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SENATEROSTRUM



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THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Engineering 101: What Faculty Need to Know About Advising Engineering Students

CHAR PERLAS, MISSION COLLEGE, MESA DIRECTOR/COUNSELOR, COUNSELING AND LIBRARY FACULTY ISSUES COMMITTEE

“California’s colleges and universities have great engineering programs and the capacity to produce more engineers. Our challenge is getting more students into these programs and ready for the job opportunities that await them after graduation”

—Governor Schwarzenegger, 2007

The Governor’s proposal to bring 20,000 new engineers to California’s workforce includes a plan to establish new engineering programs at both California State Universities and University of California campuses, as well as to fund new apprenticeship programs that partner private industry and California Community Colleges (CCC). As a result, CCC’s will likely see an increase in students pursuing degrees in Engineering. What can we, as CCC faculty, do to prepare ourselves and these students to meet the State’s needs? In an effort to support the Governor’s goal, this article provides CCC faculty an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the various components involved in assisting students to successfully transfer into Baccalaureate Degree engineering programs.

Rick Ainsworth, Director of the Center for Excellence in Engineering and Diversity at UCLA, expresses the following concern: “The barrier that our transfer students frequently cite is the lack of proper counseling and guidance for the engineering and computer science major.” While the “lack of proper counseling” may stem from the student’s own failure to seek such assistance, such complaints remind us that counseling students is always a challenge as transfer institutions change

policies, students change their minds, and some majors are just more complicated than others. Although many CCC counseling faculty appropriately advise engineering students that IGETC (the UC general education pattern) is not the appropriate guide to follow, that engineering degree requirements vary from university to university, and that *www.assist.org* may not provide the most up-to-date information, CCC faculty may not be aware of all the nuances that accompany the ability to properly inform engineering students of their transfer requirements.

The faculty, those both teaching and advising these students, should work to see that students pursuing this in-demand major understand the complexities of their chosen transfer path and seek the guidance they need.

#1 Ask Questions!

Faculty who teach courses that are designed for the student who intends to go on in engineering should learn who their students are—and encourage those with transfer plans to meet with a counselor to ensure proper course planning. In order for counselors to properly advise engineering students, counselors must first obtain information from the student. Counselors need to ask specific questions relating to intended transfer institution and interested emphasis so they may be able to identify the required courses needed for transfer.

Resources such as www.collegeboard.com, <http://www.discoverengineering.org/>, and the US Department of Labor can provide students with overviews of careers in engineering that might assist the student in identifying an emphasis. Additionally, career sites such as www.roadtripnation.com allow students to view streaming video of interviews with people such as Mary Bell, VP of Logistics for Caterpillar, and Michael Dell, CEO and Founder of Dell Computers.



#2 Inform students to commence Physics and Calculus Sequences Early

Once the student has acknowledged his/her degree objective and transfer institution, specific classes needed for transfer can be identified.

All engineering students are urged to begin their calculus and physics sequences early in their academic career as these courses are the foundation courses required for most engineering majors.

Faculty who encounter these students in the classroom should reinforce this message, as well as facilitate student access to counseling by encouraging students to make appointments for advisement, as well as inviting counselors to present transfer requirements to students in appropriate courses.

#3 Identify and use current resources

In efforts to accurately identify additional required courses, the current college catalog of the transfer institution should be used as a primary resource. Current catalogs can be found online via <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/> for UC, <http://www.calstate.edu/> for CSU, and <http://www.aiccumentor.org/>

About- Mentor/schools.asp for California private universities. Although the college catalog will not contain articulation agreements specific to the institution, by using the catalog, counselors can then compare the requirements to those listed in www.assist.org. At some institutions, degree requirements change on an annual basis, so, by cross-referencing the college catalog with www.assist.org, counselors can feel confident that they are providing the student with the most up-to-date information possible. Additionally, depending on the popularity of the engineering program at the intended transfer institution, certain institutions may revise their departmental admissions procedures. Contacting the engineering departments directly has assisted counselors in gathering current admissions information.

Sound like a lot of work? It is, and with the rise of new engineering programs throughout the state, it will most likely become even more complex. Although advising engineering students can be a complicated and time consuming task, taking steps to ensure the reliability of the advice being given to the student is invaluable. ■

California Community College (CCC) General Education (GE) Advanced Placement (AP) List

DAVE DEGROOT, ARTICULATION OFFICER, ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER AD HOC COMMITTEE

Why Have Systemwide Advanced Placement (AP) Policies and Procedures?

The number of students enrolling at California Community College (CCC) campuses with AP scores and requesting “course” and general education “area” credit for these scores is ever-increasing and the current budget climate is sure to lead to even more UC and CSU-bound students beginning their higher education at CCCs. Of the estimated 2.7 million students who graduated from U.S. public schools in 2006, 406,000 (14.8 %) earned an AP Exam grade of 3 or higher on one or more AP Exams while in high school. This is up from 14.1% for the class of 2005 and 10.2 % for the class of 2000. (College Board Press Release 02/06/07) While there may be disagreement among faculty as to whether a score of 3 is truly predictive of college success or indicative of having learned the equivalent of what is accomplished in an introductory college level course, we are seeing more and more students with credit-worthy AP scores who are desirous of credit for their work and we are obligated to grant such credit in a thoughtful and unbiased manner. While we can toil away in our college-based silos and develop our own approach to handling AP scores, wouldn't it be far simpler to adopt one policy that has undergone systemwide scrutiny and is consistent with our transfer partners? Wouldn't a system approach to AP policies and procedures just simplify our lives?

Not only would a system approach simplify our lives, it would simplify the lives of our students.

As we well know, community college students often attend more than one college and the awarding of AP credit differs notably among and between community colleges. The ultimate question is how can we provide our students the benefit of systemwide standardized AP policies and procedures while preserving the autonomy of the discipline faculty who are responsible for determining AP course equivalencies.

Why a CCC GE AP List

Now that there is an IGETC AP list as well as a CSU GE AP list and both transfer AP lists are aligned, it seems only logical to have a CCC GE AP list that is also aligned with the transfer GE AP lists. A systemwide CCC GE AP list could provide students and counselors a clear and consistent reference as to how AP scores can be applied for general education at all of the 109 colleges. As all CCC campuses are required to have the same minimum GE requirements for an Associate Degree (Title 5 § 55063. Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree), establishing a common process for awarding GE credit for AP should be quite simple.

Currently, students may receive associate degree general education credit at one college but not at another because there is no course equivalency at the second college or the faculty have not established an AP GE “area” equivalency.

If a CCC GE AP list is instituted, students will know that regardless of which of the 109 CCC campuses they choose to attend, or how many CCC campuses they attend, their AP will fulfill the same general education requirement at every college regardless if a “course” equivalency exists or not.

