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ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES NEWSLETTER

SENATE ROSTRUM

THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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

BY DAVE DEGROOT, ARTICULATION OFFICER, ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE

Whenever systemwide policies are proposed there is a natural and understandable concern expressed by faculty. Local district control of curricular policy is critical in maintaining effective learning environments that are relative to each district's unique demographics. In this case, however, a systemwide community college GE AP list would not compromise local district control. The intent of the CCC GE AP list is to equate AP scores to broad general education "area" requirements that are required across all campuses (Title 5 § 55063. Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree), thus leaving campus specific "course" equivalency determination as a responsibility of the local discipline faculty as required by Title 5 (Title 5 § 55052. Advanced Placement Examinations). Because the GE "area" requirements are the same across all campuses (as defined by Title 5), it is appropriate to have a systemwide CCC GE AP list. On the other hand, courses that are specific to individual campuses should have "course" AP equivalency determined by the discipline faculty on those campuses (as defined in Title 5). The adoption of a systemwide CCC GE AP list will not replace the responsibility of individual campus faculty to determine campus specific "course" AP equivalency.

A Systemwide CCC GE AP List—Why?

A systemwide CCC GE AP list would provide students and counselors a clear and consistent reference for applying AP scores towards associate degree GE "area" requirements. Community college students often attend more than one college and the awarding of AP credit differs significantly among community colleges. Students may receive associate degree GE 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 list. For example, a student with a score of three in AP Physics B will receive GE equivalency credit at Santa Barbara City College because the "course" equivalency is in their GE Area A, but the student would not receive GE credit if the student transferred to Allan Hancock College because there is no "course" equivalency for AP Physics B at Allan Hancock College and is therefore not on their GE list. If a CCC GE AP list were instituted students and counselors would know what GE requirement an AP score would fulfill regardless of which, or how many, of the 110 community colleges the student attended.

Academic Senate Resolutions and Rostrum Articles

The need for a California CCC GE AP list has been well established. Beginning as far back as 1994 (S94 4.05 Advanced Placement Three-Year Degree) and as recently as 2006 (F06 4.02 Advanced Placement (AP) Credit Policies and F06 4.06 Advanced Placement (AP) Equivalency Lists) there have been Academic Senate resolutions calling for research on AP credit policies and procedures. In addition, a number of *Rostrum* articles addressing AP concerns

have also been written including "AP, IB 5-6-7, 3-4-5 What is it All About and Why Should Faculty Care?" (February 2007), "Now Is the Time for Systemwide Advanced Placement (AP) Policies and Procedures" (February 2008) and "California Community College (CCC) General Education (GE) Advanced Placement (AP) List" (May 2008). Last spring all this interest and research culminated with the Academic Senate passing a resolution calling for the development of a California CCC GE AP list (S08 4.04 CCC GE Advanced Placement (AP) Equivalency).

CCC Articulation Officer's Survey

After the passage of Resolution 4.04 S08, a California CCC GE AP survey was conducted among the California community college articulation officers. There was a 100% response rate to this survey with 109 out of the 110 articulation officers supporting the need for a GE AP list. The survey provided the impetus for a proposed CCC GE AP list. During the 2007-2008 academic year the system offices of the CSU and UC worked with their appropriate academic senates to revise the CSU GE AP list last reviewed in 1998, develop an IGETC AP List and closely align both lists. In the GE AP survey all 110 articulation officers responded that if a CCC GE AP list is developed it should be aligned with the CSU GE and IGETC AP lists. The proposed CCC GE AP list is not only aligned with the Title 5 general education requirements, but also with the CSU GE and IGETC AP lists. This spring, the proposed CCC GE AP list will be presented to the delegates in attendance at the Academic Senate plenary session for adoption. You can find the proposal on the Senate website at *http://www.asccc.org/Events/sessions/spring2009/materials.html.*

Advanced Placement Statistics

There are an ever-increasing number of students enrolling at California community colleges with AP examination scores requesting credit for these scores. The number of AP examinations taken in the United States in 2008 was 2.7 million. California led the nation with 453,166. The next three closest states were Texas with 270,466, Florida with 235,030 and New York with 200,609. In the past ten years the number of AP examinations taken has substantially increased with California again leading the nation from 175,182 in 1998 to 453,166 in 2008. This increase is contributing to the fact that we are seeing more and more students with AP scores arriving on our college campuses and requesting credit for their AP scores. In addition, considering the current budget crisis and future state funding projections there will be even more CSU and UC bound students beginning their bachelor degree program at our colleges.

Next Step

As noted above, a resolution will be brought forward at the Academic Senate 2009 Spring Plenary calling for the approval and adoption of the proposed CCC GE AP list. Local academic senates should begin a discussion about the proposed CCC GE AP list. It would be advisable to include the articulation officer and transfer director in these discussions as they are the most knowledgeable campus resources when it comes to general education and AP scores. ■

> The intent of the CCC GE AP list is to equate AP scores to broad general education "area" requirements that are required across all campuses.

Explaining the ASCCC Position on "Transfer Degrees"

BY JANE PATTON, VICE PRESIDENT, AND MICHELLE PILATI, TREASURER

The question of "Transfer Degrees" is a hot topic for many people—especially those outside our colleges. Explaining the Academic Senate position is not simple, and a reductionist view ridiculously suggests that somehow we oppose transfer or oppose degrees. Because the Academic Senate has recently received several inquires, we were prompted to summarize the Senate's positions, which are based on several recent resolutions. Below is a summary that we have shared and which we will continue to pass along to help others understand the faculty perspective on this academic and professional matter: the content of our degrees. (For more background on the recent Title 5 changes, please see the May 2008 *Rostrum* article "As the Degree Turns-Notes to Minimize the Drama of Getting your Compliant Degrees Approved".)

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has held numerous discussions over the last several years about the meaning of our degrees and determined the following:

> "Transfer" is something students do once they leave the colleges rather than something that happens when they are within our doors.

Earning a degree that is composed only of transfer requirements is really not what was intended by Title 5, which states that degrees must *not* be granted based on an accumulation of units such as those in the IGETC pattern or the CSU GE breadth requirements; but that instead there must be a concentrated focus in the form of a major or in an area of emphasis, which was the recent change in Title 5 (See Resolution 13.02 Fall 2006). The titles of degrees at some of our colleges have been misleading, suggesting to students that completion of a degree automatically qualifies a student for transfer—as is the case in some states. A degree entitled "Transfer" or "University Studies" does not come with any such guarantee. In actuality, transfer requirements are out of our control and frequently changed by the receiving institutions, so a degree which includes the word "transfer" is really a false promise to students, suggesting that by taking our programs, they will automatically be accepted at given institutions. Therefore we recommended that titles of degrees not include the word "transfer" (see Resolution 9.02 Fall 2006).

"Transfer" is something students do once they leave the colleges rather than something that happens when they are within our doors.

In fact, students may continue to do what they have always done: complete an associates degree and/or prepare for transfer and they can accom-

plish both if they plan appropriately—to take the courses required by their college to earn a degree with either a major or an area of emphasis, as well as complete the lower division requirements for the university to which they plan to transfer. The concept of an "area of emphasis" was recently added to permit colleges to develop an alternative to majors that is broader than traditional majors, allowing colleges to better meet the needs of their communities.

In general, the Academic Senate is committed to facilitating student transfer in a manner that is compliant with existing Title 5 language with respect to the degree (GE + major/area of emphasis), and also allowing for more local decisions regarding degrees.

