ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES NEWSLETTER

SENATEROSTRUM

CONTENTS

It's baaack….

75:25 and the Governator Effect

by Ian Walton

P olitics is an interesting endeavor—full of opportunities and traps. In his first year in office Governor Schwarzenegger achieved considerable success by breaking the mold of the traditional process and crafting flamboyant personal deals. But it all fell spectacularly apart when he encountered the immovable "special interests" of teachers, nurses and firefighters. When the public perception is that you've broken your word it becomes very difficult to broker any new deals. It remains to be seen whether this year's budget largesse and the attempt to suddenly honor the original deal on Proposition 98 funds will resonate with the voters in November. Is giving your personal word, reneging on it, and then "fessing-up" under threat of a lawsuit a successful political strategy?

A similar political dynamic may be appearing in a lower key, but still interesting, way with our own Board of Governors and the long-running 75:25 issue. At the May 1st board meeting, members took an action that was perceived, not just by statewide faculty representatives, but by several board members themselves as the very public breaking of a deal previously agreed by the Board itself. Admittedly, the individuals serving on the Board are different, but it's the perception of the official action that counts.

> **Breaking your own deal is very different from the more common occurrence where the Board takes an action that is contrary to the advice of Consultation or individual constituency groups.**

There are several inter-related, difficult issues such as 75:25, 60% and 50% laws that might benefit from a combined "let's make a super-deal" approach. Does the May action mean that such an approach is now off the table completely because "you can't trust them to honor their own deal?" Or can we figure out a way to move forward together?

So what exactly happened? If you're an expert on 75:25 you can skip the grisly details in the next four paragraphs. As you probably know, the enforcement mechanism for 75:25 compliance is the annual Faculty Obligation Number (FON) issued by the System Office and available online at *http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/ cffp/fiscal/standards/full_time_faculty_obligation.htm*. It has always been regarded as ineffective by the Academic Senate because, at best, it maintains the status quo by increasing the number of full-time faculty in direct proportion to the increase in student enrollment. It does nothing to increase the ratio and advance the system towards the long-standing goal of 75% as a minimum of credit instruction taught by full-time faculty. Every time an exemption is granted we move further away from the goal—as witnessed by the statewide average figures for the actual full-time, part-time ratio (Fall 1988: 63.1%, Fall 1998: 62.2%, Fall 2005: 61.4%.)

In Summer 2002 the System Office calculated and notified districts of the routine increase in full-time faculty that would be required by Fall 2003. This calculation is based on state funds already budgeted to the district in the 2002-03 year. Then the mid-year state budget cuts arrived. As a result of long, difficult conversations and negotiations at Consultation Council and at the Board of Governors meeting, the Board crafted the following public deal at its November 2002 meeting:

1. Start with the original increase as calculated by the System Office;

2. Automatically reduce that increase by 50% for all districts (a permanent waiver that has never been restored);

3. Allow districts to apply for a temporary deferral of the remaining 50% increase. This was originally to be restored after one year and was later extended to two years. Students, bargaining units and local academic senates had to support the request for this deferral.

So a district that received a deferral and two years later (Fall 2004) restored its full-time faculty number received no reduction in funds. Districts that failed to restore their original faculty goal at the end of the two year period were identified for apportionment reduction. In addition, there was never an authorization to drop below the base number of faculty (the Fall 2002 obligation number prior to the originally calculated increase for Fall 2003.) So districts that dropped below this base were also identified for reduction in apportionment. Notice an important point that the Senate has repeatedly made. This reduction in apportionment is not a fine, nor punitive in any sense. This is "categorical" funding.

If districts spend the offered funding on full-time faculty positions, they get to keep the money. If they do not spend it on full-time faculty, they must return it. What could be simpler or fairer?

Twelve districts were identified for apportionment reductions. Then an additional "deferral" came into play. Districts were offered the choice of taking the funding reduction immediately or of postponing until 2005-06. Five districts paid up immediately and seven requested a deferral. So far everything is within the terms of the Board of Governors' November 2002 deal.

Now fast forward to the May 2006 Board of Governors meeting. Suddenly the seven districts who have not returned the funds that they already received but failed to spend on full-time faculty were granted a complete amnesty—a retroactive dispensation to break the law. Imagine how you feel if you're one of the vast majority of districts who struggled to do effective, responsible planning and comply with the law in 2003. Imagine if you're one of the districts who failed to comply but chose to take your funding reduction immediately. Imagine if you're one of the districts who failed to comply in a different year and isn't eligible for an amnesty (2005-06). Imagine the effect on future compliance with almost any regulation.

Of course, in a completely underfunded system you can always make the completely compelling case that your district desperately needs the funds, and that the money will clearly benefit students and programs. Administrators, and in some cases faculty, from the seven districts passionately made that argument before the Board. We can all make exactly that case any time we see the potential for additional funds for our own local district. But every statewide faculty representative argued eloquently that a retroactive amnesty is appalling statewide public policy.

This conversation highlights some fundamental differences of opinion with some CEOs who consistently argue that the 75:25 goal was a vague ideal only to be contemplated in times of specific funding.

They cite the two years of program improvement funding provided after AB1725 as evidence for this. (Notice, paradoxically, that although we actually received dedicated funding we failed to sustain an increase in the ratio.) But more importantly, the historical record shows that increasing the percentage of full-time faculty was an established goal of both the legislature and the Board of Governors well prior to AB1725 and was independent of the dedicated funding concept.(Board of Governors, January 1978 and SB630, 1987)

"Unfunded mandate" has become a perverse rationale to do anything in our system. The original concept has been turned on its head and is now used to argue that we can't do anything unless we're provided dedicated funding for it—often by the same people who oppose categorical funding and advocate strongly for more local control. This very argument was recently heard in the early stages of opposition to the math/English graduation requirement recommendation. And it was used to oppose either a carrot or a stick approach to target for improvement those districts with abysmally low ratios in the forty or fifty percent range.

Comments from individual CEO testimony to the Board and various versions of a CEO statement on 75:25 distributed at the Board meeting, *"Why Don't Districts Reach This Goal"* have suggested that "statewide faculty leaders do not represent the views of local faculty", "are not aware of needs which local faculty consider more urgent", and "are able to advocate the merits of a single policy without regard

to fiscal realities." As mentioned above, when you're locally offered additional money who could possibly argue against it? But in terms of statewide policy, the additional money should never have been offered. The Academic Senate's adopted position in support of 75:25 comes from a long series of resolutions, (S97, S99, S00, S03, F04), endorsed by voting delegates who represent every college and district local academic senate in our system.

There have also been suggestions that 75% may not be the correct number to reach. We agree—75% was originally intended as the minimal floor—not the exact target or the ultimate ceiling. Interestingly the CSU system adopted a similar goal in Fall 2001. There have been requests for evidence that full-time faculty benefit students. This usually seems to be a desire for a simplistic, single outcomes measurement such as a direct correlation between percentage of full-time faculty and student GPA in a specific class.

In fact, the widely available research points to a much more complex set of benefits where students prosper in an environment that provides easy and consistent access to a wide variety of interactions with full-time faculty, both inside and outside the classroom.

So what is the deal that would allow us to move forward on 75:25? The faculty representatives on the prematurely abandoned system 75:25 Task Force consistently argued that there needed to be a balance of two fundamental ingredients in any solution. In return for additional flexibility for districts that were in verifiable fiscal distress, or just genuinely different, there had to be a mechanism that guaranteed forward progress to increase the statewide average. A promise to **request** additional funds for full-time faculty positions is not adequate.

And what's that got to do with 60% and 50%?

Proponents of raising the part-time faculty load limit from 60% to 80% argued that the issue was independent of the full-time part-time ratio because it is guaranteed by the FON regulations. Since May's Board of Governors' action demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the FON guarantee, it's perhaps well that the body so soundly defeated the proposal to raise the 60% limit.

There may be some legitimate examples where increased staffing flexibility would be advantageous. But as I've recently taken to suggesting at every possible opportunity, the real solution is to improve the appalling working conditions of our part-time colleagues— pitiful salary, few benefits, no job security, no realistic academic freedom. If we could create part-time equity then we could make educational decisions, including staffing, based on sound educational reasons. At the moment, we make them because they're cheap. That's no way to run a system of higher education.

The 50% law also pops into many staffing conversations.

The Senate has long been on record in support of adding counselors and librarians to the ratio—but only if you adjust the ratio accordingly.

Some CEOs want to count all those extra people and leave the requirement at 50%. You've got to be kidding! Ask any elected politician how much of the budget should be spent on the classroom in non-research institutions like ours and they'll tell you 60% or 70%—not 50%. The math/English conversation has also highlighted the notion that there are other instructional assistance positions that could benefit students but which at present count on the non-classroom side of the 50% calculation. In this case a possible out-of-the- box solution is to invert the concept and create a 10% administrative law, for example. But there would have to be genuine consensus on how to spend the remaining 90%. At present districts must collegially consult with the academic senate on the budget **process**—but as you are all well aware, that may give you zero influence on the contents of the actual budget in any specific year.

