



Academic Senate

23/AS/18/AS Support of the ASCSU Presidential Search Process in the California State University System: Announcement of Finalists and Visits to Campuses (Sense of the Senate)

RESOLVED: That the CSU Stanislaus Senate reaffirms its position on open and transparent Presidential searches expressed in 12/AS/15/SEC, *Sense of the Senate Resolution California State University, Stanislaus Academic Senate Presidential Search Transparency* (October 2015) and in 14/AS/11/SEC, *Resolution on President Searches* (September 2011),

RESOLVED: That the CSU Stanislaus Senate supports the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) in its continued promotion of transparent presidential searches as expressed in AS-3347-18/FA, *Presidential Search Process in the California State University System: Announcement of Finalists and Visits to Campuses* (November 2018), as well as the previous ASCSU resolutions AS-3234-15/EX, *Presidential Search Process in the California State University System: Announcement of Finalists and Visits to Campuses* (November 2015) and AS-3035-11/FA, *Response to Proposed Changes to the Board of Trustees Policy for the Selection of Presidents: Affirming the Importance of Campus Involvement and Transparency* (September 2011); and be it further

RESOLVED: That, for current¹ and future Presidential searches, the CSU Stanislaus Senate urge the CSU Chancellor and the Board of Trustees (BOT) to return to the time honored and successful policy of providing for the public announcement of finalists with accompanying official public visits by finalists to campuses; and be it further

¹ CSU Fullerton, Humboldt State University, CSU San Marcos and San Francisco State University are currently in the process of presidential searches.

RESOLVED: That the CSU Stanislaus Senate distribute this resolution to:

- CSU Board of Trustees,
- CSU Chancellor,
- Trustees Committee for the Selection of the President (TCSP) for San Francisco State University, TCSP for CSU San Marcos, TCSP for Humboldt State University, TCSP for CSU Fullerton,
- Advisory Committee to the Trustees Committee for the Selection of the President (ACTCSP) for CSU San Marcos, ACTCSP for San Francisco State University, ACTCSP for Humboldt State University, ACTCSP for CSU Fullerton,
- CSU campus Presidents,
- CSU campus Senate Chairs,
- California State Student Association (CSSA)
- Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association (ERFSA)

RATIONALE: *The CSU Stanislaus Senate is very pleased, and incredibly lucky, to have a true academic as president of Stanislaus State. This has not always been the case on this campus, and the same cannot be always be said for other CSU campuses. In 2011, the CSU Board of Trustees amended the Trustees Policy for the Selection of Presidents to make the public announcement of finalists and official campus visits in Presidential searches at the discretion of the Chancellor and Chair of the Trustees Committee for the Selection of the President (TCSP) (<http://www.calstate.edu/datastore/PresidentialSearch.shtml>). At the time, the ASCSU passed AS-3035-11/FA, which advocated for the public announcement of finalists and the preservation of public campus visits by Presidential candidates. In 2015, the ASCSU resolution AS-3234-15/EX reaffirmed the position the ASCSU took in 2011 and called for the public announcement of finalists and public official visits for the four Presidential searches being conducted in 2015-16.*

This resolution reaffirms the CSU Stanislaus Senate resolutions 12/AS/15/SEC, 14/AS/11/SEC, and the ASCSU resolutions AS-3347-18/FA, AS-3035-11/FA and AS-3234-15/EX and, once again, requests the CSU Chancellor and Board of Trustees to bring back transparency in its Presidential searches by way of public announcement of finalists and public visits by finalists to the campuses. This resolution further

reaffirms the need for transparency so that faculty might have the opportunity to engage candidates, thus allowing the opportunity for faculty to play an appropriate role in the decision-making of selecting the best candidate to lead their campuses.

The CSU Stanislaus Senate wishes to re-iterate several of the points made in the 2011, 2015, and 2018 resolutions. Provisions of the Trustees policy have significant implications for the nature and selection of a Presidential search. The policy expresses a commitment to consultation with campus and community representatives, but rather than mandating an open and transparent search process, which includes the public announcement of finalists and their official public visit to campus, the policy provides that the Chancellor and the Chair of the TCSP together decide whether to schedule campus visits for Presidential finalists making the process closed and secretive.

