

SDSU

NewsCenter



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Open Letter to SDSU Community from President Adela de la Torre

By [President Adela de la Torre](#)

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*SDSU President **Adela de la Torre** shared an open letter to the campus community on Tuesday, April 30. In the letter, she discusses the importance of clear and timely communications, encouraging all members of the university to support a culture of communications.*

Dear SDSU Community,

Mere words on a page cannot adequately convey the heartfelt sense of honor, gratitude, and responsibility I feel for the privilege to be your president during this chapter in our university. It includes both excitement for our future and deep concerns, partially due to long-standing issues related to campus infrastructure and community safety.

Today I want to specifically address these latter issues.

For the last 10 months, I have endeavored to learn all I could from and about you. Though my formal listening tour began last June, it has not stopped and will not stop any time soon. I keep listening to what you have to share because hearing from you helps us make the best-informed decisions.

Much of what I have learned clearly identifies the exceptionalism and distinction of SDSU faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Yet, I also understand — in the wake of recent events — that our students, faculty, and staff have suffered pain due to a lack of nimble and transparent responses and organizational structures that challenge our ability to provide timely and needed information.

Two themes have run through recent conversations I've had with our faculty, staff and students as well as members of the executive and administrative teams:

- First, SDSU's students, faculty, and staff want to be included in transparent, timely, and proactive communication about the challenges we face and the steps we are taking to solve them — every step of the way.
- Second, though communication is improving, many members of our community have not felt heard for a long time — and that a culture of reciprocal communication has not reached every corner of our campus. These communication gaps have resulted in an institutional failure to address the needs of these individuals in a timely or effective manner.

I doubt that even the most optimistic individuals on this campus have failed to notice the cries of frustration related to the uncertainty surrounding the PSFA Building. This is just one example of several across our organization. And while I am not detailing all issues here, I am aware that these are real concerns.

I want to acknowledge that the current state of communication reflects a culture that we are trying to change. Organizational cultural change requires the collective focus, commitment, and strength of many hands until success is achieved. That is our goal and we are committed to moving forward in this direction.

I want you to know just some of our steps we are committed to in order to move forward:

- Strategic Communications and Public Affairs (StratComm) will centralize high stakes and time-sensitive communication. In other words, our community can expect to receive communication directly from StratComm, not just from division or unit leaders.
- We will deliver time-sensitive communication in a variety of modalities to ensure our community has opportunities to hear early and often about issues that impact them. For example, Human Resources is holding informational sessions this week to speak with employees about the worker's compensation process.
- We will communicate what we know and also what we don't yet know. Related to the PSFA Building, we will provide updates at least once per week on the SDSU Urgent page: <http://urgent.sdsu.edu/>

You will soon hear from StratComm explaining the type of focused communications you can expect to receive as an affected member who has been impacted by the PSFA Building closure. Please be on the lookout for the email.

This is a new era at SDSU, and an improved culture that makes communication a priority at every level is imperative to achieve the individual and collective goals we aspire to achieve. My goal is to model that process.

As I've said before, we have much to be proud of — but what got us here won't get us where we need to go.

So many of you have told me directly that you join me in aspiring for greater heights and bigger dreams for SDSU. Those who share those aspirations know we can achieve them only by joining forces — in intention and action — believing that the best is yet to come for you, for us and for San Diego State University.

Adela de la Torre

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San Diego State University President