Colleagues,

It’s hard to fathom that three months from tomorrow we’ll be celebrating the Class of 2019 walking across the graduation stage. Of course, there’s a lot for all of us to do in the time ahead, and I appreciate your exceptional investment of effort and energy toward making so many dreams come true for our seniors. As many of you know, the federal government shutdown resulted in the delay of USCG license exams until early March (during our scheduled Spring break). The six state maritime academy presidents are engaging MARAD, the USCG, and Congress to ensure that our March exams go as scheduled – and that our seniors do not suffer another delay in testing. I’ll keep you apprised of the situation.

We’ve also experienced some annoying, but necessary, outages of water and natural gas over the last month. Annoying because we experience disruptions to our normal routines, and necessary because, as you may remember, we’re operating with some old pipeline infrastructure (some of it has been here longer than Cal Maritime… meaning it is over 75 years old). I would like to thank and commend the campus facilities team for their extraordinary tenacity and skill in quickly resolving very difficult repairs alongside numerous off-campus partners. When you have a chance, please thank them.

This month I’ll be attending the Higher Education Climate Leadership summit at Arizona State, the Chancellor’s Senior Leadership Council in Long Beach, and our annual faculty and staff leadership retreat in Marshall, CA. These meetings serve to shape how Cal Maritime remains relevant, differentiated and forward-looking as we begin development of our next campus strategic plan. In March and April, we will hold a series of “Futures Days” to capture the best thinking of all campus community before the development of strategies for the new strategic plan begins. I hope that each of you will find and make time to participate, so be on the lookout for the announcement of dates.

Have a safe, productive and rewarding February!

WHAT HAVE I BEEN UP TO?

Like many of you, I spend a considerable amount of time participating on various boards, committees, and councils representing the campus interests, sharing our points of view, and creating paths to partnerships that benefit our faculty, staff and cadets… Januarys are particularly busy. Here are a few points of interest:
Quarterly Meetings

On January 16, I participated in the State Maritime Academies quarterly meeting. Highlights of this conference call included the following:

- Discussion of program approval letters from NMC and expiration dates
- Elimination of delays in mariner licensing for new grads/renewals for current mariners
- Sharing impacts of exam delays on graduates with MARAD, USCG and Congress
- NSMV design concepts/energy requirements

Later, I joined my 23 campus president colleagues for the bimonthly meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees.

Annual Cabinet Retreat

I started the new year joining the campus’ senior leadership for our annual Cabinet retreat. Anticipating the final report on the assessment of our leadership development program, and preparing for a welcomed assessment of our campus’ shared governance efforts, the Cabinet coalesced around three main objectives for our retreat - strengthening our cohesiveness as a leadership team, understanding our role and impact in the ELDP, and ratifying Campus Strategic Goals for the 2016-21 planning efforts.

The good news is that we made great progress toward achieving these objectives. The better news --- preceded perhaps by a big “Aha!” moment --- was that in order to achieve the objectives articulated in the strategic plan, we must all work harder within our campus community to create a shared definition and understanding of our strategic objectives. In principle, this seems simple enough, but to put it into practice takes time, energy, and courage. It’s not always easy, but it’s worth it. For a little bit of humor in your day about communication, take a look at this link. IT’S NOT ABOUT THE NAIL.
WHAT’S GOING ON AROUND CAMPUS?

Shared Governance Assessment

From my perspective, establishing shared understanding is the starting point from which we engage in shared governance, and I want to thank the Academic Senate and Provost Opp for leading our important effort to improve shared governance on our campus.

As you may know, Dr. Gary Reichard was invited to campus to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the policies, structures, and practices currently in place and assess them against the experience of faculty, staff, students, and administration. We expect to have a draft report of Dr. Reichard’s assessment later this month, at which time the Academic Senate will solicit feedback from the campus community.

ELDP Assessment

On Friday, February 1, the campus community received a link to the final assessment report of the Edwards Leadership Development Program conducted by Skyline Technologies. With Commandant Taliafiero taking the lead, this report will be discussed campus-wide through a series of meetings and presentations. More information will be provided by the Office of the Commandant.

NEW PEOPLE & NEW TALENT

Inherent in the work we do is the fundamental principle that, as a university, we are a people institution — and I am routinely encouraged that we go the extra mile to hire bright, talented, and hard-working individuals to help us achieve our mission. Here are a few new faces since the start of the school year.

❖ Jonathan Meier, Engineering Technology
❖ Alondra Trevino-Ortiz, Engineering Technology
❖ Sepandarmaz Momeni Mechanical Engineering
❖ Sarah Szewczyk, Mechanical Engineering

TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD!

Financial Aid Scholarship Webpage

We now have a dedicated landing page for all maritime industry scholarships available to our students, which is in addition to the outside scholarships webpage.

No other maritime academy has this extensive resource or service. We update the deadlines when information is available and we continually search for new scholarships that relate to our majors and maritime industry.
Naval Academy Leadership Conference

On January 21, 2019, seven Cal Maritime cadets traveled to the United States Naval Academy to participate in their Annual Leadership Conference. The conference featured the theme of “leading from the inside out.” Among the list of notable speakers was former Mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, as well as the 16th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace. Both discussed the importance of their teams, and as a team leader, the importance of taking care of them.

Our cadets joined 300 participants from over 45 military and civilian colleges. Attendance at the conference was made possible through the Edwards Leadership Development Program Fund, sponsored by Tom and Libby Edwards.

In service,

Thomas A. Cropper
President

Cal Maritime Cadets
Wyatt Sebourn
Nathalie Calderon
Diana Martinez-Camacho
Yunus Aybar
Cameron Lourenco
Andre Batoon
Kevin Nguyen