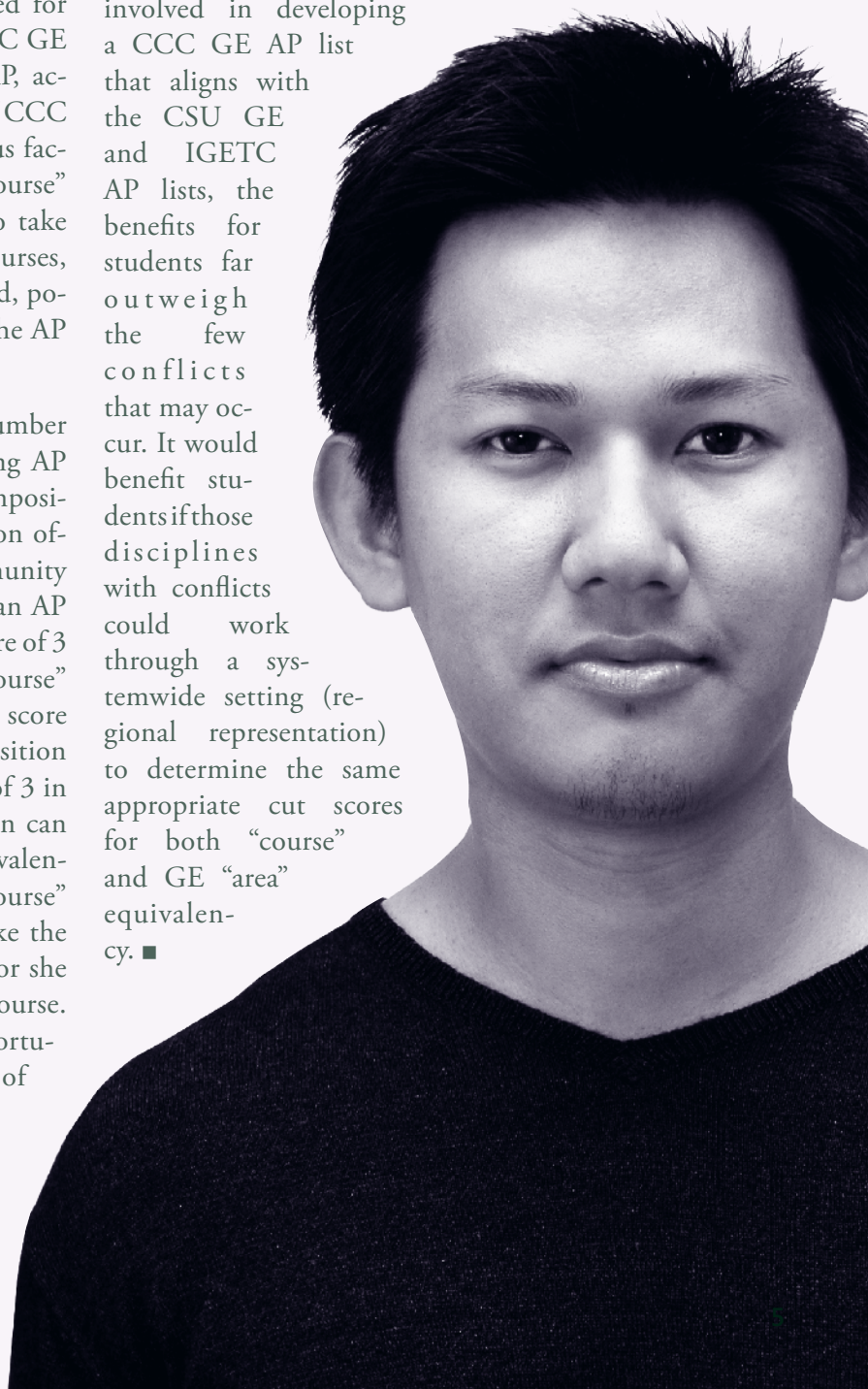
The challenge with instituting a systemwide GE AP list is that there may be conflicts between what individual campus faculty determine are acceptable AP scores for their campus “course” equivalencies and the cut score determined for the CCC GE “area” equivalency. If the CCC GE AP list, like the CSU GE and IGETC AP, accepts scores of 3 or higher for fulfillment of CCC GE “area” equivalencies and specific campus faculty require an AP cut score of 4 for “course” equivalency, the student may be forced to take the course if it is a prerequisite for other courses, ceasing to benefit from his/her AP work and, potentially, re-learning what was covered in the AP course.

Such a dilemma currently occurs on a number of CCC campuses with respect to awarding AP credit for the first semester of English composition. In a recent survey of CCC articulation officers with 70 of the 109 California Community Colleges responding, 58 colleges required an AP English Language and Composition cut score of 3 for their freshman English composition “course” equivalency. At a college that requires a cut score of 4 for the first semester English composition course equivalency, a student with a score of 3 in the AP English Language and Composition can receive CSU GE and IGETC GE ‘area’ equivalencies, but not the first semester English “course” equivalency. If such a student wants to take the next level English composition course, he or she will have to take the first semester English course. Although this is an unfortunate situation, fortunately it is not the norm for the majority of CCC campuses.

Local discipline faculty are encouraged to consider the impact on students as they establish cut scores so as to not create unintended complexities for students.

If there is a desire to establish a higher cut score for course equivalencies, be sure that this is academically justified.

Although there are challenges involved in developing a CCC GE AP list that aligns with the CSU GE and IGETC AP lists, the benefits for students far outweigh the few conflicts that may occur. It would benefit students if those disciplines with conflicts could work through a systemwide setting (regional representation) to determine the same appropriate cut scores for both “course” and GE “area” equivalency. ■



Predicting, Planning, and Compensating: Weathering the Changing Climate in California's Community Colleges

MICHELLE PILATI, CHAIR, COUNSELING AND LIBRARY FACULTY ISSUES COMMITTEE

While the skies outside may have been cloudy, the mood inside the Costa Mesa Westin was far from it as counseling faculty came together to participate in an Academic Senate-hosted institute designed just for them in late February. As the program highlighted, the need for counseling faculty, while ever-present, is even more so when times are tough:

As the California Community Colleges confront the “perfect storm” and prepare for “tidal wave II,” our counseling faculty stand ready to deal with the changing demographics in our state and their impact on education. Like weather forecasts, our predictions may not be accurate, but we can plan for change and compensate when the weather takes a turn for the worse. The counseling faculty, due to their close contact with students, are tasked with responding to sudden climate changes, expected to be the first to notice the rain, and able to adjust the temperature as needed. Counseling faculty must detect, respond to, and effect change.

The institute began with our able president, Mark Wade Lieu, making the mess that is the state's status seem amusing, despite our many challenges.

His overview of the state of our state provided the perfect foundation for the event which really offered participants a vast array of topics to explore (please see www.asccc.org to find out more). Following Mark's opening, Linda Michalowski (Vice Chancellor, Student Services and Special Programs, System Office) offered the System Office's perspective on things. Despite all that had already been addressed, she offered some additional food for thought. She spoke of how obtaining financial aid can be a seemingly insurmountable burden for students and mentioned a publication published in late 2007 entitled “Green Lights and Red Tape—Improving Access to Financial Aid at California's Community Colleges” (http://www.ticas.org/files/pub/Green_Lights_Red_Tape.pdf).

If we are really concerned about student success, shouldn't we be ensuring that they are readily able to access all the financial assistance to which they are entitled?

I would suggest that we should all seek to begin a dialogue locally about student access to services and support—are we doing all that we can

to be sure that our students get the aid that they need—and that is available to them? It should not be only those in “student services” who care about our students receiving the services they need—this should be a concern of all faculty, of all the colleges.

On the positive side, Linda spoke about a unique program at Victor Valley. They have developed a “bridge program” which, as Linda described it, eliminates the ability of high school students to opt out of college-going. Without looking into the details of what this entails, I hope we can all agree that any program that presents college as a no-brainer must-do is a great one. Our next challenge is ensuring that students realize that college is above and beyond high school and that there are skills that they really must obtain before leaving K-12 in order to not forever be lagging behind their colleagues. In this era when we are focused on basic skills and transfer, I think it is important to also remind ourselves of our obligation to meet other student needs—and to bring more students to our colleges.

While I could probably fill an entire *Rostrum* with lessons learned, great experiences, and general musings based on the Counseling Faculty Institute, I do not want to succumb to that indulgence (and no one would permit me to anyhow). Our mission in offering this institute was to provide a professional development opportunity to counseling faculty, and to remind them of the role that the senate, statewide and locally, can and should play in helping them to serve students effectively.

Participants were encouraged to draft resolutions where they were called for—and reminded of existing Academic Senate documents that might aid them in their work.

As it is an on-going issue on most campuses, a general session was dedicated to a discussion of the “50% law” that requires that 50% of Proposition 98 funds be spent on the direct costs of instruction.

Following an overview of the history and challenges of the law, the discussion was opened up to the room—and a lively discussion it was. I hope that everyone learned a little something—and thought about this issue in a new way. What was apparent to me was the obvious disconnect between ensuring that students have access to counseling faculty and being desirous of faculty involvement in shared governance—yet counseling and release time are both on the “other” side of the 50% law. What was also apparent is that there is no easy solution, but that this is a topic worthy of much more conversation.

