

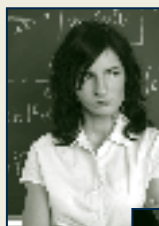


ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES NEWSLETTER

SENATEROSTRUM

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THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Change is in the Air

BY MARK WADE LIEU, PRESIDENT

As I write this, we are in the month of August, and there is a clear feeling of change in the air. On a national level, there is a growing intensity surrounding the upcoming presidential campaign, even though the actual election is over a year away, and a common theme among the candidates for the presidency is one of change. Much closer to home, our System has a new (interim) Chancellor, and I am writing an article for the first time as President of the Academic Senate. The Academic Senate is also embarking on new endeavors, among them the Basic Skills Initiative, articulation efforts with high schools in career and technical education under SB70, and a course identification project (C-ID).

Overall, I think that a degree of change is healthy for all organizations.

Organizations need new challenges to stay vital. Organizations that cannot change may not be responsive to the changing needs of its members and circumstances.

Fortunately, the Academic Senate is an organization that does change. It does so in a thoughtful and measured way, in a way that permits broad discussion and input. In this article I want to focus on how the Academic Senate has changed in how it views and in its approach towards student learning outcomes (SLO).

I was recently forwarded an email from a faculty member wondering what the Academic Senate was currently doing to “combat the SLO juggernaut.”

The email included reference to the numerous resolutions opposing the imposition of student learning outcomes and to vociferous *Rostrum* articles penned by the Executive Committee. Not surprisingly, to judge by our published documents, one could infer that the Academic Senate is still firmly dedicated to opposition to student learning outcomes in all its manifestations.

During the time surrounding the adoption of the 2002 Accreditation Standards by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), the Academic Senate’s efforts were focused on resisting the implementation of the new standards and the imposition of SLOs. SLOs had already been implemented by the other regional accrediting bodies, many beginning in the early 1990s, and anecdotal evidence suggested that SLOs consumed a significant amount of resources without demonstrable improvements in student learning or success. The Academic Senate opposed the new standards and asked for evidence, such as that asked for with SLOs, to show that SLOs were worth the time and money.

This resistance was codified in numerous resolutions, ten in 2001 and 17 in 2002, and strongly-worded articles. The Academic Senate was fiercely critical of the ACCJC, and relations between the two groups became cool. As a result, when the ACCJC needed partners to develop training for colleges in working with the concept of SLOs, it turned to another community college organization, the Research and Planning Group (RP Group). Early feedback on the trainings indicated that the vast majority of SLO coordinators on campuses were administrators. In addition, participants in the trainings cited a lack of clarity on what SLOs were

and how they should be measured, and these observations reinforced the Academic Senate's position that SLOs should simply be opposed in the hopes that they would go away.

Today, five years later, the Academic Senate continues to be concerned with the time and resources needed to assess and document SLOs and the fact that not only is work on SLOs an unfunded mandate but adds to the work that faculty already do and in some cases pulls faculty away from their work as teachers in order to focus on SLOs. This was most recently expressed in Resolution 2.02 S07 concerning the new SLO Annual Report format and the data required for its completion. However, in the last five years, several factors have caused the Academic Senate to change its stance on SLOs in significant ways.

First, it became clear after a few years that the ACCJC was firmly enforcing the need for colleges to assess SLOs in the accreditation process. In spite of the Academic Senate's opposition to the standards, the Academic Senate also strongly asserted the primacy of faculty in developing SLOs as an academic and professional matter (see Resolution F04 2.01). As a result, most colleges shifted responsibility for SLOs from an administrator to a faculty member, and today 90% of all SLO Coordinators are faculty. Clearly, the Academic Senate needed to take a role in supporting faculty SLO Coordinators to supplement the work of the RP Group (see Resolution F06 2.02), and in January of this year, the Academic Senate offered its first Accreditation Institute, followed by regional meetings for SLO Coordinators, and then followed by the first SLO Institute this past July. While the Academic Senate continues to have questions about SLOs, it is convinced that its involvement in supporting SLO coordinators and community college faculty in this endeavor is vital in order to make the best of the SLO process; and, in fact, there is a growing body of data to show that the SLO process is resulting in better alignment of curriculum and programs, better critical thinking by students, and a much needed look at some of our pedagogical techniques and content.

Second, over the last five years, the federal movement towards the standardization of higher education and accrediting processes has only grown stronger, culminating in the Spelling's Commission report last fall and percolating even now in the discussions of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (see the article on Preserving Higher Education elsewhere in this issue). Not only are faculty firmly opposed to such standardization, but we have found an unexpected ally in the effort to oppose this federal movement in our regional accrediting bodies. The ACCJC has reaffirmed its support for regional peer review-driven accreditation, and it has promoted from the inception of the 2002 Standards the concept that SLOs are the best way to subvert national efforts at standardization. Only in hindsight is the Academic Senate now able to see that the ACCJC's agreement to adopt SLOs was a pre-emptive action to forestall accreditation on a federal level. With this new understanding, relations between the ACCJC and the Academic Senate have improved. Representatives from the ACCJC participated in both the Accreditation and Student Learning Outcomes Institutes.

I shared this historical perspective with the attendees of the Student Learning Outcomes Institute this past July, and now I share it with you.

The Academic Senate has strong principles, but it is not an organization where its tenets are fixed for all eternity.

