

DAS President's Report to the PCCD Board of Trustees for December 6, 2011
Karolyn van Putten

Thank you Mr. President and congratulations on your new role. Good evening trustees, chancellor, district administrative center staff, college presidents, colleagues, and members of the public.

It has been very difficult for me to identify specific issues or concerns to mention in tonight's report. Largely that is because there are so many matters that warrant attention, most of which I have mentioned previously, and there appears to be so little that can be done to meaningfully address them.

For months now, you've been hearing from students, from teachers, and from community members that continuing and increasingly imminent workload reductions are having a damaging effect on students' ability to complete their programs of study. Despite hearing these comments repeatedly, there's no apparent evidence that you fully grasp their implications. From where I sit, the most troubling implications are being demonstrated by increasing pressures on the dwindling number of faculty to do more with less.

The work of shared governance requires interest and willingness. It also requires time to read often-lengthy documents, to reflect on what was read and collect input from one's colleagues about the information contained in these documents. It requires time to attend meetings and follow through with the decisions made in these meetings, and even more time to do the work required to actualize those decisions. With so few of us to go around, and with so many intractable issues to address, some of us are approaching burn out, some are reluctantly or eagerly contemplating retirement, some of us have given up, and some of us are choosing to focus only on classes and students.

We're running out of time to make decisions that will guide us back from a precipice that is dangerously near. The longer it takes for us to make much-needed changes, the less likely it is that Peralta will survive, by my estimate, more than 2 years. I have one direct question, what will you, the Board of Trustees, do to support and encourage making the necessary adjustments?

In closing, it gives me great pleasure to add the District Academic Senate's voice to the chorus of those who are congratulating former DAS president Dr. Joseph Bielanski, Jr. and former student trustee Jurena Storm on their appointments to the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. We've seen their good work here at Peralta and have every confidence that their contributions will be equally valued and valuable in their new roles.

That concludes my report for tonight. Thank you for receiving it.