Spring FLEX Day 2024 Opening Session Recap - Catch What You May Have Missed! Episode 193

00:00:00 **Veronica**

At the heart of my purpose is people, service, and community. I'm confident with collaboration, we can perform to achieve that vision of safety and service. Together we can successfully improve our sense of safety and our belonging.

00:00:22 **Tania**

Welcome back to the Mt. SAC Podcast. Today, we have a fun recap of the opening session highlights from 2024 Spring Flex Day so you can catch up easily or recap easily and stay in the know. Here is Shiloh Blacksher to kick us off.

00:00:42 **Shiloh**

It is now my pleasure to welcome to us this morning President and CEO Dr. Martha Garcia.

00:00:49 **Martha**

Good morning to all of you. It's exciting to be here with you as we prepare to start the spring 2024 semester, thank you for the invite. I want to share a few comments with you this morning. As I complete my eighth month at Mt. SAC, there are three themes that have stemmed as I continue to get to know you and have the privilege of working with you.

00:01:16 **Martha**

And I want to start first and foremost by expressing gratitude. Gratitude for everything that you do. Gratitude for being here, gratitude for being committed to our students and for being committed to not only taking care of yourself in order to better serve our students but also taking care of our campus.

00:01:35 **Martha**

The three themes that have been evident these last few months and this one was evident immediately and I shared it during my Fall Flex message was family. Family is sacred, we have, you have, and I'm lucky to be a part of the Mt. SAC family. You have created a beautiful culture where it is evident that as a campus we are committed to being a family and that as we are a family, we're also including in our family, our students.

00:02:13 **Martha**

And just like it happens with family, sometimes there may be disagreements or we don't necessarily believe in the same decision, but yet we're always united and come together and move forward together. And I truly love that and I'm really grateful that you have allowed me to be part of this family. I feel extremely fortunate.

00:02:34 **Martha**

The next theme has been pride. There is tremendous pride in the work that you all do. It takes a collective effort and I've seen it in many, many ways expressed. Pride in the work that you do as you teach and learn with each other and with our students, pride in the exemplar programs that we have where students are excelling and succeeding at national and international levels.

00:03:06 **Martha**

And you all know the many accomplishments, but I'll restate some of them again. Our coral program, our chambers program, incredible. Our forensics program, our athletics programs, our respiratory therapy program. One in 18 programs in the nation that has been acknowledged for receiving the type of acknowledgement that they have received.

00:03:34 **Martha**

We also have seen in the opportunities that I've had to visit some classes. And I'm really grateful to those of you that have invited me to your class and have allowed me to share that space with you and your students, the tremendous pride in the work that you're doing.

00:03:51 **Martha**

I was privileged to visit one of our courses in non-credit where we support our students with disabilities and it was a phenomenal experience. And I'll finally conclude with thanking Tania and the faculty members who allowed me to visit the Leaf class and to see what the faculty are doing to integrate sustainability into deaf and hard of hearing courses into a film production course is just phenomenal.

00:04:31 **Martha**

So, thank you for what you do and we should definitely be celebrating the accomplishments of our students and your accomplishments as you continue to demonstrate excellence in what you do every day. And the commitment to continue to improve what we're doing, I've seen it. It's been evident specifically as it relates to the work related to accreditation.

00:05:00 **Martha**

I'm really grateful to all of you that have come together and supported and worked really hard to ensure that we strengthen our processes, which in turn demonstrate and not only demonstrate, but will help us continue to improve and strengthen the processes that need to be strengthened.

00:05:22 **Martha**

I had the opportunity to talk to Chris yesterday who is the faculty member responsible along with Kelly for student learning outcomes. What he shared yesterday in regards to what they are doing to improve even that cycle is amazing.

00:05:39 **Martha**

So, I'm just really thankful because just like we are helping our students learn and for many of them the concepts that you're teaching are concepts that they're hearing for the first time, we also continue to learn and we also continue to improve. So, I'm really, really thankful for that.

00:05:59 **Martha**

And I want to thank Kara for inviting me to speak to the new faculty. It was also a great experience to do that yesterday and I welcome them once again. We are glad they are here, that they've joined our family. I'm looking forward to this exciting semester with you.

00:06:17 **Martha**

We are starting strong and just truly excited and I want to share with you that I'm extremely honored and moved to have the opportunity to engage with you this morning as we prepare, we energize and we're committed to taking care of ourselves and taking care of our campus together. So, let's start this semester with tremendous energy and passion as you have demonstrated and be well. Thank you all.

00:06:53 **Shiloh**

It's now my pleasure to welcome a new member of our leadership team, Dr. Connie Gutierrez. Dr. Gutierrez joined Mt. SAC in January and is the new Dean of ACCESS & Wellness. Welcome Connie.

