

AFA Report to the Board of Trustees, 2/8/22, AFA President, Sean Martin

President Battenfeld, Trustees, President Chong, Colleagues and other members of the community--

I'll start by again thanking the members of this Board for helping to create the conditions for a safe return to in-person instruction and services. The vaccine and testing mandate provides a foundation for sensible safety conditions needed to expand in-person services to our community. Relevant expert consensus seems to be that COVID will remain a part of our lives and college operations for the foreseeable future, and so the AFA leadership wishes to express our support for continuation of the mandate beyond the end of the emergency conditions in which it was initiated. In addition, we would like to express support for any needed revisions of the mandate to reflect changes in scientific consensus, e.g., considering the CDC's shift from the phrase, "fully vaccinated," to the phrase, "up to date," so as to determine whether vaccine boosters should be required going forward.

I'd also like to thank our Administrative and Classified colleagues for their care in implementing and maintaining the protocols for a safe return to in-person instruction and services. The receptiveness and response to faculty concerns has been especially appreciated. We recognize the workload and complexity of this effort is substantial. We also realize that no system can be perfect and mistakes will be made, but the willingness to adapt and improve the system is noted and appreciated.

The last point I'd like to make pertains to our future operations at the college. As our work shifts from pandemic to endemic conditions, it is understandable that there is interest in benefitting from, and permanently incorporating the new

knowledge and experience we've all gained in transitioning our work to remote modalities. We recognize that there's no "going back" to the way things were. At the same time, this enthusiasm is accompanied by considerable concern about how the embrace of remote instruction and services impacts the quality of our work and the learning experience of our students. In addition to securing access to the necessary equipment and software, the District must be prepared to provide the ongoing resources necessary to make this work effective and sustainable. The goal must be, to the degree possible, to develop quality commensurate with in-person instruction and services. That means accounting the substantial time and effort faculty dedicate to creating and maintaining quality online instruction and services. With some support from the District, faculty have thus far borne this out-of-class labor out of their professional dedication and commitment to students. But a long-term solution demands recognition that this effort is indeed above and beyond the workload that faculty members can be reasonably expected to maintain. We're confident these issues can be worked out in negotiations, but we wish for you to be cognizant of this faculty need as you consider the long-term financial interests of the District.

Thank you for your time and attention.