



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**PRESIDENT OF THE FACULTY SENATE'S REPORT
April 13, 2026**

Introduction

This will be my final report to the Board as President of the Faculty Senate. The last three years have seen significant changes at the college. During the past three years we've undertaken a shared governance review, said goodbye to President Tuajuanda Jordan, engaged in a successful national search for a new college president that welcomed President Rhonda Phillips, made substantial updates to the Faculty Bylaws, approved several new majors and programs, and witnessed the culmination of one strategic plan and the formation of another. It seems that the only thing that we haven't done is stand still. In this report, I will provide findings from the latest Faculty Pulse Survey as they relate to shared governance and Title II Compliance and present technical amendments to the Faculty Bylaws.

Shared Governance at St. Mary's College

In my first Board report in October of 2023 I noted that the Faculty Pulse Survey conducted in September of that year found that 57% of all faculty were dissatisfied with the state of shared governance at the college and fewer than one in six of all faculty were satisfied with shared governance. In response to faculty concerns, the college undertook a shared governance review and one of the first initiatives announced by President Phillips was the creation of a Shared Governance Working Group. That working group developed a Shared Governance Statement of Principles that has now been approved by all key constituencies at the college.

In March of 2026, the Faculty Senate again used the Faculty Pulse Survey to ask the faculty about their satisfaction with shared governance. The share of faculty who are satisfied with shared governance has risen to 42%, up considerably from 23% in 2024, and 14% in 2023. Only 13% are dissatisfied and that is down from 46% in 2024, and 57% in 2023. It's worthy of note that this is the first time, since the inception of the Pulse survey, that the share of faculty satisfied with shared governance has exceeded the share dissatisfied. To put the current results into perspective, in the inaugural survey in 2022, only 8% of faculty were satisfied with shared governance and 67% were dissatisfied. In the span of 4 years, the level of dissatisfaction has fallen from 67% to 13% and satisfaction has risen from 8% to 42%. For those of you asking "what about the other 45%?", they have expressed a neutral position, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

President Phillips has made a clear commitment to shared governance at the college and has taken a very inclusive approach to her leadership. I believe that the improvements in faculty sentiment are reflective of that reality. I hasten to add that there is still work to be done and the

efforts of the Shared Governance Working Group are ongoing. Implementation of the new strategic plan, nationwide enrollment challenges, state-specific budget difficulties, and Title II Digital Accessibility guidelines are only a sampling of the opportunities for shared governance at the college moving forward.

Title II and Digital Accessibility

In my February Board report, I wrote that even with the assistance available, coming into compliance with Title II will be a heavy lift for faculty and staff. Faculty must ensure all teaching materials, including older syllabi, scanned PDFs, and presentation slides, are fully accessible to screen readers, which requires significant time for review and reformatting. All instructional videos and live-streamed lectures must have accurate, synchronized captions, and audio content needs accurate, formatted transcripts - at present, no available software has been identified that is capable of generating captions or transcripts that meet the Title II guidelines for accuracy.

What I did not have while writing my February report, was supporting data on faculty efforts and use of college resources. The March 2026 Pulse Survey sought to fill that gap. Based on findings from the survey, we now know that 91% of faculty have made use of the Digital Accessibility Training provided by the college's Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (CITL). Approximately 22% of faculty are not very confident that they understand the Title II requirements and 47% are very confident that they understand the requirements. Roughly 30% of the faculty fall somewhere in between. Approximately one-third of the faculty are not very satisfied with the resources being provided by the college and roughly 39% are very satisfied. Another 28% of faculty fall in the middle. Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of faculty are very concerned that the Title II requirements may cause them to eliminate content to the detriment of their courses.

In response to faculty concerns about removing content, the office of the Associate Provost indicated that this issue has been related by faculty:

1. Outright removing the content that was non compliant (this was the initial advice at the start of the Spring semester, but that has now been walked back based on new guidance);
2. Relatedly, restricting the amount of 'enrichment content' faculty had available on their LMS sites for students to use as practice problems or to build background knowledge (because they needed to remediate that content)
3. Possibly replacing content that was not remediable with other content they'd have to source that was compliant
4. Figuring out what to do with content/file types where the technology for making the content accessible just wasn't there; we see this for some languages other than English, and math/computational elements.

At present, all of these concerns remain in play. As such, there is an accessibility friction at play whereby the needs/resources that some students/individuals require to access an experience are in conflict with other accessibility needs/resources also in use, coupled with the time and effort to reconcile those competing needs.