The Academic Senate supports:

1. Helping students to transfer by providing clear information about transfer and degree requirements and not misleading them with our degree titles.
2. Providing degrees that are meaningful—that indicate an appropriate level of competency in English and mathematics, as well as a more in-depth knowledge in an area of study (what is commonly referred to as a "major", but which may be *somewhat* broader than what this concept generally implies with the new option of an "area of emphasis").
3. Providing opportunities to recognize and transcript CSU GE or IGETC completion that does not lessen the meaning of a community college degree. (i.e., certificates could be provided for those students who do not opt to complete a "major"). This option was added as part of the recent Title 5 changes.
4. Broadening the concept of what is permissible as a "major" such that degrees that are not explicitly designed to prepare a student for transfer may be offered (i.e., permitting degrees where the major component does not necessarily substantively meet the requirements of the lower division for a CSU or UC major, with the caveat that this is made explicit to students).

The Academic Senate opposes

1. Compromising the meaning of an associate's degree by permitting the awarding of degrees that are merely a collection of general education courses without an additional organized pattern of study in a single discipline or related disciplines (i.e., major or area of emphasis) (see Resolution 13.02 Fall 2006).
2. Calling a degree a "transfer" degree–because transfer cannot be guaranteed (see Resolution 9.02, Fall 2006).

Please note: All resolutions are available on the Academic Senate website at: *http://www.asccc.org/Res/Search.aspx.* ■

Eliminate the Word "Transfer" in the Degree – Resolution 9.02 F06

Whereas, The use of the word "transfer" in degree titles may lead students to believe the completion of the degree ensures transfer to a four-year institution; and

Whereas, Students may believe that all courses they successfully complete for a "transfer" degree are transferable;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with local senates, local curriculum committees, and chief instructional officers (CIOs) to eliminate the use of the term "transfer" in program titles for the associate degree.

Challenge Your MQ Knowledge

BY BETH SMITH, CHAIR, STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMITTEE

Minimum qualifications provide the common, unifying core for all faculty within a discipline. They provide the buffet of knowledge and skills that fill the plates of every course approved by the curriculum committee. Each decision to assign a course to a certain discipline(s) is critical to student success as well as affecting overall program success, hiring decisions, and more. For all these reasons and others, several papers on minimum qualifications and equivalencies have been adopted by the Academic Senate. Reading the papers will help faculty and administrators understand the positions of the Senate, laws and regulations, and other details, but sometimes it's advantageous and fun to have another format to convey the information.

Below you will find a short exercise to share with curriculum committee members, hiring committees, senates, administrators and others involved with making sure that the most qualified person is delivering the intended curriculum. Each set of three questions includes two truths and one untruth. See if you can determine which is which! Correct answers follow at the end of all four sets of statements.

Bronze Level

B1 - The Academic Senate has concluded that credit basic skills courses in mathematics and English may be taught by a faculty member without a master's degree in the respective discipline.

B2 - Teaching experience is included in "professional experience" when discipline faculty consider the minimum qualifications.

B3 - Curriculum committees may place a course into more than one discipline, meaning that anyone with qualifications in any of the identified disciplines may teach the course.

Silver Level

S1 - Interdisciplinary Studies is a discipline which requires that a qualified faculty member have MORE educational experience than other disciplines on the master's list.

S2 - A faculty member who has a lifetime community college credential for a particular subject area has met the qualifications to teach in the disciplines correlated to that subject area.

S3 - Noncredit minimum qualifications are the same as credit minimum qualifications for all disciplines.

Gold Level

G1 - Emergency hires are hired under a different set of minimum qualifications than other faculty.

G2 - Single-course equivalency is no longer acceptable in California community colleges.

G3 - Eminence is a means of demonstrating equivalence.

Platinum Level

P1 - When a nonmaster's degree qualified instructor teaches a class, CSU and UC do not accept the units for the course when the student transfers.

P2 - Title 5 requires that full-time faculty job announcements be advertised on the California Community College Equal Employment Opportunity Registry (better known as the "Job Registry").

P3 - If the statewide minimum qualifications change after a faculty member is hired to teach at a college, the local board of trustees may decide to continue the employment of the faculty member. ■

Turn to page 10 to see how you did

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,

Our senate wants to help our student association become more involved, organized and professional. Do you have any resources for us?

Wanting to Help Students

Dear W.H.S.,

Yes, we have some ideas and resources for you. The Student Senate for California Community Colleges is developing into a wonderful organization, and student participation in it provides a wonderful experience for your current student leaders and those aspiring to be leaders. You can access the website at http://www.studentsenateccc.org/ . The Student Senate has a General Assembly planned for the first weekend in May in San Diego. Your senate can recommend that students participate in the General Assembly. Officers of the Student Senate are eager to engage students across the state. The students have adopted a resolution process like the one used by the Academic Senate, and student development of resolutions is encouraged.

Your students leaders might benefit from attending your senate meetings too. The model you provide might spark interest in a more organized agenda or voting process. College committees that include the voice of the students can also provide examples to student participants about effective meetings and planning. Be sure that the student association knows that student input is valued and necessary for good decision making at your college.

> Be sure that the student association knows that student input is valued and necessary for good decision making at your college.

Another strategy may be to include the student leaders in a meeting of your senate executive team. This could be an informal discussion over lunch or a more formal invitation to meet with you and discuss options to help the students become more effective. If the student organization has a faculty advisor, offer your invitation to lunch to that person as well.

Student organizations, like faculty organizations, are only as strong as the commitment and interest of the participants. Perhaps your senate can make a concerted effort to lead a campaign to rally student interest. If each instructor convinced only one student in each class to consider participating in student government or committees, just imagine the results….

Good luck! ■

"Fixing" the California Community College System

BY MICHELLE PILATI, FUTURES COMMITTEE MEMBER

Time and time again, suggestions come from outside our "system" as to how to "fix" us. Interestingly, although our problems are complex, proposals to "fix" us tend to be quite simplistic and are often focused on increasing administrative flexibility while sacrificing quality. And when economic challenges emerge, the fixes seem to be more short-sighted than usual. In the current climate, we have proposals from the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) to decrease the funding for some courses, we have caps imposed on our growth at a time when most colleges are growing quite considerably, and there are always calls to remove the rules we have in place to prevent a further decline in our full-time faculty numbers. Without full-time faculty, how do we accomplish our academic and professional responsibilities? If our loosely joined system had a voice, what would it say? If our system had an independent voice, what would it advocate for?

Dear Friends of the California Community College System –

I'm compelled to write you at this time as we are in a predicament. As our economy gets worse, we are expected to do more—and more—with less. As the UC and CSU take fewer students, the demands on our resources increase. As people are laid off, they come to us for re-training. We try not to complain, but we can only take so much.

Over the years there have been many who have taken an interest in how our system works and how it doesn't. Policy influencers look at research on our system and see where we are not living up to our potential. They then make proposals for ways to fix us, often without consideration for our many missions, our diversity, and our commitment to accessibility. If we abandoned our communities and focused exclusively on transfer, increased our fees, and implemented admissions requirements, no doubt our transfer rates would soar. While preparing students for transfer is an important part of who we are, that is not all that we are. We strive to do the impossible—meeting community needs for workforce preparation, English language learning, transfer, life skills, and terminal degrees, just to name a few. We serve all adults who can benefit—not merely those with transfer aspirations. But we certainly would like to increase our transfer rates—and would welcome changes that help us to do so—without sacrificing our ability to serve those who need us the most.

