

Campus Forum


February 22, 2022

Made in Merced. Built for the World.



Forum Topics

- Rumors, Myths, Topics of Interests, Concerns, and More
- Civility and Professionalism
- Celebrations




SPRING 2022
Connecting with Campus

CAMPUS FORUMS
2/22/2022 - 3:00 PM
5/6/2022 - 2:00 PM

COFFEE & CONVERSATIONS
CABINET
1/25/2022 - 2:00 PM
3/31/2022 - 2:00 PM
SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT
3/15/2022 - 1:00 PM

VICE PRESIDENT CHECK-INS
STUDENT SERVICES
1/28/2022 - 12:00 PM
2/25/2022 - 12:00 PM (LB)
3/18/2022 - 12:00 PM
4/22/2022 - 12:00 PM (LB)
5/13/2022 - 12:00 PM
INSTRUCTION
2/2/2022 - 1:00 PM
3/25/2022 - 3:00 PM
5/2/2022 - 11:00 AM
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
2/25/2022 - 10:00 AM
4/29/2022 - 10:00 AM



Part 1:

Rumors, Myths, Topics of Interests, Concerns, and More

Rumors thrive on uncertainty, so often the worst thing you can say is

'no comment.'



Survey response:

“You’re only interested in addressing “myths/rumors/assumptions”? What about facts?”

Today’s plan:

Respond to the rumors with facts.

**FACT
VS
RUMOR**

Rumor Topic:

Follett Access and Textbook Program

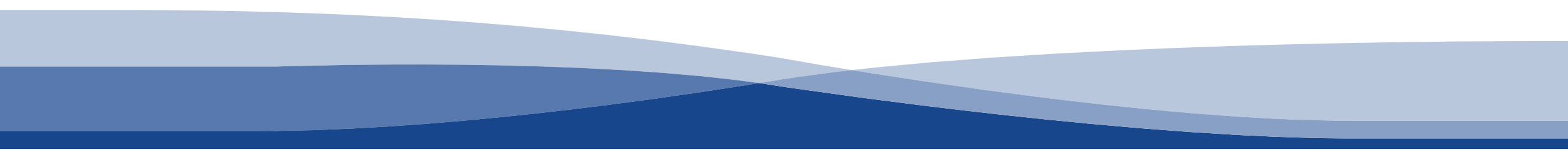
Textbook program went perfectly—no hiccups at all

“COVID money that was suppose to be given to faculty was instead given to Follett.”

Textbook program is forcing us towards certain publishers, types, etc.

Kickbacks? . . .
Inappropriate dealings?
...Impropriety?

The Facts:

- No “kickbacks” to anyone at the college
 - The Follett partnership has enabled us to maintain bookstore services vs. operating in a deficit
 - 2 Year Total = ~ \$261K profit applied to previous \$1.2M deficit
 - Faculty are not required and will not be required to go with any publisher or type of textbook
 - The “pilot” program has not been without “hiccups,” but it has been much better for students overall, for example:
 - Fall 2021 - 26% of students reported having their textbooks on Day 1
 - Spring 2022 - 89% of students had their textbooks available for pickup on Day 1
 - Improvements needed: Better communication, better understanding of how to access e-textbooks for faculty and students, expand modes of communication
- 

Rumor Topic:

Merced College Online

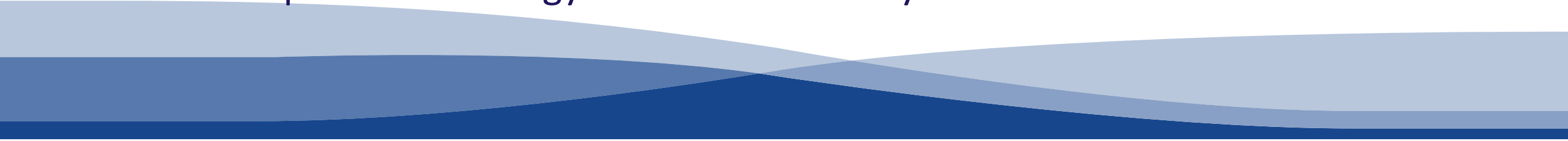
“The nature of our intent with becoming an online institution”

“LB Campus may become remote.”

