

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS

STAFF COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Resolution Calling for Accountability from Academic Personnel

Resolution #: SCR 25-01

Approval Date: March 20, 2025

Purpose:

In response to the findings of the Cozen O'Connor Report published in 2023, the California State University system and CSU Channel Islands have implemented additional mechanisms to identify and address 'other conduct of concern,' defined in the report as 'unprofessional conduct, bias incidents, microaggressions, acts of intolerance, bullying and abusive conduct' that does not rise to the level of requiring disciplinary action. This has triggered much analysis of the climate and culture at CSUCI.

In light of this ongoing conversation, the CSU Channel Islands Staff Council is calling attention to an established pattern of behavior perpetuated by a significant number of faculty and academic administrators at CSU Channel Islands that extends beyond the conduct noted in the aforementioned definition and instead represents an entrenched culture at CSUCI wherein (professional, non-managerial) staff work, staff areas of responsibility, and staff contributions to university operations are consistently devalued and impeded, in direct violation of agreed upon campus norms.

This resolution highlights several examples of said behavior that have been brought to the attention of Staff Council by staff and demands acknowledgement and accountability from campus leadership on behalf of all staff, whose work supports academic operations and the university mission at large. It is the belief of Staff Council that these behaviors and this culture cannot be addressed within the context of 'other conduct of concern' alone, in part because the devaluation of staff and staff work within postsecondary institutions is well-documented and represents a pattern of hierarchical bias that is historically endemic to higher education. But we believe CSUCI can rise above such category- and role-based divisions and come together to practice true, *inclusive*, collegiality.

Resolution:

WHEREAS university staff at CSU Channel Islands are tasked with areas of responsibility that, while separate from the direct work of classroom teaching, are vital in ensuring said classroom teaching occurs smoothly and effectively, in clean, functional classrooms with appropriate and working equipment, and that students are able to both enroll in classes and navigate the university campus to attend said classes,

WHEREAS staff responsibilities include the direct implementation and enforcement of university rules, policies, and procedures as part of the general operation of the university, which are necessary to ensure fairness and equity within the campus community, efficiency of university operations, and the success of CSUCI students,

WHEREAS staff must directly interface with and support faculty and academic administrators to complete their job duties and ensure effective university operations,

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WHEREAS staff have brought serious concerns to their Staff Council representatives regarding their treatment by faculty and academic administrators when performing their job duties or enforcing university policies and procedures, with types of behavior experienced by staff detailed below (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- Faculty and/or academic administrators refusing to follow established operating procedures regarding such tasks as classroom assignments, academic scheduling, use of departmental space, event scheduling, submission of information for reporting, purchasing of equipment or supplies, and other necessary operations, including attempts to ‘go around’ staff directly responsible for a task whether intentionally or out of ignorance,
- Faculty and/or academic administrators responding in rude or disrespectful ways when staff attempt to enforce rules or operating procedures,
- Faculty and/or academic administrators applying pressure to staff to ensure their preferred outcomes regardless of established rules or operating procedures,
- Faculty and/or academic administrators implying incompetence on the part of staff when outcomes are not as desired, negatively impacting staff morale, staff reputations, and future career prospects for staff at CI,
- Dismissal of information provided by staff on policies or procedures regardless of source or assured accuracy,
- Dismissal of staff perspectives, opinions, or suggestions during policy or procedure development or revision,
- Failure to provide staff with all necessary tools, information, or support to complete tasks or essential job duties required by university policies or procedures, especially those that necessitate active collaboration with faculty and/or academic administrators,
- And, dismissal of staff efforts, staff contributions, or the necessity of staff departments or staff-specific processes in university operations,

WHEREAS Staff Council, Academic Senate, and Student Government joined forces with the Office of the President to draft and agree upon a shared definition of collegiality in 2020, which clearly identifies the expectations for how all campus community members should engage with one another,

WHEREAS staff are expected by their peers and by university leadership to practice collegiality in the manner defined in the Shared Definitions document and to abide by other established university policies and procedures regardless of the actions of faculty or academic administrator colleagues, thus creating a culture in which staff are held to a higher standard than their faculty and academic administrator colleagues,

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WHEREAS the results of the Fall 2024 Campus Climate Survey indicate that a majority of campus community members, regardless of role, do not feel that policies and rules are applied fairly, suggesting that the above examples represent an established culture wherein certain employee groups have been permitted to operate with impunity regardless of the impact on university operations or morale,

WHEREAS a culture in which the valuation of certain employee groups above others is blatantly apparent in university operations and community engagement is not conducive to collegiality or effective collaboration as agreed upon in the Shared Definitions document,

WHEREAS the work of university staff, which provides our institution with the necessary infrastructure to support its mission, is consistently undervalued and actively impeded at CSU Channel Islands in the aforementioned ways and others, ensuring that the university does not embody the principle of inclusive excellence.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the CSU Channel Islands Staff Council expresses in the strongest terms its alignment with staff in enforcing appropriate and necessary university rules, policies, and procedures and the necessity that all campus employees be held to the same standard with regards to compliance with established university policies and procedures,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Staff Council expresses its unwavering support for staff and staff work, highlighting the unique and vital role that staff play in the success of CSUCI and all post-secondary institutions,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Staff Council calls for campus leadership to acknowledge and address the aforementioned concerns from staff, provide additional support to staff in enforcing university policies and procedures moving forward, model positive interactions with individual staff and staff departments for their faculty colleagues and direct reports, and find ways to champion staff in light of the alarming rise in incivility being experienced from faculty and academic administrators,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Staff Council calls for the explicit inclusion of staff in all future CI strategic planning initiatives, including the CI 2030+ strategic plan, with the requirement that there be equitable numbers of staff seats on strategic planning committees and action items directly benefiting staff in said plans to ensure that staff areas receive equal opportunities for growth alongside faculty,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be distributed to Academic Senate Chair Christina Smith, Interim Provost Jessica Lavariega Monforti, Chief of Staff Kaia Tollefson, and President Richard Yao with the expectation that these campus leaders meet with Staff Council to discuss next steps.

Exhibit(s):

1. [Cozen O'Connor Systemwide & Campus Reports](#)
2. [Fall 2024 CSU Channel Islands Campus Climate Survey dashboard](#)
3. [President's Advisory Council on Inclusive Excellence \(PACIE\) Shared Definitions](#)