

## **Statement in Support of the Fire Technology Programs at College of San Mateo to Acting President Richard Storti**

It has been brought to the attention of faculty at the College of San Mateo (CSM) that the Fire Technology Program at CSM, and more specifically the Firefighter Academy (FIRE 722) and Emergency Medical Technician (FIRE 797) programs, are in danger of being put on “pause” in Spring 2024.

Warnings of placing a program on “pause” without faculty involvement circumvent the authority of Senate. [Board Policy 6.13](#) (BP 4020) stipulates that Program Review (PR) and Program Improvement & Viability (PIV) are academic and professional matters under the purview of the Academic Senate. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Academic Senate, under [Administrative Procedure 6.13.1](#) (BP 4020 and 4022), to design and recommend to the college administration processes for conducting these evaluations of instructional programs. The College of San Mateo has a PIV process that was used to assess three programs just last year. If administration has concerns about a program’s viability, they should allow for a transparent analysis of the program with all stakeholders in the room.

A sudden “pause” of the Firefighter Academy and Emergency Medical Technician programs not only affects completion for students already enrolled in the program in question and the faculty scheduled to teach said program, but it affects the reputation of the college in the wider community, particularly when CSM has the only fire technology program in the county and a strong partnership with the San Mateo County Fire Department. All of these factors would lead to an irrevocable breach of trust with community partners that would endanger the entire fire technology program and impact our credibility as an institution. It also sets a dangerous precedent for removing programs from the schedule without following the PIV process and using budget as the sole measure of a program’s success or impact.

As our community's college, "pausing" this program is short-sighted and violates our institutional priorities of strategic planning, effective communication, student-focused support, community partnerships, and (given the high rates of success and enrollment for students of color in this program) equity.

The Academic Senate urges Acting President Richard Storti to continue offering courses in the Fire Technology programs in question without interruption. If the college needs to explore the viability of the program, administration must first consult the Academic Senate, and if there are true concerns, the Academic Senate expects the use of the Program Improvement & Viability (PIV) process as stated in Board Policy.

- The Academic Senate of the College of San Mateo