Online cohort program starting in fall, DE Crosswalk

“what is going on? where are we? What is the future look like for this district?”

The Facts:

- Merced College was one of few colleges to keep several of our CTE programs in face-to-face modalities when the pandemic started and one of the first to re-open face-to-face for students—we are **FULLY committed to serving our f2f students.**
 - Merced College, including the LB Campus, will continue to offer and market all modalities—face-to-face, online, and everything in-between.
 - Merced Crosswalk is a faculty-led process approved by curriculum
 - Program Relaunch starting this fall:
 - Business Administration
 - Child Development
 - Criminal Justice
 - Computer Technology and Information Systems
- 

Rumor Topic:

Enrollments, FTES, and
Low Enrolled Classes

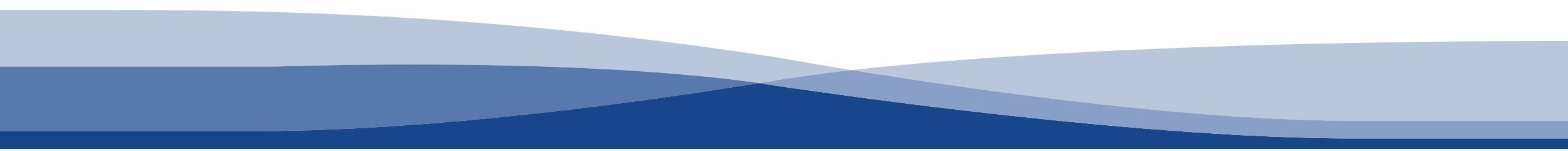
*Online vs. Face-to-Face
Success Rates*

**Scheduling
classes to best
serve students**

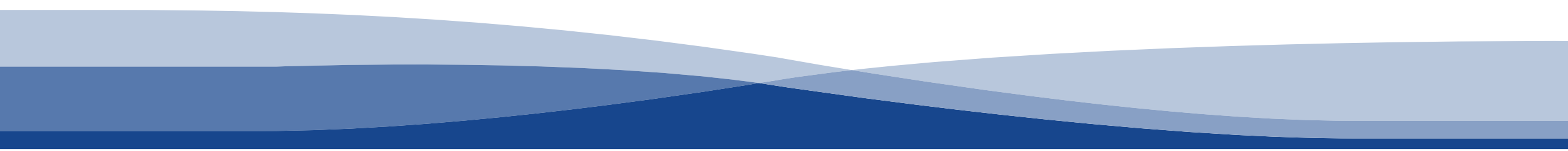
**“A transparent overview
of the logic and
calculations behind
which classes get
canceled due to low
enrollments...”**

**“Why are we
throwing away
FTES at a time
like this?”**

The Facts:

- Online vs. Face-to-face success rates (2020-2021) – Online (68%) success rates remain lower than face-to-face (88%)
 - Several low-enrolled classes were not cancelled due to COVID-emergency protection from the state as well as federal COVID relief funds
 - This will not be the case next academic year
 - The Office of Instruction is working on minimum enrollment criteria
 - FTES is approximately 11% less in spring 2022 (versus spring 2021)
 - Community colleges nationwide have experienced significant enrollment losses and the trends are very similar to Merced College's enrollment decline as a result of the pandemic
- 

The Facts :

- Many initiatives are being deployed to rebuild our enrollments, including, but not limited to:
 - Increased outreach efforts within the community and high schools
 - Re-engagement of students who stopped attending during the pandemic
 - Increased marketing initiatives, including targeted marketing
 - Offering f2f, online, and hybrid at times meeting student demand/need
 - Utilizing the Hyflex classroom (e.g. LB and Merced live and synchronous live class)
 - New Innovative Enrollment and Scheduling Workgroup being developed to look at scheduling options (compressed calendar, 4-day versus 5-day, evenings/weekends , etc.)
- 