At the end of the institute, participants were likely dizzy with Title 5, counseling athletes/transfer students/international students/online/special populations, SLOs, BSI, assessment, SB70, and the many new contacts they made. I have honestly never seen a group that enjoyed having a chance to connect more. A long-term outcome that I hope to see is more counseling faculty on the Academic Senate committees—and at future Senate events. There is no Academic Senate initiative that can succeed without the active participation of our student services colleagues—they truly offer a unique perspective that benefits us all.

Next year the Senate will again hold the Counseling Institute February 20-22, 2009, in the North. However, next year the institute will also include librarians. Please inform your counseling and library faculty and ask them to mark their calendar for this exciting event. ■

As the Degree Turns—Notes to Minimize the Drama of Getting your Compliant Degrees Approved

MICHELLE PILATI, CO-CHAIR, SYSTEM ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM (SACC)

Alas, the soap opera continues as colleges submit their shiny new—and hopefully compliant—degrees to the Chancellor’s Office. While we know those bold and beautiful new degrees, submitted by the young and restless faculty, have been designed with all my children in mind, we wait, on the edge of night, as their fate is determined. Stephanie Low, their fearless recipient in the Chancellor’s Office, in the interest of avoiding General Hospital, has resorted to providing an automatic response to requests for reviews of draft degrees. The tips that follow are based on this memorandum, as well as unofficial conversations regarding degrees. As we all have but one life to live, I hope they will simplify yours.

Truth in Advertising I—Titles

Degree titles should be informative and accurate. The Academic Senate adopted position is that “transfer” is not an appropriate title for a degree—transfer is what a student intends to do, it is not something that one studies. Suggested degree titles for your degrees that would have an area of emphasis include General Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, Liberal Arts, or Liberal Arts & Sciences. With the “truth in advertising” concept in mind, degrees bearing the “Interdisciplinary Studies” designation would need to offer areas of emphasis that mandate interdisciplinary course selections. And an area of emphasis in “Mathematics and Science” would need to require courses in both mathematics and science. Per the Chancellor’s Office, the “Liberal Studies” title should be reserved for degrees that prepare students for the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential baccalaureate degree.

Truth in Advertising II—Descriptions

If a proposed degree is intended for transfer, this should be stated. If it is not, this should also be clearly stated. Any degree that does not require either IGETC or the CSU GE pattern and a major or area of emphasis that consists of transferable courses should not be identified as a degree designed for students who intend to transfer. If your degree is intended for transfer, make sure that the general education options are clearly indicated.

As you develop new degrees, why not also review your old degrees? Do you have degrees that claim to be designed for transfer, yet truly do not serve the student well? Why not consider a review of all degrees—with an eye to preventing students from being misled? An example—a major in psychology that is intended to prepare students for transfer would generally not consist of 18 units of psychology courses, nor a sociology major consist solely of sociology courses. Where only a limited number of lower division courses in the major are needed for transfer, support courses should be identified and incorporated into that major. A review of the requirements of transfer institutions will help inform the determinations made by discipline faculty as new degrees are developed or old ones refined. And be sure to bring your articulation officer and counseling faculty into the conversation—their guidance is essential.

Truth in Advertising III—And then what?

A major of area of emphasis is not merely a list of courses—it is a list of courses that are being packaged together for an academic reason—not to merely provide a means for a student to inadvertently earn a degree without even trying. Just as there are goals associated with a

major and a description, there should be the same for areas of emphasis. Just as you would develop program level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for a major, you should have such SLOs for an area of emphasis. Keeping this in mind may help as you structure your degrees. Here are Stephanie's words on the topic:

The courses in an area of emphasis must have a clear relationship that represents a pattern of learning (pursuant to Title 5 §55061). In order to convey this relationship, there needs to be a description for each area of emphasis. The description should identify the main focus of this area of emphasis. Example:

ARTS & HUMANITIES: *These courses emphasize the study of cultural, literary, humanistic activities and artistic expression of human beings. Students will evaluate and interpret the ways in which people through the ages in different cultures have responded to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation.*

Avoid Amnesia

While this should be very old news now, a reminder is called for—general education transfer patterns do not satisfy the requirement for a major or area of emphasis. A degree is GE **PLUS** a major or area of emphasis, and whatever other requirements have been established locally (and other state mandates). While the student can now get a Certificate of Achievement for completing IGETC or the CSU GE, that does not mean that this Certificate can be combined with your local GE to earn a degree.

Major vs Area of Emphasis

While you may be hard-pressed to see the difference, it is there. I think there is a general understanding as to what a “major” is, as these are not new. The idea is that an area of emphasis may be broader than a major. It might allow the undecided student more options than a traditional major—providing the student with a tailored learning experience, but with more choices than would normally be available in a major. Here are Stephanie's words on the subject:

An area of emphasis is considered to be a broader group of courses and may be defined as 18 units in related fields intended to prepare a student for a particular major at the four-year institution or to prepare a student for a particular field as defined by the community college. An area of emphasis is similar to patterns of learning that a student in the first two years of attendance at a four-year institution might follow in order to explore an area of interest as a possible major. However, the composition of the associate degree cannot be so broad that it lacks focus. Title 5 §55061 discusses the philosophy of the associate degree and needs to be considered while developing an area of emphasis. Please note that this section specifically states that the associate degree must “represent more than an accumulation of units.” It goes on to describe certain capabilities and insights that students are expected to develop while completing the degree requirements.

We are also looking for titles and descriptions for these areas of emphasis that represent the capabilities and insights that students will gain.

The proposed area of emphasis must list courses from which the student chooses to complete a minimum of 18 semester units (27 quarter units). This should not include any units that are described as “general education” courses or as “recommended” electives.

Keep it Simple

An added complexity that some are introducing to the process of getting new degrees approved is seeking approval for both AA and AS degrees. While there is nothing wrong with this, be sure your submission is clear. Provide documentation explaining what an AA and an AS are at your college—as we all know these vary widely.

The Days of our Lives

Hopefully developing new degrees has resulted in some beneficial conversations on your campus. While the timeline imposed on us for modifying our degrees is a challenge, colleges seem to be rising to it—and the result will be new opportunities for our students. ■

Marketing Our Colleges: WhoDoUWant2B?

JANE PATTON, PROJECT DIRECTOR, STATEWIDE CAREER PATHWAYS: SCHOOL TO COLLEGE ARTICULATION

Athletic directors who recruit student athletes often remind the rest of the college that when the athletes enroll, they do not only enroll in their sport; they also take courses across the campus, such as general education, fulfilling requirements for degrees and for transfer. So any athletic recruitment effort actually benefits the whole college.

If this axiom is true, then any targeted marketing or outreach effort to potential college students can bring enrollment not only to one program but also to the whole college. In February, the Academic Senate-led SB 70 project launched a statewide marketing campaign called **WhoDoUWant2B**. Its purpose is to encourage teens to plan for their futures by considering the many Career Technical Education (CTE) opportunities in our state's public high schools, Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCPs) and community colleges.

You already may be aware of the SB 70 *Statewide Career Pathways: Creating School to College Articulation* project, (see www.statewidepathways.org and the March 2007 *Rostrum*) which has developed the infrastructure for articulation between high schools, ROCPs and our colleges. The project's Steering Committee determined that in addition to creating the articulation processes, what was also needed was a comprehensive, professional statewide marketing campaign to stimulate in-

terest in CTE in California. Thus was born the **WhoDoUWant2B** campaign.

The project contracted with a Sacramento firm, Runyon Saltzman & Einhorn, Inc. to develop and execute a CTE awareness and outreach campaign, targeting California students, parents and educators. It includes internal components (e.g. informational materials for secondary teachers and counselors) as well as the external marketing components explained in this article. The goal is to increase interest in CTE and career opportunities, encourage students to enroll in secondary and community college courses, and ensure that California's working families are aware of CTE opportunities. All of the components of the campaign are intended to drive traffic to the new website **WhoDoUWant2B.com**.

The advertising components of the campaign include radio ads for teens and for Spanish-speaking parents, web banner ads, search engine optimization and in-line text advertising.