00:07:07 **Connie**

I am so thrilled to be here with you all this morning. Coming from the beautiful city of Garden Grove, I'm about to represent Mt. SAC here at ACA and present on accessibility. So, I'm really excited to be here and I echo President Garcia's sentiment of just having a lot of gratitude and appreciation for being part of the Mt. San Antonio family.

00:07:29 **Connie**

I look forward to meeting you all, developing collaborative and intentional relationships while I am here to always advocate for our students, I do want our faculty to know my door is also open to you all to advocate for you and to be of support. Thank you for having me this morning. Thank you Shiloh and the whole team for this morning's events and I look forward to meeting you all. Have a great day.

00:07:56 **Shiloh**

We are also joined today by another new member of the leadership team, Dr. Veronica Saucedo, who is our acting chief of police and campus safety.

00:08:08 **Veronica**

Good morning to our beautiful campus community and I'll be brief. I wanted to share the sentiment I have with my role here. I recognize our campus has experienced trauma from past events and we have bridges to build and relationships to heal. I recognize this is a time for restoration of peace and safety.

00:08:29 **Veronica**

The primary purpose of police and campus safety is to serve you all our campus community. My goal as your acting chief is to invest in your safety, to invest in your vision of service, and to provide leadership and training to develop our police and campus safety department to achieve our vision of what that safety and service is.

00:08:53 **Veronica**

At the heart of my purpose is people, service and community. I'm confident with collaboration we can perform to achieve that vision of safety and service. Together we can successfully improve our sense of safety and our belonging.

00:09:11 **Veronica**

I'm proud to take this charge as your police and campus safety acting chief of this department and focus on our safety and relationships, providing the service we envision with a servant-leadership mindset. With that said, cheers to a beautiful and blessed and successful spring semester. Thank you.

00:09:39 **Shiloh**

Next, I'm excited to introduce our new academic senate president, Tania Anders. As you know, Tania stepped into the role of president last fall, but this is her first Flex Day address as Senate President.

00:09:51 **Tania**

Thank you so much Shiloh for those kind words. I'm so happy to be here with everyone. So, welcome to Spring. Let me share with you a few things that will hopefully encourage you and entice you to become more and more active in our academic senate.

00:10:07 **Tania**

So, our Senate leadership team is myself and Shiloh, who you already met now as well as Raul Madrid, so those are our two co-vice presidents. We have Sara Mestas as our secretary. So, those are your officers you can always reach out to. But you also have your executive board members, please always feel free to contact us . We represent a wide variety of disciplines and divisions. So, please reach out.

00:10:35 **Tania**

My office and Shiloh's and Raul's and Sara's office is in building four. We are in the suite with the instruction office 24/65. Thursdays is Senate Day. So, twice a month the executive board meets in a virtual setting and twice a month the full senate meets at Founders Hall usually in person, that one obviously then you're always welcome to attend as guests and at the beginning we also always have public comment times. So, you can also come for that.

00:11:06 **Tania**

Your senators represent you at the Senate. So, each designated department in our constitution, they are listed. You have one senator. If you have under 10 faculty in your department, if you have more than 10, then you can have a second senator.

00:11:24 **Tania**

So, every now and then I encourage you to count how many faculty you have. You may have had a new hire, you may have now 11 faculty. So, then you can have two department senators, part-time faculty can also serve as your senators.

00:11:37 **Tania**

We also have five senators at large who are elected by you. One of them being specifically a part-time faculty. Your senators serve to your terms and I encourage your departments to rotate that duty so you can all learn about the important work the Senate does for our campus.

00:11:55 **Tania**

Your senator is your voice. They are the ones that vote for you when we have action items. So, make sure you discuss action items in your departments. They also keep you informed about all Senate matters, so please ask them questions or your leadership team.

00:12:13 **Tania**

You can also use board docs as a resource for yourself. We also have a Senate academy on the fourth Friday of the month from 12 to 1:30, you can register for that on pod. So, fun fact number one, I'm from Germany originally, so Deine Stimme ist, your voice matters. There's your German lesson for the day.

00:12:32 **Tania**

We also have a wonderful senate website. Thank you to Anthony Mestas who is our support admin in the instruction office, he's done amazing cleanup work there. So, you can find a whole bunch of information there, including our committees across campus. We have governance committees, operational senate committees and others. Please , please, please, you are part of shared governance. This is how you can engage with your campus.

00:13:03 **Tania**

We have broad representation of faculty on these committees and councils. So, I encourage you, please go onto the Senate website and look at the committees, look at what they do when they meet and if it happens to be a time where you're available, we would love to have your voice represented on one of the many committees we have on our campus.

