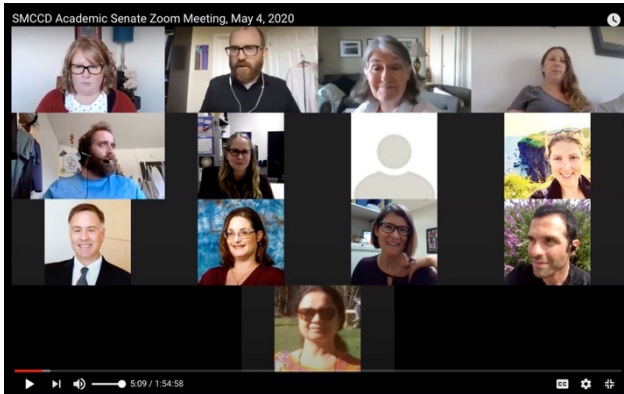


## Academic Senate End-of-Year Update

Prepared by President Jeramy Wallace



Colleagues,

Congratulations on finishing another academic year! This was a year that was unlike anything most of us have ever experienced, and while the pandemic has turned our district upside down, I hope you can find solace in the fact that in the coming week, we will confer hundreds (if not thousands) of degrees and certificates upon our graduating and transferring students. Despite these extraordinary circumstances, our students (and us) have made it through the Spring 2020 semester.

With that being said, I'd be remiss not to acknowledge that so many of our students were left behind. We are a majority-“minority” district, and as we have seen, our students of color have been disproportionately impacted by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Our students, more than their university counterparts, experienced higher levels of unemployment, food and housing insecurity, health issues, and technological barriers. And while this pandemic has amplified these issues, it is important to recognize that they were always there.

As we head into the summer intercession, I hope everyone can take some well-deserved time off. It has been an extremely stressful two months for every member of the faculty, staff, and administration. We all deserve some time to wind down and to re-energize. But I'd also like to call on every member of the faculty to reflect on our District's mission and our collective commitment to educational equity and social justice. I want to ask you to be prepared not only to teach in a modality that is foreign to so many of us, but to also be prepared to jump back into the trenches with our students this summer and in August. Higher education is a beacon of hope for many of our students, and the community colleges, in particular, have the capability to disrupt the poverty, despair, and hopelessness that many of our students will be feeling in the coming months. But it is up to us to realize this disruption. With that in mind, please have a great summer, and I look forward to seeing you in the fall.

### 2019-20 District Academic Senate Members

Jeramy Wallace, President

Leigh Anne Shaw, Immediate Past President

Diana Tedone-Goldstone, President, Cañada Academic Senate

Arielle Smith, President, CSM Academic Senate

Kathryn Browne, President, Skyline Academic Senate

Jessica Hurlless, Chair, District Curriculum Committee

David Eck, Vice President, Cañada Academic Senate

Pete von Bleichert, Vice President, CSM Academic Senate

Jesse Raskin, Vice President, Skyline Academic Senate

Nick DeMello, Chair, Distance Ed Advisory Committee

### 2020-21 District Academic Senate Members

Jeramy Wallace, President

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Arielle Smith, President, CSM Academic Senate

Leigh Anne Shaw, President, Skyline Academic Senate

Chair, District Curriculum Committee – to be elected Fall 2020

Kathryn Browne, President-elect

David Eck, Vice President, Cañada Academic Senate

Pete von Bleichert, Vice President, CSM Academic Senate

Jesse Raskin, Vice President, Skyline Academic Senate

Chair, DEAC – to be elected Fall 2020

## 2019-20 District Academic Senate Goals

1. Review current state of online training (e.g. STOT) and ensure it is meeting faculty need in serving students  
(In Progress)

The transition to online teaching in mid-March due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic not only accelerated this goal, but it also brought the three colleges together in a conversation about what constitutes quality online teaching and learning. The DE coordinators, instructional designers, instructional technologists, and ASLT deans all came together to create training opportunities for the District's faculty in response to the Spring 2020 campus closures. In response to the pandemic, the District Academic Senate created a cross-representational Task Force on Teaching and Learning (TTL), which, in response to the District's move to online instruction for Summer and Fall 2020, has developed guidance documents for teaching online and has collaborated on offering district-wide distance education training.

While the District-led STOT is no longer offered for instructors who want to teach online, Skyline and Cañada had developed their own "homegrown" distance education professional development called the "Quality Online Teaching and Learning" (QOTL) training. The DAS TTL has worked with the three campuses to offer the QOTL training more widely and across the District. Cohorts of instructors will undergo this training over the summer.