The website is student-focused and interactive and provides self-exploration of CTE, career options, high school, ROCP and community college programs, and links to public institutions and financial aid information.

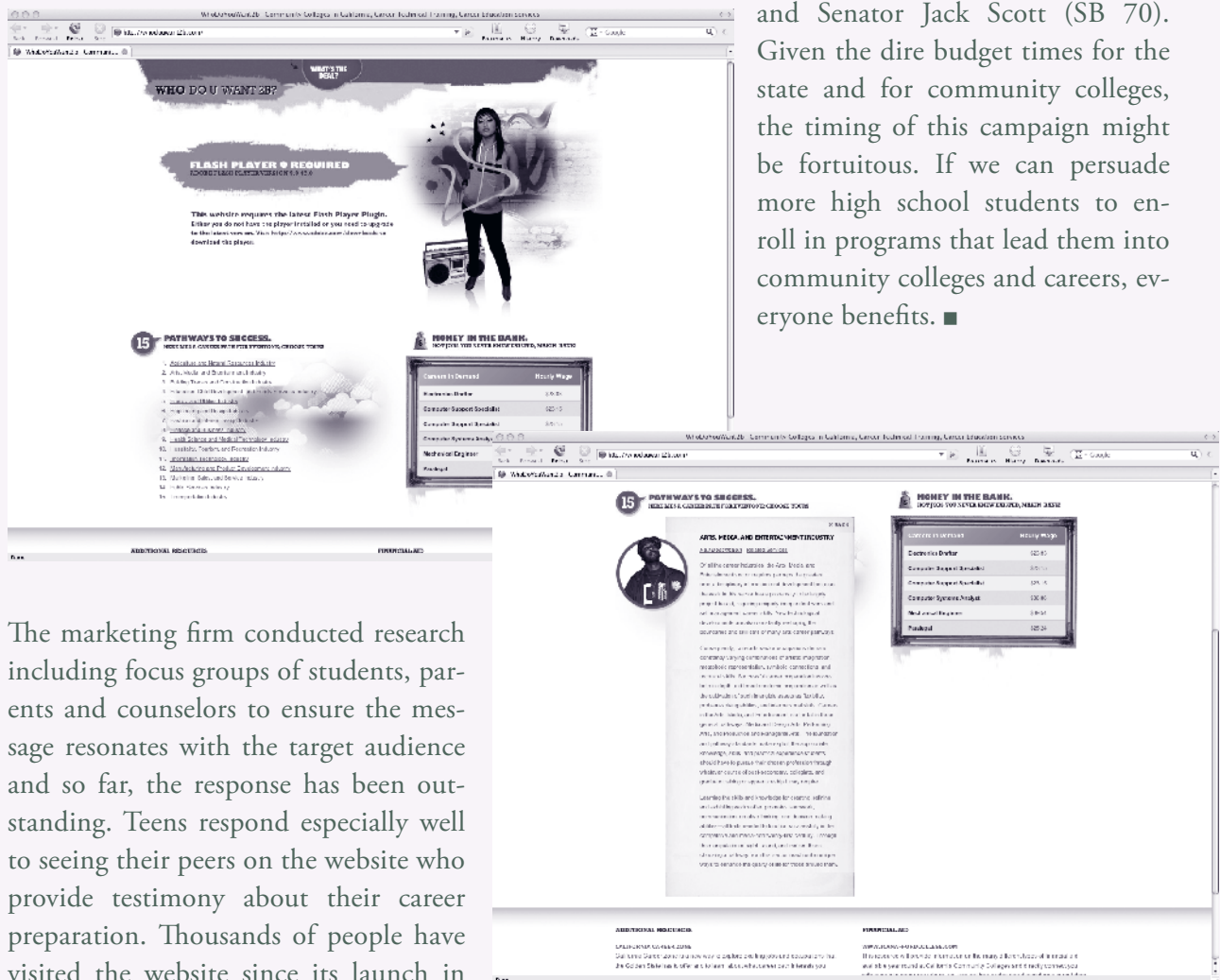
It is not intended to be a comprehensive career-exploration website, as there are many excellent resources that do that already. Instead, it intends to be simple and motivational. If you haven't looked at **WhoDoUWant2B.com** yet, I encourage you to have a look at it—now and in coming months, as new features will be added.

There is an effort to coordinate the campaign efforts with compatible campaigns, such as the *I Can Afford College* Community College Financial Aid Awareness Campaign. In addition, links are being provided to appropriate websites, such as CaliforniaCareerZone.org, Eureka and FastWeb.com.

February, and the advertising (web banners and radio) has already proven successful at reaching the target audience.

By developing the infrastructure for secondary-postsecondary articulation and launching the outreach campaign, the *Statewide Career Pathways: Creating School to College Articulation* project hopes to accomplish the vision laid out by Governor Schwarzenegger

(the Governor's Initiative on Economic Development and Career Technical Education) and Senator Jack Scott (SB 70). Given the dire budget times for the state and for community colleges, the timing of this campaign might be fortuitous. If we can persuade more high school students to enroll in programs that lead them into community colleges and careers, everyone benefits. ■



The marketing firm conducted research including focus groups of students, parents and counselors to ensure the message resonates with the target audience and so far, the response has been outstanding. Teens respond especially well to seeing their peers on the website who provide testimony about their career preparation. Thousands of people have visited the website since its launch in

Board Policies: The Perfect Storm

BETH SMITH, SOUTH REPRESENTATIVE

If you are reading this article, then you are already too far gone into the oblivion known as “board policies” to ever return to normal. The tornado of whirling policies, procedures, and drafts attempts to suck you up to new levels of frustration and arduous efforts. Fear not, however; the updraft takes you just where you and your senate need to be. The tornado will drop you in a new location, and after the rebuilding, every indicator will point to the new location as being safer and better.

Board policies provide the most direct way for academic senates to exert influence on academic and professional matters. These policies shape the way the district will treat students, employees, respond to accreditation, fulfill the mission statement, and more. They communicate the philosophy and intent of the local governing board regarding the educational experience for students, as well as all the other operations of the district. Discussions of philosophy are the perfect time for academic senates to participate and contribute to development of ideals and values for educational experiences and student success. If the policies directly deal with academic and professional matters, then the board must consult with the senate per local agreements (rely primarily or mutual agreement). Beyond those defined areas for consultation, senates and boards will want to engage in dialog about many of the philosophies guiding the policies for the district.

The review of old and the development of new board policies is work—tedious and focused work. Even with a regular cycle for review, as required by the accreditation standards, there are so many policies and so little time. But the academic senate can prioritize the policies that influence academic and professional matters, and direct energies toward perfecting these policies. With new revisions of Title 5 adopted, and more soon-to-be adopted by the Board of Governors, a review and update of many current board policies should be on the agenda of local governance committees and councils in the fall.

And while these revisions will be on the radar of most administrators, now is a good time for senates to bring forward other recommendations while the door is open to discuss policies. Almost every paper written and adopted by the Academic Senate has ideas or examples of board policies applicable to that topic. For example, the paper about minors on campus has sample board policies for important issues regarding minors, and the recent paper about academic integrity also has recommendations for policies that call for the creation of a climate of honor and respect, keeping in mind the authority of faculty to assign grades.

To assist with the actual wording and legal considerations for board policies, the Community College League of California (CCLC) has provided policy templates for member districts. These templates provide key words, references to laws and regulations, plus draft procedures for the policies too. Each governing board, in consultation with constituent groups, will be able to tailor the templates to fit local needs and goals aligned with the mission statement. In the future, it would be helpful if the CCLC called upon the Academic Senate for consultation on the templates in order to expedite the work of local senates. Even asking the Academic Senate to help identify which of the policies fall under the purview of the senate would greatly assist local senates. Perhaps a resolution will be forthcoming calling for a conversation between the Academic Senate and CCLC for improved board policy templates.

