

Community College of Rhode Island
400 East Ave.
Warwick RI 02886

Council on Postsecondary Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence RI 02903

May 1, 2017

Dear Council Members and President Hughes:

The past year at CCRI has been extremely challenging and distressing for many faculty and staff, which has prompted us to write this letter. Specifically, the budget, planning, and lack of co-governance are troubling.

The lack of co-governance is particularly worrisome. CCRI is the people's college and co-governance is an integral component of our charter and enabling statute RIGL 16-33.1-3, yet faculty and staff have been largely excluded from all aspects of governing since the appointment of the new president.

It was disturbing when the president assumed office and declined to assemble a team to negotiate the faculty contract. Then having assumed office, a college meeting to share her vision and open a dialogue was never scheduled. Instead, unilateral decisions became a common occurrence.

There has been no substantive faculty input invited on:

- the design of multiple measures for placement
- the construction of a new block schedule
- the decision to hire outside strategic planners
- the exclusion of the Chairs' Council from governance
- the elimination of all math labs
- the expansion of concurrent and dual enrollment
- the institution of p-tech

And, unfortunately, information has not been shared in a timely manner -- i.e. before the changes become official. Furthermore, after choosing multiple measures for placement, the administration never communicated to faculty what the measures were or how they were weighted. Why?

Faculty and staff have been told that the college needs to operate in an increasingly lean manner; it is hard to reconcile that statement with the actions of the administration and the council.

On December 16, 2015, the long dormant position of Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services was suddenly reactivated, upgraded from AVP to Vice President of Student Affairs / Chief Outcomes Officer, and the job description was rewritten to eliminate the Higher Ed requirement. Within weeks, the position was filled with a candidate who has an MBA and no Higher Ed experience, but commanded a salary of \$165,000 - higher than the \$154,500 salary of the departing Vice President of Academic Affairs who had a PhD and considerable community college experience. The VP plays an integral role in curricular decisions, which we believe are beyond the scope of her education and background. Why?

In the past year, there has been an abundance of additional administrative hires, further increasing administrative redundancy and bloat. The attached document is a sample of said redundancy.

At the same time, we are seriously understaffed in the areas of support our students need on a regular basis. We have fewer than twenty full time advisors for a population of typically fifteen thousand students; we have part time tutors, part time disabilities specialists on some campuses, part time department administrative assistants, no testing center on every campus, no mandatory orientation. These services are even more limited, often nonexistent, for students taking evening and weekend courses. These are crucial components for increasing retention and graduation rates. If we choose to remain an open enrollment institution, then we have an ethical obligation to provide the support and services to enable students to flourish in a community college setting. Why is that not happening?

The President's Executive Team all have strategic planning in their job descriptions and are handsomely compensated:

VP Academic Affairs - \$144,999.92

VP of Student Affairs - \$164,999.90

Associate VP Student Services - \$134,216.94

VP Business Affairs - \$154,500.06 (2016), \$164,999.90 (2017)

Director of Office of Institutional Planning and Research - \$113,445.02

Yet the administration, with no explanation, decided to hire a strategic planning firm from Colorado for \$121,000, and has created a position of Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives reporting to VP Student Affairs/Chief Outcomes Officer at \$82,114. Why?

Finally, planning and timing has been a challenge. As you know, a search for a new VP of Academic Affairs was conducted last spring. The search was suspended, and the position was not posted again until October 11. That necessitated a very intense, somewhat rushed search culminating in open forums scheduled the week before exams. Faculty wrote letters requesting that the forums be delayed so more faculty could attend, but the president declared it was urgent to fill the position and the forums could not be postponed. Why?

In the summer of 2016, each campus began collecting SWOT analysis information. Last October town meetings were conducted to again elicit SWOT information for each campus. Subsequently, a committee was formed to elicit the same information yet again; currently and hopefully for the last time, our outsourced Strategic Planning firm has also requested this information. Why?

Much of what we have communicated is already known. You know the hires - you approve the hires. You know the budget expenditures - you approve the budget expenditures. But these choices don't exist in a vacuum. People notice choices and draw conclusions.

Currently, it is difficult for faculty and staff to feel our service is truly valued. We are not interested in praise, but rather in being an integral part of how this institution functions. Faculty and staff interact with students in ways administrators never do. We have valuable experience and diversity of perspective to bring to the table when consequential decisions such as those mentioned above are being made. Inviting us in only marginally and selectively greatly weakens and threatens the health of this institution.

