

To: Dylan Rodriguez, Chair of the Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

From: Thomas Cogswell, UCR Assembly Representative to the UC Academic Senate

RE: Report of the Meeting of the UC Academic Senate Assembly, December 13, 2017

Senate business is often a combination of exquisite tedium and high drama. So it was in the Assembly meeting of 13 December. Technically it should have very short because there was no formal business to resolve. Yet after three hours when I had to leave, the majority of the participants were still there, discussing the situation.

Formally there is very little to report. President Napolitano was cautiously optimistically about the system's relationship with the legislature and the governor, a relationship that she characterized as improving. She thought it likely that the good faith efforts by Riverside and Santa Cruz to meet the 2:1 ratio of first year students to transfers will eventually led to the release of \$50 million, which the legislature held back last spring. She was aware of the mounting problems surrounding the faculty salary scale, which she vowed to fix, if possible, and she was happy with the recent report on retiree benefits which she wanted to implement. She also introduced Michael Brown, the new Provost. Senate veterans will be very pleased with the appointment of Brown, a faculty member at UC Santa Barbara who has chaired BOARS and the Systemwide Senate. Beyond these points, there was no other business.

Yet once the President and the Provost left after an hour, faint optimism gave way to serious alarm. Chair White then explained the gravity of the situation. In the wake of the Moreno Report into possible wrongdoing during the recent Audit of the University, several senior staff members have resigned, and while the report does not directly accuse the President of interfering with the Audit, it does not paint a happy picture.¹ Even the rosier analyst would have to admit that the President has been weakened, perhaps seriously and maybe even fatally. Meanwhile the findings have emboldened the Governor and various legislators, eager to alter the status quo. Finally, the bleak situation may soon get worse; White also reported that there is another report which may be released shortly, which (reportedly) casts the senior leaders of the system in an even more unflattering light.

After Chair White's thorough and at times sobering presentation, he had the full attention of each Assembly member, and it led to a wide-ranging and thoughtful discussion. Yet it all came back to one hard fact -- there is little the Senate can do since it has no formal way of addressing the Regents except by way of a Memorial. In the end, White urged all faculty members to read the Moreno Report with great care, to discuss it in committee meetings -- and to brace for potentially rough weather.

¹ For the Moreno Report, see <http://senate.ucr.edu/uploads/Independent%20Fact-Finding%20Review%20Moreno.pdf>