Do you sense the opportunity for a giant super-deal here?—the 75—60—50—25 deal—(π for short.) But to create such a deal you need willingness and trust. Did the May action on the 75:25 regulations just make that much harder to achieve? As we said at Spring Session, "are we there yet?"—not even close! So how do we move forward? **Perhaps the July Board of Governors' retreat will help.** And then there's always the election… ∎

Where, Oh Where, Does the Curriculum Go?

by Michelle Pilati, Curriculum Committee Chair

As with most things, a lack of formality is fine until there is disagreement or discontent. When controversy arises and relationships are not clearly delineated, the manure hits the fan. While we can consider this quandary with respect to many things, I'll take on the relationship between your curriculum, your senate, and your board. Do you know what your "power" structure is? Does anyone? Perhaps "power" is not the right word—but you get the idea.

Somewhere, somehow, sometime, bylaws that establish how your senate and your curriculum are related should have been developed. There should be some document out there that makes this relationship clear. As you know, better to have these things in place before problems arise—but, as they say, hindsight is 20/20. What do we have to guide us in establishing this relationship?

Title 5 (Section 55002) states that "The college and/or district curriculum committee recommending the course shall be established by the mutual agreement of the college and/or district administration and the academic senate.

The committee shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a committee that includes faculty and is otherwise comprised in a way that is mutually agreeable to the college and/or district administration and the academic senate." Thus, the delegation of curriculum to a "college and/or district curriculum committee" that makes recommendations is clearly established in Title 5. The question to then ask is who does this body make recommendations to? Does it make recommendations to your local senate or to your board? How has this language been interpreted?

It has been my personal experience that curriculum committees make recommendations directly to the local board on routine curriculum matters, as the board is formally our highest level local governing body—but that the decisions made by the curriculum committee (CC) generally go unquestioned.

The exceptions to this are those things that explicitly require board approval, such as new programs or degrees. And there are some things that necessarily go through the senate, such as graduation requirements, new programs, and, possibly, GE decisions. Otherwise, one generally considers curriculum approval to be the final word. But is it? Does your local senate have the ability to "veto" what the CC has done? Can the decisions of the CC be challenged? This is where the need for more formality can save your neck, or cook your goose—depending on the situation. Hopefully all matters can be handled with collegiality and minor controversies dealt with effectively, but are your processes in place to deal with that minor irritant that has the potential to escalate?

A look at the paper "The Curriculum Committee: Role, Structure, Duties, and Standards of Good Practices", adopted in fall of 1996, can help inform this discussion. I encourage you to give this paper a read—it makes the point that there is no one best way to do things, as we are all unique (local control triumphs!). But looking at what others do and why they do it can aid in local decision-making. The introduction makes clear the answer to one aspect of this discussion:

> "Given the diversity of disciplines and faculty and the varying degrees of shared governance currently operating in the system, practices utilized by curriculum committees throughout California's community college system vary widely. Nevertheless, a clear consensus about the main function of the curriculum committee has emerged. **The main function of the curriculum committee is that of primary responsibility for the development, review, renewal, and recommendation of curriculum to be approved by the Board of Trustees."**

The paragraph above suggests that most of the time the CC makes recommendations to the local Board of Trustees. This paper also reinforces the common practice of local senates delegating the authority over curriculum to the CC:

> The curriculum committee is the vehicle upon which the local academic senate relies in carrying out its responsibility to develop curriculum recommendations for presentation to the local

governing board. …courses and programs must be recommended by the curriculum committee and approved by the governing board of a college district. The curriculum committee may either be a committee of the senate or a college committee whose composition is mutually agreed upon by the senate and the administration.

While it is always nice when a paper says what you think it should say, my conscience would not permit me to stop there. So, I read on and I did a quick survey. How your curriculum and senate interact is a local matter, ultimately. As is made clear here:

> The link between the academic senate and the curriculum committee can be accomplished in several ways. A common practice is to specify that the chair be a member of the senate. Often this is done by assigning the chairship to the past president or vice president of the senate. Alternately, the chair may be selected by the curriculum committee and then become an ex officio senate member. In any case, reports by the curriculum committee should be a regular senate agenda item.

Title 5 states that recommending programs and courses to the local governing board is the role of the curriculum committee as stated in Title 5 §55002 "The college and/or district curriculum committee recommending the course shall be established by the mutual agreement of the college and/or district administration and the academic senate. The committee shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a committee that includes faculty and is otherwise comprised in a way that is mutually agreeable to the college and/or district administration and the academic senate." While not specified, curricular recommendations may be reviewed by the senate before being passed on to the board, leading the paper's authors to make the following comments:

> The nature of the senate report requires comment. Typically, the committee reports both on the courses and programs to be recommended to the Board for approval (usually just a list) and on the procedures used (usually as committee minutes). Because Title 5 specifies that curriculum is recommended to the Board by the curriculum committee [Title 5 §55002(a)], *it is not the role of the senate to change the recommendations (emphasis added)*. However, it is appropriate for the senate to review the policies and procedures used [Title 5 §53203(a)] and call attention to any irregularities which might require a recommendation to be returned to the committee for reconsideration.

What are other colleges doing? Of the few that I heard from, one CC was completely under the arm of the senate (so to speak). The CC seems to give things a first pass, but then the senate votes. As the senate rarely questions the decisions of the CC, this has worked well. While this structure has the potential to leave CC members feeling disempowered, this tends not to be the case as their decisions are generally not questioned. At another, the CC is a standing committee of the senate that periodically makes a report to the senate. The senate can opt to return the report for reconsideration or forward it on. The other 4 respondents all indicated that the CC had the final word, except for the "biggies" (things like degree requirements and new programs must go to the senate). Interestingly, one respondent noted that previously the senate had been able to trump the CC but that this was changed as the senate had not questioned any decision of the CC for years. Another noted that the use of an online curriculum management system allowed everyone to see what was happening, meaning that senate was aware of what was happening with curriculum, even if no formal report was made.

Alas, there is no clear right or wrong for how your Curriculum Committee and your senate should interact, but there should be clearly stated guidelines.

That your senate should be informed of the curriculum's activities is for certain, as is the need for the "biggies" to go to senate. And you can't remove your board from the process, so those board agenda deadlines will necessarily impact your curriculum deadlines. Things that have to be decided upon locally, with respect to curriculum governance, include whether or not the senate has the final say in curriculum, how often curriculum reports to senate, and how CC decisions can be challenged. Topics to be considered include why you might want your senate to have the ultimate control of the curriculum, what impact this might have on curriculum timelines, what is your CC's charge, and what aspects of your overall process might need improving. An effective and efficient CC (and campus culture) is one that emphasizes collegiality. Everyone on your CC should keep that in mind—no decisions of the CC should be a surprise if everyone is doing their job properly. I smell a whole other article coming on, so I will leave you with in mind—an emphasis on collegiality is one means of preventing problems—as is having clear and consistent processes. ∎

60 Percent? 80 Percent?

Your Academic Senate and Healthy Dissent

by Gary Holton, Representative at Large

It has been my honor to serve on the 2005-2006 Executive Committee for the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. We have dealt with many thorny issues, but none more difficult than the question of whether to support raising the adjunct teaching limit from 60 to 80 percent of a full-time teaching load. The true strength and health of the Academic Senate was demonstrated in the deliberations–both in the Executive Committee and at Session–regarding this issue.

For many of us, the issue seemed to arrive somewhat out of the blue. Shortly before Fall Session, we were informed that Senator Denise Ducheny had agreed to carry a bill raising the adjunct limit from 60 to 80 percent. At the Fall 2005 Plenary Session, several resolutions were introduced, but the decision of the body was that the issue should be referred to the Executive Committee for study and a recommendation. Socrates once suggested that, "The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing."

The Executive Committee honored the wisdom of the body in recognizing that this was an issue about which we knew very little. Fortunately, ignorance is a disease with a simple cure. President Ian Walton charged a sub-group of the Executive Committee with researching the issue and bringing to the larger group a better understanding of the issue and some possible positions the Executive Committee might take.

In the beginning, the members of the subcommittee were mixed in their responses to the proposal. Twice, the subcommittee invited both full- and part-time faculty who supported the proposal to speak before the full Executive Committee.

As they researched and discussed, the members of the subcommittee became convinced that a change to 80% would not be in the interests of our students or of the profession.

They created a series of resolutions expressing the reasons why the Academic Senate should oppose the proposed change.

When these resolutions and their rationales were presented to the full Executive Committee, it became clear that no matter how you sliced it, this was not going to be a unanimous vote. A clear majority of the Executive Committee believed that the Senate should oppose changing the limit to 80 percent. As a member of the dissenting minority, I saw the strength of the Executive Committee in what followed.

The Executive Committee could have taken a simple voice vote and all of the resolutions would have been approved. Instead, we engaged in that most tedious and often overlooked aspect of democracy. We talked about it. It was taken as a given that thoughtful people of good will can sometimes disagree. Those of us who disagreed with the majority weren't just listened to, we were heard. Our objections were received as efforts to improve the recommendations that the Executive Committee would pass on to the full Senate.

And improved, they were. The subcommittee met in the wee hours and redrafted their resolutions, clarifying points, strengthening arguments and ensuring that the Senate's abiding respect for our adjunct colleagues was reflected in the tone of each "whereas" and every "be it therefore resolved." The next morning, the im-

proved resolutions were discussed and finally approved by a majority of the Executive Committee.