We know we are not perfect and we understand your desire to fix us. We don't operate as a system—and we should not be expected to. Our 110 college system is genius—allowing 110 different approaches to meeting local community needs. Some colleges are positioned to be the destination for transfer-oriented students—and they shift their resources to that area, hiring more counseling staff and ensuring that transfer-bound students receive the guidance they need. Others strive to serve immigrant populations by establishing satellite locations that reach out into these populations. Even individual colleges within a district are able to dedicate their resources as is appropriate for their demographic. Perhaps we are better described as a network that spreads throughout the state with each location tailored to the needs of our local communities. While we must find ways to work together effectively and ways to ensure that all students are well-served, to expect us to function as a fully integrated system is not only impossible, but unwise.

It must be noted that sometimes external forces have done wonderful things for us. Faculty will often reference AB 1725 (Assembly Bill 1725) and praise it—but they probably don't take the time to read it. And they should—as well as all of you who want to make the California community colleges better. AB1725 established a proud vision of the colleges noting that "learning is what we care about most". It also noted what community colleges need in order to ensure that such learning could happen, as demonstrated in the statement "The success of the assessment, counseling, and placement system in the community colleges depends upon the ability of community college districts to provide a full range of courses of remedial instruction and related support services." This captures what is at the core of the failures some see in our system—we don't have the resources to do it.

The Legislature's understanding of the community colleges was further codified in AB1725, as these choice quotes demonstrate:

- "Professional development for faculty, support staff, student services staff, and administrators is vital."
- "All state and local policies, rules, and regulations regarding community college faculty and administrator qualifications, evaluation, hiring, or retention should strengthen faculty, administration, and board cooperation in matters related to those topics. They should also strengthen the role of the faculty as an authoritative, professional collegiate body."
- "The state should provide the community colleges with enough resources and a sufficiently stable funding environment to enable them to predict their staffing needs and to establish highly effective hiring processes."
- "It is the joint responsibility of the student and the community college to realize the student's goals and aspirations, which often change during the educational experience and which include such diverse purposes as literacy training, English acquisition and development both for persons whose primary language is English and persons having other primary languages, vocational training, job reskilling, skills enhancement, and education oriented toward transfer to a four-year college or university."

While we seemed to have the support we needed back then, efforts to fix us have generally consisted of new forms of "accountability", regulations to prevent us from misbehaving, and directions to simply do more with less. And every now and then we hear rumors about doing away with some of the really good rules. If you want to help us, don't do anything that would decrease our number of full-time faculty. If you really want to help, enforce the rules that exist to make sure that our colleges have the people they need to really make things work—ensure that 75% of all instruction is being taught by full-time faculty. While our many part-timers are essential to our functioning, they could do so much more if they were full-time faculty and able to move their local colleges forward with the passion and drive they currently use navigating the freeway. Community and belonging are essential to academic success—how can you foster success when so many of your teachers are not an integral part of that community?

And, while you are at it, provide funds for professional development so that all faculty can be their best and do their best for students.

And if you really want the colleges to produce more degrees and certificates, fund all the support services that are necessary to guide students on their educational journey. Modify existing rules to increase the number of full-time faculty who are both teaching and counseling. Instruction can't achieve its full potential without the support services to aid students in identifying and planning to reach their goals. AB1725 acknowledged this. How can the education we provide be valued, but the need to support it with resources be ignored?

Please give us what we really need to succeed and we will strive to meet your expectations. Who knows, if properly supported, perhaps we might even exceed them.

Sincerely,
Joe the California Community College Instructor ■

Correct Identification of Truths and Untruths

BY BETH SMITH, CHAIR, STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMITTEE

The answers to "Challenge Your MQ Knowledge" challenge from page 6.

Bronze Set

B1 is the untruth: "The Academic Senate has concluded that credit basic skills courses in mathematics and English may be taught by a faculty member without a master's degree in the respective discipline" is incorrect. The Senate has taken the opposite position: "The Academic Senate has consistently maintained that applicants with minimum qualifications to teach only lower-level or introductory courses in a discipline may very well have the depth of knowledge to teach that limited area; however, with such limited expertise these people will not be as likely as someone with minimum qualifications in that discipline to have an understanding of how each course fits into the sequence of courses in their respective disciplines" (*Qualifications for Faculty Service in the California Community Colleges: Minimum Qualifications, Placing Courses Within Disciplines, and Faculty Service Areas*, 2004, p. 7). Furthermore, Resolution 10.1 S99 stated, "Resolved that the Academic Senate refuse to consider any proposed changes to the Disciplines List in its present review of the Disciplines List and subsequent reviews that would lower minimum qualifications for faculty who teach basic skills courses."

Statement B2 is true: "Teaching experience is included in "professional experience" when discipline faculty consider the minimum qualifications." The exact language may be found in Title 5 §53404.

> Courses are articulated based upon the content of the course and other features of the Course Outline of Record, not based upon who teaches the course.

Statement B3 is true: Academic senates have the authority to place courses in disciplines in Title 5 §53200.

Silver Set

S3 is untrue: The third statement in the set, S3, "Noncredit minimum qualifications are the same as credit minimum qualifications for all disciplines," is incorrect. Some minimum qualifications are the same and some are not. There are notable differences in the basic skills disciplines, and for the entire list of noncredit minimum qualifications see Title 5 §53412.

S1 is true: Interdisciplinary Studies is the single discipline on the list that requires not only a mas-

ter's degree but additional upper division or graduate level coursework in an additional discipline. Curriculum committees ought to carefully consider if it is appropriate to place a course in Interdisciplinary Studies since the pool of qualified applicants will be significantly reduced.

S2 is true: Yes, community college lifetime credentials are still valid throughout the system. However, meeting minimum qualifications doesn't guarantee a person would be hired or a regular employee would be assigned to teach in that program.

Gold Set

G1 is untrue: Emergency hires are faculty, and faculty must meet minimum qualifications, or the equivalent, in order to be hired.

G2 is true. This statement should be well known around the state as the Academic Senate has vigorously reminded all faculty of the fact that there are NO single-course equivalencies.

G3 is true: Eminence, as stated in G3, is one of three ways of meeting equivalency. The other two include course work or other work experience. Title 5 no longer refers to eminence as a stand alone measure for meeting minimum qualifications.

Platinum Set

P1 is untrue: "When a non-master's degree qualified instructor teaches a class, CSU and UC do not accept the units for the course when the student transfers." Courses are articulated based upon the content of the course and other features of the Course Outline of Record, not based upon who teaches the course. There are many wonderful vocational and career technical courses students take for programs of study as well as electives. The key for students is the articulation agreements between colleges and universities.

(Note: If there is evidence to the contrary, that some universities are refusing transfer based upon qualifications of the instructor, please send the information to the Senate Office immediately.)

P2 is true: Section 53021(a) of Title 5 does require that full-time faculty job announcements be posted on the Job Registry.

P3 is true: The board is not required to continue employment of a faculty member who may not meet newly adopted statewide minimum qualifications. Local senates are urged to work with local bargaining units to protect faculty interests in this case. Please reference Title 5 §53403 for more information. ■

Jumping on the Opportunity

BY MARK WADE LIEU, PRESIDENT

At about this time last year, the California community colleges were confronting the fact that a large number of our colleges were being placed on warning and probation. Nine colleges were put on warning (the first level of censure by the Accrediting Commission) and two colleges were put on probation (the second and more serious level of censure). Six months later, the June report came out, and while four colleges moved off of censure status to have their accreditation reaffirmed, eight additional colleges were put on warning and one was put on probation. Two of our colleges were put on the highest level of censure before de-accreditation, Show Cause, at the recently concluded January Accrediting Commission meeting. Not surprisingly, there is a great deal of anxiety at all colleges and questions about what this portends for our system as a whole.