We are requesting a private meeting with both the council and President Hughes on June 7, 2017 to discuss these issues. Christopher Cobleigh, our NEARI uniserve has agreed to act as our contact person to confirm this meeting. Chris can be contacted at ccobleigh@neari.org.

Respectfully,

Concerned CCRI Faculty & Staff

Vice President for Student Affairs (Services?)/Chief Outcomes Officer (VPSA/COO)	Associate Vice President for Student Services (Affairs?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first-year retention • placement • ensure that there are student-centered services • • • • will oversee ... athletics • ensure that there are clear academic pathways (?) for all entering students • will oversee ... advising and counseling • oversee enrollment management • career placement • student success • academic assessment 	<p>ensure appropriate retention ensure academic adjustment and placement planning, ... student service programs</p> <p>supervise, control, and evaluate all ... related to Athletics</p> <p>new student orientation</p> <p>supervise ... counseling, advising</p> <p>support all enrollment strategies and functions of that department</p> <p>control and evaluate career planning and placement</p> <p>supervise, control, and evaluate ... Student Success Centers</p> <p>testing and assessment</p>

Chief of Staff - 107K	Assistant to the President
<p>managing the Office of the President performing a wide range of administrative support duties serve as liaison and facilitator to the campus and community in terms of interpretation of ... (will supply rest if necessary) serve as liaison to the administrative staff of the RI Board of Education and the RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner conduct regular meetings with office staff for purposes of facilitating coordination and communication. Serve as liaison to additional staff ... assist in responding to problems and issues presented to the President by individuals and organizations from within and outside the College community prepare the agenda for and attend all President's Team meetings research and provide background information and recommendations to support decision-making on College policy issues provide open, timely and effective communication, keeping the President abreast of salient matters, and providing ... information to support ... (see above duty, repeated here) ensuring accurate records are maintained of all decisions and that timely follow-up ensues oversee the planning, ... of College-wide public programs, College protocol events and other events that serve to enhance the College's image</p>	<p>managing the Office of the President a wide range of administrative support duties serve as liaison and facilitator to the campus and community in terms of interpretation of ... (see left-hand column) serve as liaison to the staff of the Office of Higher Education and the Board of Governors conduct regular meetings with office staff for purposes of facilitating coordination and communication. Serve as liaison to additional ... assist in responding to problems and issues presented to the President by individuals and organizations ... prepare the agenda for and attend all President's Council and Executive/Director Report meetings ... research and provide background information on various issues as requested provide open, timely and effective communication, keeping the President abreast of salient matters, and ... ensuring ... follow through on requests for decision and action logistics and planning of events ... campus-wide</p>

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Council letter signatures

Department

J. [unclear] English

[unclear] Biology

Debra [unclear] English

Bert [unclear] Performing Arts

Renee Anderson English

Mel [unclear] English

Margaret [unclear] English

Kathy R. [unclear] English

[unclear] English

[unclear] English

Paula [unclear] English

Josha [unclear] English

[REDACTED]

Thom [unclear] ART

Brian [unclear] ART

Ramona M. Skelly Mathematics

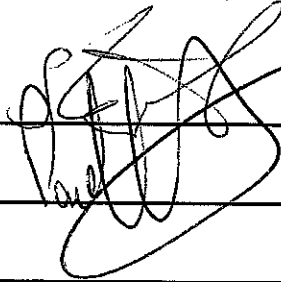
Rosemary M. Humble ENGLISH

[Type here]

Council letter signatures

Department

Steven Forleo



ENGLVA

Paul White

P. B. Omega

Physics

Physics

Mark Roudy

D. G. W. L.

Mathematics

Math. His

Tommy Rashid

~~Handwritten signature~~

Eng & Tech

~~Handwritten signature~~

Sue A. Phyl

English

Bethany J. Peller

Human Services

Joe D. W.

Math

John P. ...

LAW

Barbara ...

LAW

Council letter signatures

Department

Michele Student	English
Madeline	Criminal Justice
Zhynn	Library
Nancy Merdes	Library
Andy Lawson	Biology
Kim McWard	Biology
Margaret H. Connell	English
Janet A. Hallam	English
Kathi A. Moore	A&C
E Dalton	Math
Louis Muman	English
Ann O'Leary	English
[Signature]	math
[Signature]	biology
[Signature]	Business
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[Signature]	English
Christal A Moran	Foreign languages
[Signature]	Math
[Signature]	Human Services