00:13:26 **Tania**

Your voice also matters in hiring processes. So, when there are management openings, we usually have two faculty members serving on those hiring committees. I am currently in need of a faculty member interested in serving on the search for assistant director of the center of excellence.

00:13:46 **Tania**

So, please reach out to me, faculty hiring for this year. Just as a reminder, we will be welcoming, hopefully nine new faculty members in the upcoming academic year. So, those hiring teams have already been identified, so thank you for the work that you do for that as well.

00:14:08 **Tania**

You can reach me in my senate office often or by email of course or by phone. I am this semester going to do my best to really, really be there for you . I have virtual office hours designated for Tuesdays 9 to 9:30. I know that's not long, but I've of course have other times, but lots of meetings for me to attend. And on the full senate days, I will be in person in my office. Again, just reach out , schedule an appointment.

00:14:37 **Tania**

Fun fact number two about myself. When I'm not senate president, I teach mostly oceanography, which is like magic but real and so is the senate work. So, please come and join the senate and work with us in our shared governance. Have a wonderful spring semester everyone.

00:14:59 **Shiloh**

Good morning everyone. I hope you are doing well today. I'm happy to share what the faculty association has been up to. If this is new to you, I am joined in this work by many wonderful people. Tamra, Vicki , Maya , and I all serve as the officers of the association and we are here to listen and learn from you and work on your behalf.

00:15:23 **Shiloh**

The faculty association also has an executive board that meets twice a month. We have representation from across campus serving on our executive board. We have counselors, librarians, classroom professors from both credit and non-credit areas. So, we are doing our best to make sure all voices are heard as we work on your behalf.

00:15:50 **Shiloh**

The representative council is the association's policymaking body and depending on the number of members within each department, you may elect between one and three representatives. The representative council meets once per month. It's the first Tuesday of the month and we are currently meeting by Zoom. The first meeting is March 5th and all members are invited to attend our rep council meeting.

00:16:20 **Shiloh**

In terms of negotiations , the negotiation team has a couple of changes, so please know that Tamra Horton, our Faculty Association Vice President, is stepping off of the team and we are happy to have Joshua Christ join us as a shadow on the negotiation team. I also am stepping up this semester to participate and enjoy this work as well.

00:16:49 **Shiloh**

We have had two negotiation sessions so far. The negotiations update is going to be sent out today so you can hear through that update what has been brought to the table and discussed so far.

00:17:03 **Shiloh**

We are also planning for the next cycle in this process and you may have contributed topics to be added to the survey. So, the negotiation survey is currently being developed and will come out later in the spring semester. I want to thank Lonnie , John, Tim and Lewis for helping us with that work.

00:17:25 **Shiloh**

In terms of upcoming activities, we have a busy spring semester. T-shirt Tuesday is something that we want to continue, so show your FA spirit on Tuesdays by wearing your FA T-shirt. We do provide a Starbucks gift card to the first person that we see in their FA shirt. And we want to thank Emma for leading this activity. And if you don't have a T-shirt yet, you can contact our office staff member Vera and she can help you with getting a T-shirt.

00:17:57 **Shiloh**

Coffee with the FA has been very popular and we are hosting that event again. In week two, we will be joining you for coffee at a couple of locations on campus. Patricia Maestro is leading this event, so look for emails about the dates and the locations for this activity.

00:18:19 **Shiloh**

FA elections are going to start at our first rep council meeting. We will have open positions for several officers, full-time and part-time directors, as well as representatives to the adjunct Faculty Advisory Committee. Nominations will open at the first meeting, so please consider whether you want to join us in this work in this way.

00:18:42 **Shiloh**

Feel free to reach out to me or to Tamra to learn more about what you would be expected to do if you want to serve in one of these positions. And I do want to thank Barry , Christina , and Sherry for serving as our elections committee.

00:18:57 **Shiloh**

This is a new event to the faculty association. We were asked by FAC, FAC is a statewide advocacy organization for faculty and we were asked to host a legislative round table discussion. All faculty are invited to attend this event and we do hope that you will. This will give you an opportunity to speak directly with assembly member Mike Fong and share with him what life is like at the community colleges.

00:19:28 **Shiloh**

The last thing I want to remind you is just another reminder to our adjunct faculty that you can apply these Flex Day sessions to your PGH, the Professional Growth Hourly Incentive. There is a link on the professional development webpage.

00:19:47 **Shiloh**

If you have any questions at any time, please reach out to Tamra or I. It's always preferable to use our Gmail accounts. And if you want to learn more about the faculty association, please take a look at our website. We're always adding new information. And thank you again for your time. Have a great semester everyone.

00:20:10 **Tania**

Thank you for listening to the Magic Mountie Podcast and don't forget to share your favorite episodes.