As I write this, our legislators in Washington, D.C. have come to a conclusion on an economic stimulus package amidst a daily litany of business declines, layoffs, foreclosure numbers, and heaving stock market fluctuations. In California, even as the Legislature wrestles with a greatly challenged budget for 2009-2010, action on addressing budget shortfalls in 2008-2009 remains stalemated in Sacramento. Not surprisingly, colleges face great uncertainty in their own budgeting and budget planning in the face of possible mid-year budget cuts, postponement of apportionment payments, suspension of promised capital improvement monies, and burgeoning student demand.

It would appear that we are in the worst of times—victims of accountability and accounting both run amok. However, knowing full well how Pollyanna-ish I sound with this pronouncement, I believe we are actually in a unique time of opportunity when it comes to participatory governance, and local senates should capitalize on it.

Let's begin with the issue of accreditation. While the aggressiveness with which the Accrediting Commission censured so many colleges took many

by surprise, the fact is that few could actually say that the actions were unjustified.

The truth is that for many years, most of our colleges coasted along in the accreditation process, emphasizing in our self-studies that we were making a great effort but somehow never making enough of an effort to meet the minimums required by the accreditation standards. Just like students who learn that they can get a passing grade because the instructor gives credit for effort alone, not requiring actual achievement or competence, colleges were lulled into a similar practice when the Accrediting Commission took no action even when deficiencies on standards were noted cycle after cycle.

Over the course of the last year, I have had the chance to talk to many faculty leaders who work for colleges that are now on censure, and in the course of discussing how they were going to go about addressing their deficiencies, I would ask whether they were surprised by the Commission's findings. Of the more than twenty colleges that were on warning or probation last year, only two said that they were. The rest actually said that it was about time the Accrediting Commission took their colleges to task for deficiencies they consistently failed to address.

As discussed in "Have You Heard about the Two-Year Rule and Accreditation?" (*Rostrum*, February 2008), the top three deficiencies cited when colleges are put on censure relate to program review (including the use of student learning outcomes and assessment), linkages between planning and budget, and governance. Given the strong role that academic senates play in all of these areas, work to address these deficiencies falls solidly in the laps of academic senates.

Faculty could certainly choose to simply put the blame for deficiencies on administration or point to local boards that micromanage day-to-day operations, but the strategic senate knows to take advantage of such situations to bring the importance of participatory governance to the fore and to use the opportunity to review policies and procedures to strengthen the functioning of the college, and the faculty's role in the institution.

Senates come at the issue of deficiencies from a position of strength because underlying the Accreditation Commission's conferral of censure status is the threat of an institution's actually losing accreditation. Heretofore, no one really imagined that such a thing could happen, but the de-accreditation of Compton College in 2007 has made this possibility all too real. (At its January 2009 meeting, the Accrediting Commission took action on Solano College and changed its censure status from the lowest level, warning, directly to the highest level, show cause—another dose of reality for everyone to digest.) Senates can take a strong leadership role in revisiting and revising inadequate policies and procedures, thereby addressing cited deficiencies. Lest you think this is an overwhelming task, at both College of Marin and Modesto Junior College, senate leadership was central to the institutions getting not only out of probation but skipping past warning to reaffirmation of accreditation within six months and one year, respectively.

The Accrediting Commission is very well-versed in Title 5 regulation and how participatory governance is supposed to work in our system; hence, it can easily spot where such governance is not functioning well. As a result, the Commission has increasingly recommended that colleges engage with the Aca-

> Technical assistance visits can also comprise separate meetings with constituent groups to provide each group a chance to air concerns which are negatively impacting the well-functioning of the college.

demic Senate for California Community Colleges and the Community College League of California on technical assistance visits. Such visits, jointly requested by the local senate president and the college president/superintendant, provide an overview of the statutes and regulations regarding participatory governance. During such visits, faculty, administrators, staff, trustees, and students are all reminded of their specific roles and responsibilities. Technical assistance visits can also comprise separate meetings with constituent groups to provide each group a chance to air concerns which are negatively impacting the well-functioning of the college.

The citing of deficiencies with planning and budgeting processes and program review by the Accrediting Commission has a clear connection with how colleges respond to the current fiscal instability afflicting California. The Academic Senate has two excellent resources for local senates in this area, *The Faculty Role in Planning and Budgeting* (2001) and *Program Review: Developing a Faculty Driven Process* (1996 –a revision is coming before the body for adoption at the Spring 2009 Plenary Session*)*. Both documents attest to the all-too-common problem of planning which takes place independently of budgeting. The Academic Senate emphasizes that budgets should emerge from the fruits of planning, and planning should be informed by program review at all levels.

In addition to the impetus that accreditation findings lend to a revisiting of current budgeting and planning processes, the bleak fiscal outlook is also something to take advantage of. Budgets will probably be flat for a few years, which means that there will be no new dollars to fight over. This provides an excellent atmosphere in which to review policies and procedures regarding budgeting and planning.

We all have a tendency to let processes slide when money is good. We manage to get the money we need for our program, for the senate, for long-needed equipment or supplies, and with that we are content. However, such processes often fail us when times get tough. What we all need is a better overall budget and planning process such that there is a clear process for allocations when times are good

We manage to get the money we need for our program, for the senate, for long-needed equipment or supplies, and with that we are content.

but also for reductions when times are bad. Sadly, most of us feel fairly disconnected from budget discussions except when the college announces that it needs to trim 20% from the budget and asks everyone to participate in how to make those cuts. A good process will have already set many priorities, providing a foundation from which to have these discussions based on a shared understanding.

Undoubtedly, there are budget and planning issues that have arisen over past years that have resulted in dissatisfaction with current processes. Choose one or two things that have been the most problematic and start with those. Engage your board and administration in a dialog about how to improve these processes. Since there are no new dollars, discussions can focus on process rather than on whether changes will result in more money for specific areas.

As an interesting concluding thought—I was recently at the System Office talking with a Vice-Chancellor and a representative of the Legislative Analyst's Office, and the conversation turned to accreditation and the budget shortfall. One of them commented that in a recent conversation with representatives of the Accrediting Commission, the representatives made a clear connection between the underfunding of community colleges and the diminishing ability of colleges to meet minimum accreditation standards, resulting in the wave of colleges being censured. A bleak situation, to be sure–but perhaps with observations like this from the Accrediting Commission, we have a stronger argument than ever to get adequate funding for our colleges. Carpe diem. ■

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Library and Three Faculty Perspectives

BY JANET FULKS, CHAIR, CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

During the Fall 2008 Plenary Session, a resolution calling for the Academic Senate to begin collecting SLOs for a library was passed by a close margin. The library's purpose was to provide examples of SLOs from across the state so that hard-working faculty would have the option of looking at SLOs from other schools to help them with their own work. The vote was so close that it not only required a verbal yeah and nay, but a standing vote as well. Finally, because the numbers looked so close, a serpentine vote (counting off) was needed to get a final tally. The library passed by only one vote. What does that mean?

For those of you on the unofficial curriculum and accreditation listservs, run by Jon Drinnon of Merritt College, this vote may have you scratching your heads because the resolution for the library occurred at your request. For those of you on the SLO coordinators listserv, your first thought may be: "Why in the world would anyone vote against this?" Your faculty have been asking you for examples of SLOs in their disciplines, and here was an opportunity to serve their needs. If you have not been very involved in the SLO effort on your campus, you may be surprised at how much support there was for the library. Hasn't the Academic Senate passed resolutions strongly against SLOs in the past? What is happening here?