In the meantime, prepare for the windstorm of revisions to your local policies because of the revisions to Title 5. Many of the changes directly fall under the purview of the senate, so plan now for the number of local policies that need to be developed or rewritten, and how the senate will recommend changes through your local consultative process. The tornado will have left you in a better place because faculty are proactively engaged to create academically sound procedures and experiences for students. ■

“...Like a Bridge Over Troubled Waters”

(With gratitude to Simon and Garfunkel for their inspiration)

ANDREA SIBLEY-SMITH AND THE AD HOC NONCREDIT COMMITTEE

What do the following community college students have in common?

***Steve's life was one of trying** to survive. He dropped out of high school and a wrong move in the wrong crowd ended with him serving time. He has now turned his life around by realizing what education could give him when he enrolled in a noncredit adult high school diploma program at his local community college. Through the encouragement of his family, peers and noncredit teachers and counselor, he successfully attained his high school diploma with a 3.0 grade point average and is now attending credit classes at his local community college.*

***Carmen first started learning English** in 2001 at a noncredit ESL program at her local community college and is now helping others learn as a volunteer. She is a mother, wife and works part-time while taking ESL classes three days a week. Carmen is now attending credit classes at her local community college to further her education.*

***Miryam was an immigrant** and a young married mother who worked in a fast food restaurant. She began taking noncredit ESL classes at a community college, and then took classes at the noncredit adult high school diploma program at the same college. She received her diploma in June 2005, and then enrolled in the noncredit Pharmacy Technician Certificate program also at the same college. She successfully earned her Certificate and will work as a Pharmacy Technician while taking credit classes at the same college, in order to complete the Nursing Program. She eventually wants to continue her education to become a doctor.*

***Vinrey was a 22 year-old mother** who dropped out of high school and works two minimum wage jobs. A caring person supported her return to school and she earned her high school diploma in a local noncredit high school diploma program at a local community college. This noncredit adult high school diploma program had a special “transition to college program” called ACE—“Adult College Entry.” This noncredit to credit transition program helped her to learn to navigate the entry process into college life as well as how to be a successful college student. Vinrey is taking noncredit vocational classes in the noncredit medical assistant program and now her goal is to graduate from the same college in credit classes for a career in nursing.*

There are thousands of stories like these happening every day. Like one in four AS/AA degree earners statewide, these students began their educational journey into credit classes at a community college by starting in noncredit instructional programs.¹ Using noncredit as “a bridge over troubled waters” and life obstacles is an important steppingstone to a college education for many lacking basic skills, high school diplomas, English language proficiency, vocational training and the ability to compete in today's global economy. These students are mostly working adults with families and life obligations; high percentages are disadvantaged and minorities, and are not yet ready or able to embark on the community college journey. These

¹ Smith, Leslie, 2006. *Noncredit: The Educational Gateway*. City College of San Francisco. A PowerPoint presentation to the Board of Governors on July 9, 2006, California Community Colleges: Sacramento. Available at https://www.ccsf.edu/Offices/Government_Affairs/.

students need the flexibility of embarking on this educational journey with noncredit or adult education classes. These classes are free, open entry/open exit, accessible, with flexible hours and ability to repeat a course when needed, such as with changing work schedules or childcare issues.

It's important to note that not all noncredit students have transitioning into credit as a goal. Some may be learning English to get a better job or to function better in the community. Some are increasing their job skills and earning noncredit certificates that certify them for employment in a career field. Others are taking a variety of classes for lifelong learning. But this article will concentrate solely on the critical role noncredit can play as a steppingstone to a college education and further vocational training.

The troubled water that so many potential students are navigating now is captured in the glaring statistics and warnings² that have all of us in the educational field so concerned:

- ◆ A statewide 30% high school drop out rate, as high as 60% in some areas
- ◆ Upwards of 80% of students entering community colleges need basic skills
- ◆ Over half of the low-income households are headed by an adult lacking a high school diploma and over one million Californians between the ages of 18 and 25 lack a high school diploma
- ◆ An estimated 75% of new jobs in today's economy require some level of post-secondary education
- ◆ By 2015 an estimated 600,000 additional students will enroll in Community Colleges in California (Tidal Wave II) and many will

be low income or first generation college students³

- ◆ A second Hidden Tidal Wave of more than 750,000 students who are not high school graduates, as well as adult learners, workforce participants, and unskilled/under-skilled workers, all need college education
- ◆ California faces a growing crisis of undereducated citizens that imperils the state's economic and social future

So, how can the community college system respond to meet this growing educational crisis? What can individual faculty do?

One strategy is to "build bridges" for students who need them to successfully transition into our colleges. The community colleges have already responded to this call with many "bridges" such as creating high school to college articulation with projects like the Statewide Career Pathways and the Basic Skills Initiative which are promoting both credit and noncredit basic skills to bridge the education gap. There are some colleges that have wonderful examples of effective practices and strategies, both large and small, which support students transitioning into college from high schools, noncredit, and K-12 Adult Education. Hopefully these can be shared at future Plenary Session breakouts. However, there are still too many instances where colleges have missed opportunities for this collaboration.

The community colleges are uniquely able to help address these challenges in a number of ways and having a noncredit program at their college provides a two-way bridge for noncredit and credit to meet different student needs. Not only can they help transition noncredit students to credit, but they can offer their credit students educational support with no-fee, open entry/open exit non-

² California Community Colleges System Office, "Californians Lacking Basic Academic Skills", April 2006

³ California Community Colleges Board of Governors (CCCBOG). 2006. *California Community Colleges System Strategic Plan*. Accessed at http://www.cccco.edu/strat_plan/strat_plan.htm.

credit classes and learning labs. About half of the students utilizing noncredit classes in California are actually credit students! And statewide, 33% of credit students receiving an AA/AS degree accessed noncredit at one point in their degree pursuit.⁴

Does your college offer any noncredit ESL, noncredit basic skills, or noncredit vocational training? If not, or if you only offer a minimal number of noncredit classes, please consider the role noncredit can play in your college mission in reaching those students in your community who are not yet college-ready and helping them to transition to college, jobs, and a better life.

If you do offer noncredit ESL, noncredit basic skills, and noncredit vocational training, are those programs isolated in “silos”? Have your credit and noncredit faculty and programs collaborated to build informal and formal articulation and linkages? Are credit and noncredit faculty and counselors having the dialogues they need to have in order to build seamless pathways into credit programs and for credit students to utilize noncredit to support their success in credit classes?

How many community colleges are reaching out to their local K-12 Adult Education students? If you have few noncredit offerings at your college, but your community has a K-12 Adult Education program, consider building pathways to your college by collaborating with your Adult Education faculty with both informal and formal articulation. Often the students in K-12 Adult Education programs are even more isolated than those in community college noncredit programs, yet they are in a unique position to work with the colleges to be a bridge to higher education.

⁴ Smith, Leslie, 2006. *Noncredit: The Educational Gateway*. City College of San Francisco. A PowerPoint presentation to the Board of Governors on July 9, 2006, California Community Colleges: Sacramento. Available at https://www.ccsf.edu/Offices/Government_Affairs/. (Statistic does not include credit students taking noncredit supervised tutoring)

One possible strategy to build bridges for students to move up the educational ladder is to create special transition programs for students to use noncredit elementary and secondary basic skills classes (including community college adult high school diploma programs offered in noncredit). Many of these students need extra support, encouragement, and preparation to plant seeds of real success and possibilities, where before they might not have existed. In one community college district, a program called “Adult College Entry” is jointly supported by noncredit student services and instruction collaborating with credit faculty, counselors, and programs. It offers special counseling, college prep classes, cohort support, and small group support for those students who otherwise would become discouraged and not pursue a college degree or college vocational certificate. If replicated at other colleges, these types of programs could build those needed pathways to college.

Another example of an effective strategy for pathways is to offer “dual-listed” community college courses. (Your college may have a different name for these classes. However, dual-listed courses are different than “concurrent” or “dual” enrollment, which typically refers to high school students who simultaneously earn college credit from a community college.) Formal research still needs to confirm the degree of effectiveness of dual-listed classes, but for those colleges offering them, anecdotal reports of success are already abundant. Although a common practice, not all colleges who have noncredit offer “dual-listed” courses. So what is a “dual-listed course” and how does it promote pathways to credit?

