

April 10, 2013

Open letter to Mark Rocha in response to his letter to faculty:

You wrote: "Two things are clear: the college has a problem and we need to begin healing." I would counter that what's certain is that we have a problem and the problem needs to be solved. Healing can't begin until the problem is solved. What is the problem? The problem is your method of administration. In the words of Benjamin Franklin, "It is not wise to leave splinters in a wound that you wish to heal." Calling for healing now is like applying Neosporin while being eaten by a crocodile.

Your platitudinous proposal to change the very nature of administration and your attendant list of suggestions are all based on creating dialogue. I agree that talking over coffee and "two by two" dialogue and summer picnics are good ideas, but so is the inherent dialogue of shared governance that was in practice until you unceremoniously trampled it. What has also been trampled is our confidence that you are listening and taking what you hear into account when you make decisions. We no longer believe that you are listening to our deans, that you will make changes in a considerate and timely fashion, or that you will respect the retirees who served this college for decades. We can no longer trust that disagreements will not be met with punishment.

My suggestion for your invitation to "fill in the bank" is that you start by fixing these issues, and then you address the grievances outlined by the Faculty Ad Hoc Committee. Then, perhaps, healing can start. If you had sent this letter two years ago, the invitation to dialogue might have been more meaningful. But the sickness on campus has gone untreated for too long.

Your letter shows your interest in an abatement of hostilities from the faculty, students, and voting constituents of the district, but no interest in solving or even acknowledging the problems that engendered the antipathy in the first place. After an overwhelming vote of no confidence from both the faculty and students of the college you claim to love and serve, there is only one honorable way to respond... not coffee, not a symbolic box of chocolates, but a straightforward resignation.

A Seriously Concerned Faculty Member