It seems to me there are potentially three groups of faculty across the state with different attitudes about SLOs and their assessment:

1. The first group of faculty is working with SLO assessment. These faculty want to look at other colleges as part of a research and vetting process to validate their own thinking and direction. They do not want to copy other people's SLOs nor do they see this as standardization. They want resources! They are motivated by the positive curricular dialog that is occurring as part of the SLO process. They see the real and potential involvement of adjuncts in the assessment process as an asset as well as the natural connection between SLO assessment and program review. They desire to continuously inquire, "How can I do my work better?" Some California community college faculty, some colleges, and some professional groups have already started websites to collect SLOs for review, but a local or discipline specific website is not comprehensive enough to help entire colleges in the same way the Academic Senate library has the potential to help.

2. The second group of faculty have been exposed to SLOs on their campus. They realize this is a mandated activity that isn't going away. Some want to see examples as potential models to emulate or to avoid, while others want to use someone else's SLOs so as to get around the perceived additional workload and fulfill (albeit very superficially) what they know is a mandate. The latter motivation is scary. Perhaps some of these faculty haven't yet experienced the richness of dialog about SLOs that is occurring at other schools, so they can't see its value. Yet without this dialog, SLOs and assessment methods adopted directly from someone else just to save time is the worst kind of self-imposed standardization. It reduces the purpose of it to busywork and takes away the meaning and authenticity that can occur. Worse yet, it doesn't help faculty teach better nor help students to learn.

3. The third group of faculty is made up of those who have adamantly fought against SLOs and wishfully hope they will go away, while clinging to the belief that a change of politics in Washington will help their dreams come true. These faculty will vote down an SLO library that others would use, even knowing that their colleagues have asked for the it, because they see it as a principled stand against standardization. They are probably not involved in the

SLO efforts on their campus or know little about how it is working at other colleges. They want the Academic Senate to continue to resist SLO work in all its forms.

These three groups battled it out in the vote for an SLO library. As I listened to the discussion, I realized that many faculty in the third group had not followed the national scene and seemed unaware that the proverbial accountability train has "left the station". They were unaware of its strong support from both major political parties or that Ted Kennedy is one of the authors of No Child Left Behind. The federal and state legislatures have made their insistence on accountability clear, and the new administration has stated its support for it as well. Since the legislatures invest a large portion of the budget in education, they want to know someone is at home looking at the quality of that investment.

As an individual, I have to admit that I agree with the legislative view as I have pursued my own doctorate and paid for my own children to go to college. I want the course work to make sense, across the institution and within the individual courses. I want to complete a prerequisite, or have my children complete one, and know that it is truly preparation for the next class. At my college, we never even discussed curriculum content, assessment and alignment of prerequisites broadly before SLOs.

Now, it is a major topic of conversation. I want to know that when my students, my own children or I finish a program of study, it is more than a loose collection of topics. Class content and work is not at the whim of the random collection of faculty whose classes I registered to take. It is a professional and well reasoned set of topics and work that coordinate and make my investment of time and money valuable. I want that program to provide me with skills and knowledge I can use in the real world (known as outcomes). Finally, as a professional teacher, I want to be fair to my students. I want to improve in everything I do. I want a reason to discuss the discipline issues and to talk with other departments and community members that are part of the holistic pathway through the program I teach in.

The third group of faculty also seemed unaware that in the debate over the Higher Education Act, Congress made it clear that higher education must prove that it can provide accountability through SLO assessment and peer review (the current system of accreditation) to validate our work. If this method does not work, and we have five years to show that it does, Congress has promised an uglier situation with mandated SLOs from the federal government. Perhaps some faculty in the second group may like that better. After all, that is less work.

But many of us in the first group have already jumped on the accountability train and are trying to command it by retaining faculty primacy over curriculum and SLOs and program review. This is work, but at the same time we have found that after the initial effort, the payoff is worth it! The results range from aligned curriculum and programs to fair grading, from excellent professional dialog to program review with meaning.

So, the SLO library will come into existence over the next year. It will be a resource, not a standard, providing discipline and program level SLOs (and hopefully some potential assessment methods) so faculty can better do their good work.

Submission to the library will be voluntary and will follow set guidelines. The Senate's Accreditation and SLO Committee, in conjunction with the Curriculum Committee, are designing a website shell that should allow easy submission and provide effective search engines. So, if you have ideas or desires with regards to the library, please send them ahead to jfulks@bakersfieldcollege.edu. If you are uneasy or worried and voted down the library, send your concerns as well. You may have thoughts we have not yet considered, and we want this to be a well-developed, safe and useful library.

This is an academic endeavor that involves all of us. We must keep talking so that the three groups can gradually become one, a faculty united, focused on what is best for our students and for teaching and learning.

Dialog is key. And so is education. Watch for a paper on what is working with SLOs across the state coming this spring from the Accreditation and SLO Committee. Keep abreast of dialog in Washington regarding accreditation and accountability. Above all, keep talking to your colleagues, those who are in all three groups. Like we demand of our students, we all need to learn from different points of view. ■

Mythbusters: Addressing Accreditation "Urban Legends"

BY LESLEY KAWAGUCHI, CHAIR, ACCREDITATION AND SLO COMMITTEE

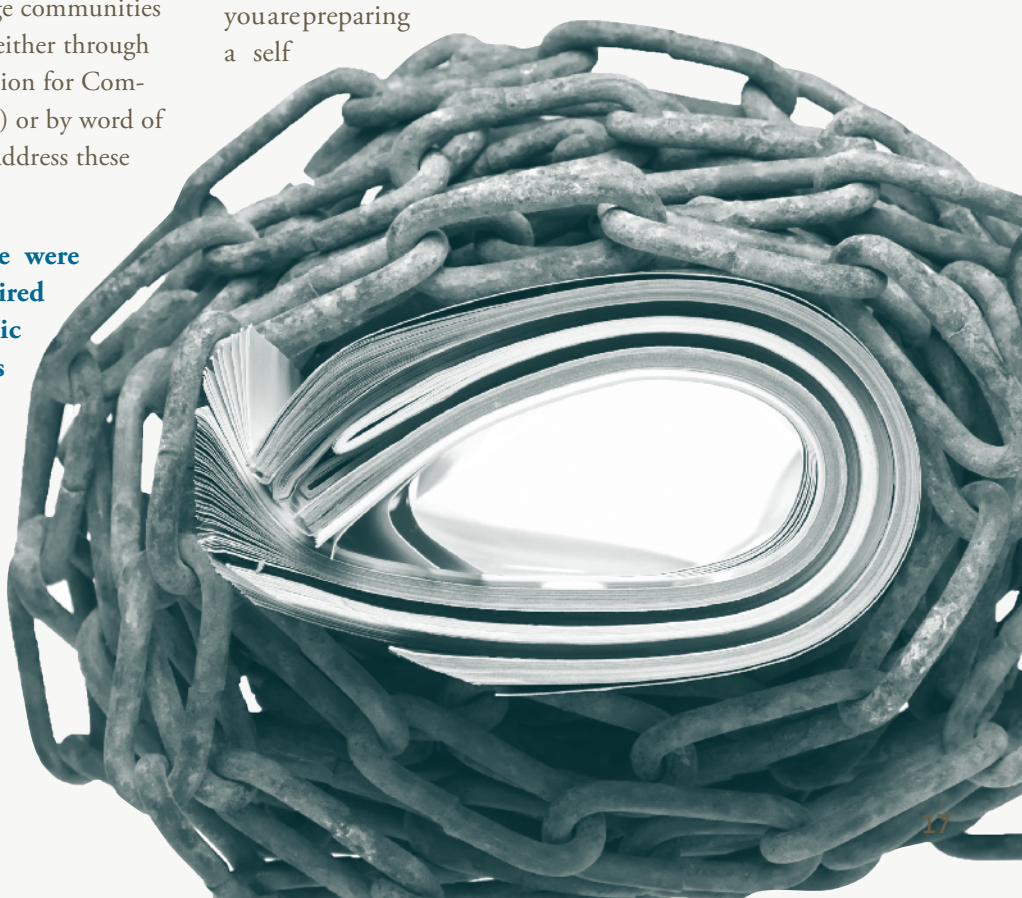
During the Fall Plenary and at the recently held Accreditation Institute, members of the Accreditation and SLO Committee attempted to address accreditation stories that have thrived like urban legends across the state with kernels of truth garnished with large doses of fiction. Much of the concern clearly comes from the rising number of colleges receiving sanctions, including two colleges now facing "show cause" as a result of the January 2009 commission decisions, placing them one step from termination of accreditation. Some of the concern also arises from mixed and conflicting messages that colleges and their individual members from college communities receive or believe they have received either through training by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) or by word of mouth. This article is an attempt to address these stories, hoping to bust the myths.