Finally, as part of this goal, the District Academic Senate reconvened the District Distance Education Advisory Committee in Fall 2019, and it consists of DE experts from across the district.

2. Work with facilities on a review of the impact of the classroom environment on our students  
(On Hold)

The San Mateo County Community College District has invested in many beautiful, state-of-the-art buildings that have truly enhanced the faculty's ability to provide high quality educational experiences for our students. At the same time, many of the older teaching spaces are less than ideal for effective teaching and learning due to outdated technology and uncomfortable classroom environments (e.g. too hot/cold, too noisy, etc.). As a result, the District Academic Senate is engaging in a District-wide inventory of classroom needs. However, the campus closures due to wildfires in Fall 2019 and the novel coronavirus in Spring 2020 has put this project on hold.

3. Continue to focus on equity and social justice intentionality in all aspects of teaching, learning, and student interaction  
(Continuous)

It is important to highlight that this is not a goal with an end-date – equity and social justice have infused all of the District Academic Senate's work this year, and it will continue to into the future. DAS has foregrounded all decisions this academic year, especially with respect to the COVID-19 crisis (see below), with equity and social justice. Furthermore, DAS started a conversation about the District's hiring practices vis-à-vis equitable policies and faculty diversification this academic year, which we plan to continue and finalize in the 2020-21 AY.

4. Achieve greater communication between campuses and greater engagement of faculty involvement in local and statewide initiatives  
(Continuous)

Under the leadership of Immediate Past President, Leigh Anne Shaw, the faculty leaders of the three campuses have closely collaborated on a number of policies and initiatives. In fact, the Spring 2020 campus closures have necessitated cross-district collaboration amongst the faculty leadership. Finally, DAS is still planning to offer a district plenary in January 2021 (likely in a virtual format).

5. Continue to assign courses to disciplines  
(In Progress)

All three local curriculum committees have created processes for assigning courses to disciplines and have started to undergo this process. Unfortunately, the campus closures have affected the committees' processes for doing so, especially since they have needed to dedicate most of their resources to the distance education transition.

6. Explore ways to further improve collegial consultation and participatory governance to better serve our campuses  
(Continuous)

Like equity and social justice, strengthening shared governance and collegial consultation has no end-date; it is something that we must continuously nurture and strengthen. As mentioned previously, the local faculty leaders have increasingly collaborated on resolutions, initiatives, and policies.

And while this pandemic has been a once-in-a-generation crisis and has negatively impacted many of the District's students and staff, it has also brought out the best in many of the District's leaders. The District Academic Senate has had a very collegial and productive relationship with the District administration, particularly Vice Chancellor McVean and his staff. We have also worked closely with Chancellor Claire, who has maintained an open-door approach with the senate leadership.

At the same time, this year has also shown a spotlight on areas where collegial consultation at times falls short in giving faculty a voice in decisions that affect academic and professional matters. Shared governance is designed to lead to effective, collaborative decision-making that unites all the constituencies, produces an improved college environment, and draws upon the strength of diversity. For shared governance to work, there must exist transparency, open communication, and a commitment to work together. The DAS looks forward to working with the Chancellor to enhance this key aspect of governance.

7. Improve access and equitable allocation of resources for professional development at all three campuses  
(On Hold)

In Fall 2018, the leadership of the District Academic Senate and the Aft 1493 agreed on the need to examine and improve the processes for short- and long-term professional development. In December 2018, the DAS and AFT held a joint meeting where members of the faculty could share their experiences with the District's program. While many best practices came out of this meeting, most attendees expressed frustration with the complexity of the processes, the inequitable distribution of funds, and the different processes at the three campuses (which impacts adjuncts at more than one campus). DAS President Leigh Anne Shaw, AFT President Paul Rueckhaus, and DAS President-elect Jeremy Wallace presented at each college senate to gather further feedback from faculty, and they met over the course of the 2018-19 to draft that feedback into new Article 13 policies and procedures. At the end of Spring 2019, when Paul Rueckhaus left the District, the AFT did not appoint a new member to continue the work with the District Academic Senate. In Spring 2020, the draft policies were ready to present to the local senates for feedback and approval so that the improved processes could be presented to the AFT for negotiation.

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the District Academic Senate received a legal opinion from AFT 1493's legal counsel, Bob Bezemek, in which the DAS was told to immediately "cease and desist" the work on professional development that the DAS and AFT had done to date. The letter accused the District Academic Senate of attempting to enter into negotiations with the District. As a result, this work on professional development policies are on hold while options are being explored. Members of the faculty who would like to see the professional development revisions negotiated should contact their union representatives.