That could have been the end of the issue. In the past, the practice of the Executive Committee has typically been that once the Executive Committee has taken a position, it is the responsibility of all Executive Committee members to either support the position at the Plenary Session or remain silent about their disagreement. No one in this Executive Committee even suggested that those of us in the minority would be asked to remain silent.

And when Session did roll around I, of course, did not remain silent even though I was running for re-election to the Executive Committee. Even though I knew that the majority of the Senate would support the positions brought forward by the Executive Committee.

Despite these things, I was confident that the members of the Academic Senate would welcome thoughtful arguments, even if they might disagree with the conclusions.

Now, I lost my campaign for re-election. Still, my faith in the Academic Senate is not shaken. I know I did not lose as a consequence of my dissent. I lost because of the strengths of my colleagues on the ballot and because of my own weaknesses.

The 60 to 80 percent controversy will fade. Regardless, for me, the thoughtful manner in which the Academic Senate addressed the controversy will always stand as a shining example of the health and strength of the organization it has been my honor to serve. ■

And the Red Rocket's Glare

by Wheeler North, Area D Representative

One Sunday morning, in San Diego under a cool morning marine layer, over 300 students gathered to make history. The debates had been going on for over a year, and really for longer than that, without going too deeply into the history of our statewide student representation for California community colleges. Twenty-five odd souls had worked feverishly over the past year developing several structural models of which Model E had been selected by the existing ten regions as the one most likely to meet their needs. This model is a mix of the old CalSACC (California Student Association of Community Colleges) model and our ASCCC model that hopes to ensure all colleges can bring their student voices to the elected and appointed leaders of our colleges and our system.

The problem at hand though was this group of students were just that, a group. Although they were highly intelligent, intensely engaged, and extremely passionate, they none-the-less were just a group of students with an idea.

For that idea to become a living thing, recognized by law and regulation as the sole voice for 2.5 million students the one missing element needed to change this boiling mob of youthful energy into that voice was a constitution.

In a brief window of time, sometime slightly after ten on this fine morning 70 of the potential 109 member delegates took their ballots and voted. They marked those ballots, inserted them into the double blind envelopes commonly used in anonymous voting processes, and then they licked and sealed their respective fates. It was over in a few short minutes.

The prime focus of much of their debates over the previous year and during the previous two days of de-

liberation was more about constitutional ideals. Although many were trying to be specific about their many concerns, all voicing an incredible plethora of potential fates, either dire or desperately dire, in truth most concerns were about the division of where a constitution should end and the by-laws should begin.

While there are as many opinions on this as there are humans I tend to prefer General Robert's take on the issue. He suggests that they should be the same unless there is good reason to separate them. If this is the case then the constitution should contain the basic minimum definitions about your body that you really don't want changed very easily. This should be the bare essentials which define what your body is, what your body does, who your body is composed of and their primary privileges, and what it takes to perfect, amend, or improve your constitution.

As such, constitutions are often vague and fairly brief and are usually considered to be very flawed, in and of themselves. Take the one that defines the United States of America. Upon its original ratification it was quite short, could easily be read in a few minutes and it had a few minor flaws. One that seems to be fairly significant by today's standards is the fact that it essentially gave all the power of participation to the land owners. And if you weren't a land owner you were either property or an outlaw. Fortunately some very savvy and skilled political minds quickly crafted some amendments, the first ten of which gave rights to every member of the body. (Although we may still not be quite there yet, the intent was sound).

A problem these remarkable students faced was that voting it down would leave them with nothing. So in spite of the perceived "flaws" of this fledgling article, to vote "Yea" was to give it life, to vote "Nay" was to return it and themselves to the mediocrity of forlorn rabble rousing. Were they to say "no" today, with the high ideals of returning next season for another, possibly better, attempt they might place their incredible potential in deep jeopardy. As has often been said about California, funding is fickle. What worked today may or may not work tomorrow.

Yet, with the birth given by the ratification of a constitution, their potential could blossom and flourish regardless

of the current flaws, much like the U.S. Constitution has been perfected into one of the most inspiring and powerful documents in humankind's brief history.

As a volunteer, whose sole purpose there was to politely hold a lovely hat six feet above the ground, I am one of the luckiest people in the world to have shared in this short leg of their journey. As a recent participant in our electoral process, replicated here, I was invited to join our Executive Director Julie Adams in providing guidance to the student tellers as they passed, collected and tallied all the ballots. And then, because the electronic voting was set to close at high noon we were sworn to secrecy. To a person I believe that we lucky few honored that window of silence.

But in honoring that window I had the pleasure of watching the body move, assemble, reassemble, coagulate in various shifting cliques and to finally come together in a long moment of celebration as they announced and introduced their new representatives for the upcoming year.

At last the stage was completely set. While the tension was rampant and the body was charged to the point of "bursting in air", they remained very polite and highly respectful of what they were experiencing. The Student Elections Committee Chair, Todd Bowen, Orange Coast College, poised himself at the microphone for a brief moment savoring the anticipation and high expectations.

As he read the results, "109 eligible, 70 voted, 0 disqualified, 49 Yeas needed to ratify with a two-thirds super-majority, 11 Nays, 59 Yeas", the body relaxed and exhaled for a brief moment in time. And then pandemonium broke out. But in that brief moment of relaxation an overwhelming sense of relief passed through the body. From the quiet ones all the way to the vociferous nay-sayers and the passionately concerned diplomats everyone was relieved. This new life had vested itself through the long birth canal of parliamentary process. While their work was just beginning, collectively they had become a living entity, whose soul was far greater than the sum of its parts.

The giddiness was rampant, many had tears in their eyes, even the delegates who had clearly called for "Nay" were not about to arbitrate the power of the moment. In the subsequent session dedicated to hearing the body's concerns about the drafting of by-laws, many were so overwhelmed they found it hard to focus on moving forward. While they didn't have to fight a war against

half of Europe while crafting this document, it was still an incredible thing to have experienced. Although I personally would have enjoyed some *bombs bursting in air* and *a rocket's red glare*, in truth it wouldn't have added much to the experience for most in attendance.

So what does their future hold? It's a hard thing to call. But what I can say is that local participation will be the thing that nurtures this neophyte into maturity. Without it, this thing may quickly grow cold and gray. Those of you who are in a position to promote and support every local, regional and statewide activity for these remarkable advocates please step up to the plate. The most obvious immediate need is to obtain system level funding. But chip in and help them out, any time and any way you can.

While the Academic Senate played a big part in this monument, many people, too numerous to name, were also heavily involved. But a few deserve special mention.

One, up high on that list, is Gary Holton, San Diego Mesa College, who acted as the ASCCC liaison and student advisor and who was instrumental in facilitating their deliberations.

A second is Maryanne Estes from the System Office, who was not only a guiding light but was the primary force behind the scenes, clearing the red tape and logistical issues so that the students were able to make their bit of history independent of the typical political forces surrounding such history-making.

A third, as usual, right there in the middle of the foray, pulling everything together, is our Executive Director Julie Adams, with her incredible staff doing their usual magic. Incredibly, they pulled off the Senate Plenary Session with 270 attendees on one weekend, and this session with over 300 the following weekend, while also orchestrating the IMPAC Conference elsewhere in the state on the **same** weekend. King Arthur, you've got nothing on **this** round table of knights.

Finally, the real heroes were this year's student delegates who scrapped and cajoled their way into history over the past year. While some will remain to carry on with the hard work, many are already set to pursue their future dreams, be it Berkeley, Stanford, or a robust and wild career of running the universe.

Thank you all for your intense dedication to those whom we most love to serve. ■

Equity Metrics
Developing Inclusive Strategies in a Diverse World

by Phillip D. Maynard, Equity and Diversity Action Committee Member

When it comes to examining equity and other inclusive initiatives introduced in higher education, the conversation of assessment arises early, as well as it should. Whenever such an initiative is implemented there should be a system of evaluation in place to measure the effectiveness of the institution's efforts.

Mt. San Antonio College is excited to be working with the University of Southern California's *Equity for All Project*. The *Equity for All Project* is a partnership between the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California, the System Office for the California Community Colleges, the Lumina Foundation, and participating community colleges: College of Alameda, De Anza College, Hartnell College, Long Beach City College, Merritt College, Rio Hondo College, San Joaquin Delta College, and LA Southwest College.

The key principle of "Equity for All" is that individuals at all levels of leadership, responsibility, and power are the ones who can make change happen and bring about equitable educational outcomes.

The capacity of individuals to become agents of change can be facilitated by engagement in a collaborative productive activity.

This principle is implemented by the formation of teams of practitioner-researchers who convene to examine data on student outcomes and develop a scorecard on the "state of equity." These teams are called "evidence teams" and are comprised of faculty, administrators, and staff critically examining and discussing collected data in order to reach a measure of understanding as to why inequities persist on their campuses. Each member of the evidence team assumes the role of researcher, whose job it is to "hold

a mirror to their respective institutions and reflect the status of underrepresented students on basic educational outcomes." Organizational learning occurs when new knowledge is constructed by evidence team members and is used to induce institutional change for the improvement of educational outcomes for minority student groups.

