

Yesterday afternoon, the executive board of the Cal Poly SLO Chapter of the California Faculty Association (CFA SLO) sent an email (copied below) to its members alleging that earlier this quarter a faculty member of color was pulled over by campus police in an incident of racial profiling. This is the first the university has heard of this allegation.

We, the university administration, take any and all incidents of racial injustice and inequity extremely seriously. We are troubled to learn of these allegations, and our concern is with following our processes for investigating them and supporting the alleged victim.

If any member of our campus is harmed, we want and need to know about it. We will do all that we can to support them, bring about justice, and ensure their ongoing safety, wellbeing and comfort. We can only do this if incidents are reported, which allows us to launch an investigation, hold accountable those who are responsible, and take corrective action to help ensure similar incidents don't happen again.

Immediately upon learning of the allegation in the CFA SLO email, we made an initial search through fall quarter incidents and found no traffic stop or other UPD interaction matching the description detailed in the email.

The university will continue to investigate this matter — but we have no other information beyond what is in the CFA SLO email. We are seeking additional details that would help pinpoint the date and time of the alleged interaction, so that we can reference saved body camera and dash camera footage, which UPD uses to record and log officer stops and interactions throughout their shifts. Dash cams are automatically activated and the footage logged at the time a squad car turns on its lights or siren to initiate a stop.

CFA SLO's suggestion that the university does not care about incidents of racism on Cal Poly's campus is inaccurate, inflammatory and destructive at a sensitive time on our campus. We implore the CFA SLO to work with the university as partners in addressing incidents of racism and injustice and holding accountable those responsible.

We have asked the CFA SLO for additional information and details that will help the university investigate the allegations. However, they have been unwilling to provide any further information. We find it frustrating that CFA SLO would raise such a serious allegation, while refusing to provide any details — even the date of the alleged incident — that could help the university investigate the allegations.

Given the situation, the university intends to hire an impartial, third-party investigator to review the allegations and establish the facts. We are willing to work with CFA SLO on choosing that investigator. We believe the serious nature of these allegations warrants requesting that the California Deputy Attorney General conduct the review. We will take all action — including the full extent of legal recourse — to discover the facts surrounding the allegations. If the allegations are substantiated, those responsible will be held accountable and there will be serious consequences as warranted.

We ask anyone with information about this incident to report it to the Office of Equal Opportunity, Academic Personnel and the Office of University Diversity and Inclusion.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Armstrong