

Norco College Classified Staff,

We are all the Classified Senate. Some of us are Representatives. Some of us are committee members. All of us are members of the Senate. Together we can ensure our voice as classified staff is heard.

We are responding to this email to clarify to all classified staff about the Classified Senate and what our collective purpose is.

The Classified Senate is an employee organization that was created by classified staff, run by classified staff, and is for classified staff. It is important to have classified's voice in shared governance. While it is the joint responsibility for the Senate and CSEA to ensure that classified professionals have meaningful input into the decision-making processes of the college, CSEA focuses on our bargaining rights, wages, hours of employment, and working conditions with the two CSEA representatives assigned to Norco College. It benefits the entire classified body to have the Senate focus on providing a collective voice and participation in the initiation, development and evaluation of college policy, procedures, and budget. The Senate promotes the recognition of classified staff as a valued part of the college work force and leads in the development of staff professional development.

Moving forward, the Classified Senate has an agreement with CSEA (see attachment) to act as its governance arm in shared governance matters at Norco College. We look forward to working together on better understanding of our organization and the importance of respecting staff's right to organize our participation in governance. We would like to work with Dr. Reece to resolve this matter as we have the same goals for student success.

Please share your comments, questions, and feedback to: nclassifiedsenate@gmail.com. We will be sending out information on an open forum that will take place online for classified staff.

See below in red regarding the email from 2/22/19:

"Norco College Staff,

I am writing to let you know I met with Classified Senate yesterday (11:00 AM) and suspended the group from future meetings. I understand that you may need to wrestle with the issue a bit. In the end I hope you settle on full support for my decision. Below are two critical documents:

1. The statement I read to the group yesterday morning. This explains why I decided to suspend the group.
2. A list of meetings/communications related to this issue. The list documents over a year of communications.

I am available if you want to discuss this issue.

Dr. Reece

Statement Read to Classified Senate

The Norco College community is committed to two very large endeavors: 1) They want to do something significant around student, regional and college transformation; and 2) They understand that we can only achieve this together, in an open, transparent and collaborative manner. I am 100% committed to both endeavors and I believe every constituent group at Norco College feels the same way. The students, classified, faculty, managers, and community supporters are in agreement with this. They want to go “Big” and they want to do it as “Us.”

I have found the Classified Senate to be an exception to this, particularly with regard to the “Us” part. The C-Senate is a shared governance group at NC and as such is required to be transparent and inclusive.

Regarding Transparency: The C-Senate has been deliberately obscure and covert rather than transparent with their agenda, and communications.

- C-Senate communicates through an unauthorized list serve that does not include all classified. **The Senate communicates to our membership via an approved listserv (approved by Dr. Reece on December 4, 2017) with a list provided and updated by Human Resources (via District Network), agendas are sent via Nor-all, and agendas, minutes, and documents are all public via Classified Senate website (in spirit of the Brown Act)**
- The C-Senate has not disclosed major decisions to the ISPC even though they report to the Council. **The Classified Senate is an employee organization and does not report to ISPC. If invited to ISPC to give an update, the Classified Senate would more than welcome the opportunity to share with the college our activities.**
- The C-Senate does not routinely communicate with other constituent groups on campus. **The Senate communicates to our membership via an approved listserv, agendas are sent via Nor-all, and agendas, minutes, and documents are all public via Classified Senate website (in spirit of the Brown Act)**
- For comparison purposes, the Academic Senate sends most communications out through Nor-All. **It is not the responsibility of the Classified Senate to comment on another employee organization’s actions, therefore no comment.**
- The President routinely finds out about C-Senate actions through 2nd hand communications. **The Senate has communicated with Dr. Reece on many occasions. Dr. Reece was informed of the first staff forum in April 2018. Dr. Reece was kept informed about the Classified Professional of the Year by the committee and invited to participate in the event on April 23rd. Dr. Reece, at several ISPC meetings, was informed about the Strategic Planning Committee’s goal of creating a Staffing Plan. At the Big Us Retreats in fall 2018, Dr. Reece was informed about the Workplace Environment Committee’s goal of creating a Workplace Environment Guiding Principles and Best Practices, and of the Staff Professional Development Committees goals which were included in the notes of the retreat. In addition, Dr. Reece was in attendance of the Senate meeting when the vote for the reorganization took place and a few other meetings. All of our meetings are open to the public and our agendas and minutes are posted publicly.**