Overall, the *Equity for All Project* seeks to reframe the discussion from student responsibility to institutional accountability and place the processes of higher education center-stage to bring about change at the institutional level.

The logistics of the framework for *Equity for All* is identified by four perspectives that make up the structure of the Scorecard: Academic Pathways, Transfer Readiness, Retention and Persistence, and Excellence.

The *Academic Pathways* perspective includes indicators that represent access to majors, programs, and tracks (e.g., transfer vs. vocational track). The *Retention and Persistence* perspective refers to continued attendance from one year to the next year and/or to completion of degrees. The *Transfer Readiness* perspective consists of measures that indicate students' completion of required academic requirements for transfer, and measures that indicate institutional structures and practices that are conducive to a transfer-oriented culture. While measures of retention may represent the fulfillment of minimal requirements for "academic survival", the *Excellence* perspective represents higher level academic accomplishments that can lead to majors in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields, or transfer to selective institutions, winning academic scholarships, etc.

With each of these perspectives, the *Evidence Team* investigated measures called "vital signs" disaggregated by ethnicity. This was accomplished for the purpose of establishing relevant indicators of equity/inequity

educational outcomes based on an analysis of the data revealed.

One might ask the question: "Why would a community college want information of this nature?" Institutional Research already provides and monitors success and graduation rates as evidence of the institution's effectiveness; however there may be little or no evidence for equity/inequities in these rates between races/ethnicities. This leads to the question: "Are all historically underrepresented groups achieving equitable outcomes in education?"

Mt. San Antonio College was invited to participate in the *Equity for All* project based on the racial/ethnic composition of its student body. All invited institutions met at least one of the following criteria for inclusion in the project:

‣ The percentage of enrolled Latino/a students was 25% or higher

‣ The enrollment of African American students exceeded the California Community College system wide average percentage

‣ The enrollment of Native American students exceeded the system average of 1%

‣ The total enrollment of non-Caucasian students was 50% or greater.

Our campus was also a good match for the project because *Equity for All* is commensurate with the goals of Mt. San Antonio College, specifically: "The College will provide an environment for consciousness of diversity while also providing opportunities for increased diversity and equity for all across campus." Additional equity goals are in the college's Student Equity Plan, available online at *http://www.mtsac.edu/about/facts/ student_equity_plan.pdf*.

Mt. San Antonio College, like the other eight colleges, is extremely excited to participate in the *Equity for All* project. As is well known, the State of California requires that all community colleges submit a student equity plan that demonstrates an avenue to identify student success for all students. The results of *Equity for All* can be the beginning of a new prototype for a new student equity plan that will enable community colleges to further engage in evidence-based practices to identify problems and set benchmarks.

The next step is to identify the source of these problems and move towards finding a way to overcome possible identified barriers that must be overcome to achieve the benchmarks.

Prior to the completion of the project, the *Evidence Team* discussed a variety of strategies to be engaged in the dissemination of the data, with hopes of bringing the entire campus community into a dialogue about equitable educational outcomes. For each perspective, an *Equity Brief* has been created, the first one having already been completed and sent out to faculty and administrators. This will provide the campus community with information of the team's work and will encourage stakeholders to get actively involved in the process of cultivating equity.

The *Equity for All Evidence Team* has given status reports to the academic senate and other campus committees about the team's progress and findings.

> We believe that gathering data about outcomes and disaggregating by race and ethnicity is a powerful means of raising awareness of institutional problems and then motivating faculty and staff to seek solutions.

We have had one meeting with the college president, who has given us a 100% endorsement.

The final report will include recommendations for next steps that result from the final analysis. While we are proud of what we at Mt. San Antonio College *Equity for All* team have accomplished thus far, we must continually infuse the state of equity into the larger discussion about institutional performance.

At the Fall 2004 Plenary Session, a breakout was presented by representatives of the Center of Urban Education and during Spring, 2005 Session, Dr. Estela Mara Bensimon, Director of the Center for Urban Education, was a keynote speaker on *Equity for All*.

A Student Equity Initiative was submitted as a resolution and passed at the Spring 2006 Plenary Session. The resolution asks that colleges participating in the *Equity for All* and the *Campus Change Network* present some of their evidence-based findings at a future breakout.

This can be an exciting challenge for all of us. ∎

A Snapshot of Noncredit in the California Community Colleges

by Mark Wade Lieu, Educational Policies Committee

Noncredit has been a major focus of discussion in the system over the last year. In addition to the discussions of how to implement increased apportionment for noncredit under the provisions of the proposed community college funding formula found in SB361 (the impetus for my previous article on noncredit), the System Office is also coordinating the work of the noncredit alignment project, which is focusing on clearly defining the nine areas of noncredit and reviewing curricular approval processes, and discussions of quality standards in noncredit. Coincidentally, or perhaps serendipitously, the Educational Policies Committee of the Academic Senate has been working on the development of a paper about the status of noncredit in the community colleges this year as well.

My previous article on noncredit presented an overview of some major differences between credit and noncredit. This article takes the information gleaned by the Educational Policies Committee in preparation for writing its paper to provide a snapshot of noncredit in our system.

Colleges report almost 92,000 FTES of noncredit instruction in 2004-2005, 8% of the total FTES for the System for that year. While 98 out of the 109 colleges offered some noncredit, 22 colleges generated more than three-fourths of all noncredit FTES; in addition, many offered only noncredit supervised tutoring, which is used to support credit instruction.

Using MIS data for Fall 2004, we get an idea of the composition of students in noncredit. Over 60% were female with the majority being over the age of 40. The two largest ethnic populations were White (slightly over 32%) and Hispanic (slightly under 32%), followed by Asian with almost 14%.

Using 2003-2004 data, the System Office made a presentation to the Board of Governors in January 2005, *Noncredit Instruction: A Portal to the Future,* which adds to our understanding of noncredit students. Twenty-three percent were immigrants, many of whom are English language learners. Approximately 15% never completed high school, and nearly 17% received some form of financial aid.

Over 50% of noncredit enrollments was in Basic Skills (35.3%) and English as a Second Language (17.2%). Short-term vocational programs enrolled almost 17% of noncredit students, with courses for older adults just slightly lower.

The demographics for the faculty in noncredit are markedly different from those for noncredit students. Noncredit employed 1,543 FTEF in Fall 2005. Of the 5,471 faculty, nearly 90% were part-time. In the full-time ranks, women outnumbered the men by more than 2:1; in the part-time ranks, women outnumbered the men by 3:2. It is important to note that a number of faculty teach in both credit and noncredit programs. Whites comprised 70% of part-time faculty and 65% of full-time faculty in Fall 2005. Approximately 13% of both part-time and full-time faculty were Hispanic, with Asian being the third largest group at 8% (FT) and 10% (PT). More than 44% of Fall 2005 faculty were 55 years old or older.

Based on TOP Codes, the largest group of faculty was in ESL, with over 600 FTEF. Short-term vocational TOP Codes had over 300 FTEF. Since there are no dedicated TOP Codes for courses for older adults, it is not clear how many faculty focus on service to older adults.

Although surveys being conducted for the paper by the Committee of the largest noncredit programs are not yet completed, preliminary data reveal some additional information about the place of noncredit in our colleges and districts. With regard to noncredit participation in local senates, two districts have separate senates for noncredit, and six colleges report having dedicated

seats for noncredit representation. The other nine respondents have representation for noncredit only if a noncredit person happens to be elected to the senate.

Many processes are essentially the same at most colleges between credit and noncredit. Curriculum and program development follow the same processes for credit and noncredit, but three colleges have no noncredit faculty on the curriculum committee and two report that noncredit program review is only an informal process. Accreditation generally encompasses a review of both credit and noncredit programs. In spite of the similarity of processes, articulation between noncredit and credit programs is lacking. Only three colleges reported that research was conducted to support articulation efforts, and several cited this lack of articulation as an important issue for their colleges.

The survey also covered some working condition issues.

Salaries for full-time noncredit faculty are generally equivalent to full-time credit faculty in terms of amount, but teaching load for noncredit faculty ranges from 25 to 36 hours/week compared to 15 hours for most credit faculty.

Four of the colleges apply the minimum qualifications for credit, where applicable, to hires in noncredit; while most use the minimum qualifications for noncredit, where applicable. In most areas, the minimum qualifications for credit are higher; in some areas, such as older adults and parenting, there is no credit instruction and thus no credit minimum qualifications. A third of the colleges have one faculty association representing both credit and noncredit faculty; however, three colleges report having no union representation for noncredit faculty at all. Overall, the status of part-time noncredit faculty is generally equivalent to the status of part-time credit faculty.

Over the coming months, the Educational Policies Committee will complete the survey and develop its paper on the status of noncredit. Look for the paper to come up for adoption this fall. ■

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Compressed Calendar Survey

Are We Glad We're There?

by Jane Patton, Chair Relations with Local Senates Committee

I n February 2006, the Relations with Local Senates Committee conducted a survey of academic senate presidents, asking about the effects of compressed calendars on participatory governance at their college. What prompted the survey was a resolution in Fall 2004:

> **13.04 F '04 Shared Governance: Barriers to Participation**
>
> Whereas, There has been a gradual system-wide trend to both compress academic calendars and add additional terms per year in order to address fiscal shortages, which, in effect, concentrates the instructional workload into shorter time periods, thereby leaving many faculty with less time for governance activities; and
>
> Whereas, This workload shift may be initially difficult to identify on the local level, and any local efforts to study or correct this have little or no effect upon the system-wide impact of these trends;
>
> Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, through research and survey, seek to determine what impact compressed calendars and additional terms per year are having upon faculty participation in state, district and college governance and produce an analysis of this process.