Rather, it is an organization responsive to the needs and concerns of the faculty of the California community colleges, and as such regularly revisits its positions and resultant activities. Although uttered over 2,500 years ago, Heraclitus is quoted as saying (albeit not in English), "Nothing endures but change." The coming year will undoubtedly bring changes to our nation, the California Community College System, and our lives as educators. I welcome you to join me to engage in these challenges and opportunities together. ■

Preserving Higher Education: Vigilance is Essential

BY JANET FULKS, ACCREDITATION AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME AD HOC COMMITTEE

You may not know this, but higher education dodged a bullet this summer. Attacks on peer review regional accreditation have been continuous and widespread. Before you consider joining in the attack on current accreditation practices, ask yourself if you are willing to turn over the process of accreditation to federal accountability measures.

While many faculty completed spring final exams and transitioned into summer activities, a battle was raging. Spellings and the U.S. Department of Education, along with

with

other special interest groups, probed every potential soft spot in higher education. Their focus was to discredit and disable regional peer accreditation as we know it. The allegations made against accreditation basically claimed that regional peer review cannot work and that accreditation has gotten worse in the last five years with regards to its inability to hold higher education institutions accountable. Their answer, federalize the process.

In an attempt to support the regional accreditation associations, and preserve the individuality of our American Higher Education, the Senate Executive Committee sent a letter to involved parties.

In addition, the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) which includes faculty representatives from the University of California, the California State University System, and the California Community College System, sent a letter advocating for regional accreditation processes. Copies of these letters are below. Please read these important statements which represent millions of students and thousands of faculty supporting regional peer accreditation. Become familiar with the issues necessary to preserve higher education. In order to examine the latest updates that describe the battle lines look at *Here We Go Again...Sin, Salvation and Accreditation* at http://www.chea.org/lia/IA_072007.html from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the American Council of Trustees and Alumni's (ACTA) *Why Accreditation Doesn't Work and What Policymakers Can Do About It* at <http://www.goacta.org/publications/Reports/Accreditation2007Final.pdf> ■



June 18, 2007



*The Honorable Barbara Boxer and
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510*

Subject: Higher Education Regional Summit Meetings

Dear Honorable Members:

We, the elected representatives and officers of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, are requesting that you, as elected state and federal office holders, do all that is within your power to prevent the standardization of higher education that could follow the Higher Education Regional Summit Meetings presently being conducted on behalf of Secretary of Education Spellings. The Academic Senate is supportive of quality education and its relationship to productive accountability, but we are extremely apprehensive concerning where current efforts in Washington DC may be leading. Before enlarging on this subject, we should explain briefly who we are and by what authority this appeal is made.

This letter is in response to a Fall 2006 resolution adopted by our elected body of Academic Senate delegates:

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges assert its conviction that any federally imposed standardization of higher education threatens the high quality, dynamic and innovative system of higher education that is a central component of American democracy and an inspiration to freedom loving people the world over;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges oppose any federal attempt to standardize higher education; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges determine the most effective manner to convey to the appropriate legislators, intersegmental groups, and the federal government the opposition of our 109 colleges and 58,000 professors to the standardization of higher education.

Our organization is the largest body of post-secondary educators in the world and is charged by California's Education Code and regulations with overseeing academic and professional matters that directly affect California's 2.5 million community college students. The Academic Senate is not a union; rather, it is an academic organization of college professors who are deeply concerned about the future of higher education in America.

As you may be aware Secretary Spellings and Texas business executive Charles Miller are promoting through national and regional summits a concept of higher education that is driven by standardized measures and "customer satisfaction." It is our view that universal standards and national benchmarks, particularly in liberal studies, provide little information that is genuinely useful to institutions of higher learning or to students and voters. Rather, we believe that decisions concerning curricula, programs, and missions must be determined through an ongoing dialogue by local faculty, administrators, students, and faculty members from regional and statewide transfer institutions. For example, in California the Academic Senate works with local faculty, administrators, the State Chancellor, the Board of Governors, and intersegmental organizations which represent California's tripartite systems of higher education (California Community College System, University of California System, California State University System), and the communities served by their respective institutions. By so doing, California's higher education system benefits from local control that is immediately responsive to regional needs while remaining inextricably linked to statewide systems of governance and oversight.

At present, more than one-third of the California's 18-19 year old population is enrolled in a community college. Our system provides the most access to postsecondary education for historically underrepresented populations. Nearly half (45.3%) of the graduates of California's university systems come from our community colleges, and an additional 30,000 continued their studies at private or out-of-state four-year institutions. We have conferred more than 63,000 degrees and certificates in vocational/occupational areas, 7,000 degrees and certificates in nursing, and we have an overall vocational completion rate of 77.3%. As we consider the stature of American higher education in the world and the phenomenal record of our own community college system's success in providing open enrollment to a diverse population, we have to wonder if the primary result of standardization would in reality be to establish unfunded mandates, needless bureaucracy, and a lowering of standards overall. We believe that Secretary Spellings' higher-education commission is sounding a fallacious argument about the current state of American education in a manner reminiscent of the 1983 document, "A Nation at Risk."

