



2026 Classified Senate Board Meeting Report

Good evening and happy pride, President Chabaan, Board of Trustees, Dr. Garcia, and college community. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Classified Senate.

The Finals Week Coffee Talk Café, coordinated through a partnership of the Classified Senate, Academic Senate and Presidents Office was a huge hit last month. By my estimate, throughout finals week we served at least 24 dozen donuts and brewed over 600 cups of coffee. Along with tea, hot chocolate, fruit, various pastries, and gluten free options. It was wonderful to watch people come together, put names to faces, and reconnect with old friends.

We hope to continue the Coffee Talk Café into the 26/27 academic year with the goal of hosting it once a month, as the district community truly enjoyed the offerings and the spirit of collegiality they inspired. I'd like to give a special thank you to Jenne Arden, Events Pillar Lead, and Karen Lamb, Administrative Assistant, Academic Senate, for their hard work and help with the coffee café.

I am sorry to have missed the Pride festivities last week. I was out of town attending the annual Classified Leadership Institute (CLI) in Riverside, Ca. I'm excited to report Gillian Estes, Administrative Assistant III in Academic Affairs, and Beysaira Abundiz, Medical Assistant in Student Health Services also attended, having been sent by their respective departments. Thank you to Dean Romagnoli, Dean Goldstein and Director Rebecca Norwick, for supporting your classified professionals to attend. I'm so happy to see classified professionals beyond the Senate participating in CLI, as it is open to all classified employees.

The week began with the President's retreat, where I had a wonderful conversation with Senate President Karen Peterson of Crafton Hills College. She is currently revamping their Classified Senate bylaws to reflect our pillar-based structure. I plan to offer a workshop at CLI next year on our structure and the benefits it has brought to our Classified Senate.

Throughout the week I attended excellent workshops on addressing hierarchical microaggressions, ethical AI practices, essential leadership skills and a bit of art

therapy! I look forward to applying the skills, information and practices gained at CLI back to our shared governance work.

We received a budget and legislative update from Andrew Martinez, Deputy Director of the Community College League of California. Keynote speakers Dr. John Hernandez, President of Irvine Valley College, and Dr. Tracey Colman, Dean at Chabot College, delivered powerful messages on the Power of Presence and the idea of “It Takes a Village”, themes that resonated deeply and felt very much like a reflection of what we strive for through our shared governance work.

We were also pleased to give a shout-out to our own Dr. Angelica Garcia, as next year’s keynote speaker, enthusiastically echoed by others in the room. We hope to see that happen, especially as CLI will be held in right here in Santa Rosa at the downtown Hyatt next year!

I am beyond thrilled to welcome CLI to our home town. My hope is that each manager will be able to send at least one classified professional from their department to CLI next year. As a reminder, CLI is open to all classified employees and is an amazing professional development opportunity. My goal is to have my entire Senate in attendance in 2027.

Thank you, Dr. Garcia and Vice-President Kate Jolley, for your support in my attendance this year possible. I am truly grateful for these opportunities.

And as I say each year, being in attendance alongside other California Senates, and noting those not in attendance, I am reminded how fortunate we are. Of the 116 California Community College Districts, the 80 that do have Classified Senates, some are still greatly limited in Shared governance. And the colleges without a formal Classified Senate, participation tends to be even more limited and inconsistent.

The Classified Professionals at SRJC are so fortunate to have not only a seat at the table, but, as I learned from CLI, a full place setting: the drink, the food and the seasoning. That sense of full inclusion makes all the difference.

Thank you so much. Wishing everyone a wonderful Summer 4/10 and Happy Pride!