Rumor Topic:

Administration

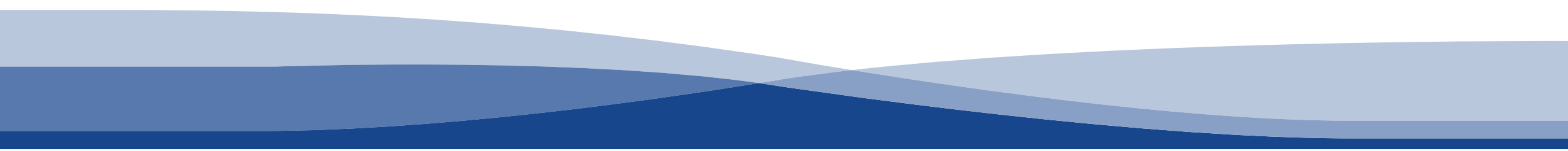
New deans, new dean positions, acting deans, deans moving around?

Admin uses LB as a stepping stone for others.

Why is there so much admin turnover?

Admin on special assignment, leave, or what? Tell us.

The Facts:

- High potential leaders move up—and Merced College has promoted several of our own
 - Some of our deans have relocated due to personal/family needs and we have had a few retirements
 - Our Los Banos Dean is currently on special assignment—she is okay but we cannot share more in order to honor her privacy.
 - Acting Deans have been in place this year in a few areas, but we have filled one vacancy and the other two are currently in active recruitment
 - Turnover in dean positions is never ideal—we'll continue to work to recruit/appoint committed administrators and retain our deans
- 

Rumor Topic:

Hiring Processes

Stacked committees?

***Integrity of the
process***

Hand selected
candidates and
finalists

**Committee
Appointments?**

The Facts :

- Integrity of our hiring processes are incredibly important—if you ever experience anything that may be perceived as hindering the integrity of the process, then please report it to Human Resources
- All hiring processes and practices, including composition of the selection committee, should align with the following:
 - BP/AP 7120, Recruitment and Selection
 - BP/AP 7214, Faculty Hiring
 - Title 5 Section 53021, Recruitment


Rumor Topic:

COVID Funds, Stipends, etc.

COVID bonus/pay

"Covid money that was
suppose to be given
to faculty was
instead given to
Follet."

The Facts:

- COVID funds have been used for multiple initiatives—some include:
 - Maintaining instructional continuity and support services
 - Instructional technology, supplies, and equipment
 - Student aid—plus laptops, wifi hotspots, basic need assistance, textbooks, etc.
 - Expanded wifi—including outdoor wifi areas with new furniture
 - Remote worker transitions (MCFA & CSEA negotiated stipends for permanent remote workers)
 - Health and safety, including PPE supplies, HVAC units and increased filtration systems
 - MCFA negotiated adjunct stipends and CSEA negotiated one-time stipends
 - Stipends for online training were provided to all faculty
 - Funds to assist with increased support for online transitions were allocated
- 

Rumor Topic:

Faculty Load and Assignments

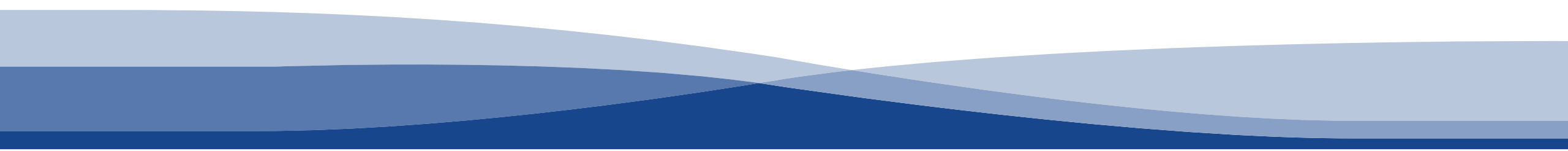
Making up load/reduced pay

Transparency on
how load is counted.

Compensation
for part-time
faculty office
hours

Load
calculated
differently in
some areas?