Many noncredit students do not have the confidence to make the big step into credit classes, so a “safe” option is to sign up for a noncredit-credit “dual-listed” class.

A credit class (often vocational) will leave open some seats (i.e. 5 per class) for noncredit students

to sign up for the same class, except they will be taking it as a noncredit class. They experience a credit class without worrying about a grade or possible failure. Many noncredit students then gain the confidence they need when they have a successful experience and are often able to make the transition to credit. Sometimes they can receive credit for the dual-listed course they took by successfully passing a credit-by-exam, which gives them a jump start into college. However, not all courses offer credit-by-exam, so it would be a good strategy to encourage faculty to have this available where appropriate. Credit courses (that are not dual-listed) can offer credit-by-exam options for students who also may have taken a noncredit course that is equivalent to a credit course and students can use this to step into the credit path. Another way to help transition noncredit students in dual-listed courses is to have the faculty and counselors agree to waive the successfully completed dual-listed course as a prerequisite into the next level course.

In keeping with current dialogues on this issue, in Fall 2007, the Academic Senate adopted a resolution “Credit-Noncredit Dialogue” which supports using noncredit courses as bridges to credit:

9.08 F07 *Credit-Noncredit Dialogue*

Whereas, Noncredit courses provide students with a less intimidating means of beginning a college career, students who otherwise might not view a college certificate or degree as an attainable goal;

Whereas, Credit by exam is an option, where available, for students to demonstrate that they have achieved the objectives of a course and to be granted college credit for that course; and

Whereas, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges supports the use of noncredit courses as a bridge to credit programs and courses;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges encourage a dialogue between faculty who teach credit and faculty who

teach noncredit courses, to discuss topics such as course rigor, teaching and assessment methods, goals, and means for aiding the transition from noncredit to credit programs and courses; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges encourage credit faculty to consider developing credit by exam options for credit courses that have noncredit equivalents, where appropriate.

These are only a few of the many ways that credit and noncredit faculty and their colleges can work together to build bridges for noncredit students to transition to credit programs and for credit students to utilize noncredit to support their efforts in credit.

Think about starting or expanding noncredit instruction at your college! Noncredit and credit in the community colleges can be an unbeatable team to support the many students who would otherwise fall through the cracks of a needed educational continuum.

There may be many strategies to address the needs of California’s future, but this is one that we can work on in our colleges, one class at a time, and one student at a time....

Dulce arrived in California in 2004. She enrolled in a noncredit ESL program at a local community college and started at the beginning level. She later started taking dual-listed credit/noncredit classes at the same college at ESL 80 level. She also enrolled in the noncredit adult high school diploma program and earned her high school diploma in 2007. After successfully finishing the dual-listed levels she enrolled in regular credit classes at the college. Currently she is a full-time student at the college and is already taking English 100. Her goal is to complete her associate degree and transfer to the university. She wants to major in History and minor in Linguistics. ■

Eminence—Do I Know It When I See It?

DAN CRUMP, CHAIR, STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMITTEE

“Eminence”—the word of terror to the chair of the Standards and Practices Committee. Well, maybe not “terror,” but it sure brings up a lot of questions in any discussion of equivalencies to disciplines in the Disciplines List. The equivalency process in section 87359 of the Education Code states that “no one shall be hired to serve as a community college faculty...unless the governing board determines that he or she possesses qualifications that are at least equivalent to the minimum qualifications.”

Many districts recognize eminence as a basis for granting equivalency. Although eminence is not specified in current law, it is not prohibited and has been established in many districts. As with all aspects of the equivalency process, it must be “developed and agreed upon jointly by representatives of the governing board and the academic senate, and approved by the governing board.” The process would need to include a definition of eminence, criteria for establishing that a candidate is superior in the field, a review of the candidate’s ability to satisfy the general education portion of a degree, plus local issues which might include the fairness and equitability of the determination. The bargaining agent for the district may also want to participate.

But the problem is that there is no legal definition of “eminence.” A repealed section of Title 5 (section 52270) defined eminence as “superior knowledge and skill...in comparison with the generally accepted standard of achievement in the subject field...and should be based on the conviction that the applicant, if measured by recognized authorities in his subject field, would be judged superior.” Some districts have required that this recognition of eminence must be beyond the geographic area of the district—it is not

enough that the district itself is impressed with the person’s skill or knowledge.

The Academic Senate has not taken an official position on the use of eminence, but a recent resolution (Spring 2007, 10.06) directed the Academic Senate to “conduct a survey on local practices for assessing ‘eminence’ and develop guidelines for local senates to consider when determining eminence.” Well, we did conduct the survey (thanks to all that participated) and presented the results at a breakout at the Fall 2007 Session. Things were pretty inconclusive. In fact, many colleges responded that they were waiting to hear from the Academic Senate before they developed a policy. So we have our work set out for us.

Suggestions were received at the breakout (and subsequent gatherings) for help with eminence:

- ◆ State champions in competition (e.g. debate, dance, football)
- ◆ National winner (e.g. winner of TV’s “Dancing with the Stars”)
- ◆ Prize Winners (e.g. chefs, authors, actors)
- ◆ High Pass Rate in State or National Exams (e.g. high school teacher who has students that score high on standards tests or has a high passage rate for the CAHSEE)
- ◆ World famous in the field

Faculty want to find the best possible candidates to fill a pool from which hiring assignments can be made. Adding candidates to the pool who have exceptional subject area knowledge, as in eminence, is the goal of many departments. That is why we still grapple with the idea eminence instead of just abandoning it.

Sources of Information:

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. *Equivalence to the Minimum Qualifications*. 2006

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. *Qualifications for Faculty Service in the California Community Colleges*. 2004

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. *Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges*. 2008 ■

Julie's Inbox:



The Academic Senate receives many requests from the field, and most of them come through the Senate Office into the inbox of our own Executive Director Julie Adams (hence the name of this column). As you might imagine these requests vary by topic, and the responses represent yet another resource to local senates. This column will share the questions and solutions offered by the President and the Executive Committee. Please send your thoughts or questions to Julie@asccc.org.

Dear Julie,

After the accreditation team visited our college, one of the team's recommendations to our board of trustees was to perform a self-evaluation. We think that's a good idea for our board, but our senate executive committee wants to know if academic senates should also perform self-evaluations. What do you think?

Evaluating Evaluations

Dear E.E.,

It's funny that you should ask this question. The Executive Committee for the Academic Senate is

developing an evaluation tool for itself as a board as well as self-evaluation instruments for individual members of its board this spring. Nothing is formal yet, but we hope to have a process and companion forms soon.

We believe that self-evaluation provides organizations the opportunity to review existing practices, determine goals for the coming year, and recognize accomplishments. If possible, we would encourage your senate to consider some sort of evaluation process or instrument for use by the senate members or the faculty at large. Once the Academic Senate Executive Committee has a finalized process in place, it may provide a model for local senates. Good luck and stay tuned! ■

Taking Back the Concept of Accountability

MARK WADE LIEU, PRESIDENT

Without a doubt, one of most controversial words in education today is “accountability.” While the term still retains some of the positive connotations of its origins, it cannot be argued that the term has not been tainted by its misappropriation by outside agencies for their own purposes.

In expressions such as “to take into account,” “to account for oneself,” and “to be held accountable,” we can see the positive connotations of responsibility for one’s actions and consideration of circumstances. Today’s “accountability,” however, carries with it the implication that someone or some group is *not* fulfilling its responsibility and thus needs to be taken to task. “Accountability” thus becomes a threat, a bludgeon to enforce responsibility. With particular regard to education, rather than the idea of faculty, staff, and administrators taking responsibility—external forces view educators as shirking their responsibility and so must be forced to be accountable or suffer the consequences. Far from the notion of responsibility, “accountability” has now acquired the association of punishment.

