

Good evening Senators, students, and guests,

As many of you know, on September 24th I travelled to Oakland for a meeting with UC President Janet Napolitano, along with the other UC AS Presidents. At the meeting, we discussed mental health services, post-doctoral supplemental tuition (known as PDST), system-wide LGBT data collection, potential tuition increases, anti-sexual assault work, and the Violence Against Women Act. It was a very productive meeting as we were able to address every agenda item in a timely manner. We were able to ask President Napolitano to look into specific issues with PDST programs, and reaffirm our support of the work being done with UCSA in regards to sexual assault prevention. We also discussed the possibility of having cohesive efforts in lobbying between all parties affected by the state's budget, other than May Lobby Day.

Mental health services seems to be a huge issue on other campuses with students having to wait weeks for a meeting with university counselors and psychologists, essentially due to a lack of funding. Brandon Starks, my counterpart in the Graduate Student Association, emailed Dr. Charles Nies some of the notes from our meeting with President Napolitano, and Dr. Nies stated that many of our therapists are seeing 7 students a day when the normal load is about 4 students a day. In other words, many of them are losing out on lunch and breaks due to such a large influx of students using CAP services at UC Merced. Dr. Nies has requested more funding from the Chancellor in hopes of bringing another therapist on board as well. He said he would let us know if he needs anything done on our end.

Last night, we were made aware of a meeting happening with the UC Vice President of Capital Resources and Budget, Patrick Lenz at UCSD. Eric Hang from the UC Office of the President was able to coordinate Mr. Lenz's schedule to meet with the AS Presidents outside of his meeting with UCSA. This meeting will likely take place this Saturday from 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm. I will be in attendance at this meeting.

Today I met with Steve to talk about the Acorn Room and I'm currently drafting up a letter to send to the Chancellor to communicate our frustration with the cancelling of reservations without any explanation. This was highlighted a couple weeks back when my room reservation of the Acorn Room for Coffee with the President was cancelled due to them needing it for another meeting. However, when I was having Coffee with the President in another location, it was brought to my attention that the Acorn Room was not being used at that time after all. This is not the first time we've had our reservations cancelled, and just the fact that they have priority leaves a lot of room for uncertainty when we tell students we're going to be at one location, but then have to change when our reservations are cancelled. This is a disservice to students, and this is why I'm drafting up a letter to the Chancellor asking that they give the reservation system to OSL, which is open until 8:00 p.m., so that the reservation process of the Acorn Room will be more fair for all parties that need to use it. I will let you all know what the Chancellor says when she replies.

Tomorrow I, along with Senator Fitzgerald, have a meeting with Kari Mansager, the Director of the UC Merced Violence Prevention Program, to discuss potential collaboration between our departments for National Campus Conversation Week. I have my staff currently putting ideas together for a potential event to host. I've also reached out to UCSA President Kuoch-Seng to see if they have any campaign material for UCSA UConsent Campaign, so that we can have information to hand out to students. I think that this is a crucial time to have these types of discussions on our campus, especially with the passage of SB 967 which defines consent between two individuals. Please let me know if you would like to contribute to these efforts.

That's all for my updates. I want you all to know that you're doing an awesome job! Let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Ivan Flores
ASUCM President