The survey was divided into three parts: 1) demographic questions and basic data about calendar status at the college, 2) questions about the decision-making processes for colleges that either have considered or adopted the calendar, and 3) questions about the perceptions about the effects of the calendar on participatory governance. The questions in Part 3 were only for colleges that have already made the change. For many questions, respondents had the option to provide open-ended explanations of their Likkert scale ratings. Although few surveys provided qualitative responses, some of the comments are worth reading (see URL below) but are too lengthy to include here.

There were 62 respondents to the survey. Twenty-three reported they are already on a compressed calendar. According to the System Office, as of December 2005, 37 colleges in the state are under a compressed calendar, so our survey yielded data from 23 of the 37 colleges or a total of 62%.

Findings

Respondents said that their academic senate was the group that most often initiated the discussion of whether to change the college calendar and that the senates were very involved in the decision-making, with 80% indicating the senates had some or primary influence on the final decision.

Most responses were surprising to the members of the committee, as a majority of senates indicated a neutral effect on shared governance. For example, questions such as the effect of the compressed calendar on participatory governance overall, on faculty participation on committees, on faculty attendance at meetings, and on curriculum processes, the most frequent response was a "neutral" effect. Many other questions yielded similar answers. As a matter of fact, so many answers were "neutral" that the committee wondered if it had not become an automatic response. Still, the strong pattern leads one to conclude that the effects

on governance appear not to be a significant issue. However, while the most frequent answer was "neutral," often only half or fewer of the 23 colleges on compressed calendar chose "neutral," a point that raises the question of the strength of the neutral positions.

You can access the complete survey data by going to the Academic Senate website and clicking on "surveys." Please note that what appears in *survey monkey* as a low response rate to many of the questions is simply a reflection of the way the survey was structured. All 62 of the responding colleges could answer the first set of questions, but only those already on a compressed calendar (23) could respond to the third section.

Limitations to the study

There are many limitations to this survey. It may be that these results are not very meaningful if what the resolution suggested is true: that a "workload shift may be initially difficult to identify on the local level. . . ." An audience member at the 2006 Spring Plenary session suggested that the respondents, senate presidents, may or may not have had opportunity to consult others before replying to such questions as the calendar's effects on counselors, librarians, or specific committees. Some colleges have only lived under this new calendar for a short time, so they may have had insufficient time to see effects on governance or evaluate changes in any meaning-ful way,

while at other colleges the calendar has been in effect so long that it may be hard to compare the old and new calendars.

The Relations with Local Senates Committee was charged with investigating only one aspect of alternate calendars: faculty governance activities. Therefore this survey does not answer all questions people have. However, at the recent Plenary Session, another resolution was passed, which asks the Academic Senate to compile and disseminate existing research done across the state that investigated such issues as student success, retention, scheduling and other factors. In the meantime, the 2000 Academic Senate paper, *Alternative Calendars: Recommendations and a Progress Report* available on our website, provides a list of recommendations to help local senates frame their discussions about the pros and cons of alternative calendars. Ultimately, while surveys such as this and the 2000 Academic Senate paper are helpful, as will be disseminating the results of other research conducted across the state, the local discussions are perhaps the most critical aspect to the decision-making process because it is the local college that needs to come to its own conclusion about the best calendar for its students. ■

Blackboard Down!

A Retrospective Look at Crashing

by Patricia James Hanz, ASCCC Technology Committee Chair

I n 1982, I was forced to take a workshop in "Appleworks for Teachers." I didn't look forward to spending a week with computer geeks, and went along nearly kicking and screaming. It turned out to be the most important week of my teaching career! The instructor started the workshop with three important pieces of advice worth sharing:

▸ Back up your work. There are only two kinds of computer users; those who have lost data and those who will.

▸ Save often. There is such a thing as a "Karmic Editor". The KE attacks documents in progress, no one is exempt and you may never know why.

▸ Move on. You may have something go wrong and while you are trying everything you can think of to fix the problem, it seems to fix itself. It just might be that you have no clue about how it got fixed. You have to be okay with that, count your blessings, and move on. Trying to figure out how you fixed the problem may drive you crazy.

I have carried, and honored, these three pieces of advice and they have served me well, especially in the last month.

Imagine that you have been talking up the uses of a Course Management System (CMS) to your faculty for a couple of years and finally most people have discovered the benefit of using the CMS for keeping a grade book, posting assignments and class announcements. In addition, you have a ton of online course sections running and have had no problems with anything for five wonderful years. Would you be depending on the system, maybe to a point of complacency? What if your CMS failed, suddenly, mid semester?

Just such a catastrophe happened to us during our spring break. We all came back to school to face the complete loss of our online system (we use Blackboard and host our own), which ironically happened due to a major "glitch," while our technicians were installing a much needed redundant back-up system. There were lots of reasons and circumstances that necessitated our doing this mid-semester, and we have wonderful technical folks, so I won't go into the details. Suffice it to say, that it can happen in the best of situations to really good people. This article is about what happened and lessons learned. (Remember Katrina?) Alfred

E. Neuman, in Mad Magazine, back in 1960-something, said, "Learn from the mistakes of others, because you will never live long enough to make them all yourself."

We spent a week trying to recover the data that had been lost (content entered directly into the CMS) and during that week we provided instructors with web space and assistance in posting content for students while we were in recovery mode. Our Blackboard Network Coordinator worked with our Web Master to immediately post a page, replacing our Blackboard portal, which informed students that they should check their college email. Unfortunately, it took us a couple of days to figure out that students thought their classes were postponed for a few days. We then added a note to the original "check your email" post informing them that their courses had not been cancelled

As the Faculty Distance Education Coordinator, I felt it was important to keep everyone informed about what was going on every step of the way. I sent at least three updates per day, stayed in phone and email contact with affected faculty, and assisted with securing web space and posting content as needed. I also tried to assess what people would need, should our data not be recoverable.

The data was not readily recoverable. We weren't sure, at first, how much we had lost.

After we found out the data was very likely gone, our immediate concern was to get Blackboard back up, with or without all of the course content. Students were out of touch because they couldn't access Blackboard the way they were accustomed to. We have college email for all of our students, but they don't use it much for a variety of reasons. Because we expect them to use college email, we don't have their private email addresses and have to communicate with them either through the CMS or hope that they check their email.

Prior to this, as a regular practice, some instructors demanded that students check their email several times a week and they send out announcements in the email to force students to establish access. (This is a good idea, if you rely on college email for students.)

We found out that most faculty, including me, had not consistently used the college email with students.

So, we used our automated phone system to contact all the online students reminding them to watch their email. Unfortunately, that showed us just how many students had out-dated phone information on record!

While we were waiting to hear about the data, I sent out an email suggesting that in the worst case scenario, we should, as a faculty, if we lost their work or grades, plan to do nothing to penalize students,. Whatever policy that was developed beyond that, would depend on each individual class situation and what the instructor had backed up. The reason it was only a suggestion on my part was, first I wasn't sure if anyone had lost anything, and second, we didn't have a formal policy established for the worst case scenario!

After a meeting of faculty, technicians and administrators, we decided (against my better judgment) to hold forums with faculty BEFORE we created such a policy. I was concerned that the forum process would take too long, and we would all be doing different things. My actual worry was that some instructors would give blanket credit for all work lost, and others would require students to make up everything which would result in messy conflicts. This did happen in some cases. (By the way, just to put your mind at ease, we have since recovered much of what was originally thought to be lost and were not in as horrible shape as we originally feared. Students had a lot of saved work and faculty had almost all of their data, either saved locally or institutionally archived.)

It took a little over a week to get back up and running and it took a few days to resume the rhythm of teaching and learning that is the nature of distance education. The students were, for the most part, fabulous and patient. The instructors, for the most part, were also wonderful, understanding, incredibly hard-working and committed to student success. We did receive a call from the press, which I'll elaborate on in the recommendations portion of this article.

Recommendations to Keep you Safe: Lessons Learned

Here are some practical suggestions to take into consideration now!

1. Institutional Responsibility: Develop a plan with the technicians at your college that consists of a protocol for regular back-up of your course management system. Send the plan (along with a budget pointing out the FTE generated by your program) that delineates the cost of the back up system, to your budget committee, to all of your instructional administra-

tors, and anyone else you can think of. THEN make sure the plan is implemented.

2. Faculty Responsibility: Develop a protocol for instructors, which includes a schedule for regular back up of faculty developed course content, grade book items, test banks, and anything else that may have been entered directly into the CMS. (Documents and web pages that were uploaded into a CMS are likely saved on someone's hard drive prior to up-load, but may also need to be mentioned in the faculty back-up protocol.) Train people how to accomplish content and grade book back up.

3. Senate and Administration Responsibility: It is important to develop and publish a lost work/grades policy that instructors can follow consistently and that the college will support.

