

Modesto Junior College (MJC)
Academic Senate Resolution SP21-A
Reaffirming the Principles of Democracy: Civic Rights and Responsibilities

**Proposed by: Allan McKissick, Curtis Martin, Aishah Saleh, Rob Stevenson
and Hans Hauselmann**

Whereas: The Academic Senate of Modesto Junior College (MJC) reaffirms the uniqueness of the representative institutions of the United States of America, the oldest, contiguous constitutional republic in the world, and is dismayed by the January 6, 2021 mobbing of the United States Congress, “the People’s House,” as it is the first assault on the U.S. Capitol building since the War of 1812.

Whereas: The planned insurrection was particularly dangerous in that it forced both the evacuation of Senate and House Chambers and the Vice President of the United States, demonstrating to the world that many of our nation’s top leaders were in imminent danger; and,

Whereas: The Academic Senate of MJC recognizes that, at minimum, the 1/6/21 attack on our nation’s capital building, which has already led to arrests and condemnation across partisan lines, clearly demonstrates the dangers of demagoguery fueled by fact-free social media environments, conspiratorial hatred and a “mob rule” mentality; and,

Whereas: At the same time, the acts at Capitol Hill on 1/6/21 have also clearly shown, through clear juxtaposition, that justice in our country continues to be administered differently for people of color; and,

Whereas: As conflict arises, we, as post-secondary educators, remain steadfast in support of our college mission, vision and values statements as we seek to fulfill our promise as public servants to set a civil, inclusive example of the proper exercise of representative government, which includes the cultivation of thoughtful conversations in search of compromise, reconciliation, and equitable solutions.

Whereas: As faculty at a public institution of higher education, we serve as stewards of the values espoused in our college mission, vision and values statements, the last of which calls on the college to exhibit “professionalism, integrity, and responsible stewardship” in the pursuit of fostering “respect for and interest in the diverse individuals and histories of our community” and promoting civic engagement.

Therefore: Let it be known that the Academic Senate of MJC reaffirms the principles of our democracy as well as the mission, vision and value statements of our college, and, as public educators we urge everyone to embrace both the rights and responsibilities of civic engagement to ensure the strength of our democracy; and, we ask, in an effort of good faith, that all levels of representative governance from the college to our federal government, continually demonstrate a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of constitutional democracy by upholding the principles of good faith, solutions-oriented engagement, civil and productive disagreement and peaceable transitions of political power as have been practiced in our nation for hundreds of years.

Therefore: We reaffirm our commitment to honest, civic discourse in our daily lives and call on the principles of democracy to recognize the dangerous, violent nature of the attack on Capitol Hill; and, do our part, as public teachers, to reaffirm both our commitment to inclusive communities and our recognition of the social and historical context of the exclusionary practices on full-view January 6th, 2021. We, as faculty, recommit ourselves to the constant practice of democratic, participatory governance and remain steadfast in our efforts to provide access to quality, affordable post-secondary education for all as we seek to develop the “intellect, creativity, character, and abilities that shape students into thoughtful, culturally aware, engaged citizens” (from *MJC Mission Statement, 2020*).

Therefore, Be It Further Resolved: That we, as faculty, support and recommend college-wide professional development opportunities that address the fundamental principles of democratic institutions and civic behavior; protest, academic freedom, free speech and hate speech; and the rights and responsibilities of participation in our constitutional democracy.

First Reading: January 21, 2021

Final Reading: February 4, 2021

Disposition: Carried