



STUDENT UNION ASSEMBLY

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Commissioner of Academic Affairs

Student Union Assembly Constitutional Duties and Responsibilities, as per art 3, § A:

- Establishes and maintains communication with the UCSC and systemwide Academic Senate and all undergraduate academic related programs.
- Shall inform and represent the SUA on matters of academic policy.
- Shall act as the representative to the Academic Senate on the Committee on Educational Policy.
- Shall provide for periodic polls and information surveys to assess student concerns.
- Required to hold weekly office hours at the SUA office.
- Attends weekly officer meeting(s) to ensure communication and collaboration.
- Prepares a monthly report evaluating the SUA, which provides constructive criticism, for the purposes of improvement.
- Carryout any other duties as set forth in this constitution, the bylaws, and/or assigned by the Assembly and/or Chair.

The primary responsibility of the CAA is to be the representative for undergraduates at the University of California Santa Cruz vis-à-vis academic issues. Thus, the CAA must stay in close contact with the Academic Senate, (the faculty body on campus with plenary authority over admissions, curriculum, graduation requirements and the like), be aware of its role, responsibilities and functioning, and also be informed of students' opinions and views pertaining to the aforementioned.

The month of September has been an extremely busy one, as at the end of it classes begin. Many pieces of the "SUA puzzle" were/are in the process of being put together as to ensure that the SUA starts the year out right and is as productive as possible. With that said, numerous officer trainings were completed, along with any and all relevant discussions. These include those pertaining to diversity, traveling, and hiring

interns and an Operations Manager. These trainings, (facilitated by SOAR staff), helped to inform the officers about not only important university policies and procedures, but also how to work with people in a productive and efficient manner that will allow for the completion of necessary tasks. I especially liked the diversity training. I felt that it provided some interesting ideas for conducting one's self.

In addition to these trainings, the officers also had important discussions about the involvement of the officers vis-à-vis the campus and the running of general body meetings. The structure of SUA body meetings is very important, because it is at these meetings where the whole campus, (vis-à-vis college and organization representatives), gets to play a direct role in the SUA process. Thus, ensuring that the structure and processes thereof for meetings are fair and efficient are a high priority. I feel that decisions made such as, preventing presenters of resolutions and funding requests from asking for immediate decisions and having the SUA body decide what, (if anything), constitutes an emergency, and designating a quarterly meeting for all SUA members to present their monthly reports will not only help the body run more smoothly, but will help legitimize its function.

Also, the bylaw committee has met and is progressing with the creation of SUA bylaws. The committee consists of myself, the Chair and the Commissioner of Diversity. Thus far, I have created an electronic copy of the bylaws compiled by last year's Internal Vice-Chair and a bylaw revision template, (that will hopefully be available online at some point), and have written up the bylaws for the Commissioner of Academic Affairs and the Legislative Liaison. The Chair and COD are working on bylaws for the other non-officer/intern positions. The goal is to have several options for the SUA body to review and vote on early in Fall quarter.

This month, in addition to our regular officer meetings, we met with the Assistant Vice-Chancellor Dean of Students twice, and had our first meeting with the Acting Chancellor. Campus-wide and my.ucsc messaging to students and future meetings with the Chancellor and other Vice-Chancellors were some topics of discussion with the Dean of Students. A Hate/Bias Task Force, a Diversity Council and UC Management vis-à-vis a public relations firm it hired were some of the topics discussed with the Chancellor. The Hate/Bias Task Force has and is looking into many of the issues brought up last year

surrounding the tracking, reporting and resolution of hate/bias incidents on campus. The Task Force is working with Student Affairs on an informative website and a “poster campaign” to be ready for Fall quarter, and hopes to have a response team composed of faculty, staff and students in the future that can handle these incidents when they occur. The Diversity Council is a new advising group that the Chancellor is creating that would report to him on issues of diversity on campus. Chaired by a faculty member, the council would have faculty, staff and student representation. The council will most likely begin in October or November.

I have recently been helping the COD on a survey/assessment that she is working on about various campus resources including, but not limited to the ethnic resource centers, Engaging Education and the Disability Resource Center. The first survey should be released in mid to late October, and results will hopefully be available in Winter quarter. A few resource center directors, (those who responded to the COD’s offer to work together on this project), the COD and myself have met to discuss logistics, questions, and areas of assessment. In addition, the COD and I thought it prudent to bring in an outside person, (a Psychology graduate student with survey experience), to help ensure that the survey and its results are as unbiased and helpful as they can be. The COD and I began working on possible questions and are continuing to meet with the necessary individuals.

As for Ethnic Studies, I have set up one meeting with a professor and am in the process of setting up another early in fall quarter so the process of ascertaining faculty members position’s can continue and progress in this area can be made. I am also still assessing the responses from the faculty survey, (and am hoping to receive more). Although, this is proving to be more time consuming than I had planned. I still hope to have an executive summary, along with my thoughts on the development of an Ethnic Studies at UCSC ready to distribute to the SUA body early in Fall quarter. Since I am still waiting on responses from over 70% of those who I sent the survey to and I will need the “go ahead” from the general body before continuing in with this work, the proposal I had wanted to have for the Academic Senate, (specifically CEP), at the beginning of Fall quarter seems unlikely. Although the timeline for progress is unclear, I am certain that progress is and will continue to be made in this area.

Lastly, I have been reading up on system-wide Academic Senate reports in the hopes of providing a status report/briefing for the SUA body, similar to the one I have for the UCSC Academic Senate. Although, it has been and will be hard to get current information, because the reports on the system-wide website are not current and only cover through the 05-06 year. At any rate, any information I can provide to the body will hopefully help to inform them and will be a vast improvement over previous years.

It is hard to gauge and evaluate the progress of the officer group in terms of working together, individual and group productivity and ability to succeed in the coming year. At times it seems as though the group, and/or individuals take one step forward and two steps back. As was the case for the past two months, officer meeting seem more like an exercise in pulling teeth than a time to discuss and make decisions on important issues. There seems to be a deep lack of trust, communication, disrespect, and at times, stupidity. This is unacceptable, especially when it spills over into meetings with administrators, as has been the case. However, it is far worse when officers directly disrespect administrators, as has also been the case. This type of behavior is inexcusable and must stop immediately. If we want to be respected by administrators, we have to respect them. Lastly, if an officer is not doing his/her job, is lying or has committed some sort of “crime” vis-à-vis SUA policies, rules and procedures and there is evidence, we have processes in place for removal. People should not waste time with baseless allegations and speculations.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report and participate in the process. After all, we cannot complain about unfavorable outcomes when we do not bother to involve ourselves in the proceedings. If you have any further questions and or comments, do not hesitate to contact me. My email is [jatiba@ucsc.edu](mailto:jatiba@ucsc.edu).

Peace

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Jamal Atiba

Commissioner of Academic Affairs