(<http://www.calstate.edu/datastore/PresidentialSearch.shtml>). It is worth noting that since the change in the Trustees' Policy for the Selection of Presidents, several searches for Presidents have been conducted, but in none of those searches have there been public announcement of finalists and their official visits to campuses.

The argument that a closed and secretive search is necessary otherwise good strong candidates are likely to withdraw if their names are made public, runs counter to the manner in which people move up in the administrative ranks in organizations, especially universities, through open searches and public visits to campuses. Also, a vast majority of organizations and universities realize and are quite comfortable with the natural aspirations of their human resources, indeed encouraging and assisting in their movement to higher ranks.

Closed and secretive searches suffer from other downsides as well. First is the inability of the campus community at-large to appraise the finalists and to find out relevant information about them through both public and private information sources, prior to the final selection and appointment of the President.

Negative information about an appointee may not be revealed in a closed search. In one of the Presidential searches, the BOT was unwilling to share the information that their preferred candidate was

facing a faculty vote of no confidence at his campus at the very time that the Advisory Committee was making its recommendations to the TCSP/BOT. This breach of transparency poisoned the campus reception of the new President and thus made his job of assuming authority over the campus even more difficult. A second downside could be the appointment by the TCSP/BOT of an acceptable candidate as President who was not the preferred/best choice based upon the votes of the Advisory Committee to the TCSP. In such a situation, the best President for the campus could have been disregarded and bypassed, thereby shortchanging the campus of a great leader.

Currently 21 of the 23 CSU campus senates have approved resolutions urging open and transparent Presidential searches, which include the public announcement of finalists and their official public visit to campuses. The CSU Stanislaus Senate supports and stands in solidarity with these campus senates and urges the Chancellor and each TCSP for CSU Fullerton, CSU San Marcos, Humboldt State University and San Francisco State University to conduct open and transparent search processes requiring finalists for the campus President's position to officially visit campuses and meet with campus community members.

Confidence and satisfaction in the outcome are intricately linked to the type of process followed. Forgoing publicly announcing finalists' names and scheduling official campus visits for them is behavior characteristic of a private corporation rather than a public university. Such a lack of transparency is troublesome as it denies the opportunity for campus stakeholders to have a voice in the process. There is a lack of opportunity for full campus community input into the choice of the president. Such a process also means the CSU does not meet the higher standards of transparency and accountability expected of public institutions. As a result, there is likely to be less confidence and satisfaction in the outcome on the part of the university community and the public.

Meaningful consultation means open campus visits where all members of the university community have the opportunity to meet finalists and ask them questions in a public forum. Such visits give the university and public insight into finalists' knowledge of the campus and their ability to unify and lead the students,

faculty, staff and administration. Visits also give finalists insight into the university community they aspire to lead. Such a process builds confidence in the community and satisfaction with the appointment of Presidents who match the culture of the campus, who can work to unify the campus, and who can lead it into new directions and greater successes.

Finally, much of the current literature on the need for closed Presidential searches comes from private companies who have a fiscal imperative to advocate for closed searches. This self-serving propaganda is understandable in a capitalist economy, but such viewpoints are not necessarily in line with reality. In contravention to the standpoints of private, capitalist executive search companies, the AAUP website provides a [Presidential Search Committee Checklist](#) to guide institutions in the application of Presidential search policies. It emphasizes that:

“open visits are crucial in the success of the search process because they permit members of the campus community to participate in providing impressions, as well as to contribute to the candidate's understanding of the culture of the institution. In this final phase of the selection process, open visits present vitally important opportunities for both the campus community and the candidate to determine each other's suitability. This final step is extraordinarily useful to the search committee in making its final recommendation to the board.”

The purpose of this resolution is to reaffirm the time-honored and successful tradition of open presidential searches. This resolution seeks to maximize the chances that other campuses find someone who fits as well as President Ellen Junn fits on this campus, and to ensure the faculty have the ability to meaningfully participate in the selection of the most appropriate candidate to lead their campus community.

Approved by the Academic Senate on 12/04/18