With student learning outcomes (SLO), we are in a complicated place. Yes, SLOs originated as an external mandate—but we have taken them and worked to make them something of benefit to ourselves as educators and to the success of our students. We are working to make the SLO process something of value—making the proverbial “silk purse” out of a “sow’s ear.” Are SLOs placing huge demands on our colleges both in terms of time and money? Definitely yes. Many of our colleges are still struggling to make SLOs a positive experience, and some still resist SLOs as an unfunded mandate. The Academic Senate concurs with the need to bring resources to bear on this activity. In addition, while the Academic Senate supports the development of SLOs through an internal process, there are pressures for the imposition of ex-

ternal outcomes measures, some as disassociated from the actual process of learning and education as the privately developed tests required under the Gold Standard of the Perkins Reauthorization or the standardized measurements proposed by the Spellings Commission to allow for institutional comparisons.

Another externally imposed accountability effort is the *Student Bill of Rights* movement. Under the ostensibly worthwhile goal of promoting broad discourse in the classroom, the *Student Bill of Rights* movement is actually a thinly disguised attack on the perceived liberal slant of the professoriate and what supporters of the movement see as attempts by this liberal professoriate to indoctrinate impressionable students with a biased perspective. Thus, the supporters of the movement are working to legislate what is taught in the classroom—that professors be held accountable for presenting all perspectives of an issue, whether or not those perspectives reflect the current thinking in a discipline or are supported by current research or practice.

A third example is *Pick-a-Prof* and its ilk. *Pick-a-Prof* and similar websites provide the public with the grade distributions of individual professors and a forum for comments about individual professors. When institutions have refused to provide grading information, they have been successfully sued under the freedom of information act to provide it. Again, the word “accountability” has raised its head. These web services claim that such grade information and public comment help to keep instructors accountable in their teaching and grading to the public; most of us view these web services as little more than commercial ventures that prey on many a student’s desire to find an easy grader or to find a forum to vent a frustration.

With all of these negative associations for the term “accountability,” it is hardly surprising that faculty shy away from anything that uses this term, in any of its forms. However, as with SLOs, I think it is high time

that faculty take back this term and use it as a way to convey to our students and the public the quality and rigor of what we do as educators.

Accountability is connected with data, and data provides the foundation on which decisions should be made. This is very much true in a positive and proactive process regarding student learning outcomes. If a solid process of assessing SLOs is in place, institutions should be able to generate data that informs further planning and budgeting. Rather than a process that seems to rely more on whim and popularity, planning and budgeting could be more rationally driven by research and results.

In this year of probable budget cuts, I am reminded of the last major cuts in 2002-2003. At that time, matriculation budgets were slashed almost 50%, and they have yet to recover. A colleague at the System Office commented to me that we in the system were partly to blame. Knowing the vulnerability of categorical funding, we should have been earnestly collecting data to demonstrate what we anecdotally knew was true—that matriculation funds provided key student services that supported student success in their classes and college careers. This colleague pointed out that if we had been more proactive about documenting student success through the use of matriculation funds, we might have been able to successfully argue for the preservation of those funds. I have no doubt that such comments will surface again given the threats we perceive once again to categorical funds.

The Academic Senate is working on accountability in a positive sense in several areas. Several of the major projects under the leadership of the Academic Senate are grant funded, and we are very aware that measurable outcomes are vital to securing future funding. Therefore, we carefully build in to each grant project a strong evaluation component where we can use the results to argue for continued support. Under the Statewide Career Pathways grant, the Academic Senate supports the development of articulation agreements between high schools and community colleges to smooth the transition for students in career and technical education (CTE). To date, the Academic Senate can point to the creation of over 80 articulation templates to facilitate this work, and it is this

ability to provide data that prompted legislators to provide on-going funding to the project and to write the Statewide Career Pathways project into CTE legislation.

Accountability is also written into the work of the current phase of the Basic Skills Initiative. It is surely no surprise that redirection of former Basic Skills over Cap funding to basic skills is under threat in the current budget climate. While the Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC) report provides some measures of basic skills improvement, colleges need better data not just to argue for ongoing state funding but to inform their own work to address local basic skills needs. Central to this phase of the Basic Skills Initiative is the development of rubrics and tools that colleges can use to generate this information.

As a college-supported organization, the Academic Senate also sees the need to be accountable to you, our membership. One of the major projects underway is the development of an evaluation process for the faculty you elect to serve on your Executive Committee. The evaluation process has at its core three goals. First, through the development of the evaluation process, the Academic Senate hopes to focus on its core functions and whether or not they are being served. Second, we hope to use the evaluation process to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each Executive Committee member. Third, based on a review of those roles and responsibilities, we hope to improve our orientation and professional development for Executive Committee members so that they have the knowledge and tools to carry out their responsibilities. You should be hearing more about our progress with this process later this year.

As with professional ethics and collegiality, attempts to impose accountability on colleges and their faculty result merely in artificial measurements that denigrate the concept of accountability. As faculty, we need to take on accountability and not turn from it, whether we are talking about our syllabi, our grading policies, or rates of student success; for it is only when we accept the responsibility of accounting for ourselves to our students and the public that we can improve as educators. ■

2008 Hayward Award for Excellence in Education

The *Hayward Award for Excellence in Education* was established in 1989 in honor of Gerald C. Hayward, who served as Chancellor of the California Community Colleges from 1980 to 1985. The Award honors community college faculty members who demonstrate the highest level of commitment to their students, college, and profession through a record of outstanding performance of professional activities, as well as a record of active participation on campus. The 2008 Hayward Awards were supported by a grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges, and each recipient received a \$1,250 cash award and a commemorative plaque.

Each of the four recipients was invited to briefly write about his/her work and passion for this issue of the *Rostrum*. We hope their stories will inspire nominations from your college next year.

Joyce Bishop, Golden West College

Pathways to Independence was created 18 years ago by Dave and Joyce Bishop to help young women find a safe place to live and achieve success in college. The organization has helped 225 young women and is run completely by volunteers, most of whom are educators.

Pathways serves young women who (1) are poor by state/federal standards, (2) come from a significantly abusive or disadvantaged background, (3) have a serious desire to get an education or job training which will make them self-sufficient, and (4) are becoming independent for the first time in their lives.

Many of the clients come from alcoholic families. Many have experienced years of incest and other forms of abuse. Some have spent years in foster care or even became homeless. A small percentage of Pathways clients experienced personal tragedy as a result of bad choices which resulted in chemical dependency or even jail or prison.

Pathways clients sign a contract listing commitments to full-time school, 2.0 grade point average, part-time work, weekly psychotherapy, and weekly contacts to a mentor. A mentor holds the client accountable for these commitments.

Pathways also makes a commitment to clients by providing:

- ◆ A monthly stipend to off-set housing expenses
- ◆ Payment of tuition and books (many clients are not able to receive federal or state grants because the income of their abusive parents is calculated into their federal financial aid application even though they have not had contact with their parent in years)
- ◆ Access to over 70 health care professionals who provide every form of health care pro bono
- ◆ Weekly counseling from a licensed therapist who is among 45 therapists providing pro bono counseling
- ◆ Access to four mechanics who donate all of their labor while Pathways reimburses for parts.
- ◆ Access to a number of other support people (lawyers, accountants, cosmetologists, etc. who donate their services.)

Pathways graduates are fulfilling their dreams and working in the fields of teaching, accounting, human services, social work, counseling, human resources, business, law, graphic design, and many more. Currently half of the Pathways' Board is made up of former clients. A program like Pathways can be easily duplicated in your area because it is a collection of volunteers who each have one task; for example, coordinating mentors, health providers, or automotive services. If you are interested in learning how such an organization could help your at-risk students, contact Joyce Bishop at jbishop@gwc.cccd.edu or visit the Pathways' website at <http://pathwaysto independence.org>.

Jonathan Brennan, Mission College

My first opportunity to pursue my own higher education came through a community college. Because of this experience, my priority is to remain a dedicated lifelong learner in order to find strategies to support our students in reaching their academic and personal goals. I believe that I can be most effective when I am empowering students to become active, responsible learners and offering them a well-designed learner-centered curriculum. Offering open access to the college should be accompanied by ensuring student access to the effectiveness skills they need to succeed in college (and beyond). I have been researching solutions to the obstacles students face in reaching their college goals. I have been fortunate in having the opportunity to share these new ideas with my students and with thousands of educators from community colleges across California and the United States.