"A Nation at Risk," claimed that the quality of American education was in serious decline, a claim that has since been refuted. According to "A Nation at Risk," American students were never first and were frequently last academically compared to students in other industrialized nations. The report asserted that student achievement declined dramatically after Russia launched Sputnik and hit bottom in the early 1980s. According to the report, SAT scores fell markedly between 1960 and 1980, student achievement levels in science were in steady decline, and business and the military were spending millions on remedial education for new hires and recruits. While "A Nation at Risk" sounded an alarm about American education, here is what was actually happening:

- Between 1975 and 1988, average SAT scores went up or held steady for every student subgroup.*
- Between 1977 and 1988, math proficiency among seventeen-year-olds improved slightly for whites, notably for minorities.*
- Between 1971 and 1988, reading skills among all student subgroups held steady or improved.*
- Between 1977 and 1988, in science, the number of seventeen-year-olds at or above basic competency levels stayed the same or improved slightly.*
- Between 1970 and 1988, the number of twenty-two-year-old Americans with bachelor degrees increased every year; the United States led all developed nations in 1988. (March 07 Edutopia)*

It is not difficult to link the assertions of "A Nation at Risk" to the eventual advent of standardization within our nation's K-12 system. While No Child Left Behind may have intended enhanced educational opportunities for all students, such large, state-sponsored bureaucracies have scripted the classroom, lessened educational opportunities and narrowed textbook publishing to the test. Mostly, such efforts have created unparalleled opportunities for consultants and middle managers while leaving behind the dynamism that was once the true genius of American education. While we do not expect to see such a stringent bureaucracy imposed on higher education, we do wish to assert the perspective that the present form of regional accreditation offers vital quality assurance processes that are vastly superior to the homogeneity of standardization. We believe that the overall effect of excessive standardization would be to diminish the capacity for schools and colleges to meet the particular needs of diverse student populations.

Our hope is that leaders, such as you, will continue to value the democratizing role that higher education plays in our society. While it remains vital that we train students for the world of work, our colleges and universities also prepare students to ask penetrating questions, to locate, interpret, and use information, to utilize critical thinking skills in the workplace, and to appreciate the intrinsic worth of the world's artistic and philosophical traditions. We prepare Americans to take their place as contributing and participating members of a democratic society. Viewed from a distance, the life of the higher education classroom is like America herself—fiercely independent, creative, and simultaneously community centered. College and university faculty work collegially to tailor classes, programs and services that fit the regional and individual needs of students, and we welcome accountability that assists in this endeavor. At the same time, the thought that operational decisions could become dependent solely on systems that are based at a distance from the day-to-day realities our classrooms and colleges is a matter of significant concern.

The increasing demand for external reports is accompanied by ironic decreases in budgetary allowances for the instructional missions of our colleges. At the same time, state and national data bases already contain more than sufficient information to satisfy the needs of legislators and the Department of Education. In our opinion, there is little to be gained and much to be lost by forcing standardization on such a dynamic system, particularly where testing is concerned. Information changes radically in short periods of time. Textbooks are often outdated within a matter of a few years. Standardized tests on the human genome would be outmoded on a six month cycle, and the same applies for other technological and scientific areas. Standardization would force testing compliance on outdated information and establish a bland uniformity with regards to such areas as liberal studies, all at a phenomenal drain on our education budgets.

While standardization and detailed accountability dovetail well with corporate and manufacturing models, such is not the case where multiple academic missions of access and support concern the needs of diverse populations of students. Therefore, we hope that you believe as we do that standardization's imposition of bureaucracy, unfunded mandates, and blurry generalities would not well serve colleges, students, taxpayers, or our national interest—and we urge you to do all that is within your power to safeguard the dynamism that has made America's public education system a model for the world.

Sincerely,

Ian Walton, President

[SIGNATURE ON FILE]

Chair, Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates c/o University of California
Telephone: (510) 987-0711 1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Email: Michael.Brown@ucop.edu Oakland, CA 94607-5200
July 2, 2007
Margaret Spellings, U.S. Secretary of Education



Dear Secretary Spellings:

The purpose of this letter is threefold: 1) to introduce to you the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates as the faculty voice of public higher education in the State of California; 2) to impress upon you the importance and need for regional accreditation and peer review; and 3) to encourage your cooperation with the regional accreditation associations and other non-federal negotiators.

The faculty who serve on the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) represent the University of California (UC), the California State University System (CSU), and the California Community College System (CCC). Together, they represent over 70,000 higher-education faculty serving more than 3 million students at 142 institutions of higher education. Specifically, the UC Academic Senate represents 16,000 faculty, 209,000 students, and 10 institutions. The CSU Academic Senate represents 23,000 faculty, 417,000 students, and 23 institutions. And, the CCC Academic Senate represents 31,000 faculty, 2.5 million students, and 109 institutions. ICAS and the faculties it represents are passionately committed to the same imperative goal: excellence in teaching and learning.

As educators, we well understand the value of assessing educational outcomes. Devotion to the continuous improvement of educational processes is a central part of our culture and our identity. However, research has clearly shown that the further removed educational controls and mandates are from the teaching-learning interface, the less effective they become in improving education and serving students. In fact, controls imposed from afar tend to homogenize the activities and outcomes of education, discouraging local innovation and robbing local institutions of their ability to improve educational processes and actively respond to our rapidly changing world. The faculties of public higher-education in the State of California support the activity and philosophy of the regional accreditation associations. We believe their longitudinal commitment to rigorous, informed, and well-designed peer review is the most effective way to achieve the outcomes we all seek. We support the efforts of regional accreditors to clearly identify and document appropriate criteria and best practices that serve the ends of educational excellence.