Mythbuster #1: I heard that we were given more time to reach the required expectations on the SLO rubric provided by ACCJC. If that is true, what is the new deadline?

There are four levels to the SLO rubric: awareness, developmental, proficient, and sustainable and continuous, with the last being the highest level. In September 2008, the commission announced in a letter to all member institutions that it expects colleges to be at the proficient level (third level on the rubric) in 2012, with the expectation that they would thereafter have on-going and sustainable processes for their SLOs and assessment (fourth level).

Mythbuster #2: I heard that there was a requirement that we correct deficiencies within two years after the recommendation. Is this true?

It is true. This is actually a requirement from the federal government; deficiencies must be corrected within two years. But depending on the infraction and the commission's timeline, the time could be even shorter than two years. The bottom line is, if you are preparing a self



study and see a recommendation in a past letter from the commission, you need to be sure your institution has addressed it and can show evidence of improvement. Unlike the old days, you will not see colleges with the same recommendation report after report after report.

Mythbuster #3: I heard at an ACCJC team training meeting that there is a specific number of SLOs required for every course.

When in doubt, one should always go to the Accreditation Standards. Nowhere in the Standards is a specific number given. Yet one can imagine that a five-unit course meeting nine hours a week would have more SLOs than a three-unit course that meets three hours per week. Some one-unit courses could conceivably have a single SLO. No one but the local college should determine any number because the SLOs are based on the pedagogy and the Course Outline of Record requirements.

Mythbuster #4: I was at a meeting where an ACCJC commissioner stated that the SLOs HAD to be in the Course Outline of Record. Is this true?

ACCJC maintains that as an accrediting agency it is not mandated to follow California's Educational Code or Title 5 requirements. Moreover, ACCJC accredits institutions that fall outside of California, including Hawaii and Micronesia. The official Course Outline of Record is a California practice. Thus, it makes no sense that ACCJC would require something based upon one state's practice. Moreover, the Standards do not mention that SLOs need to be in a Course Outline of Record. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has spoken with ACCJC and believes that SLOs belong in a document that is easily accessible and public (which is the language used in the Standard). The location of this document and the SLOs may be the syllabus, the Course Outline of Record, Addenda to the Course Outline of Record, the college website, or the college catalog, wherever the individual college decides to place them and wherever students can find what is expected of them.

Mythbuster #5: Is it true that the SLOs have to be on every syllabus?

The actual language in Standard II.A.6 reads "In every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives [*emphasis added*] consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline." In California, the official Course Outline of Record has explicit course objectives, which all sections of a given course need to meet at the college. This language has been confusing and the senate has asked the commission to clarify what it expects.

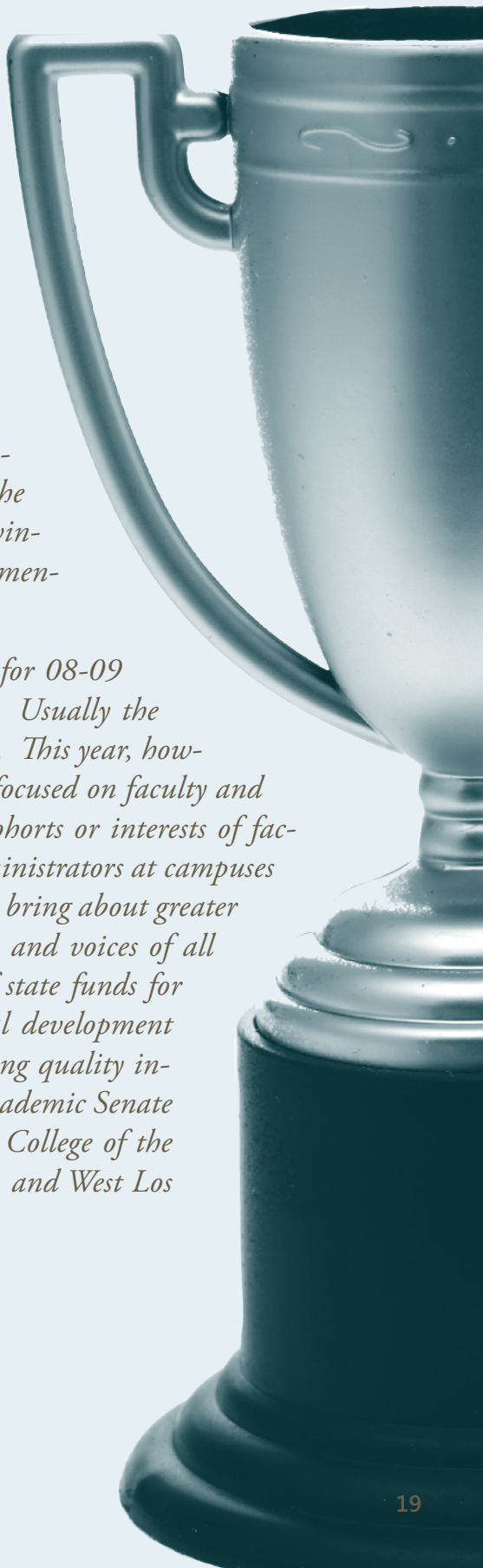
Mythbuster #6: I've heard that schools are being put on warning or probation because of SLOs. What is the main reason schools go on warning or probation? Is it just dependent on the visiting team?

No college that is currently facing sanction does so because of SLOs. Colleges may receive recommendations regarding SLOs and assessment, but they are not the reasons for a college to go on warning, probation, or now, "show cause." Rather, the main reason colleges face sanction is that they have not addressed past recommendations. These recommendations can be 6, 12, or even 18 years old and still have never been seriously addressed by the college. There are three major reasons institutions face warning or probation. The first two have to do with key areas of institutional effectiveness, program review (colleges are currently expected to be at the highest level on the ACCJC rubric) and planning (again, colleges should be at the highest level), while the third deals with governance issues.

There are plenty of other accreditation "myths" floating around. The Academic Senate has asked the commission to clarify these misunderstandings and you can always contact the commission directly. Serving on a visiting team and sticking to the Standards are two ways to help clarify these misunderstandings. ■

Exemplary Awards

BY BETH SMITH, CHAIR, STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMITTEE



The Board of Governors each year honors exemplary programs within the California community college. The Exemplary Awards are sponsored by the Academic Senate and the Foundation for California Community Colleges. The Senate develops the theme, criteria, and scoring rubric for the applications. Faculty, administrators and students participate in the scoring of the applicants, and two colleges were identified as winners with an additional four colleges identified as honorable mentions this year.

