**Background & Position on Website Blocking by Content Category**

1)  *We do not see the need to continue blocking websites solely based on their* ***content category*** *(e.g., adult, gambling, “questionable”).* We have consulted with other community college campuses, and the blocking of content by category is not standard practice. In fact, while it was suggested that Santa Rosa Junior College and Solano College both use the Palo Alto Networks software for network security, we contacted librarians at both campuses who then verified with their IT departments that they do use Palo Alto Networks software but chose not to activate the additional content category filters that are in place at CCCCD.

2)  *The current process for requesting that content be unblocked circumvents students’ rights, is not timely enough to support classroom instruction needs, and it forces students to compromise their own privacy by requiring them to request access via faculty.*

3)  *While it may not have been the District’s intention to violate the principles of academic freedom, from the faculty perspective, the placement of the content filter is doing just that and could set a dangerous precedent for further harmful restrictions.*

4)  *We request that the District reconsider removing the content category filters while keeping the* ***standard filters for malicious categories****, such as malware, viruses, and command-and-control.* We request that, should the District consider future network solutions that could potentially block web content by content category, the District consult with our campuses’ Academic Senates, Technology Advisory Groups, Associated Students, and other participatory governance bodies so as to reach an appropriate solution.

**For Reference:**

LMC Academic Senate Resolution, passed 2/26/18:

“WHEREAS, the use of the on-campus network is critical to accessing web content that supports instruction and research relevant to the curriculum;

WHEREAS, filtering software that pre-emptively blocks access to websites by category is, in essence, censorship and goes against the District's professed Value of Academic Freedom, which "values the freedom of faculty and students to pursue knowledge without constraint";

WHEREAS, a policy that authorizes the District IT department to solely determine the educational value of content viewed over the campus network is contrary to academic freedom;

Be it resolved that the LMC Academic Senate disagrees with the usage of website blocking and strongly recommends the blocking be suspended until the matter can be appropriately discussed through the existing participatory governance process.”

**LMC Associated Students Resolution, passed 3/12/18:**

Excerpt: ““This censorship creates a barrier for students who do not have the means or privilege of private access.”

**CCC Academic Senate motion to support turning off the content filter, passed 5/7/18**

[from the Minutes] URL Web Filtering: The district bought a program to block websites that aren’t appropriate to access using the college Wi-Fi. This poses a problem in researching certain subjects. The Council would like to poll other colleges on whether they use filtering. Judy motioned for the Senate Council to support turning off the web filter but leaving the security part in place; Bonnie seconded; all in favor except for the abstention of Jon and Mark.

**Current message when accessing a blocked website:** 