



March 1, 2018

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL AND USPS

Dr. Timothy P. White
Chancellor
The California State University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California 90802

Dear Chancellor White:

The California Conference of the American Association of University Professors has urged the national AAUP to take an official interest in the issues of academic governance raised by your promulgation of Executive Order (EO) 1100 (revised) and EO 1110 on August 23 and August 2, 2017, respectively. The conference has expressed concern that their adoption is at odds with widely observed principles of academic governance, a concern that we share.

EO 1100 (revised) and EO 1110 make extensive changes to general education requirements and to placement testing and remedial education policies that apply to all of the California State University (CSU) campuses. As a result, they mandate significant changes to graduation requirements, curricula, and course offerings at each institution in the CSU system.

The Association's interest in these matters stems from our longstanding commitment to sound academic governance, the principles of which are enunciated in the attached *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*. The *Statement on Government*, formulated in conjunction with the American Council on Education and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, rests on the premise of appropriately shared responsibility and cooperative action among governing board, administration, and faculty. It refers to "an inescapable interdependence" requiring "adequate communication among these components and full opportunity for joint planning and effort." It observes that "a college or university in which all the components are aware of their interdependence, of the usefulness of communication among themselves, and of the force of joint action will enjoy increased capacity to solve educational problems" and further asserts that "unilateral effort can lead to confusion or conflict."

Section V of the *Statement on Government* defines the special role of the faculty in institutional government:

The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. On these matters the power of review or final decision lodged in the governing board or delegated by it to the president should be

exercised adversely only in exceptional circumstances, and for reasons communicated to the faculty. It is desirable that the faculty should, following such communication, have opportunity for further consideration and further transmittal of its views to the president or board.

The particular authority and primary responsibility of the faculty in the decision-making processes of the academic institution in these areas derive from its special competence in the educational sphere. Thus, the faculty should play an active and meaningful role in the development as well as in the revision of institutional policy in those areas in which the faculty has primary responsibility. Also implicit in the foregoing passage is the expectation that the faculty will play a primary role in the establishment as well as in any subsequent revision or modification of the institution's curricular policies and structure.

In an August 2 letter to CSU presidents announcing the promulgation of EO 1110, Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, executive vice chancellor, described the decision-making process as follows: "Through robust discussion, consultation and sharing of ideas, the final policy has been shaped by input from faculty, students and administrators." On August 23, Dr. Blanchard wrote the CSU presidents to describe the "consultation process" that led to the adoption of EO 1100 (revised): "Feedback was analyzed and informed the draft revision that the [CSU Academic Senate] executive committee and EO 1100 work group, presidents, provosts and others have reviewed and commented on."

Disagreements about the adequacy of the faculty's involvement in a "consultation process" frequently hinge upon disparate understandings of the term *consultation*. The Association's Committee on College and University Governance has defined the term as follows:

Consultation means that there is a formal procedure or established practice which provides a means for the faculty (as a whole or through authorized representatives) to present its judgment in the form of a recommendation, vote, or other expression sufficiently explicit to record the position or positions taken by the faculty. This explicit expression of faculty judgment must take place in time to affect the decision to be made.

The CSU system Academic Senate (ASCSU), the campus senates of twenty-two institutions in the CSU system, the California Conference of the AAUP, and the California Faculty Association (CFA) contend that the process that led to the adoption of the executive orders did not provide for adequate faculty consultation. Certainly, the processes outlined by Dr. Blanchard do not appear to constitute consultation in the sense defined by the Committee on College and University Governance.

The ASCSU adopted a resolution at its September 14–15 meeting objecting to the "severely time-constrained and flawed shared governance process and consultation." The senate's resolution states that

CSU faculty are experts and researchers in their fields who must be relied upon when the system contemplates major changes in curriculum design. We contend that the revision

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to EO 1100 and the newly released EO 1110 did not arise from the fulsome shared governance process needed to reflect faculty expertise, and therefore the Senate and the faculty it represents are compelled to reject changes in curricula that do not originate through such a fulsome process. Changes to basic curriculum policy need thoughtful consideration informed by a nuanced understanding of the rationale and impacts of proposed changes on the quality of education that CSU campuses provide and that our students deserve.

The resolution urged you to place the orders “into abeyance and defer their implementation date to, at earliest, Fall 2019,” to “engage in data-driven and genuine consultation with faculty,” and to “collaborate with the ASCSU in developing a plan for monitoring the efficacy of the changes in General Education and academic preparation curricula [so] that the details of this plan [could] be communicated to campus stakeholders early enough to be considered in campus curriculum planning.”

The information in our possession regarding the adoption of the two executive orders has come to us primarily from faculty sources. We would welcome any information that you can provide that would contribute to our understanding of the issues of concern. Assuming the essential accuracy of the information in this letter, we urge you to hold the executive orders in abeyance, as requested by ASCSU, and to allow the faculty to exercise primary responsibility in the curricular decisions implicated by the executive orders.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Hans-Joerg Tiede
Associate Secretary

Enclosures by electronic mail

cc: Rebecca D. Eisen, Esq., Chair, California State University Board of Trustees
Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, Executive Vice Chancellor
Professor Christine Miller, Chair, Academic Senate
Professor Jennifer Eagan, President, California Faculty Association
Professor Alexander Zukas, President, California Conference of the AAUP