The Academic Senate Executive Committee selected a theme for 08-09 that veered off the traditional path for exemplary programs. Usually the Senate looks for excellent and wonderful programs for students. This year, however, the Executive Committee decided to seek programs that focused on faculty and the professional development programs designed for special cohorts or interests of faculty. The applications indicated that senates, faculty and administrators at campuses across the state are engaging in outstanding programs aimed to bring about greater student success, to increase collegiality, and to embrace needs and voices of all faculty, and others, at the college. Even with the absence of state funds for professional development, colleges continue to see professional development for faculty as a means of maintaining standards and improving quality instruction and services for students. And for that reason, the Academic Senate is pleased to honor the following colleges: Mt. San Antonio, College of the Canyons, Santa Barbara City, San Diego City, Los Medanos, and West Los Angeles.

Keeping the Conversation Going: The Institute of Teaching and Learning at College of the Canyons

BY RUSSELL RICHARDSON, DIRECTOR, COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

Achieving teaching excellence is a career long endeavor requiring a never-ending exploration of the mysteries of the teaching and learning process. Increasingly, colleges support this endeavor through teaching centers or institutes, which provide a broad-based collection of programs focused on teaching improvement. College of the Canyons (COC) has developed its Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) with this purpose in mind. The ITL is a collection of programs designed to provide teachers with opportunities for study, discussion, and reflection on teaching paired with concrete incentives for participation.

The ITL includes three major components. Our efforts to provide faculty development actually began in 1989 with a program exclusively for adjuncts, The Associate Program. Like most community colleges, adjuncts at COC far outnumber full-time faculty. Given the significance of their role in the teaching-learning process, it makes sense to tailor a program to the needs of adjuncts and to provide them with a vehicle for professional advancement as well as teaching improvement. The Associate Program is a series of six Saturday workshops spread across two semesters. The first three are based on microteaching and provide faculty with opportunities to practice their teaching skills in front of other teachers and to receive feedback. The second three workshops cover a variety of pedagogical issues and topics and give participants opportunities to exchange views about their teaching and the use of the techniques involved. The program also includes a mentoring phase in which each participant, working with a mentor, plans a lesson based on the methods introduced in the program. The lesson is then implemented in the teacher's classroom and observed by the mentor, who provides the teacher with feedback. The culmination of the program is a reflective paper based on the mentee's classroom demonstration and the accompanying feedback. Two hundred and sixty nine adjuncts have participated in the program, which leads to "associate adjunct status" and a 10% increase in pay.

A second component offers both full- and part-time faculty courses and workshops on teaching. COC full- and part-time faculty may receive salary advancement by accruing 12 units of course credit. Rather than taking additional courses within their teaching discipline, the college believes that some faculty may be well served by taking courses in pedagogy. To promote this practice, the ITL offers credit courses and course-length workshops on teaching, approved by the District as eligible for salary advancement. The courses are developed in-house and taught by COC faculty. There are currently eight courses covering a variety of topics including online teaching, educational technology, and other pedagogical methods.

Third, the Institute promotes classroom research through individual grants to faculty members who design and implement research projects based on concepts and principles they have encountered in Institute classes. Faculty members receive stipends of $500, $1,000, and $1,500 for completing classroom research projects (CAPs) that promote reflection and change in classroom practices. CAPs are a key piece in the web of support that the ITL weaves to promote reflective practice. The process gives teachers an incentive to make an idea their own by thinking deeply about the criteria for success when introducing a new technique. Through peer review and the give and take process by which the projects are designed, participants take classroom research a step further than they are likely to take it by themselves.

In addition to these programs, the ITL offers Flex workshops, provides facilitator training, publishes in-house articles on teaching, and supports an online center for teaching resources. Over 500 faculty members have participated in ITL courses and workshops. In some ways, we want studying and reflecting on teaching to be like a never-ending, campus-wide conversation and all the programs above are the vehicles for keeping that conversation going. Undoubtedly, the more we talk, study, and reflect on teaching, the better teachers we become. ■

Los Medanos College Math Department Teaching Communities

BY JULIE VON BERGEN, DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION CO-LEAD

Stop me if you've heard this one before: four mathematicians walk into a conference room and …

At Los Medanos College when a group of mathematics professors meet together in a conference room, they are most often engaged in discussion about how to realistically explain linear regression to algebra students, or how to teaching Riemann sums to calculus students by slicing up a watermelon. Since January of 2003 faculty of the mathematics department at Los Medanos College who teach common courses have been creating teaching communities to share lesson plans and curriculum design. The teaching community model is a faculty inquiry group based on the Japanese lesson study concept, kenkyu jugyo.

The intent of the teaching community meetings is to design and implement curriculum, discuss and revamp lesson plans to suit the needs of specific groups of students, observe lessons in the classrooms of colleagues, and to address teaching to the mathematics program learning outcomes of problem solving, mathematical versatility, communication, preparation for subsequent courses, and effective learning attributes.

Since the lesson study concept that the teaching communities are founded on produces lesson plans and curriculum that are carried out in the classroom, student learning is directly affected. The teaching community work at Los Medanos College is part of a growing movement within the mathematics community to improve the quality of mathematics education. This trend is reinforced by the current research of mathematics educators, including James Stigler who concludes "The key to long-term improvement [in teaching] is to figure out how to generate, accumulate, and share professional knowledge".

The teaching communities have produced and revised student learning outcome based curriculum packets for use in algebra and intermediate algebra courses. An early conclusion from participants in the algebra and intermediate algebra teaching communities was that the selection of textbooks available did not adequately address our student learning outcomes and that supplemental materials could improve instruction with regards to these outcomes, specifically communication and effective learning. As a result, faculty have created classroom discussion and group-work-based class activities centered around realistic, campus and community specific contexts.

The faculty members who attend the teaching community meetings are both full-time faculty and adjunct faculty. In the mathematics department more than 50% of our sections are taught by adjunct faculty, most of whom teach in multiple community college districts in the Bay Area. Much of the success of the teaching communities is due to the dedicated participation of our adjunct faculty, and the collaboration between full-time and adjunct faculty members. ■

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Developmental Education Faculty Certification Program

BY RICK STEPP-BOLLING, CO-DIRECTOR, MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE

Mt. San Antonio College's Developmental Education (DE) Faculty Certification Program has been in place for seven years and focuses on providing participants with opportunities to not only understand the basic developmental education principles, current learning theory, and active learning strategies that support student success, but also to provide them with methods and strategies for application both within the classroom and beyond. Once they have applied the developmental principles and strategies in both mock and real classroom situations, program participants are shown how to assess the results of their applications both as individuals and with feedback from their fellow DE participants. Finally, faculty are shown how to use the assessment results they have gathered to revise their methods and strategies for application within the classroom to better serve their students, thus completing the learning cycle for faculty and simultaneously supporting student-centered success.

Through regular programmatic assessments, more than 90% of participants have reported making modifications to their teaching, and more than 80% have reported positive changes in their students' participation in class, level of enthusiasm, control over their own learning, and overall course completion.