Regarding Inclusiveness: The C-Senate has been exclusionary and restrictive rather than inclusive. Many classified not only feel excluded, but are literally excluded because of adopted practices by the C-Senate. **The Senate is the voice for all Classified Staff. The Classified Senate is the entire body of Classified Staff. All of our meetings are open to all staff, surveys are conducted for feedback on initiatives, and forums are held to elicit feedback when campus wide decisions/initiatives that directly affect staff. We have ten**

subcommittees with 19 additional staff participating. We are continually encouraging staff to participate.

- Classified staff have complained to me about not receiving communications from the C-Senate. The Senate communicates through an approved listserv. If staff are not getting the communications, we need to be informed so we can request they be added to the listserv (just like any other listserv on campus).
- C-Senate meetings have been established at a time that excludes managers from attending because it conflicts with the long-standing management meeting time. This excludes an entire constituent group from being able to attend the meetings. This has already been addressed in a previous email. Our meeting times were set in August 2018 for 2018-19 with input from staff about the best time to meet. This was addressed in January 2019 and in our response we stated we would take the time conflict into consideration when we set the meeting times for the next year. Dr. Reece, in his email, had also offered to change the management meeting times if it was more convenient. We never received a follow-up.
- The C-Senate changed their election process so that nominations are now restricted to 12 people rather than all classified employees. Previous to that decision, all classified were eligible for the main leadership positions (President/Chair and Secretary). As such, the C-Senate has collectively excluded many people from the possibility of holding office and has privileged a small group of individuals. All classified professionals are eligible to become Representatives (see bylaws for details). The election process is open for discussion if brought forth by classified staff members. The process was openly discussed in three public meetings with input from membership. The Chair/Secretary was changed to facilitator roles due to no one person wanting to take on the position of being the “leader” of the senate.
- At least three classified employees expressed to me their desire to run for office but felt intimidation from C-Senate leadership which discouraged them from throwing their hat in the ring. The Senate is aware that three staff were present at individual meetings to discuss running for “leadership” positions even though the elections were not announced yet and per bylaws would not take place until spring. These staff members were unaware of the purpose of the meeting, expressed concerns and were extremely uncomfortable at the experience. The Senate welcomes participation and encourages staff to consider being a Representative.

None of these statements should come as surprises to the C-Senate. I have been very specific with the C-Senate leadership about this. I will be happy to provide a list of meetings and written communications where I addressed all or most of these issues with the C-Senate [list is below]. It is a list that covers a year of communication around these issues. The meeting on 2/21/19 was the first time the Senate Representatives met with college administration to discuss any issues. The list of meetings and written communications provided in the email was not provided at the meeting and the information was not provided in advance to properly prepare to discuss. Previous to this date, all communications was conducted via email and the Senate was not given any indication that the administration was unsatisfied with the response.

I am not sure if 1) the C-Senate does not want to operate in a transparent and inclusive manner or 2) the C-Senate does not know how to operate in a transparent and inclusive manner. Regardless, what I do know is I have worked closely with the C-Senate for more than a year to address these issues. I have been clear about my expectations with written communications and individual meetings. I have been open with my time and support to help the C-Senate move in this direction. My hope over the past year has been that I would see development and maturation in the best practices direction. The Senate is still

getting started, it takes longer than a year to be a “mature” body. It continues to seek guidance from other college classified senates and the 4CS.