The Facts:

- F/T load is 30 units—this is contractual and the District has and will always honor F/T load
 - Reduced load is negotiated: “...a full-time faculty member and the District may negotiate a contract for reduced load.” (Article X, Workload, Section 8)
 - No F/T has engaged in a negotiation for a reduced load
 - The District has worked to provide special projects and/or offer classes with very low enrollments for faculty to make load during these unprecedented times
 - Compensation for P/T faculty office hours has been negotiated in the tentative MCFA agreement and, if ratified, they will be provided next year
 - Load assignment has been inconsistent among areas—this is being addressed and MCFA/District has negotiated a settlement to those paid differently
- 

Rumor Topic:

Communications and Transparency

"A lot of shady non transparent, and back door communication is creating an atmosphere of mistrust."

"How can communication about key decisions impacting faculty be delivered in a more timely and transparent matter by all parties concerned?"

"...it still seems as though there isn't complete transparency in communication, and the environment still feels very "us verses them."

"Authentic Communication Transparency in administrative matters"

The Facts:

- Increased communication and transparency have been a top priority for the past 5-plus years
 - Forums, one-on-ones, “listening sessions” with cabinet, coffee and conversations with the president, coffee and conversations with the vice presidents, additional participatory governance opportunities, etc.
 - What are we missing? What else would be helpful?

Rumor Topic:

Other/Miscellaneous

Building Projects

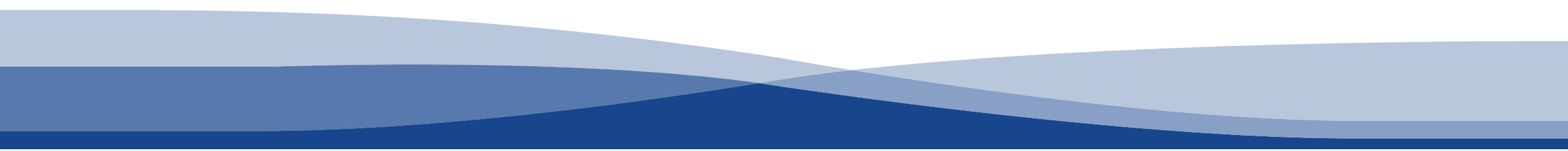
Universal
masking?

*Made in
Merced
Competition*

Another
re-org?

President
applying for
jobs at the
State?

The Facts :

- Ag/IT Building scheduled to open in August 2022
 - Vocational Building remodel scheduled to begin late-2022 and open in August 2023
 - Universal masking remains in place for the time-being—we continue to consult with Public Health experts regarding COVID protocols
 - Made in Merced Competition delayed due to latest surge, but judging has been scheduled for Friday, Feb 25th—winners announced next week
 - **No** re-orgs are being planned or discussed
 - President is not applying to jobs at the state
- 

Part 2:

Civility and Professionalism



Among workers who've been on the receiving end of incivility:

- 48% intentionally decreased their work effort.
- 47% intentionally decreased the time spent at work.
- 80% lost work time worrying about the incident.
- 63% lost work time avoiding the offender.
- 66% said that their performance declined.
- 78% said that their commitment to the organization declined.

The Price of Incivility

by Christine Porath and Christine Pearson (2013)

Employees who experience incivility at work perform worse in their jobs, are less helpful to colleagues, and are more likely to steal from their employer.

- C.L. Porath and A. Erez, 2007

PSU » » 'Why you gotta be so rude?' PSU study highlights 'vicious cycle' of workplace incivility

'WHY YOU GOTTA BE SO RUDE?' PSU STUDY HIGHLIGHTS 'VICIOUS CYCLE' OF WORKPLACE INCIVILITY

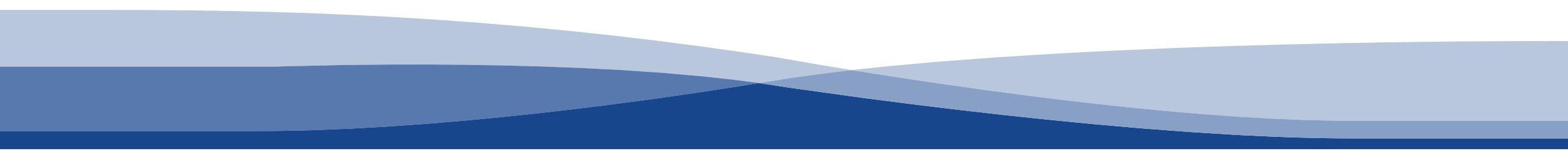
By *Cristina Rojas* August 9, 2021  Share

