

Greetings Board members and Happy New Year. It's good to see everyone and thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening. It's another frenzied start to the semester as faculty welcome students, begin classes and again take up the rhythms of our community of learners while accommodating a variety of challenges students are facing with remote learning.

Faculty continue to show empathy and concern for the well-being of all as we work with other constituent groups to pursue the college's strategic priorities: Access, Affordability, Building Community, Transformative and Innovative Practices and Stewardship of Resources.

There are four priorities for the MJC Academic Senate this semester that I'd like to share briefly this evening:

1. We continue our efforts of implementing a permanent teaching and learning center, the Institute for Applied Creativity and Community Transformation, or ACCT at MJC, building on our Fall 2019 Academic Senate sponsored workshops dedicated to fostering active, contextualized learning models, the CCCCO/Lemelson MIT grant and Spring 2021 Institute Day speaker, the engineer, educator, NASA astronaut and NFL wide-receiver, Leland Melvin.
2. We look forward to collaborating with other constituency groups to finalize and implement our recommended college shared governance model this semester. The new participatory governance approach seeks both more efficiency and transparency while also seeking the constant, active participation of all in college-wide governance.
3. We continue the roll out Guided Pathways (GP) Schools, despite the reduction of campus life during Covid-19, and two cross-constituency groups are focusing on reimagining the student experience within GP Schools and using data to inform our Pathways decisions.

4. We continue important academic and projects, including the implementation of a Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) policy and procedure as well as MJC curricular process to ensure a clear and transparent CPL for qualifying students. We also are working on the continuation of the REACT Facility Teaching the Incarcerated pilot program and continue to work with the MJC Foundation to find unique and meaningful ways to celebrate the upcoming 100th birthday of our college.

In this spirit of collaboration and finding the good in the challenging, I thought I'd end this evening by invoking the wisdom of Arundhati Roy, an Indian author best known for her novel The God of Small Things (1997).

In her work, The Cost of Living, Roy reminds us of the purpose of everything: "To love. To be loved. To never forget your own insignificance. To never get used to the unspeakable violence and the vulgar disparity of life around you. To seek joy in the saddest places. To pursue beauty to its lair. To never simplify what is complicated or complicate what is simple. To respect strength, never power. Above all, to watch. To try and understand. To never look away. And never, never to forget."

I hope that each of you is finding time to remember the small things in life that bring joy in difficult times. Faculty look forward to returning to regular operations soonish and until then, we send wishes for a humble, hard-working and service oriented start to 2021. This concludes tonight's report, thank you.