Instead, my explicit expectations for a transparent and inclusive C-Senate have been dismissed and in turn I have received ongoing complaints about the organization from classified, faculty, managers and the 4CS. I even received concerns around C-Senate’s dealings with the Student Senate last year. **These complaints have not been brought to the Senate. We are especially unaware of any issue with the Student Senate. Issues will be addressed as they are brought to the Senate, but action cannot be taken if concerns are never brought forward in an open meeting. All comments, feedback, and concerns shared with the Senate have been discussed and incorporated into policy, practices, and plans. We continue to grow from it.**

In light of this, I have decided to suspend the NC Classified Senate. I don’t believe the C-Senate is collectively committed to transparency or inclusiveness and the C-Senate’s ongoing behavior runs counter to core values at Norco College and RCCD—core values the RCCD Board, the Chancellor, ACCJC and the NC community expected me to sustain. With this suspension, members of the C-Senate are not allowed to attend meetings during college business hours or organize during college business hours. **With the suspension of our classified senate email address and permission to meet/organize during business hours our voice as a classified body has been taken away. It is an attempt to take away our ability to participate effectively. We will be forced to meet/organize on our own time, which we can, and still do the work we have all imagined together.**

Moving forward:

- I will consider restarting the organization after consultation with College leadership and the 4CS. I will not start the organization under any circumstance again until there is a fair and transparent election that is open to all classified who wish to be nominated (including self-nominations) for senate leadership positions and until communications are agreed to be held in an open and inclusive manner for the entire campus to see. **The Classified Senate is an employee organization, voted by a majority of classified staff to develop it, and will remain a Senate unless a majority of staff voted to disband it. Per the legal opinion of the State Chancellor’s Office regarding Minimum Standards for Staff Participation in Governance “Staff should have the choice for how they want to organize and present their views on governance matters” and RCCD Board Policy 2510 which includes wording from Title V 5102.5: (a)(3) In performing the requirements of subsections (1) and (2) of this section, the governing board or its designees shall consult with the representatives of existing staff councils, committees, employee organizations, and other such bodies. (b) In developing and carrying out policies and procedures pursuant to subsection (a), the district governing board shall ensure that its actions do not dominate or interfere with the formation or administration of any employee organization, or contribute financial or other support to it, or in any way encourage employees to join any organization in preference to another.**
- Regarding classified input into decision-making, we will revert to the practice of relying exclusively on CSEA as the representative body for classified staff and continue with classified representation on councils/committees as our primary means of incorporating classified input. **Per the Shared Governance Statement signed with CSEA (see attachment), the Classified Senate is authorized with the delegated responsibility to coordinate classified staff committee assignments for CSEA appointments to ensure classified representation and participation as well as to channel the voice of classified perspectives on**

policies, procedures, and practices when developed, revised, or implemented. The Senate Representatives and members are committee and council members that participate in shared governance.

- I will bring this decision to ISPC for discussion. If they wish to forward an official recommendation to me on this matter, it is their right to do so and I will consider their recommendation with an open mind to changing my decision based on their recommendation. It is not clear as to what ISPC will be considering. We will seek clarification from Dr. Reece. The Senate will continue to be an employee organization with rights under Education Code 70901.2, Title V 51023.5, AB 1725, and RCCD BP 2510.

Meetings and Communications

Meetings and communications I have held to discuss these issues are listed below. This list does not include every meeting and every communication, but it captures the majority. A vast majority of the meetings/communications listed either did not pertain to the Senate or did not include discussion about these issues/concerns. The Senate is not CSEA and any issues regarding the Senate should be addressed and discussed with the Senate.