8. Improve the process for equivalency to minimum qualifications  
(Complete)

In Spring 2019, then-President Leigh Anne Shaw and President-elect Jeramy Wallace engaged Vice Chancellor McVean in a collaborative process for revising Administrative Procedure 3.05.1: Minimum Qualifications, Faculty Service Areas and Equivalency to Minimum Qualifications. These draft policies were shared with all three local senates and their feedback was incorporated into the final document, which was approved by DAS on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

9. Create a board policy to govern the hiring and evaluation of temporary full-time faculty hires and grant-funded hires  
(On Hold)

DAS President Wallace met with Skyline Vice President Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza and Director of Human Resources David Fuene in Fall 2019 to create policies governing the hiring and evaluation of temporary full-time faculty. These draft policies were shared with DAS and the three local senates in Fall 2019 and Spring 2020, and their feedback has been incorporated. However, we are currently waiting for a legal opinion from the District's counsel on education code related to temporary faculty. Once this legal opinion is received, the DAS will revise the policies as necessary and proceed in the approval process.

10. Create a statement of support for OER initiatives and cost-lowering innovations for students at all three campuses  
(In Progress)

During the 2019-20 academic year, this was spearheaded at the local senate level and is being taken up by the District Distance Education Advisory Committee. Unsurprisingly, the transition to distance education has not only made this goal more urgent, but it has also highlighted the District's needs vis-à-vis distance education resources, training, and technologies. As we work through this transition, we will better understand these needs and can then make a recommendation to the Chancellor and Board of Trustees in the next academic year.

11. Work towards parity at all three campuses on the Strong Workforce Initiative  
(Not Started)

This goal will likely be moved to the 2020-21 academic year, especially with imminent statewide cuts to categorical programs.

12. Develop policies and procedures that will promote equity in the hiring process  
(Not Started)

The District Academic Senate had preliminary discussions of this topic in Fall 2019, but no steps have yet to be taken on this goal. This goal will be a top priority for the 2020-21 academic year and DAS hopes to engage the administration in developing these policies and procedures.

13. Develop new-faculty, both part-time and full-time, onboarding guidelines  
(Not Started)

This goal will likely be moved to the 2020-21 academic year.

14. Collaborate with administration to develop policies and procedures for offering dual enrollment courses  
(In Progress)

Vice Chancellor McVean has initiated District dual enrollment task force where administration, staff, and faculty can collaborate on how to most effectively offer dual enrollment programs in the neighboring high schools.

Unfortunately, the senates haven't been able to identify faculty volunteers for this task force. We will re-engage in this activity in August 2020.

### **COVID-19 Response**

On March 16, 2020, the District moved 100% of its course to a remote learning modality, a transition that is unprecedented in our colleges and across the state's community college system. This was an incredibly difficult and stressful task for the District's faculty (and of course, students, staff, and administration). The District Academic Senate took several actions, many in collaboration with District administration, to alleviate some of this burden and to provide guidance for the SMCCCD community. The following is a list of initiatives, policies, and other actions that DAS took in response to the COVID-19 crisis:

- DAS President Jeramy Wallace created a repository of resources, trainings, and guidance documents at <https://smccd.edu/academicsenate/covid19.php>
- The District Academic Senate started meeting weekly to provide consistent guidance and decision-making.
- In collaboration with Vice Chancellor McVean, DAS created the Task Force on Teaching and Learning (TTL) – which includes faculty, staff, and administration – to draft guidance on remote teaching, to centralize professional development planning, and to draft policies for recommendation to the District Academic Senate. The TTL has:
  - Drafted guidance for administering exams in an online format (approved by DAS and distributed on April 27, 2020)
  - Drafted teaching expectations for teaching in an online modality for Summer 2020 (approved by DAS on May 11, 2020, and distributed May 13, 2020)
  - Drafted teaching expectations for teaching online in Fall 2020 (to be approved by DAS on May 18, 2020)
- Passed a resolution on Spring 2020 grading options and drafted guidance on the new grading options for faculty (e.g. P/NP and EWs)
- Collaborated with District administration to move all Summer 2020 and most Fall 2020 courses online
- Currently collaborating with District Administration to offer “hard-to-convert” courses in a hybrid modality for Fall 2020
- Hosted a series of forums for faculty in “hard-to-convert” disciplines during the weeks of March 16 and May 11
- Co-sponsored online “open labs” with Skyline’s ASLT Division and ITS for Labster and Proctorio
- Worked with AFT on revising the evaluation procedures for Spring 2020