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**From:** Bernadine Chuck Fong <fongbernadine@fhda.edu>  
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**To:** foothill  
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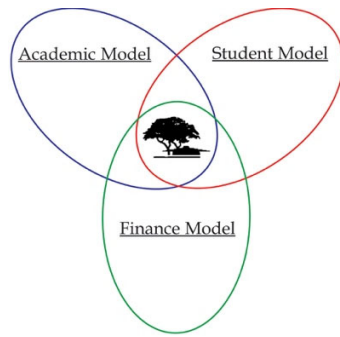
Hello, again,

Some of you are probably wondering when we are going to resume the governance and equity discussion. So here we go. Our additional core values of transparency and sustainability (not just in the environmental sense) serve us well. A collegial community is built on mutual trust and respect which will help us move forward. Experiencing and demonstrating trust and respect everyday will help us in the healing process. Along with trust comes transparency. Being open and honest, and forgiving with one another are important for us to practice with one another and will ultimately become the basis on which our governance system is built. And if our system has a solid foundation, it will be a sustainable one. A question that was asked of me at the November 1<sup>st</sup> Town Hall was what we would do now and how that will be impacted by the arrival of a new president. My answer now, after having been in a variety of (endless) meetings and getting to know you, is we need to develop what is best for the college, not what is unique to any president. On the other hand, if we build a fully functional governance system, it is what will attract the best presidential candidates. Hopefully, we would not be in search of a president to “fix” us because we will be operating as cohesive community focused on our primary mission, which is the success of our students.

Along these lines, a leadership “equinimity” retreat is planned for December 10<sup>th</sup> for the elected leaders of the Classified and Academic Senates and ASFC, along with college administrators and supervisors. The purpose of this retreat is to “strengthen our listening skills, improve our personal awareness, enhance our problem-solving skills, improve our decision-making skills, expand our personal comfort zone, appreciate differences and diversity, understand hierarchical cooperation, learn empathy for other points of view, improve team bonds, improve verbal and non-verbal communication skills, and establish a non-judgmental framework for assessment and change.” All learned from our interactions with horses! (If we had more horses, I would invite the entire campus).

We should not and cannot reformulate a truly functional, sustainable governance model without this foundation of mutual trust and respect. When I was at the Carnegie Foundation, we had this saying, “if we continue doing what we have been doing, we will get the same result.” Therefore, we need to think about how we might do things differently, *but not before* we can heal and bond as a community.

At the same time, we have an opportunity to reconceptualize what we mean by governance, and I offer this model for us to consider:



Consider each of the ellipses as representing the ideal model for each of three areas: academic, student, and finance. Clearly, there are topics, issues, tasks in any one of these models that do not, and should not or need not, intersect with the others. For example, the classified senate or student government wants to change its bylaws which it alone can control; or the academic senate wishes to change the graduation requirements of a particular degree which is solely under their purview of academic and professional matters. On the other hand, there are topics and issues in any one of these models that intersect with the others. It is in this center where there is an *intersection* that a participatory governance model emerges. For example, developing the college's educational master plan (which should be renamed the Educational *Equity* Master Plan) has implications for all sectors, as does developing the *guidelines* for new programs, allocation of resources and space. The focus of the governance model is just that, on governance or operations, not on specific tasks but for which the group has developed the guidelines.

The purpose of a participatory (notice I am not using "shared") governance body is to advise and consult *with* the President on college-wide governance issues and institutional planning from the college's mission-based perspective and to ensure open communication, genuine involvement before and while decisions are made, and inclusive participation. If we have a foundation based on the core values that I have been espousing, then there only need to be *one* college governance committee which operates at the presidential level with the president.

P.S. We need to address how we can promote DEI (diversity, equity, *and* inclusion) as soon as we can think about how we want to best operate as a cohesive community.

Best regards,

*Bernadine*

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