

Dear Colleagues:

As I step down as Division Chair today, I thought I would write with some (admittedly lengthy) reflections on Senate-Administration collaboration over the last two years. As chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, one gains a truly unique insight into what “shared governance” is, how it is practiced, and why we have to protect the Berkeley version of it at all costs. It is massively stronger than what my fellow Division chairs report from the other nine campuses. And it is the envy of senate chairs at the Ivies.

Just for a moment, ponder the power of the Budget Committee. It is unheard of elsewhere that a committee of faculty plays a key role in which full-time equivalent (FTE) requests get authorized in any given year. Or the Academic Senate Committee on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education’s (AEPE’s) role in admissions. Or the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation’s (CAPRA’s) role in resource allocation. Or think about the important role the senate through the Committee on Demonstrations and Student Actions (DSA) plays in discussions and decisions about the campus response to protests and demonstrations; ensuring that we maintain our commitment to Free Speech and our Principles of Community; to helping balance that inherent tension between Free Speech and all that it takes to have a strong community that supports diversity of perspective.

But the reach of the senate goes beyond these formal processes. An unnamed very senior administrator said to me a few months ago “Max, you have no idea how often we ponder decisions and say ‘The Senate will never go for that.’” The Senate at Berkeley is in the room, *even when we are not in the room*. Well, we sort of are, as many senior administrators were Senate chairs and/or are Senate members.

My experience with our partners in the administration has been constructive and characterized by mutual respect, trust and honesty. I did not experience an adversarial relationship, as some email chains have claimed. We have worked together and continue to collaborate on some thorny issues, some of which we disagree over. But there is an ongoing intense dialogue at all levels and, I would argue, an unprecedented effort at providing transparency, especially with respect to the financial state of the university.

Let me describe some of the successes from this collaboration during this past year:

- We selected a Chancellor - 6 townhalls, hundreds of hours of reading, interviews and consultation. Three Berkeley faculty, the Associated Students of UC (ASUC) President, the Graduate Assembly President, and a staff representative were intricately involved in the selection process that resulted in the appointment of a Berkeley Chancellor with an undergraduate degree from Cal!
- We fought hard for growing the faculty and we can declare some success. The size of the faculty is at its highest as far as I could trace it back - at 1594!

- We fought for funding the library. A joint task force, library committee, senate resolution, many conversations between Senate Chair and Vice Chair with campus leadership. We asked for two payments of \$2.1 million and got a permanent increase in library funding of \$2 million per year. For those of you who do not remember how to calculate the present value of infinite sums, this is ten to twenty times what we asked for.
- We have completed the establishment of the faculty for the first new college in years and transferred over 1000 students into the College of Computing, Data Science, and Society (CDSS). This was a process that would not have happened without significant involvement of the Senate in negotiating between units.
- We have wrapped up a historic campaign of \$7.3 billion. I assume that the excellence of the faculty helped make that happen.
- The Budget Committee handled 933 cases expeditiously. Getting to sit in on a Budget Committee meeting was the high point of my time as chair. It is an amazing institution, which is fully due to the dedication of its members.
- We had uncomfortable conversations about case delays and promotions and finally found ways forward, jointly.
- We have been intricately involved in the design of the new campus power plant, which is exciting for an energy economist.
- We have engaged in the most open and honest discussion about the future of Intercollegiate Athletics (IA) I am aware of. I thank Jim Knowlton, Jenny Simon O'Neill and Dan Feitelberg for their exceptional dedication to helping us understand how IA works and the tectonic shifts in the Athletic landscape nationally.
- We have fought for preserving math requirements for our incoming students. Special thanks go to Jelani Nelson and Ani Adhikari for their hard work.
- We have fought for preserving academic freedom.
- We have been and continue to be in the rooms where decisions get made when crises arrive.
- And through all that we have taught an unprecedented number of undergraduate and graduate students and continue to re-envision the future of what a university is.

While we got some things done, I have some real worries.

- The faculty and staff are tired and overextended to a degree that is not sustainable. This has to do with workload, but this also has to do with a “do more all the time” culture. We don’t get or take time to take a breath. We don’t take the time to celebrate each others’ small wins and successes. This can also not be solved centrally alone. Fixing this is going to take a culture shift at the micro level.
- The budgetary challenges are massive. While most of us focus on deficits, I am truly worried about deferred maintenance and the state of basic research infrastructure. Cold rooms that don’t work, broken autoclaves, design studios that are cold and do not have working screens and printers make reading program reviews a scary exercise.

- Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech issues are top of mind. Especially for this fall.

So, in wrapping up, let me point the finger at myself. Where we, or I failed, is communicating clearly where we succeed and where we fail. A lack of clearly communicated information leads to or supports a culture of distrust. We have seen some evidence of this in newsgroup posts and emails we get. We will and should do better.

My faith in shared governance on this campus has been strengthened drastically throughout this year. It is a model that works. It is my sincerest hope that going forward we continue to shepherd it. My conversations with Chancellor Lyons suggest that we are in good hands.

I am grateful to be your colleague and frankly, cannot wait to be back in the classroom this Wednesday talking about environmental policy to 300 first-year students.

I had the privilege of working with your new Division Chair Amani Nuru-Jeter all year. I am also excited that Mark Stacey has agreed to be Vice Chair. The Berkeley Division is in excellent hands. And last but not least, I want to thank Chancellors Christ and Lyons and EVCP Hermalin for their leadership and partnership. I am also deeply grateful for the excellent Senate staff and members and chairs of the numerous Senate committees.

Max Auffhammer

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