4. Student Responsibility: In the syllabus and anywhere else where directions for how to be a distance education student may be found (orientation, class schedule, etc.,), describe how students will be expected to keep copies of their work and anything else that they upload into a CMS. (In my syllabus, I have directions for discussion board participation that requires students to write their posts into Word, then spell check and edit, then copy and paste into the discussion forum online. They are then advised to save all of their postings and assignments in a folder on their own computers as back-up.)

5. Use of College Sponsored Email: Make sure that you state in your syllabus that you will be using college email to contact them, and that in the event of an interruption of the CMS, you will be contacting them via that email system. Also develop a policy that is stated in the syllabus that covers lost time due to system interruption and loss of work due to any technology failure. Develop and include in the syllabus, two policies: one that covers technology failure that is at the institutional level and another for a student's technology problem.

The first two seem like obvious safety measures for anyone who uses technology; however, if your system has been stable for quite a while, you may not be paying enough attention to these issues. If you do nothing else, revisit backing up your own work! The student responsibility issue may be off your radar.

Your syllabus is the appropriate place to tell students about backing up their own work as one of their responsibilities as students in the course.

No matter what the reason, when dealing with the press, make sure you have a well thought out statement of what happened and be honest. I waited until I could be on a conference call with my Vice President of Instruction and we talked to the press together. The resulting articles served to help our students stay informed and were really well done.

Backing up data is really everyone's responsibility from the institution to the instructors to the students. We made two especially good decisions in the midst of this situation: we established one point of contact for information to the teachers, which was the faculty Distance Education Coordinator, and the Vice President of Instruction became the point administrator who stayed in close communication with the coordinator and the technicians.

Communication was critical. The academic senate presidents from both campuses were closely involved in the planning meetings and implementation of strategies for recovery. The forums that we held gave us a lot of good information about the extent of the problems, and provided some great solutions. The forums and frequent email communication kept rumor out of the mix and kept everyone focused on solutions.

I have to say, that what seemed to be a horrible mess, turned out pretty well in the end. Our Vice President of Instruction was a great help throughout the process of recovery and we wouldn't have made it without his confidence in us and his willingness to provide us with whatever support we requested. It took the cooperation of faculty, staff, students and administrators to turn around what could have been a total disaster. We are all bound to have problems. It is the nature of technology. Reflection, planning and diligence will keep technology issues from becoming disasters. All told, there are only two kinds of technology users, after all.

For comments and questions contact Pat at *pjames@ msjc.edu*

Please check out the information about the Online Teaching Conference coming in June at *http://www. cccone.org!* ∎

MOU and the Marginalization of Faculty

by Greg Gilbert

"Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

— Vince Lombardi

Have you noticed expanding roles for consultants at your college, growing ranks of administrators, the adoption of questionable memoranda of understanding and a board so fixated on a business model that you feel as though your college has been overwhelmed by foreign occupiers? If so, there is one overriding maxim:

Local senates must maintain a strong and persistent academic and professional presence.

We academicians have a traditional responsibility to safeguard the integrity of our courses and programs, and nothing less should be expected of us, particularly by capable administrators, competent boards of trustees, and the students we serve on a daily basis. Indeed, we lose our effectiveness when we passively permit those who are not classroom and subject area professionals to subsume our duties and responsibilities. Not only do such actions weaken our local effectiveness, they undermine our profession as a whole. Thus, the corollary to the above maxim is that we must work for open and productive communications at our colleges. Moreover, AB 1725 and its implementing regulations clearly institutionalize the faculty's role in many management and governance matters. For purposes of this article, then, let us consider the appropriate roles of local senates in relationship to Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and the hiring of consultants.

In brief, an MOU is an agreement between various parties that may involve policies, finances or procedures.

MOUs may affect a myriad of areas related to instruction, including but not limited to intersegmental agreements, transfer degree processes, articulation, achievement of specific performance data, achievement of specific degrees or certificates, mandated academic policies, support services for students' basic skills, workforce develop-ment, counseling and advising, distance education, tuition costs, facilities use, and the hiring of consultants.

Where such agreements concern academic and professional matters, it is imperative that local senates and administrators work cooperatively. For example, a college may sign an MOU with another system to provide lower-division coursework and facilitate transfer for upper-division students. Because such an MOU will affect advising, basic skills coordination, student services, and curriculum, among other things, a strong faculty presence is required in the agreement's formation and implementation. MOUs of this nature may make perfect sense, but it is clear that collegial consultation maximizes the institution's ability to act in a unified and well coordinated manner. Another example may be an MOU signed with a fledging technology company to equip a lab at a greatly reduced cost with unproven technology. When local senates are involved, the final product is more likely to mesh with instructional needs, resources and services—as well as allow for contingency plans should problems arise with the new technology. In some instances, colleges have established MOUs that allow for various modes of distance education, satellite television and cable programming, viewable at home or at specific sites. As with previous examples, participatory governance maximizes the opportunity for such decisions to be made with an eye toward student retention, advising, technical support, exam proctoring, and intervention strategies.

At the institutional level, MOUs may involve the hiring of consultants. In some instances, consultants can be of great assistance, particularly in areas necessitating a particular level of expertise or an investment of time that would otherwise interfere with the ongoing business of the college. Consultants may be hired to evaluate the potential environmental impact of build outs, the advisability of promoting a bond, or even the recruitment of chancellors and presidents. Even so, local senates should remain alert for agreements that intrude into areas of academic and professional interest. Examples may include the hiring of

consultants to oversee program reviews or the formulation of local master-plans, both of which bear more than a casual relationship to instruction.

Let us consider the consultant who is hired to oversee program review. For the sake of this example, suppose that the administration is rightfully concerned about the latest messages from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) concerning the importance of program review and, as a result, has placed upon the board agenda a proposal to hire a consultant to coordinate the process. A vigilant local senate president has discovered the item and makes inquiries. The administration suggests that department chairs and administrators have all the work they can handle and that the need for a consultant is genuine. How should the senate president respond?

Whether or not the administrative request for a consultant is justifiable remains, for the moment, a secondary issue. First, the senate president should remind administration that the senate must be consulted on such issues (Incidentally, "consulted" is not a synonym for "informed"). Title 5 regulation identifies areas requiring collegial consultation that include item nine, "Processes for program review," and item seven, "Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes." If a request for a consultant is placed before the board without the consent of the senate, given sufficient time, the senate president should place the issue on the next senate agenda for discussion, along with the issue of how the item was inappropriately placed on the board agenda.

To remain silent is to offer consent by omission, not only for the hiring of a consultant but in support of unilateral decision making on the part of the administration.

If there is not sufficient time to discuss the issue with the senate, then the local senate president should present a statement to the board requesting that the matter be held over to allow for consideration at the senate and consultation with the administration. Title 5 § 53203 (c) states, "While consulting collegially, the academic senate shall retain the right to meet with or appear before the governing board with respect to its views and recommendations. In addition, after consultation with the administration, the academic senate may present its recommendations to the governing board." Title 5§ 53203 (d) goes on to say: "The governing board shall adopt procedures

for responding to recommendations of the academic senate." Therefore, after everything, if the board rejects the recommendation of the senate, Title 5 Regulation requires that the board explain its decision to not accept the senate's recommendation. Naturally, regardless of the decision reached by the board, the senate should always require that its request be included in board minutes, along with the board's response. Public records of such exchanges, collected over time, may yield important insights, perhaps during accreditation visits. What matters is that there are regulations and laws which support a faculty presence in college governance, and local senates should remain proactive in academic and professional affairs.

In recent years California's community colleges have entered into a large number of MOUs and hired an unprecedented number of administrators, many from out of state, and consultants, the result being a tale of competing ideologies, one academic, the other business.

The academic model privileges faculty expertise in academic and professional matters and is essentially democratic, dialogic, and consensus oriented. The business model favors hierarchical structures and an economic bottom line. Taken together, we often see two cultures at cross purposes while seemingly in pursuit of a common mission. Because college politics can be a hornet's nest, it is easy for competing ideologies to become embroiled in struggles that have more to do with power quotients than service to students. Fortunately, there are examples where major businesses operate successfully within a collaborative paradigm, without the sacrifice of their bottom line. In academe our bottom line is student access to comprehensive and rigorous education, along with the necessary support services—in a word: quality. As for economics, faculty are fully cognizant that institutional quality cannot endure without vigilant fiscal oversight. If we are to create appropriate MOUs and employ consultants responsibly, indeed if we are to bring all of our academic and professional insights to the table, we must remain a persistent presence in our effort to engage the "occupying force" in meaningful and mutually respectful consideration of what can be accomplished together.

[For additional Senate recommendations on effective use of consultants, see November 2005's *Rostrum* article "Consultants and the 10+1" by Mark Lieu.] ■

# "Shouldn't Prerequisites be an Academic and Professional Matter?"

by Lynn Welch, Curriculum Committee Member

The breakout session at the 2006 Spring Plenary session "Shouldn't Prerequisites be an Academic and Professional Matter" reviewed the findings of a recent Academic Senate Curriculum Committee survey that sought to gather information on the status of prerequisites in the community colleges. The discussion explored the role faculty should be playing in the prerequisite process. During the breakout we heard many of the 50 attendees confirm that numerous concerns other than academics seem to influence or drive the placement of prerequisites on courses.