Workplace incivility is on the rise and a new Portland State University study found that employees who experience or witness incivilities are more likely to be uncivil to others, a worrying trend that could intensify as people return to in-person work.

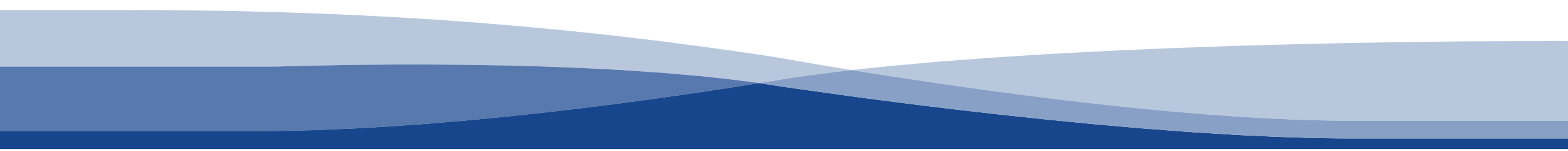
Let me give some examples

- "...stop the inauthentic Pollyanna demeanor and have a REAL CONVERSATION about what administration is trying to achieve. (Toxic positivity is not welcomed)" (Forum Topics Survey '22)
- "...The optics of the college requiring in-person attendance to a meeting in the sun, with poor air quality, in the middle of a Valley summer smacks of control and domination.. What does this level of Orwellian surveillance and micromanagement serve anyone?" (Convocation Survey '21)
- "What a waste of my day listening to people who like the sound of their own voice." (Convocation Survey '20)
- "Get rid of Convocation. You don't know what you are doing. If faculty feel Administration is condescending, there is a problem. Just leave us alone and let us get our jobs done. Please, just get out of the way. (Convocation Survey '20)

We ~~can do~~ are better!

- Disagreements are okay, welcomed, and typically lead to compromises, better outcomes, and increased understanding—**BUT** they should always be respectful and professional.
 - Share opinions with thoughtfulness and grace
 - Remember: we are all humans with personal lives, real emotions, similar struggles, etc.
 - Avoid addressing differences when you're angry, tired, overly frustrated, annoyed, etc.
 - Please be mindful of your body language
 - Regardless of in-person, emails, zoom, chat, etc.—civil discourse is an expectation
- 

Moving forward

1. Address uncivil discourse—let's hold each other accountable
 2. Working on draft policy and procedure re: professionalism and civility in the workplace
 3. Employee engagement champions and department/program liaisons next year—meeting directly with president/cabinet
 - i. Address rumors, develop strategies to address engagement issues, build rapport and trust through communication and dialogue, and keep a pulse on morale, culture, etc.
- 

Part 3:

Celebrations



**MCFA
negotiating
team**

All the new
outdoor seating
around campus!

Faculty adapting to
online teaching during
the challenging Covid
times

*Child Development Center
participating in the Week
of the Child event in April*

*Renewal of the Social
Science Club at LB*

Repainted
traffic lane
lines

**Students! They are
enduring so much, yet
many are determined
to succeed
academically**

**Area
Coordinators**

**Black History
Month ASMC Club
Recruitment
Fair**

COVID-Team and
Campus Police

**Applications are
processing much
faster with our
new process**

*Start of the Food Pantry at the
BRC and Los Banos Campus!
Special thanks to Dean Serena,
Shannon Gragg & Dean
Dawson!*

*Wonderful work of
the maintenance
and grounds team*

Q&A / General Discussion

Made in Merced. Built for the World.