All students deserve the opportunity to succeed. My personal goal is to increase student retention and success rates by at least 25% across the state. My work with other college educators offers me the opportunity to share my research in a very practical approach to student success that has demonstrated clear results (<http://www.oncourseworkshop.com/Data.htm>). I am especially committed to increasing the success of my basic skills students and have designed my basic skills English classes around student acquisition of these "On Course" success skills.

I have also supported educators from other colleges in establishing student success programs and classroom best practices. After completing training at Mount Hood Community College (Oregon), the college implemented its success program in 2004 and increased retention rates by 27% for nearly five hundred students. These improved retention rates have persisted over several years. In a pilot student success program I developed at Mission College, the retention rate of students in developmental English, Mathematics, Reading, and ESL increased by 22%.

In order to share these promising ideas with other educators, I recently developed and chaired the On Course National Student Success Conference. Over the last three years 1200 faculty from community colleges and universities across the United States, Egypt, the Caribbean, Mexico, and Canada have presented best practices in student success across disciplines. This year (May 1-3, 2008), the conference (55 sessions) will be held in Los Angeles (<http://www.oncourseworkshop.com/Conference.htm>). I invite you to take on a commitment to significantly increase retention, success and persistence rates for our community college students. I hope to see you at the conference.

Travis Parker, Cosumnes River College

Travis Parker has been at Cosumnes River College for 36 years as a coach, physical education instructor, athletic director and area Dean. Travis came from humble beginnings. His parents were sharecroppers who had little formal education but he describes himself as the world's wealthiest man because of them.

Travis says, "Education is a means to achieve one's potential and develop the habits of mind that lead to success. This is what my family provided for me. They instilled in me a strong work ethic, a thirst for knowledge and a commitment to helping others. I am fortunate to have the opportunity as an educator to instill these habits in younger generations."

Consistent with this philosophy, in 2004 Travis became co-founder and co-director of the Alpha Academy, a group that mentors male students 12-18 years of age. The mentors are college-educated, professional African-American men of Zeta Beta Lambda

Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity who voluntarily meet with the youth during four-hour sessions one Saturday a month from September through May.

The Academy encourages scholastic achievement, social and financial responsibility, and life skills training such as decision making and male/female relationships. Academy sessions are an interactive exchange of information between youth, mentors, parents and guest speakers. The students also have access to tutoring sessions two times a week with an emphasis on mathematics. Because parents are an integral part of the development of the youth, they can attend concurrent parenting sessions during the four-hour period. When the Academy began in September of 2004, four young men attended the first session. In March of 2008, over one hundred people participated in youth sessions, parent workshops, and a young women's workshop.

Administrators of local schools, as well as juvenile justice agencies recognize the Alpha Academy as a successful program. School administrators refer students to the Academy, and the justice system accepts their participation as an alternative to disciplinary action. All Academy activities are held at Cosumnes River College. All services are free.

Travis demonstrates his dedication to education by serving on the campus Academic Senate and as a Club Advisor. He says, "I desire to share my wealth by helping students succeed. Students must understand that life is a challenge for all of us in some way, but with hope, direction, and perseverance you can meet and conquer your challenges daily." As an educator, Travis is committed to helping students develop those qualities.

Christine Schultz, Santa Monica College

In 1982, Santa Monica College became the first community college to establish a transfer alliance program with the University of California. The Scholars Program, as it came to be called, recruits highly motivated students and offers them enriched curricula emphasizing critical thinking, writing, and research. The idea is to take a cohort and provide the classes, counseling, tutorial support, and peer relationships

that will increase student retention and success not only at the community college but also at the transfer institution. In exchange for this provision of an enriched academic environment, the transfer institutions agree to give Scholars students priority consideration for admission.

Christine Schultz came to the Program in 1985, first as an instructor and then, in 1986, as the Coordinator. Over the next two decades, with the active support of the College and a dedicated team of counselors, the Program grew rapidly, now serving over 900 students and enjoying transfer alliance agreements with UCLA, Loyola Marymount University, Occidental College, CSU Northridge, UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz, Cal Poly Pomona, Mills College, and Chapman University. Focusing on three principal goals, academic excellence and retention and diversity in the transfer population, the Program has seen its efforts pay off abundantly with between 98 and 100% of its students earning admission to their first choice transfer institution. It is not uncommon for SMC Scholars students to go on to Stanford, Columbia, and other prestigious universities across the nation. Santa Monica College is now both a statewide and national leader in transfers to four year universities and colleges.

The enormous growth of the SMC Scholars Program would have been an empty victory had it not been fueled by a conscientious, directed, and energized attempt to reach, recruit, and matriculate a richly diverse student population. It is, indeed, the greatest challenge for any college honors program to reach beyond the fairly homogeneous population of students who tend to apply to these programs and tap the will and talent of students who historically have not thought of themselves as "scholars." At SMC, a richly diverse faculty team has made every effort to open the Scholars Program to students from all backgrounds and walks of life. In the end, the success of the Program will be measured more by its diverse faculty and student population than by sheer numbers alone. The Santa Monica College Scholars Program will serve as a model for honors program not because it is the oldest or the biggest but rather because it is the most inclusive. ■

An Institute of Intrigue

WHEELER NORTH, CHAIR, CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

On a warm and sultry summer morning in the predawn hours, a breakfast flock of pelicans gently wings its way across the bogs and southwestern shore of the San Francisco bay. They glide in the still air on a convoluted wandering path among the towering concrete slabs of Redwood City's high tech companies painting a scene of majestic serenity. At the same time a non-descript white van departs the suburbs of Sacramento loaded with heavy and mysterious boxes, seemingly on a mission of unknown, but potentially nefarious deeds. As well, airliners line up into formation as they make their way northwestwards down the bleak final approach path into that cataclysm of aluminum, jet fuel, baggage and bodies known as San Francisco International. Inside a few of these aluminum behemoths reside highly-trained agents, fully prepared for the unknown, as the stage begins to be set upon the northern conference foyer of the Sofitel Luxury Hotel.

Deep within this murky venue lies many highly valued secrets and precious treasures, all lying about gleaming brightly for the mere adventurer to snatch up. But, to those reading this, beware of the dangerous predicament you now face for having picked up this particular edition of the *Rosstrum*. The dire events just described are soon to become real. The swirling mysteries of the cosmos are now quickly aligning for what appears to be an event of life-changing proportions. For those who step onto this galactic conveyor belt and in fact snatch at a few of these precious jewels, you will be forever changed. You will become empowered; you will become more than a mere committee member; you will be transformed into a Jedi Curriculum Master. So, the question remains, do you dare to enter into this lost but sacred vesti-

bule, known only by a few privileged souls as the 2008 Curriculum Institute?

For those with the courage to persist, you will be subjected to career-changing events such as surviving updates on the many new regulations appearing in the dusty, cobweb-filled halls of Sacramento or swim-slogging your way through the misty swamps of Stand-Alone Training. Down into the dungeons you will go where the hordes are tortured with outline integration, prerequisite scrutiny and methods, methods, methods.... Yet, through rigorous attention to disciplines (pun intended) you will be transformed into a noble Raider of the Curriculum Ark.

Adventure Park Disclaimer: This adventure is intended for and open to all community college children and employees who regularly work within curriculum approval processes, be they faculty, staff, or administrators. There are adventure packages available for one-, two- or three-day attendees. If you are below the age of seven you must be accompanied by a colleague. The Park assumes no responsibility for lost or perishable items or any misadventures you get yourself into after your stay with us. Attendance at the last general session at the Curriculum Institute meets the compliance mandate for stand-alone course training. Please consume empowering products responsibly. ■

2008 ASCCC Curriculum Institute

Raiders of the Curriculum Ark: The Tombs of Title 5
July 10th through July 12th

Sofitel Luxury Hotel

223 Twin Dolphin Drive

Redwood City

<http://www.asccc.org/Events/Curric.htm>