

This message has been sent to the Academic Senate Executive committee and our Academic Area 5 Senator and bcc'd to all staff, the Board, and student government

Dear SRJC colleagues,

The Philosophy, Humanities, and Religion Department is unanimous in our lack of confidence in our senior administrators. The recent summer school decision is but the latest and most egregious in a pattern of misguided and autocratic decisions in which faculty input has been ignored to the detriment of students, our core mission, our reputation, and the community as a whole. We don't feel the need to repeat what has already been said. We simply want to communicate our department's unified perspective ahead of today's senate discussion. We say everything below without any malice or contempt for any of the involved individuals. This is, for us, a matter of identifying where the decision-making process went awry, and acting to protect our institution from future mistakes.

1. First, we believe summer and fall schedule should proceed as published and the only cuts that occur should be low-enrolled classes as per standard practice. The published schedule is a promise to our community. Especially given the turmoil and chaos of this past year, we owe our community the stability and reliability that comes with keeping that promise. [We just received notice that this step is being taken.]
2. Second, we think it is appropriate, under these circumstances, for President Chong to resign. We do believe he has contributed to our college in positive ways. Many of us consider him a friend. We appreciate his willingness to admit that he has made mistakes. We think he is sincere in his commitment to try harder in the future. But we believe the JC will be able to more quickly and thoroughly recover from our current situation under a leader who does not need to learn, but who already understands, the core principles of academia that have been violated with this and other decisions.
3. Third, our confidence in VP Doug Roberts has suffered for years because of inconsistencies and lack of transparency regarding financial matters. His refusal to provide answers about the discrepancies in budgetary reports pertaining to this particular series of decisions has damaged our confidence beyond repair. We believe it is appropriate for him to resign.
4. Fourth, having heard directly from VP Mary Kay Rudolph how she arrived at her decision to cut 75% of our department's summer schedule, our trust in her ability to lead Academic Affairs has been damaged beyond repair. It is important to point out here that she did not simply decide to cut 75% of our offerings, she decided unilaterally *which* of our department's classes to cut. This violates a fundamental pillar of academic institutions: faculty control over discipline content. Such violations are inconsistent with the responsibilities of the job of leading Academic Affairs. We believe it is appropriate for her to resign.
5. Fifth, we know that all the VPs and some senior deans were in the room when this decision was made. We understand that some of them believed this was a good idea, and some of them knew this was a bad idea but either lacked the courage to speak forcefully enough against it, or did so, and were ignored. We as the faculty will probably never know the full story about who did and said what. But if we hope to move forward in repairing this college, it is essential that all our managers understand the various reasons this was a horrible decision.
6. Finally, we respectfully implore the Board of Trustees to take faculty input more seriously in the years ahead. This entire public relations debacle could have been avoided if faculty (and students) had been included in the decision-making process as required by law and best practices.

With deep respect and gratitude for our entire community,
The Philosophy, Humanities, and Religion Department