This was sent on the Sunday before Flex day. Chancellor Haris responded with a brief cordial message on Monday. I thanked him for his message, etc.

From: Karen Saginor  
Sent: Sunday, August 11, 2013 11:59 AM  
Subject: Your visit to CCSF this week

Dear Chancellor Harris,

Thank you for your continuing commitment to City College of San Francisco. I was glad to hear that you will be addressing us this week on FLEX day. Based on your conversation with us on July 17th, I have some suggestions for you. I know that you have no obligation to pay attention to them or to me, but I need to try.

In July, you talked about transparency for our accreditation work. We haven’t yet seen that implemented here, so please don’t make that promise again.

- You promised us “a clear roadmap to completion” that would be published within the institution. Perhaps it will be published by the day of your talk. Unless it has changed dramatically from the draft that was provided to a small group last week, it does not show “who will champion the completion of each task” and it has other deficiencies. We have less than 10 months before the June 2014 ACCJC meeting.
- We had all read in the ACCJC decision letter that CCSF needed to submit an appeal by July 31. Many of us went to bed (but not to sleep) on July 31 without knowing whether that letter had been submitted. The next day we were told that the letter had been submitted on July 30th.
- The written statement for review is due to ACCJC next week – no later than Tuesday, August 20th. Our interim chancellor tells us “We will notify you when that letter has been sent and received.” -- not before.

In July you talked about trust. We are not a faith based institution, so just telling us to trust the leaders that you have given us will not increase trust. We lose trust when we see decisions that indicate incompetency or insincerity, and we’ve seen a lot of those. A few examples in regards to enrollment of students:

- Last fall, CCSF administration declined to print the spring class schedule at all, giving as a reason that there might a legal liability in not offering every class listed in the printed schedule (because of class cancellations).
- This summer, many thousands of copies of the fall class schedule were printed, but not distributed. We found hundreds of boxes of them just sitting in the basement near a loading dock.
- The administration made multiple changes to enrollment parameters such as wait-lists and payment deadlines without thoroughly testing the enrollment system or ensuring that we had sufficient technical staffing resources to fix bugs as they arise. Many students are now contacting instructors to say “I can’t get the system to let me enroll in your class.” We can only guess at how many are just giving up and not enrolling.

Although we can’t manufacture trust on demand, we have repeatedly experienced that people (such as our students and ourselves) are capable of real change and can become trustworthy. Effective action that supports educational opportunity and success for our communities will increase our trust in the leaders you have given us.
So instead of promising transparency and asking us to trust, please talk to us about actions. What are five big ticket items that must be accomplished by next spring? For example, last month you said that there are broken systems in our financial area that will “require some heavy lifting.” What has already been done? Who will do which actions in the next few months? Since much work needs to be accomplished more quickly than can possibly be done by our small number of top administrators and supervisors, what skills do you need volunteered by our faculty and classified staff? Or are you supplying experienced, skilled assistance from outside CCSF?

Faculty are willing to do what is needed to maintain educational opportunity to our communities. We think marketing the college is an administrative function, but individual faculty, on their own initiative, have created high quality marketing videos. Yes, we complained loudly when we discovered that the entire print run of fall schedules was sitting in a basement instead of being distributed, but individual faculty stepped forward, organized themselves and with their own vehicles and on foot distributed schedules around the city, to every one of the 27 branches of the public library, countless cafes, shops, and laundromats, at the baseball park, etc., etc. We think the upkeep of buildings and grounds is the responsibility of classified staff, but we know they are overwhelmed and understaffed, so a group of faculty picked up trash and pulled weeds yesterday to make the Ocean Avenue campus more attractive to students who show up for classes they hope to add this week. And we know that SLO work is a faculty responsibility, so we are doing it. Our faculty SLO coordinators (working many hours of what was supposed to be their time off) have created and posted our SLO scorecard http://www.ccsf.edu/NEW/en/about-city-college/slo/scorecard.html Our faculty colleagues are engaged in assessment and closing the loop, – both helping and pushing those few of us who aren’t yet up to the required levels.

And we are doing this work with 5% less in our paychecks than we had six years ago. That’s more than an 18% drop in inflation adjusted wages. Is this fair or necessary? Hard to say, because we haven’t had a contract since December. AFT 2121 went to the bargaining table last week prepared to negotiate until agreement was reached, how ever long that took. Sadly, the representatives of CCSF’s administration left the bargaining table without reaching agreement. They said they were unprepared to offer a counterproposal to the union’s most recent offer and wanted to wait until later in the fall semester. They declined to meet again this week because two of their team members are taking vacations. With diminishing wages and no contract, faculty continue to work diligently and beyond our required duties.

All City College needs to work together. When you come on Tuesday, please don’t tell us that means that faculty work only on SLOs, blithely trusting that our administration will do all the rest, when they haven’t been able to do it so far. Tell us instead about what needed progress has been made since July 3rd on core accreditation issues. Who will take the next steps? How can we get the needed work accomplished quickly enough? Faculty want to work together with administrative leaders, but they rarely decide to allow us to help. Often the leaders you have given us tell us that issues needed to be dealt with by administration, not faculty. Yet the administrators are too over-committed to get the tasks done, while the clock keeps ticking. This could kill City College. Please address this on Tuesday.

Thank you very much for reading this and for your support of City College of San Francisco.

Karen Saginor
First Vice President of the Academic Senate and Librarian
City College of San Francisco Conlan Hall - E202
ksaginor@ccsf.edu (415) 452-5522