Date	Type	Meeting Attendees/Email Topic
3-Aug-17	Meeting	Staff Development. Introduced idea of starting Senate and how it would function. (The topic was brought forward by Past Chair/President Crawford in June 2017 to gauge support by new college leadership.)
8-Jan-18	Meeting	Ruth Leal meeting to discuss C Senate and how it should function (This information meeting was for questions Dr. Reece had on the Senate history and status. The issue of how the Senate should function was not discussed.)
11-Jan-18	Phone Meeting	Andy Aldasoro to discuss C Senate and how it should function (This is not the Senate)
6-Feb-18	Meeting	CSEA partly to discuss C Senate and how it should function (This is not the Senate)
9-Feb-18	Meeting	Leona Crawford to discuss C Senate and how it should function. (The topic of this discussion was that the decision to reactivate the Senate would be staff's. The President could not play a role in the administration or operation of the Senate.)
9-Feb-18	Meeting	Classified Senate Discussion with various members from campus. (This was an open meeting for classified staff regarding possibly reactivating the Senate and Dr. Reece was only present initially to express his support.)
15-Feb-18	Meeting	Senate Discussion regarding C-Senate (The Senate was not made aware of this meeting as it was not with the Representatives of the Senate nor was any of the information disclosed at any time.)

20-Feb-18	Phone Meeting	Ruth Leal to discuss senate matters (No phone meeting took place. But any discussion of the Senate would be deferred to the Senate.)
23-Feb-18	Meeting	Monique Pierce meeting to discuss issues related to organizing C-Senate. (The Senate was not made aware of this meeting as it was not with the Representatives of the Senate nor was any of the information disclosed at any time.)
6-Mar-18	Meeting	CSEA (This is not the Senate)
9-Mar-18	Email	Email announcing Senate will be led by former Representatives Group Leadership. (Email sent by Dr. Reece to nor-staff)
9-Mar-18	Email	Classified Senate email entitled Norco College Classified Senate Update was sent to a select group of individuals. Dr. Reece reminded the senate to use Nor-all for Senate communication. (The Senate initially attempted to send email to nor-all but was denied nor-all access. Instead the email was sent out by Ruth Leal to nor-all. It was never sent to "a select group of individuals.")
9-Mar-18	Meeting	Andy Aldasoro meeting to discuss C Senate and how it should function. (This is not the Senate)
15-Mar-18	Meeting	CSEA to discuss several items, including C-Senate (This is not the Senate)
25-Mar-18	Email	Classified Senate meeting with 4CS and reminder of elections in order for the new senate to start on July 1. (The Senate was not made aware of this email or meeting as it was not with the Representatives of the Senate nor was any of the information disclosed at any time.)
29-Mar-18	Meeting	Senate Discussion (The Senate was not made aware of this meeting as it was not with the Representatives of the Senate nor was any of the information disclosed at any time.)
2-Apr-18	Meeting	Classified Senate Meeting (This was the first regular meeting of the reactivated Senate of which Dr. Reece attended to discuss the reorganization proposal.)
3-Apr-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
9-Apr-18	Email	Classified Senate emails are not being sent to all staff. Requested sending out senate communication Nor-all. (The Senate asked for any staff names that did not receive emails and notified Dr. Reece that agendas are sent out to nor-all but some communications that are for members are sent to the membership directly. No response was provided. The Senate requested a full list of classified staff from the Office of the President and was referred to Human Resources.)
9-Apr-18	Phone Meeting	4CS to discuss problems with C-Senate (This meeting was scheduled by the Senate and included the President and CSEA in order to verify that the organizational decisions made by the Senate were under the purview of the Senate and that 4CS is not a regulatory body but a resource for the Senate.)