We strongly encourage you to listen to the regional accreditation associations. The U.S. regional accreditation processes represent rigorous, locally informed peer review. They achieve precision in diagnosing needs and problems, while facilitating and demanding meticulous, innovative, and locally specific improvement. It is the peer review process that ensures distinctive and responsive content, discipline by discipline, customized to meet the diverse needs of unique student populations from disparate communities. The faculties of California's public institutions of higher education would welcome your positive response as a reaffirmation of the collaborative and innovative spirit on which the future excellence of American higher education critically depends.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Brown, Chair of the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) and Vice Chair of the University of California Academic Senate

John B. Oakley, Chair of the University of California Academic Senate

Barry Pasternack, Chair of the California State University Academic Senate

Mark Wade Lieu, President of the California Community Colleges Academic Senate

[SIGNATURES ON FILE]

The Community College Initiative: Make An Informed Decision

BY JANE PATTON, VICE PRESIDENT, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

RICH HANSEN, DE ANZA COLLEGE, PRESIDENT, CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE INDEPENDENTS

In February when we go to the polls to vote in the primary election, we will also be voting on the most important community college proposal we have seen in our careers: The Community College Initiative, formally known on the ballot as The Community College Governance, Funding Stabilization, and Student Fee Reduction Act. Since passage of Proposition 98 in 1988, several reforms have moved California's community colleges away from a secondary toward a postsecondary educational structure. This initiative seeks to establish the community colleges as an independent postsecondary system, recognized in the state constitution, with its own funding guarantee under Proposition 98 separate from that for K-12. The initiative is sponsored by Californians for Community Colleges, a coalition of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, the California Federation of Teachers, and the Community College League of California. The initiative would take three fundamental actions:

- ◆ Set an independent minimum funding guarantee under Proposition 98
- ◆ Wrest student fees from the political process
- ◆ Guarantee a system of independent community college districts under the state constitution

Minimum Funding Guarantee

Presently, community colleges are funded, along with the K-12 system, on the basis of a complicated Proposition 98 formula. Funding growth is dependent on the health of the state economy and K-12 attendance. (See the Legislative Analyst's Office

(LAO) analysis dated August 10, 2006, cited below, for a helpful explanation of our funding.) According to the LAO, "The measure changes the Proposition 98 formula by establishing separate funding guarantees for the community college system and for the K-12 system." While keeping the system under Proposition 98 protections, the initiative bases community college funding growth on its own student population and ends the perennial squabble with K-12 over the community college share of Proposition 98 funds.

Reduction of Student Fees

If you have been working in the system for more than a few years, you have seen examples of sweeping cuts to college funding simultaneous with huge, unexpected jumps in student fees. This sends shock waves across our campuses, at times when state economic difficulties bring an increase in demand for our services. The state budget is balanced on the backs of our students who are expected to pay more for less.

The initiative puts an end to this backdoor taxation of our students by reducing fees to \$15 and capping fee increases to a percentage of cost of living inflation.

While supportive of the initiative overall, the Academic Senate maintains its position in support of zero fees and, should the initiative pass, will continue (along with the other faculty groups) to advocate for this position.

CCC Governance

The initiative protects the state Board of Governors (BoG) and community college districts by establishing them as independent entities with a funding mandate in the state constitution. At present, our system is only memorialized in regulation and too easily changed. Also, appointment of the system's chancellor and vice chancellors is currently in the hands of the Governor's office. The initiative gives the BoG power to appoint up to six executive officers, making our system office less political. Other system employees remain under civil service regulations. In addition, the initiative contains constitutional protections for collective bargaining and judicial review.

Resources for you

The most comprehensive and up-to-date information can be found on the FACCC web site, www.faccc.org. If interested, you or a member of your senate can sign up to receive updates about the initiative or to support the initiative. There is a FAQ as well as the text of the initiative itself. There is also information about the potential fiscal improvement for each district expected if the initiative passes. The Initiative Campaign web site at www.Californians-ForCommunityColleges.org promises to offer more information once the campaign is underway this fall. The campaign theme is "The chance for every Californian to go to College," and in addition to the three main issues—funding, student fees and governance—the campaign stresses that the initiative does not harm K-12 and does not raise taxes. Particularly informative about technical issues is the Legislative Analyst's Office report (LAO).

The Academic Senate's Position

In Fall 2005, the ASCCC passed resolution 6.04 which laid out the aims of the initiative and asked the Academic Senate to disseminate information about the initiative. Last Spring, President Ian Walton said in his President's Update, "In addition to supporting the initiative, the Academic Senate

maintains its long-standing position in support of zero fees for CCC students." Because the initiative will accomplish so many critical improvements for the community college system, the Fall 2005 delegates voted to support the resolution, but they did not overturn standing resolutions about zero fees.

In addition, the Academic Senate resolution urged local senates to collaborate with other faculty organizations and hold forums or otherwise educate local faculty, staff and students about the initiative.

While there are many ways this can be accomplished, your senate might begin by downloading a file of the information at www.faccc.org to share in senate, department and local governance meetings. The initiative's potential for systemic improvement is so significant and far-reaching that it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure our colleagues, co-workers and students are fully informed prior to the February election. ■

Senate Institutes at a Glance

2008 Accreditation Institute

January 25 - 27, 2008
Pasadena Hilton, Pasadena, CA

2008 Counseling Faculty Development Institute

February 22 - 24, 2008
Westin South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa, CA

2008 Vocational Education Institute

March 6 - 8, 2008
Seascape Resort, Aptos, CA

2008 Faculty Leadership Institute

June 12 - 14, 2008
Newport Beach Hyatt Regency, Newport Beach, CA

2008 Curriculum Institute

July 10 - 12, 2008
Sofitel San Francisco Bay, Redwood City, CA

Minimum Qualifications Audits

BY GREG GILBERT, 2006-07 STANDARDS AND PRACTICES CHAIR

“Title 5, section 53430 establishes the standards for hiring faculty based on equivalencies, and it echoes the language of Education Code section 87358 that each individual faculty member must possess minimum qualifications.”