It was widely agreed that the current requirement to validate prerequisites interferes with the academic integrity of community college courses. In addition, many schools depend on articulation agreements with four-year institutions to dictate the placement of prerequisites. Is a mandate from a four-year institution an appropriate means of determining the academic need for a prerequisite? While such a justification for a prerequisite may often be consistent with what faculty desire, does this satisfy our need to "validate" prerequisites?

The Academic Senate Curriculum Committee asked and received feedback from the field via a survey sent out last fall. The survey asked the following basic questions:

- ‣ Are math and English prerequisites being implemented at your college for courses other than math and English, respectively?
- ‣ Have you been able to validate these prerequisites?
- ‣ If so, how were these validated? (i.e., what statistical method was employed?)
- ‣ Does your college enforce prerequisites?
- ‣ If your college either does not have math and English prerequisites for courses in other areas or it does not enforce such prerequisites, does the faculty perceive a need to alter how courses are taught as a consequence of the lack of such prerequisites?
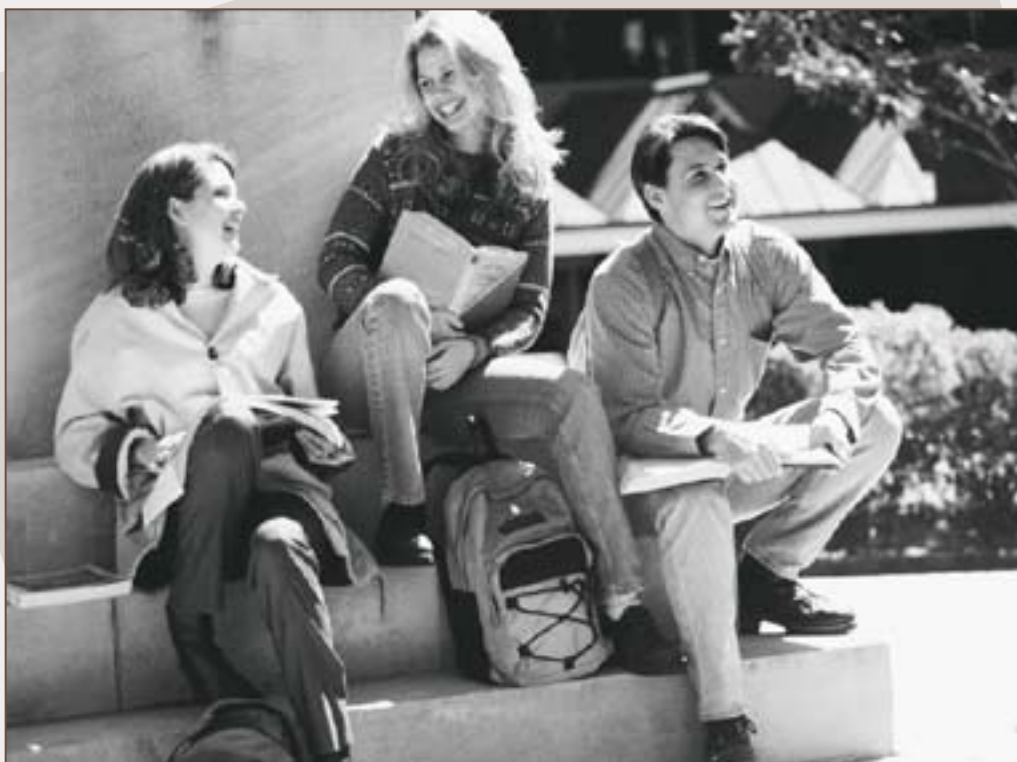
- Briefly explain how advisories are being used on your campus.
- Has your college conducted research on the impact of advisories of enrollment,
- Are enrollment concerns playing a role in the placement of prerequisites?

There were 61 total responses, including 40 Curriculum Chairs, 2 Articulation Officers, 2 Academic Senate Presidents, 10 miscellaneous faculty officers, and 7 deans, vice presidents of instruction, and various administrative staff. Here is a summary of some of the findings:

- **84.1%** said prerequisites are being used for courses other than math, composition and reading.
- Are these prerequisites validated?

    68.6% of the 49 responding to this question answered yes.

    31.4% said no.

    12 skipped the question.

- **85.5%** enforce the prerequisites.
- Does the faculty perceive a need to alter how courses are taught as a consequence of the lack of prerequisites basic skills?

    51.9% said yes;

    25.9% said no; and

    22.2% preferred not to answer.

- **53.2%** said enrollment concerns are playing a part in placement of prerequisites.

What was also apparent from the survey was a general lack of understanding of what it means to validate a prerequisite; while we may be imposing prerequisites based on a need to meet external demands, this is not a "validation" of those prerequisites. The culminating consequence of the breakout and survey results was the unanimous passage of following resolution:

9.05 S06 Examine Processes for Establishing Prerequisites

Kathy O'Connor, Santa Babara City College, Area C

Whereas, Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites, is an academic and professional matter and Title 5 §53200 establishes that faculty, through the academic senate, have the primary function of making recommendations with respect to such matters;

Whereas, The process of statistical validation of pre- and co- requisites has presented tremendous challenges, including circumstances in which faculty are unable to implement academically valid pre- and co- requisites;

Whereas, Complete and accurate student data for the purposes of statistical validation are difficult to obtain and require students to not succeed, contrary to our goal as faculty who seek to facilitate student learning regardless of student lack of preparation; and

Whereas, Non-validated pre- and co- requisites are routinely implemented at the request of outside agencies*, regardless of the ability to validate such requirements*, in violation of current policy;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the System Office to review all policies, procedures, laws, and legislation related to pre-requisites, co-requisites, and advisories, including the current validation process;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges prepare recommendations for modifying the current validation process; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges review all recommendations, including possible changes to Title 5, at the Spring 2007 Plenary Session and, if appropriate, seek to implement desired changes.

Now that the resolution has passed, the Academic Senate Executive Committee will begin the next important step of working with the System Office to review policies, procedures, laws, and legislation related to and including the validation of prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories. Furthermore, the Academic Senate will prepare recommendations for modifying the current validation process; and possible changes to Title 5, at the Spring 2007 Plenary Session.

While there are many hours of research and reflection to follow, the first important step has begun. We have admitted there is a problem and we have recognized we are not powerless and we can work to change the process. ■

We Must Be as ONE

by Greg Gilbert

> *Americans have forgotten what it takes to remain free. Instead, every ideology, every group is determined to use government to advance its agenda. As the government's power grows, the people are eclipsed.*
>
> *—Paul Craig Roberts*

To my thinking, we Americans have often taken our liberties for granted, even to the point of lethargy, until we awaken to find that they are under attack. Then, once roused, the old revolutionary zeal, reinvigorated and suddenly alert, launches us upon our midnight rides to sound the alarm.

Today, evidence of our collective awakening has begun to emerge in newspapers, magazines and on the Internet wherein faculty, administrators, trustees, and national organizations of educators are proclaiming that the free exchange of ideas and academic freedom will not be trampled by disproportionate political and corporate self-interest.

Over the past several months, the Academic Senate, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the National Education Association (NEA), the press, the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) and individual colleges and faculty leaders have raised their own alarms. One such alarm came from the Academic Senate in the form of an adopted resolution (13.01 S06) condemning federally mandated testing. This resolution was the result of a February 2006 meeting of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education in San Diego. At this meeting, Chair Charles Miller, a Texas business executive, suggested that an institution's eligibility for federal funding and student aid could become conditioned on compliance with a requirement for standardized testing.

Insofar as accreditation issues are concerned, other voices are also being raised. In a recent article in *The Berkeley Daily Planet*, J. Douglas Allen-Taylor reported that a "statewide education revolt is growing against the agency that accredits California community colleges in part because of recent actions the agency has taken against the Peralta and the Compton Community College Districts" and added that the ACCJC is "operating like a star chamber" with a "process that is out of control." In a separate article the *Daily Planet* reported that the "Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees has joined the list of educational organizations calling for a change in the accreditation process for California community colleges."

Those who share my conviction that the ACCJC has moved into an unnecessarily authoritarian and non-collegial posture may be somewhat encouraged by the articles in the *Daily Planet*. At the same time one cannot help but feel dismay that collegial peer review and accountability should have been so mishandled in California, particularly given ACCJC leader Barbara Beno's assertion that regional accreditation is all that stands between us and a federal takeover of accreditation (Community College League of California publication, *The News*, Spring 2006). Hence, while California's community colleges continue to favor regional accreditation, CFT and the Academic Senate have by recent resolutions spoken up and called for their respective organizations to "investigate possible

alternatives for evaluating and accrediting the state's community colleges" (2.03 S06). Clearly, CFT and the Academic Senate, among others, have rejected any notion that we need to accept ACCJC bullying as an alternative to federal bullying and are willing to fight for a peer review process where accountability and collegiality are not mutually exclusive.