19-Apr-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
3-May-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
4-May-18	Phone Meeting	Ruth Leal meeting to discuss C Senate communications (This phone meeting was to discuss the request by the Senate for a meeting with classified staff on the reorganization and their proposals for additional positions needed. No additional issues were discussed.)
9-May-18	Meeting	Classified Senate/IT 218 Organized by Ruth Leal (The meeting was to discuss the reorganization and proposals from classified staff on positions needed. No other issues were discussed.)
11-May-18	Meeting	Classified Senate Discussion with various members from campus. (The Senate was not made aware of this meeting as it was not with the Representatives of the Senate nor was any of the information disclosed at any time.)
14-May-18	Phone Meeting	Andy Aldasoro and Ruth Leal to discuss complaints about classified senate (This meeting was a final discussion on the proposals for staffing by classified on the reorganization. It did not include any discussion regarding complaints.)
17-May-18	Meeting	CSEA (This is not the Senate)
5-Jun-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
13-Jun-18	Email	Requested information on the timeline of senate elections (Response provided)
21-Jun-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
11-Jul-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
2-Aug-18	Meeting	Staff Development presented on (Senate issues not discussed. Presentation was on Big Us Plan)
14-Aug-18	Meeting	Classified Senate (Dr. Reece did not attend this meeting nor did a meeting take place with the Senate Representatives)
12-Sep-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
12-Sep-18	Meeting	Classified Senate Meeting (Dr. Reece attended and brought forth the issue that the Senate was required to follow the Brown Act. The Senate agreed to research the issue.)
16-Sep-18	Email	Classified Senate Meeting, email addresses concerns related to regular meeting times, senate communication, Advanced Announcement, Closed Session, changes to the bylaw restricting who can hold officer positions, and alerting to accreditation issues around these actions. (The Senate responded to Dr. Reece's concerns. After researching the Brown Act issue, the Senate concluded that it is not a Brown Act body but agreed to follow the "spirit of the Brown Act." The Senate also set a regular meeting schedule for the year and published it on the website, began sending out agendas three days in advance, sought guidance from 4CS and decided to cease closed sessions to discuss hiring committees, and extended any discussions on Senate policies with membership

		in additional open meetings.)
2-Oct-18	Phone Meeting	Andy Aldasoro and Ruth Leal (No meeting took place. But any discussion of the Senate would be deferred to the Senate.)
10-Oct-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
26-Oct-18	Meeting	Andy Aldasoro and Ruth Leal (No meeting took place. But any discussion of the Senate would be deferred to the Senate.)
14-Nov-18	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
26-Nov-18	Email	Asking for clarification on amendments to bylaws and a follow up on the response. (The Senate responded with clarification.)
28-Nov-18	Phone Meeting	4CS to discuss C-Senate actions (changes to the by-laws, and elections). (The Senate was not made aware of this meeting as it was not with the Representatives of the Senate nor was any of the information disclosed at any time.)
5-Dec-18	Meeting	Gustavo Segura – CSEA (This is not the Senate)
15-Jan-19	Meeting	Standing CSEA meeting (This is not the Senate)
24-Jan-19	Meeting	Ruth Leal (This meeting was to discuss the presentation for Staff Development Day on Jan. 25 th but did include mention of suggested changes to Senate subcommittees, which was advised to bring to the Senate for discussion)
25-Jan-19	Meeting	Staff Development (Included question about where Senate decisions are decided and if they must go to the college for approval. As with other employee organizations, it was stated that if it is an organization issue, the decision lies with the organization and if it is a college proposal that would go through shared governance.)
28-Jan-19	Email	Classified Senate meeting times conflict with Management meetings requested the senate change meetings times to avoid the conflict. (The Senate responded that the meeting times were set to accommodate classified staff, as they are the main priority, with their input and in consideration of alternate work schedules and challenges getting away from their work areas, but would consider the request in the fall for next year's schedule.)
31-Jan-19	Email	Email sent to: Nicole Brown, Patti Brusca, Leona Crawford, Bernice Delgado, Lilia Garcia, Patricia Gill, Misty Griffin, Daren Koch, Pam Kollar, Ruth Leal, Chris Poole, Caitlin Welch, Alice Montemayor, Miguel Castro, Salvador Herrera, Gustavo Segura, Andy Aldasoro, Peggy Campo, Kevin Fleming, Michael Collins, Kaneesha Tarrant, Samuel Lee, Denise Terrazas, Melissa Bader (The Senate responded with information that it is in compliance with ACCJC Accreditation Standards (provided by Gohar) and Title V 51023.5 and its communication practices.)

21-Feb-19	Meeting	Classified Senate Leadership Meeting to inform C-Senate of suspension decision. (This was the first meeting with the Senate Representatives and the information was not provided beforehand in order to allow for a full discussion. The Senate did request a follow-up meeting to address Dr. Reece's concerns.)
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#StrongerTogether #OneVoice #ClassifiedStaff

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