—Ralph Black

On May 30, 2007, the Academic Senate’s Standards and Practices committee met with Planning and Development Specialist Ken Nather at the System Office. Nather discussed with the committee the fact that the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in responding to faculty concerns during an accreditation visit initiated a minimum qualifications audit to see if the college had hired the wrong people in the wrong areas. The bottom line is where a course was judged to have been taught by an unqualified person, the credit for that course was invalidated, the course was struck from college transcripts, and transfer institutions were informed.

It doesn’t require Stephen King to explain the horrors that can follow when courses are invalidated.

Consider first the nightmare for affected students. Think of the impact on faculty, particularly part-time faculty who suddenly are not asked back.

Imagine the potential for litigation and charges of financial culpability. Think of the impact on an accreditation report, and consider how this issue reflects on the bodies responsible for overseeing hiring and compliance with the minimum qualifications: local senates and boards. Consider how such malfeasance can undermine the credibility of the System and our profession.

It’s not as if this issue hasn’t been widely discussed over the past several years. In 2004 Mark Snowwhite wrote a very informative *Rostrum* article on the subject of minimum qualifications, which included Chancellor’s Office legal counsel Attorney Ralph Black’s 2003 memo to Snowwhite declaring “that a district is not authorized to establish a single course equivalency as a substitute for meeting minimum qualifications in a discipline.” The Black memo has been available in its entirety on the front page of the Academic Senate website for several years now. Moreover, in 2006, the Academic Senate published a paper on the granting of equivalencies (available on the Academic Senate’s website at: <http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/legal/opinions/attachments/03-28.pdf>) which detailed the faculty’s authority and responsibility in the hiring process. In 2007, the Academic Senate completed another round of hearings for the Disciplines List that featured the subject of minimum qualifications and equivalencies in breakouts, hearings, and mailings. What with all the workshops, articles, and papers on the subject, the word is getting out that those who teach within our system, regardless of their subject area, must meet or exceed the minimum

qualifications established by the Academic Senate and approved by the Board of Governors.

Even so, local practices in some instances suggest that non-compliance may be viewed as acceptable when efforts to comply become challenging, regardless of the fact that compliance is a matter of law. Perhaps it's like driving 80 MPH in a 65 MPH zone until we see someone getting red lighted. Then we slow down. Well, as you can see, it appears that the red lights are on. The story that opened this article is not an isolated example of what can happen if local senates fail to take the initiative—but a growing reality.

What should local senates do? First, download two documents, The Disciplines List at <http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa_ir/psmq/min_qual/min_qual%20_revFeb2206.doc> and Equivalence to the Minimum Qualifications at <http://www.asccc.org/Publications/Papers/Equivalence_2006.html> and read them. Local senates have joint agreement with their boards on the hiring of faculty and instructional administrators and the establishment of equivalencies. Joint agreement means that both sides must agree before any action may be taken, and, thus, compliance with the minimum qualifications and the hiring of faculty are first and foremost the responsibility of local senates.

While colleges may not grant themselves an amnesty from previous violations, they should conduct an audit and agree that from that date forward, they will no longer place unqualified faculty in courses, they will no longer grant substandard equivalencies, and they will no longer permit single course equivalencies. While it is impossible to do anything about past infractions, immediate action to rectify noncompliance would certainly be preferable to what would transpire should an external audit reveal that no effort on the part of a local senate and board had attempted to make things right. While it is possible that the greatest hardship

may fall to those part-time faculty who are not properly qualified, colleges should do all that they can to find appropriate courses for these individuals and encourage that they come into compliance as soon as possible if they wish to be eligible to teach specific courses. Also of importance is that the granting of equivalencies and eminence may only occur after local board and senate approval of policies that oversee such processes. In all instances, faculty hires must demonstrate sufficient subject area depth and breadth of general education knowledge. We are, after all, colleges.

Where minimum qualifications, equivalencies, and hiring are concerned, it is essential that local senates step forward.

Because it is possible that conducting audits will in some instances cause difficulties with long-term hires, teaching assignments, and the ability of the institution to cover certain courses, faculty should work as closely with their administrative partners as possible to assure that the institution is united in its resolve to come into compliance with the law. Where questions arise, senate leaders and administrators should feel free to contact the Academic Senate (Dan Crump, Chair of Standards and Practices, Crumpd@arc.losrios.edu, 916-484-8167).