While we are on the topic of the League's interview, it is worth noting Beno's claim that the 2002 standards were created through broad consultation with the field. Just for the record, the suggestions and concerns expressed by the Senate (on behalf of the adopted resolutions of its 58,000 members) were summarily dismissed by the ACCJC. In addition, Beno claims that the generally negative perception of the Commission in California today is not actually based on its holding colleges accountable, but, rather, she insists that it is due to bad press over the suspension of Compton's accreditation. According to Beno, the ACCJC has devoted fifteen years to working with Compton. If that is actually so, why then did the ACCJC grant Compton five years of accreditation in 1999?

Also, when questioned about the number of colleges placed on warning since she became president, Beno was not prepared to be accountable. The interviewer, however, did know the answer and said, "Since the 2002 standards were implemented, 34 colleges have undergone comprehensive reviews. Three were reaffirmed, 25 required progress reports, and six received sanctions and required progress reports."

Of course, the irony is that we can never really know if the new standards help or hinder education, as there is no evidence in support of the new standards and their "culture of evidence" actually helping anyone.

What we can know is that outcomes were provided and outcomes were collected. As to the future of accreditation, do we have any choice but to stand by our principles, our system of governance, and our defense of academic freedom? Anything less is a slippery slope toward a postsecondary version of No Child Left Behind.

In a related story, the judicial system spoke up and a large, useless test sunk into the tar pit of history with the demise of the infamous California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Simply stated, the CAHSEE, and other large tests of its ilk, provides nothing of value to students. Yes, students could take it and take it and retake it, beginning in tenth grade, but to what end? Students procrastinated until their senior year, and then passed or didn't. The collection of CAHSEE evidence provides nothing to improve the lives of students or their classroom experience. Like NCLB, it was just another example of what happens when people who know too little about education are given authority over it, which brings us to Secretary of Education Margaret Spelling's suggestion that educators need to be stripped of power and employed on the cheap.

On May 2, Reg Weaver, the President of the NEA, raised the alarm by responding to a paper released by the Secretary of Education. The paper, "Frequently Asked Questions About College Costs," proclaims that faculty are responsible for an increase in educational expenditures and advocates "a proprietary business model with part-time labor replacing professional educators." Weaver, on behalf of the NEA's 2.8 million members, wrote of the importance of faculty having primary responsibility for curriculum, and reminded Spelling that faculty work is a full-time **profession** (emphasis added), that tenure, academic due process, and faculty self-governance are essential elements in the protection and promotion of quality education. Weaver emphasized the importance of research and currency and their relationship to student success and called for "a broader and more informed discussion of the role of higher education in our society."

During the past several months, we have also seen the AAUP and citizen groups stand tall in opposition to David Horowitz and his so called "Student Bill of Rights." The AAUP discusses the importance of academic freedom in its publication *Academe* and displays on its website the "1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure." According to Free Exchange on Campus, a coalition of students, faculty, and civil liberty groups, Horowitz's latest book, *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America*, "contains numerous errors, misrepresentations, and distortions." They go on to say that the book "condemns

professors for actions that are entirely within their rights and entirely appropriate in an atmosphere that promotes the free exchange of ideas." They tell us that Horowitz's research is "sloppy in the extreme" and "manipulated to fit his arguments." According to their report, his conclusions are based on two faulty premises: "that America's colleges and universities are failing to ensure students' academic freedom, and that students lack the critical-thinking skills they need to engage with controversial ideas and decide what they believe for themselves." Indeed, if there is evidence that disputes our failing to ensure students' academic freedom, it may be readily found in our vociferous refutation of Horowitz's thinly veiled campaign to stifle intellectual discourse in our colleges and universities. Surely, we must be heartened by the NEA, the AAUP, the Academic Senate, and the raised voices of various citizen groups.

While we value the efforts of representative organizations, we must also remember to honor the efforts of our local senate leaders. While it is one thing to lift up one's voice within a chorus, it is quite another to speak out as a lone faculty leader at the local level. In recent months it has been my honor to speak with various local college leaders, faculty from a number of colleges, who because they have dared to speak truth to power have had their reputations smeared, their intentions attacked, and their efforts misrepresented and distorted. Yet they persevere. Though their health and personal lives suffer, they persevere.

While it is inappropriate to mention them or their colleges by name, I can say that our profession is rich with those who defend academic freedom and the faculty's primacy in academic and professional matters.

From my perspective as an Academic Senate officer, I see the contributions that these individuals make every day and I am humbled to know people such as these. Without their principled and courageous stands at the local level, the Academic Senate would be unable to continue its work of upholding the cause of academic freedom for all to see.

Beyond the contributions of faculty, there is the sustaining strength of system unity. In my work with the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum (SACC) and other system-wide and intersegmental com-

mittees, I have learned that academic freedom and the defense of AB1725 are ideals embraced by our System Office, the CIOs and CEOs. Repeatedly, I have witnessed examples where administrators and system leaders have stood resolutely in defense of the faculty's primacy on areas related to instruction and curriculum. One noteworthy example involves the ongoing discussion of the Academic Senate's resolution to increase graduation standards in math and English. While each representative constituency has stated its own set of concerns and questions, to its credit, our system has worked cooperatively to seek mutually satisfactory conclusions. I am proud of our Chancellor for recognizing and supporting the faculty's primacy, and I salute those CIOs, CSSOs, CEOs and Trustees who have recognized the need for our system to both raise standards and maintain access. This is an example of how principles and pragmatism can work in unison.

As the cliché goes, "We are all in this together," and there has never been a more important time for our system to close ranks. Today, our greatest challenges require that we not expend our energies on internal turf struggles but, rather, that we prepare to work in unison to preserve the academic freedom that we hold so dear.

Together, we must strive for balance within our system, a balance that is analogous to that which is so vital within the branches of our national government

Indeed, each one of us has an obligation to speak out and add to our collective pool of courage, if we are to retain our ability to prepare students for participation in a democratic society.

By continuing to raise the alarm and by striving to strengthen the unity of our system, we are doing patriots' work. Through our efforts, California may yet hold back the dark night of federal accreditation, standardization, and corporate greed and be as a beacon to others. ■

Legislative Advocacy

So That We Can "Get There"

by Dan Crump, Chair of the ASCCC Legislative & Governmental Relations Committee

I t is still a busy time in Sacramento. By the time this article gets to you, we will be involved with many legislative and governmental issues. The Governor's May Revise of the state budget has been released and there will be hearings and discussions (and yes, deals) in regards to it. Legislation has finished being proposed for this session, but it is now time for us to interact with legislators and their staff about these bills and their effects on our constituencies. And we have primary and general elections coming up.

The Legislative & Governmental Relations Committee presented two breakouts at our recent Plenary Session. The first one provided updates on state and federal legislation affecting faculty. As I have mentioned before, things are constantly changing at the Capitol, so please check the legislative page of the Senate's website (*http://www.academicsenate. cc.ca.us/Legislative/Legislative. htm*) for the latest information and updates on bills, including handouts that were provided at the breakout. We will also be emailing Legislative Updates and

Alerts to local senate presidents to keep you apprised of the issues.

The other breakout was a discussion about how faculty

leaders can be more effective legislative advocates. One of the goals of the Legislative Committee is to inform local faculty leadership about legislative issues of concern to community colleges, especially in the areas of academic and professional matters. The next step is to take this information and use it to educate our legislators and their staff about the faculty perspective on these issues. I wanted this breakout to present "two sides of the coin"—how to best deliver the faculty message and how that message is received by the legislators. I was privileged to have two Capitol insiders joining me on the panel to provide their insights—Nancy Hatamiya, chief of staff for Assemblymember Pedro Nava, and Jonathan Lightman, executive director of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges. Both of them talked about the value of developing both relationships and coalitions with legislators. Communication is vitally important—we need to do this all the time, not just in times of crisis. We heard about the effectiveness of mail (snail or email) over phone calls (but any form of action is preferable over nothing at all). Writing op/ed pieces and letters to the editor was encouraged—the "power of the press." We need to invite legislators to our classrooms, libraries, counseling centers and other areas so that they can see how we work with students on a daily basis to facilitate student success. What a wealth of information we learned from these two!

This will be the year of statewide elections in both June and November, voting on a variety of candidates and issues. And we will be seeing, hearing and reading a lot of ads about these issues and candidates. We had our own little taste of elections at Session with the election of officers and executive committee members.

It was also my turn for re-election to the executive committee. While we candidates do not participate in debates like many of the statewide candidates do, we Academic Senate candidates do give a speech about our hopes and aspirations. I want to end this article with an excerpt from my speech. I can tie it in (very tangentially) with the statewide elections, for this excerpt of my speech refers to "The Sound of Music," a musical and movie that is set in Governor Schwarzenegger's homeland of Austria.

I want to share with you some of "My Favorite Things." These halls are alive with the "Sound of the Senate." The Academic Senate always seems to be doing "Something Good" and we learn to "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" to fulfill our dreams about academic and professional matters. I am not always clean and bright like "Edelweiss," and I do get exhausted sometimes because I am not "Sixteen Going On Seventeen." It is not always as simple as "Do Re Mi" and sometimes I feel like the "Lonely Goatherd" in trying to explain our position to people. Other groups might shake their heads and wonder how to solve "A Problem Like the Senate," but "I Have Confidence" that our views will prevail. So with that, I say "Goodbye, Farewell" auf wiedersehen, adieu. And I ask for a vote from you. (Hey, I told you it was an election speech!). ∎