

FCCCC President's Address

CCC Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday February 9, 2017

Good morning Chairman Middleton, Chancellor Hyman, Board of Trustees.

Yesterday, several CCC faculty members and I all took personal days to travel to Springfield and rally at the Capitol to raise awareness and seek potential allies, to educate allies and honor the on-the-ground work around the state that post-secondary education stakeholders have been doing in the past 21 months without a budget in the state of Illinois. We rallied for higher education funding and we will not stop.

This month, Faculty Council is considering the Search Committee's work to select both our next Chancellor and Provost. Naturally, this process leads all of us: faculty, staff, students and administration to think about the future of the City Colleges of Chicago.

I asked Faculty Council to respond to the question: "What is your vision for the City Colleges of Chicago over the next five years?" I will now share with you some of the responses and themes that I received to that prompt.

1. Many faculty responses reflect our deep commitment to our community-based mission. While "reinvention" sought to designate our seven colleges into career hubs or "C2C's": faculty are committed to ensuring that we return to the mission of serving all of our communities equally. While we understand that some disciplines require expensive, specialized equipment that cannot be affordably or practically duplicated at every college, we continue to be concerned that the concept of identifying one focus area or "center of excellence" for each college does not and can not meet the educational needs of the communities we are meant to serve. It is critical for "community" to be the primary focus of our community colleges. We hope that any vision of the future "recognizes the breadth and depth of what each college has to offer and focuses upon what our respective communities want, need, and deserve. Each of the seven colleges maintain separate and independent accreditation. [We] truly hope that vision also includes administrative leadership that wants and respects the same." "We must do what is best for all of Chicago's residents, not just some. We, as faculty, must stand up and continue to demand that every area of the city should

have access to evidence-based, high quality and well thought-out programs that lead to both personal and professional development.”

2. Faculty are committed to Shared Governance. Specifically, we seek for our colleges to be more inclusive in our governance and for our district to empower each college’s own governance. We must move away from the top-down managerial style and instead include faculty, students and community stakeholders in any decision-making process.

3. We are proud of and committed to protecting our diversity. Here is an area where it seems that our administrators, Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students and communities are in complete agreement. We were comforted by the Special Announcement on February 8th that read:

“In light of the recent Executive Order on immigration, please know that we value our diverse community, and remain committed to creating safe and welcoming teaching and learning environments for all CCC students, faculty and staff. This includes our international students, faculty and staff, those who are undocumented, as well as those who qualify for the [DACA] program.”

In this spirit, faculty council began discussions with district officers this month around practical, concrete and time-sensitive plans we can and should put in place to respond to any future political threat that might arise in the lives of our international students. Our ideals and values must be matched and reflected by actions and policies.

4. Considering the so-called ‘budget crisis’ in our state, we understand that our administrators may have to make difficult decisions in the upcoming year. Your faculty want to ensure that resources are always allocated and prioritized towards our students’ education and well-being. We must continue to offer a quality, rigorous education that allows our students to become informed, healthy and responsible citizens.

This concludes my report. I thank you for your time today.

Respectfully Submitted by Jennifer Alexander on Behalf of the Faculty Council of the City Colleges of Chicago