

**From:** Peter Schwartz pschwart@calpoly.edu  
**Subject:** Re: Shared Governance and Publishing of Numbers  
**Date:** November 15, 2015 at 9:51 PM  
**To:** Jeffrey D. Armstrong jarmstro@calpoly.edu

PS

Jeffrey,

Thank you for the discussion Friday. I appreciate your time, energy, and consideration. I'm writing to summarize our discussion to avoid any misunderstanding. Several people have inquired how our meeting went, and I will likely put our conversation on <http://universitysharedgovernance.wikispaces.com/Cal+Poly>, so I wish to correctly represent our statements. Please feel free to correct anything I may have misunderstood.

My reason for coming was two fold:

- (1) I had expressed to Chancellor White the concern of many faculty members in what we see as the division between administrators (Chancellor White referred to as "decision makers") and the faculty. Many among the faculty are concerned that what we see as the administration's top down autocracy is progressing to control our educational activities more completely - as it seems to be growing from the university level, down to the college level, down to the department level, and into the classroom.
- (2) You expressed concern about the way the finances were being portrayed by the CFA and we both agreed that the numbers should be presented transparently.

We discussed the "corporatization" of Cal Poly, and I now realize that we use the term differently. I understand and agree with the numbers you showed me indicating the need to finance Cal Poly with the continued decrease in state funding. I also recognize that partnering with corporations to fund education may be a good way to solve the funding short fall. However, in my mind "corporatization" doesn't mean working with corporations, it means that the university's governance is becoming that of a corporation - one of top down control. I regret that we didn't discuss this, as I didn't realize our difference in use of "corporatization" until later and I am open to more communication in this regard. I do not believe that partnering with a corporation necessitates that Cal Poly is run as a corporation. It is the latter that concerns me.

You expressed the importance of increasing faculty salary to be consistent with Cal Poly's stature and that this would take changes that required increased administration. I understand this, but asked why these changes required that the heads of the *educational* governance be the *same people* as the fund raisers. I proposed that there be administrative fundraising positions distinct from the academic leaders such as department chairs, heads of department and college deans. You indicated that in order to raise funds, one needs to know everything about the activities of the university. This makes sense to me, although I expressed that one could *know* the activities of an institution very well without being *responsible* for these activities and the people performing them. You recognized this as a valid point.

You expressed your perspective that events in the College of Agriculture and the Department of Ag. Business did not represent unilateral top down governance. You said that the candidates presented in these instances for dean and chair respectively were not satisfactory, and so could not be accepted. Additionally, you pointed out that the position of department chair was not replaced with an appointed department head, but rather an interim department chair was installed for now. You expressed that in these processes some things had been done well, and there were some mistakes made too. I encourage you to report this reflection to the community, as it may build trust. My perspective is that not installing candidates you find unacceptable from the college or department perfectly demonstrates top down autocratic governance. Certainly what faculty see is the administration appointing leaders for them that they do not want. My suggestion and request to you is to instead accept and work respectfully with the proposed candidates and use the difficulties and inherent conflict in shared governance as a starting point to build a relationship with them. In doing so you will also build relationship with the faculty these leaders represent.

I said that many people I know don't believe you when you say that increasing out of state student enrollment doesn't take seats away from California students. You said that these numbers should be more transparently presented. I agree. You indicated that on average across the university, California students are not losing seats, but it varies from departments and in some departments, such as mechanical engineering, California students may have lost seats due to increased out of state enrollment. You explained the need to bring in more money to support our educational activities and argued that the additional income from these out of state students makes possible the number of seats we can continue to offer in state students. I do not remember hearing this argument before and I encouraged you to make this clearer to the university community, as it did make sense to me.

I told you that I was frightened to speak critically of you in front of Chancellor White and to you in general because I greatly value my job and know you have processes to fire me regardless of tenure. You were surprised and said that you do not in fact have a means to fire me and you would never do that either. You offered a story of an earlier administrative position you had, where you actively sought out criticism with the intent to improve your service. I do believe that you mean this. I also believe that you value the opportunity to improve your leadership through critical feedback. I have seen that you have changed some policies because of input from the community. At the same time, I am still frightened and feel vulnerable. I may have mentioned the names Linda Vanasupa, Dianne DeTurriss, Susan Opava, and Sema Alptekin, who are among several colleagues one might argue have been fired or are in the process of being fired. You indicated that you could not discuss these situations with me, and I must confess (probably for the same reasons that you can not discuss details) that I do not know much about the conflict related to these people. However, their stories are alive in the conversation of the faculty, defining the relationship between faculty and administration.

I related a story about the CFA protest in front of the administration building. I found the atmosphere antagonistic to healthy communication and I wish to not again participate in this kind of conflict negotiation. I was impressed with what I saw as courage and generosity when you came down to speak with us. I also told you that a good number of faculty left upon your arrival. Actually, it would be more correct to say that they *fled*, afraid that they would be identified. I gave another example of the administration's treatment of the SUSTAIN initiative that I participated in. We prepared a CSU grant proposal that would have brought Cal Poly nearly half a million dollars. Provost Kathleen Enz Finken did not permit us to submit the proposal. I specifically pointed out that the faculty *universally* (to the best of my knowledge) fear Provost Enz Finken and find her unsupportive. My intention was/is to convey to you an atmosphere of fear among the faculty toward the administration, which I think follows naturally from our recognition of routine administrative retaliation against faculty that are critical or have unique practices

which I think follows naturally from our recognition of routine administrative relations against faculty that are critical or have unique practices or perspectives.

You thanked me for being frank.

I thank you for listening to me and responding.

I end by again inviting you to let me know if there's any way I can help you.

Thanks  
Pete

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Teaching Energy Classes and Intro Mechanics with open source videos: <http://sharedcurriculum.wikispaces.com/>

On Nov 4, 2015, at 10:00 AM, Jeffrey Dyer Armstrong <[jarmstro@calpoly.edu](mailto:jarmstro@calpoly.edu)> wrote:

Hi Pete,

Thanks for the chat yesterday. I have copied Diane, she can help schedule the meeting.

We have already shared the full details of how every dollar has been spent since my arrival with our campus advisory council. I am copying Rachel as we are discussing how to share this information with the academic senate and beyond. (I would also refer you to our budget memo provided early in the quarter.)

I am happy to share any and all materials with you one-on-one. I am open to mechanisms to share more broadly but we'll discuss the vehicle for sharing with the academic senate and asi.

Thanks!

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From: Peter V. Schwartz  
Sent: Tuesday, November 3, 2015 9:08 PM  
To: Jeffrey Dyer Armstrong  
Subject: Shared Governance and Publishing of Numbers

Jeff,

Thanks for offering to meet with me to clarify my concerns with respect to boundary of freedoms of the administration and faculty/staff. Additionally, I think we agreed to have an open forum to present the [financial] numbers transparently. I look forward to meeting with you and inquire if others should/could be invited. Can I set up a meeting with your office? How would we go about this?

Thank you  
Pete

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