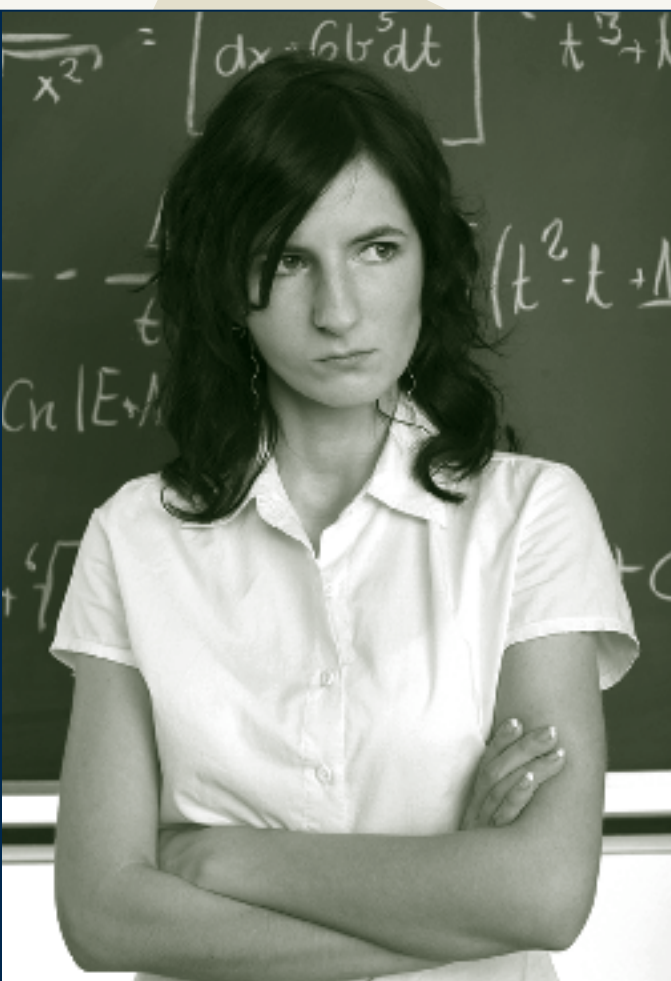
The importance of having fully qualified faculty in our classes cannot be overstated, regardless of the course, because the reality is that all subjects are cross-curricular. Whether we are discussing physics in the automotive lab, anatomy in a physical education class, or information competency in business administration, it is the role of the teaching professional to raise the discourse in any subject area to include a larger understanding of the world. When we properly qualify and place faculty in our institutions, we strengthen the ability of our colleges and the System to meet their missions. ■

Academic Integrity

BY BETH SMITH, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

“Now, I must warn you that the most stringent Anti-Cheating Charms have been applied to your examination papers. Auto-Answer Quills are banned from the examination hall, as are Remembralls, Detachable Cribbing Cuffs, and Self-Correcting Ink. Every year, I am afraid to say, seems to harbor at least one student who thinks that he or she can get around the Wizarding Examinations Authority’s rules. I can only hope that it is nobody in Gryffindor.”

—Professor McGonagall, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.



In San Francisco in Spring 2007, the paper Promoting and Sustaining an Institutional Climate of Academic Integrity was unanimously adopted. This Academic Senate paper is in response to two resolutions from Fall 2005 concerning academic dishonesty. One resolution, 14.02, “Student Cheating,” sought clarification on a System Office legal position that limits the ability of local faculty to fail a student for a single incident of academic dishonesty, and pending the result of clarification, to seek an appropriate Title 5 change. Resolution 14.01, “Student Academic Dishonesty and Grading,” required the Academic Senate to investigate faculty legal and professional rights and obligations for dealing with academic dishonesty, including options for grading, disciplinary action, definitions of academic dishonesty,

a statement of best practices, and an explanation of student rights. The theme of the paper reiterates that the best way to reduce incidents of academic dishonesty is to be proactive—to develop a college atmosphere of integrity, responsibility, and understanding of why these honorable behaviors form the essence of scholarly inquiry and ethical decision making in the workplace.

The need for a culture of academic integrity that enriches the educational experience of students and faculty and, indeed, all individuals associated with the college as employees or community members, is a well-established fact as demonstrated by colleges around the country.

The paper recommends that colleges involve all constituent groups, particularly student leaders, in developing and promoting policies and procedures supportive of a climate of academic integrity. Students have key responsibilities and protections provided by Title 5 §51023.7 and have the potential to raise awareness throughout an institution concerning academic integrity. The paper includes examples of policies and procedures that have been adopted at several colleges. Central to all discussions of academic integrity is the importance of due process and the protection of student rights.

Suggestions for promoting a climate of academic integrity are provided, along with examples of policies applied to such issues as test taking, technology, distance education, Internet use, group work, and maintaining the integrity of graded assignments. Emphasis is placed on the roles of classroom faculty, library services, counseling, and the need to institute mandates for information competency as a means of creating and sustaining a culture of academic integrity.

The paper goes on to discuss the System Office's 1995 legal interpretation of faculty rights with re-

gards to failing a student for an incident of academic dishonesty. Included in this section is a brief discussion of potential changes to Title 5 and a consideration of student rights under the law. Faculty, students and System Office legal experts are grappling with the best way to maintain faculty authority for grades per Education Code section 76224(a).

“When grades are given for any course of instruction taught in a community college district, the grade given to each student shall be the grade determined by the faculty member of the course and the determination of the student's grade by the instructor, in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency, shall be final,” while protecting the due process rights of students. Drafts of possible Title 5 language should be available Fall 2007.

The paper also provides examples from colleges of policies and procedures that support academic integrity, recommendations to local senates, faculty, and the Academic Senate, and concludes with references and appendices. Because the clear recommendation in the paper is the creation of a climate and culture at each college of honesty and integrity in every classroom and office, the paper is a necessary read for faculty, student leaders, administrators, trustees and members of the community. Then, the first meetings of how to strengthen the academic integrity at a campus can begin in earnest.

“However, there is no reason not to do your very best. You have your own futures to think about.”

—Professor McGonagall, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. ■

Refocusing with a New Lens


BY SHAARON VOGEL, CHAIR,
RELATIONS WITH LOCAL SENATES

Marcel Proust stated “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.” As our local senates start to plan for the year and set their goals, this is the perfect time to view our landscape with new eyes.

We tend to get so wrapped up in our old issues, problems and relationships that we lose our “vision.”

So how can we refocus with a new lens and sharpen and renew our vision for our students, faculty and college community?

