

ASUC Senate passes resolution supporting Election Day becoming noninstructional holiday

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Body

ASUC senators passed a resolution in support of making Election Day a noninstructional holiday and discussed current student engagement efforts at their Wednesday night meeting.

Several senators are working toward increasing student engagement this semester, including text banking, voter registration and promotional events for Proposition 16, according to several updates from senator offices. Senators are also coordinating events regarding student activism during the COVID-19 pandemic, the financial impacts of the pandemic on students and efforts to shape campus climate through #BearsStopHate and #CalStopTheSpread marketing panels.

Some ASUC senators are also focusing on getting more responses for the 2020 census.

"The most important thing is that the census deadline has been extended," said External Affairs Vice President Derek Imai at the meeting. "We're still under count, so it's really important that we get as many students fill it out as possible."

Executive Vice President Melvin Tangonan announced at the meeting that The New York Times has pledged to bring one speaker a year to the ASUC, while the Wall Street Journal is organizing a "central hub" for job preparation purposes.

UC Berkeley Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Paul Alivisatos and his chief of staff Andrea Lambert discussed updates within the school, including the decision to have the spring 2021 semester be mostly online, with the exception of a few necessary in-person classes if public conditions permit.

"In terms of spring 2021, we are trying to prioritize the most in-need in-person classes. In the meantime, most classes will be remote," said Academic Affairs Vice President Nicole Anyanwu at the meeting. "We are also prioritizing students with disabilities and those with technology access issues."

Alivisatos also mentioned plans to reconfigure certain campus buildings to create an inflow and outflow of air for future COVID-19 prevention purposes. There has been discussion, however, about how much more energy this will consume and how counterproductive such air circulation would be when California fires inevitably lower air quality.

More short-term plans involve opening up more study rooms for students.

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"We're looking towards accommodating more rooms on campus for things like medical school interviews beyond just what Eshleman offers," Lambert said.

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