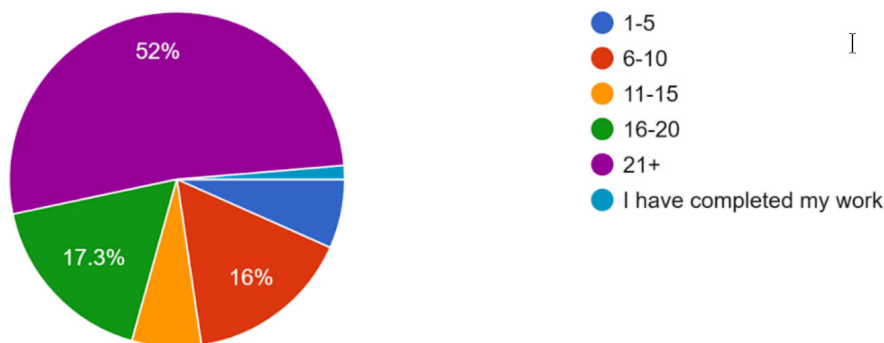
In an effort to better understand the time commitment imposed by Title Compliance, we asked faculty to estimate how much time time, in addition to their existing workload, compliance will

require per course. With regard to the time spent implementing Title II compliance for their courses, 29% of faculty said that they have already spent 6-10 hours PER COURSE this semester (as of early March). Another 23% said that they have spent 11-15 hours and 19% estimate that they have spent 21 or more hours per course.

When it comes to how much time faculty believe that they still need to spend PER COURSE this semester, 28% estimated 21 or more hours. 23% estimated 6-10 hours, 17% said 11-15 hours and 16% said 16-20 more hours. Just under 3% indicated that they had completed their work.

When asked how much time they'd need PER COURSE after this semester, 52% of faculty said 21 or more hours. 17% estimated 16-20 hours and 16% estimated 6-10.

How many hours would you estimate that you STILL NEED TO SPEND PER COURSE on prepping materials AFTER THIS SEMESTER?



Needless to say, Title II compliance has added considerably to faculty workload. When asked what the college could be doing to aid in the work, faculty responses fell largely into the following five categories:

Need for Staff Support: The most frequently requested resource is a dedicated staff person or team to assist with the time-consuming process of converting and remediating course materials, particularly PDFs, older documents, handwritten keys, videos, and complex charts/equations. Some suggested paid support or using tech assistants/student workers.

Need for Time: Faculty overwhelmingly cited a lack of time due to their heavy teaching, service, research, and personal loads, making it difficult to complete the required training and update previous material, suggesting compensation for summer work or just needing more time.

Need for Clear Guidance and Tools: Requests were made for simplified guides, checklists, cheat sheets, or FAQ documents on compliance requirements for various file types and formats (documents, slides, PDFs), and access to robust, campus-wide tools for checking and remediating accessibility issues, including solutions for LaTeX and statistical software.

Addressing Inconsistencies and Confusion: There is a need for clarity on requirements due

to perceived inconsistencies, rapidly changing guidelines, and conflicting policies (e.g., syllabi fonts), with some faculty finding the current guidance cumbersome to navigate.

Specific Software and Platform Needs: Specific requests were made for better screen readers and transcript generators, a solution for making PDFs accessible, Adobe Acrobat Pro, and platforms that are already Title II implemented, noting that Blackboard Ultra poses difficulties for faculty with disabilities.

Bylaws Update

In the Fall of 2025, President Phillips announced some administrative restructuring that resulted in several title changes. For instance, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty was redesignated as the Provost and Dean of the Faculty. To bring the Faculty Bylaws into alignment with the announced title changes, and to correct an error made in the prior round of Bylaws revisions in Table 2, Box 10a of Materials To Be Included in Librarians' Evaluation Files, the [Faculty Senate approved what we are calling technical amendments to the Bylaws](#). No substantive changes were made. The changes are highlighted in the accompanying document. All Bylaws revision requires two votes by the faculty. The first vote was held on March 30th and the final vote will be held on April 27. No objections were raised and the initial vote was unanimous. So we anticipate that the faculty will vote to approve the changes in that final vote on April 27.

Conclusion

My only action item is the technical amendments to the Bylaws. I understand that the Academic Affairs Committee may prefer to wait until after the faculty has held the second vote to approve the Bylaws and that may delay consideration of these technical amendments until a future meeting.

In my May 2024 Board Report, I noted that our dedication to this College and to its mission should always be our guiding light. Whether we are faculty, staff, students, or administrators we share a common responsibility to maintain this institution and the purpose that it serves: to be accessible, to be affordable, and to offer an education that is dedicated first and foremost to producing good citizens and good stewards of the public trust. Nothing ever can be allowed to matter more. I exit my term as Faculty Senate President confident that the future of St. Mary's College will be guided by that shared commitment. I'll be on sabbatical in the Fall, but my daughter will be on campus as a member of the incoming class. I'd be hard pressed to imagine a greater expression of my faith and belief in this institution.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Eberly, Ph.D.
President, Faculty Senate