Well what else is new—the state budget was late! So our old response kicks in and we lose an opportunity to view it in a new way. The next time this happens (and it probably will), take action! When was the last time your local senate wrote its local state representative and senator? Take the time to research how a late budget will affect your college and most importantly your students. Go to student services and ask what type of student will be affected and get a personal story to share with the legislature. Make a formal and public statement to the students about your concerns of how the late budget affects



them and what we all can do to create change. Get postcards and have them pre-addressed to your local legislators and have the students fill them with their personal concerns and the impact the delayed budget will have on them. Support other campus programs that may be affected by this late budget and let the staff know you care and want to help. Build new relationships and strengthen old ones.

It is the time to work to write your local senate’s goals for the year. Are you noticing the same old

themes coming up yet again? How can you broaden your perspective? How about asking a spokesperson from areas such as DSPS, EOPS, library, technology, CalWORKS or Economic and Workforce Initiatives to come and share their concerns and see if new ideas can be generated. New vision comes with getting refamiliarized with programs on your campus that you may have not heard from lately.

This year will be a great year to refocus with a new lens on “old” issues. The Basic Skills Initiative training will be coming to one of your local campuses soon if it has not already made its visit. Visit the newly launched Basic Skills Initiative website at www.cccbsi.org and see where and when the meetings will be held. Basic skills is one of the long term issues we have talked about, worked on and deal with daily, but now is the opportunity to look at it through a “new lens”. Is there anything we missed? Anything new we can do or change to help our students succeed? What a great opportunity to sit down with our basic skills faculty and student services to generate new and creative ideas to address this problem.

We cannot seek “new administrators” but perhaps we can view them with new eyes.

Have your local senate discuss at least one area where you can walk into a meeting with a new proposal rather than waiting for them to give you one to respond to!

Start the year off by having a meeting with your key administrators and asking them about what their goals for the year are and why. Ask them what their management style is; what they value in a person—get a different view of what you think is a “known”. You may just see them with a new lens and it may open a door you did not know existed to building a new relationships.

So as we start a new voyage this year we know we are not going to see any new landscapes, but we can make the voyage new, exciting and perhaps even fun if we try to view it with new eyes. Refocus with a new lens and Oh the things you might see! ■

Fall Session 2007

November 1-3, 2007 at the Anaheim Marriott
(700 West Convention Way, Anaheim, California 92802)

Last day to pre-register at the lower rate of **\$295** is October 22, 2007. Please visit www.asccc.org for more information and to register online.

Hotel Reservations

Please note that you must make your own reservations with the Anaheim Marriott by calling 1-714-750-8000. Please ask for the Academic Senate “Annual Fall Session Meeting” group rate no later than October 15, 2007.

Room rate is **\$129** single/double.

Basic Skills: A Conversation

BY LESLEY KAWAGUCHI, CHAIR, BASIC SKILLS COMMITTEE

That all of our students are basic skills students has been a consistent assertion and reminder at breakouts and discussions throughout the California Community College System for the past couple of years. Yet, in my day-to-day teaching, I had not often thought about basic skills students in my classes, largely because courses in my discipline, History, have an advisory that students be eligible for college-level English. When students have done poorly on their out-of-class essays or in-class essay exams, I have asked them what level of English they are taking, and almost none are in basic skills. (It's dismaying how many students who are taking English literature courses have not mastered fundamental elements of college-level writing, but that's another story.) However, as chair of the Basic Skills Committee in 2007-2008, I have begun to think about basic skills students and their needs within the context of the larger college community, which gives me pause as our colleges undertake the Basic Skills Initiative to think of ways to open up the conversation across disciplines on our campuses.

According to the Academic Senate committee charge, the Basic Skills Committee reviews policies and makes recommendations on positions and actions on issues related to meeting the needs of underprepared community college students. If my college's framing of basic skills is any indication, those needs largely center on English/ESL reading and writing and math skills. As colleges move forward with the Basic Skills Initiative, the potential exists that these disciplines could comprise the bulk of what is considered "basic skills." However, there

are other concerns that go beyond these basic skills, such as oral communication skills or larger college initiatives that should also be considered in meeting the needs of underprepared students. I would like to give a few examples for consideration.

Recently, one member of my local board of trustees told of her experience buying a new cell phone. She went to her carrier's local store, where she was assisted by a young man who mumbled and was difficult to understand. In her discussions with him, she mentioned that she needed the phone because she was going abroad as a Santa Monica College trustee. The young man said that he had taken classes as SMC but dropped out because he found the classes too difficult.

We discussed whether or not oral communication and good oral communication skills could be considered a basic skill, especially since so many of our students work in the service sector.

I have also spent some time thinking about how broader college initiatives, such as global citizenship or diversity and American cultures graduation requirements, should also meet the needs of underprepared students. The president of my college has asked the college community to engage in a discussion on global citizenship that could lead to a global citizenship graduation requirement. Don't we want all students, regardless of their preparedness for college-level courses, to be engaged in meaningful

discussions of global citizenship? Is it possible to show students that being able to convert from the U.S. system of measurement to the metric system is more than math, but also a different way of looking at and understanding the world? Don't we want all of our students to understand the ethnic and racial diversity of this country? Don't we want them all to be able to navigate the tricky and difficult ethnic and racial terrain of their communities?

Finally, the Organization of American Historians held a three-day symposium at El Camino College on teaching U.S. History for community college instructors. Many of the topics intersected with the current state of scholarship in U.S. History, such as infusing a more global perspective into the Americas' colonial origins, teaching contemporary U.S. history, teaching U.S. history on-line, or comparing 19th and 21st century immigration issues, patterns, and concerns. But in keeping with the oft-stated quote that began this piece, that "all our students are basic skills students," perhaps the most critical presentation was from an El Camino history instructor who focused on how to teach U.S. history to underprepared students and to focus on key ways to cultivate student success.

