

STUDENT COMPLAINTS ABOUT VOTER PETITIONING

Jordan Jackson | Reporter
jjackson@therampageonline.com

Students at Fresno City College are complaining that petitioners approach them on campus and ask them to sign documents without explaining what the petition is for or who they represent.

Petitioners are people who go on campus to collect signatures on different issues such as taxes, environmental protection and funding for institutions for citizens to vote on in future ballots.

Desaraye Flores, a human services and pre-social work major at Fresno City College, sees petitioners gathering signatures on campus nearly every day.

Flores said that once, a petitioner approached her respectfully at first. But while she was signing, the petitioner started asking her personal questions and implied that her hair smelled good. She ignored the remark and completed signing the petition.

Flores said after that the petitioner asked for her Instagram handle, which she declined, then walked away. She said that it feels uncomfortable when petitioners comment on her appearance or approach her without explaining their cause.

"A lot of times, I am approached when I am rushing or when I'm hurrying to class because I'm late. I feel like I already know what type of interaction I'm going to get when I am approached, so I'm immediately drawn towards ignoring them," Flores said.

Flores believes FCC should not allow petitioning on campus at all. While she acknowledges that petitioning can be important, she feels it doesn't need to happen at school.

"A lot of the time, petitioners just ask, 'Would you mind signing my petition but they won't tell you what it is. I have to ask what it is. Sometimes I feel like they're lying to me about what it is, so I won't sign,'" Flores said.

Jasleen Kaur, a third-year FCC student, said petitioners approached her nearly every day at the start of the semester. She said they give little to no explanations before asking students to sign petitions.

"They usually ask me something like 'oh, do you want to tax billionaires,' but I always feel like there is more to the story so I never want to sign anything," Kaur said.

Fresno City College campus is open to the public. Petitioning is allowed on campus if signature gatherers follow specific guidelines, use designated areas and respect time restrictions outlined by the School & Colleges Services of California.

Kaur said she feels annoyed when approached by petitioners. She said she understands that it is their job to petition and that they're trying to get paid, but she claimed they want her to sign something they themselves



A staged photo of a Fresno City College student signing a petition slip on May 9 near the main water fountain on campus. Photo by Miley Araujo.

cannot explain in full context.

Kaur said she would sign if petitioners clearly explained their cause. But she said that no petitioner has been aggressive toward her and she doesn't think FCC should enforce any new rules simply because students choose not to sign.

However, business major Elijah Townsend said that when he returned to FCC, he would see petitioners every time he got out of class, and he claimed the interactions were "aggressive."

"Have you ever been to a dealership? It's almost like a salesperson. As soon as they see you walking, they're right there. I feel like 'here we go again,' and sometimes I feel like they make you feel obligated to sign," Townsend said.

Townsend said he understands petitioners want to advocate for their causes, but added that there is a proper time and place for their efforts.

"If you're going to be out and handing out petitions I think you should also be able to read body language and recognize if a person wants to sign or doesn't want to sign," Townsend said.

Townsend suggested that petitioners should not be

allowed to approach students directly. Instead, he believes they should remain in designated areas so students can choose to approach them if interested.

Jose Luis Gallo, a pre-allied health major, said he finds it annoying when petitioners approach him directly instead of staying in a designated area.

Gallo said he encounters several petitioners twice a week, and they typically ask him to sign multiple documents each time. He thinks signature gatherers should limit the number of papers they are asking students to sign.

Gallo thinks that if they get a person to sign one paper, they should have the option to decide if they want to sign more.

"Usually, most people are too shy to say anything about it, but it should be the amount the student feels they want to sign at that moment. You can say 'I just want to sign one' instead of them giving you one and flipping another page and handing it to you, and then flipping another one as you're done with that one," Gallo said.

ASG FINISHES SEMESTER WITH FINAL MEETING REFLECTING ON STUDENT IMPACT

Jimmy Johnson | Editor-in-Chief
jjohnson@therampageonline.com

After a semester of campus events, student advocacy and fundraising efforts, Fresno City College's Associated Student Government (ASG) wrapped up its final meeting May 5. Members highlighted their impact on student life and looked ahead to next semester.

The meeting marked the end of ASG's official business for the term and served as a moment for members to reflect on their work. They also spoke about transitioning responsibilities to incoming student leaders.

Throughout the semester, ASG members participated in campus outreach efforts, including weekly informational booths, club events and student engagement initiatives. One of the final events was an ASG bake sale during the Cinco De Mayo club rush, which raised \$67 with all items donated by local businesses.

"We sold everything," Senator Esmeralda Garcia Lopez said during the meeting, noting the success of the fundraiser and thanking community partners for their support.

In addition to fundraising, ASG continued its involvement with student organizations through the Inter-Club Council, which recently held its final meeting and released an end-of-year survey aimed at gathering student feedback.

Looking ahead, members discussed preparations for the Ram Pantry, a student resource initiative that will provide snacks and basic necessities on campus. ASG leaders outlined potential food and supply options and began organizing volunteer participation for the program's rollout. Members took time to reflect on the semester and recognize each other's contributions.

"I'm proud of you guys for just hanging in there," ASG Vice President Reanna Carlson said. "It's been a great semester, it really means a lot."



Front row (left to right) Senator Esmeralda Garcia Lopez, Senator Adrianna Sanchez, Senator Love Quezada, ASG President Miguel Barrita, Vice President Reanna Carlson, Communications Officer Miley Araujo, Student Representative Natalia Montelongo. Back row (left to right) Treasurer Aidan Peña, Inter-Club Council Chair Gurbhagat Singh Bains, Senator Jeremiah Sanchez, Senator Daniel Valdivia and Senator Gabriel Escheveste. ASG Executive Board members posing for a photo together after their final meeting of spring semester on May 5. Photo by Jimmy Johnson

Members who are leaving also acknowledged the transition to a new group of student leaders, encouraging them to stay involved and continue building on ASG's efforts. "I'm looking forward to whatever you are going to be doing," ASG President Miguel Barrita said. "I'll come by the first meeting next semester to see how it goes."