As we begin a new academic year with the Basic Skills Initiative, this is an opportunity to begin a larger conversation on the issue of basic skills across college campuses.

As a history instructor, I am watching declining course offerings in my discipline as an increasing number of classes are being devoted to underprepared students. It is for self-interested reasons I want these students to succeed. And in order for the underprepared students to succeed, the conversation must extend beyond those who have traditionally wrestled with the issue—it must include all faculty. ■

Curriculum— Product or Process

BY WHEELER NORTH, CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHAIR

I would like to take this opportunity to refresh some of the ideals I learned about curriculum and what it is supposed to be, while also reviewing why what ought to be an evolving and continually improving process ends up being a product that can be packaged, stamped and shipped as needed.

In reviewing several internet resources the word "curriculum" seems to stem from the idea of running a course or race course. The many definitions all seem to reflect a requirement for a related logical set of experiences to occur within those things that are bestowed as curriculum. From this and what little I gleaned in that long ago "teacher" program I would take a stab at it thusly:

Curriculum is the definition of a set of experiences and activities that are logically related and they occur in an appropriate manner that will likely cause most students to achieve the desired learning results.

Of course with that definition one wonders "What do we need all these Curriculum Committees for?" Hmmm, in addition to enhanced rigor through peer review, from stage left there are these little things called Education Code and Regulation that, along with Accreditation processes, set standards around this definition. It seems that taxpayers (we included) want

a little more specificity around rigor if they are to bear this burden for their citizens. Therefore some approval structure must exist.

Oddly though, the paradox becomes, how do we, as subject matter experts in only our one area, trying to create rules to uphold standards of rigor and credibility, do so when we have no idea what form these experiences will take for another given subject area? Like Columbus, while we may have some rules for how to make charts, we have no clue as to what that chart ought to look like until some parts of the journey have been completed.

So it is fair to say that curriculum development ought to have some experimental journeys as a legitimate aspect of creating a quality product. Much like the chart, if Columbus didn't go find out where America was, it would have been tough to begin drawing it into the chart. And each successive journey did much to refine those earlier drawings.

For me the juxtaposition between the development and approval processes is a balancing act, that should, whenever possible, be local faculty decision making, hopefully at the program level. So as such, much of the approval processes we all utilize are really about ensuring that some of the basic ingredients exist within any course we attempt to offer. And those ingredients are there to ensure both rigor and reasonable structure.

Using our above definition, Curriculum, as a product, should be a set of defining documents that describe what the entering and exiting student should be capable of; they should describe the related areas to be experienced within the course, and the intended results or outcomes of having experienced these activities. This product should also include the parameters of structure such as time on task, in study, and doing research, books, materials, available services, etc.

If the curriculum of a course or a program fits within a larger context, the documents should also describe this relationship or integration within the whole.

At the same time, curriculum should not be so rigidly defined that different individuals teaching the course might not be able to adapt and get the same results given a different classroom, or differing lab equipment, or differing time structures, or different textbooks or even differing modalities such as online teaching versus face-to-face.

In some ways curriculum should be a narrative map of where the student should go, but this map should be inclusive and reflective of many differing potential pathways between the beginning and end of the journey.

Curriculum should be so written that it is also a journey for the faculty facilitating this effort. It should be inspirational to some degree, particularly since it is likely this could be the one and only chart that many of our new part time faculty will ever get prior to taking their students upon such waters.

Sadly, in many ways our need for bureaucratic processes often does much to throw "inspirational" out of the proverbial curriculum box. Nonetheless, curriculum well written is something that any subject matter expert will get and will get excited about as she or he facilitates her or his students educational journey. ■

Julie's In Box

The Academic Senate receives many requests from the field, and most of them come through the Senate Office into the in box 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. After a discussion about how to provide local senates a forum to share their questions and solutions, the Standards and Practices Committee of the Academic Senate recommended a section in the *Rostrum* dedicated to local senate issues. This column will share the questions and solutions offered by the President and the Executive Committee. We would love your feedback. Please send your thoughts or questions to Julie@asccc.org.

Here's our first letter:

Dear Julie,

Our district CEO and governing board president have asked the counseling faculty to provide evidence of "what they do." The counselors have to account for every hour that they are on campus during the week, list committee assignments, and other duties. The counselors feel insulted by this request, and other discipline faculty are concerned that they could be required to do the same. What can we do?

—Feeling Depressed in Southern California

Dear F.D.I.S.C.,

It is understandable that your counseling faculty members feel insulted; however, there are some things you can do to help the situation. For some reason, the CEO and board president want more information about the work of faculty. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Faculty are known for their ability to educate, and we recommend that your faculty accept this invitation to explain the myriad duties and services provided to students, colleagues and the community by the talented faculty at your college.

We suggest organizing presentations at board meetings by discipline faculty, beginning with the counseling faculty. Arrange for presentations during public comment if the senate leadership cannot include these presentations during the regular senate report to the board. The discipline faculty can share information from recent program review materials, about SLO development and assessment, concerning academic or educational planning documents, about awards received, etc. It may be useful to include a board tour of the facilities used by the program (labs, studios, learning centers, etc.) either before or after regularly scheduled board meetings.

You could also team up with your union representatives who could provide details of official job descriptions and other relevant information from the union's perspective. If the requests for information continue, it may be useful to ask your union leadership to see if this request impacts working conditions or violates the contract. Good luck!

—Executive Committee ■