The program consists of three eight-week modules with each module totaling 16 hours of class time and 16 hours of homework. Faculty earn two units of crossover credit for their participation in each of the modules for a total of six units of crossover credit once they complete the program. Seventy-four full-time and six adjunct faculty members from 24 different departments across campus have enrolled in the Developmental Education (DE) Program, and 52 have successfully completed the entire certification process. Through regular programmatic assessments, more than 90% of participants have reported making modifications to their teaching, and more than 80% have reported positive changes in their students' participation in class, level of enthusiasm, control over their own learning, and overall course completion. For more information regarding Mt. SAC's DE Certification Program, contact Rick Stepp-Bolling (EStepp-Bolling@mtsac.edu) or Lori Walker (LWalker@mtsac.edu). ■

Pedagogy of Love: Organic Praxis in Teaching and Learning

BY ELVA SALINAS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE

Initiated in Spring 2006, *Pedagogy of Love: Organic Praxis in Teaching and Learning* is a professional development program linked to Learning Communities and designed for faculty by faculty with a focus on student retention and success. This program is supported by funding through the City College Title V Program, Basic Skills Initiative and college general fund.

The program elements include:

1. A series of university extension (UCSD) courses taught by Dr. Patrick Velasquez, which are offered on campus for faculty development focused on transforming the classroom into a Learning Community—moving from theory to practice, developing teaching and learning strategies, and increasing the achievement of the college's diverse student population.
2. Professional development training and training materials for Learning Community faculty, including workshops by education experts such as Dr. Vincent Tinto, Gillies Malnarich, and Dr. Noma LeMoine; StrengthsQuest assessment for enhancing collaborative teaching; and online faculty development resources.
3. Development and compilation of integrated curriculum for Learning Communities (LCOMs) from basic skills through transfer levels in English, mathematics, history, Chicano Studies, health and exercise science, Black Studies and personal growth. Completed curriculum is utilized for training of new LCOM and general faculty.
4. Learning Community retreats, including faculty, counselors, supplemental instruction tutors, support staff and administrators, focused on building community among peers and nurturing a passion for teaching and learning.
5. Weekly Learning Community "cafes" during the semester for Learning Community team (faculty, counselors, supplemental instruction tutors and support staff) conversations, reflection and dialogue about teaching and learning theory/research and their Learning Community classroom experiences—this is the essence of ***organic praxis in teaching and learning***!

Outcomes

- Faculty Participation: From Spring 2006 to Fall 2008, this program has produced a ten-fold increase in the number of faculty trained to teach in Learning Communities.
- City College Learning Communities have grown from 2 prior to Fall 2007 to 20 in 2008-09.
- Although 2007-08 was a pilot year for Learning Community expansion, overall student retention and success was higher in the Learning Communities than in traditional, non-learning community courses.
- One highlight is the success of the basic skills English reading and writing (English 51/56) Learning Community, which had a 100% passing rate. This outcome is especially significant because all English 51 students must pass a departmental final that has traditionally resulted in a 55% passing rate.
- Ten faculty and administrators are utilizing the experiences and data resulting from the professional development program and the large-scale implementation of learning communities in their doctoral program in educational leadership with San Diego State University.
- Beyond the learning communities, participating faculty, counselors and supplemental instruction tutors are broadening the impact on students campus-wide by sharing their experiences with colleagues and implementing effective student retention and success strategies in their non-learning community activities.

For more information please contact: Elva Salinas, Professional Development Coordinator at esalinas@sdccd.edu. ■

Santa Barbara City College's SLO Faculty Development Project

BY MARK FERRER, FACULTY RESOURCE CENTER DIRECTOR, SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) has made the incorporation of student learning outcomes (SLOs) a central focus for the past four years. Members of the college community have been engaged in an intense, ongoing, self-reflective dialogue about using SLOs to improve student learning. This dialog, which began in June 2004, has resulted in the development and institutionalization of the SLO Implementation Cycle that includes Course, Program and Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs and ISLOs).

Santa Barbara City College's SLO Faculty Development Project has always been faculty driven.

The strong support of faculty for the project and the level of intense participation (each cohort works together for an academic year) indicate the effectiveness of the process. Faculty use SLOs and their corresponding measures and rubrics to improve teaching and learning, to draw on one another's strengths and successes, and to make their expectations clear and relevant, their feedback formative, and their follow-up timely and valuable to their students. Over 200 of our 250 full-time faculty have taken part in extensive training that included SLO, measure and rubric development, implementation of SLOs in the classroom, collection of student performance data, and the development of student learning improvement plans. Ninety-eight adjunct faculty have also been involved in this process.

The SBCC SLO Faculty Development Project speaks directly to the college's mission, to be "committed to the success of each student." The Project has helped faculty focus on student learning through increased involvement and engagement in discussions about teaching, learning, and the use of student learning outcomes to improve both. The SLO Project remains the catalyst for transformation. Faculty are changing their teaching methods, their measures, means of communication and guidance; they are adopting learning strategies that have evolved out of the discussions and inquiry that drive this process. The SLO Project has given faculty and staff the chance to make connections we otherwise would not have made and give priority to investing our skills and resources in helping students achieve. ■

"The strong support of faculty for the project and the level of intense participation (each cohort works together for an academic year) indicate the effectiveness of the process.

All Are Leaders

BY FRAN LEONARD, RETREAT PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIR, WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE

Teaching and learning never stops at West Los Angeles College. Since 2002, our college has held Leadership Retreats once a year. Initially, the retreats were limited to college leaders as defined by those who served on college committees. Most retreats are held off-campus with the focus ranging from evaluating the mission and values of the college to finding ways to make participatory governance more effective; from planning and accreditation to retention strategies.

Over the years, the leadership retreat has grown in importance to the college community. While participation drew primarily from the "leaders" who served on college committees, since the current president, Dr. Mark W. Rocha, has been at West, the emphasis has been that "all are leaders." This year, the 7th annual Leadership Retreat, with its theme of "Moving into the Fast Lane," drew 110 participants from all areas of the college, including a strong contingent of classified staff, ten students, as well as faculty (both full-time and adjunct) and administrators. Within a short time after the retreat was announced we had reached capacity. Last year's retreat, "Imagine—the Future of West LA College can be as you imagine…" drew 103 participants who imagined in lively tables of eight participants, drawn from all areas of the campus. The retreats have gained traction, momentum and "buzz" with each succeeding year. The retreat, scheduled for the Friday before Thanksgiving, is a much-anticipated "pause" in an otherwise full-speed-ahead campus, one that brings renewal and gratitude that our work is primarily about transforming lives.

The significance of this retreat to our college community cannot be overstated.

In 2000, the Accrediting Commission's visiting team observed that West "can no longer afford to continue to operate in a dysfunctional mode that is conflict-based and not resolution-oriented." In 2006, Recommendation 1 from the Self Study asked the college to "create a campus climate that embraces open, candid dialogue that embodies a culture of respect, civility and trust to improve institutional decision making, planning and effectiveness." The retreats have been a potent response to these observations. Rod Patterson, academic senate president of West LA College, notes, "In a spirit of mutual respect, the leadership retreat has served to bring the faculty and staff together as we refine our role and the way our roles fit together under our collegial consultation model."

Sustaining this effort takes commitment and collaboration on a yearly basis, grounded in a belief that this retreat is a wellspring of ideas and good feelings. West is fortunate in that groups such as the academic senate, the AFT Classified Staff Guild and the Teamsters, who represent deans, proudly help sponsor this event, along with the administration. Providing funding is clearly a vote of confidence by these organizations in the value of the outcomes for their constituents of this annual staff development activity.

This year's retreat drew upon the experts from California Community Colleges, exemplars of "best practices" in basic skills, evaluating SLOs, reaching and teaching the iPod generation, counseling in a virtual world, and recharging your batteries in shared governance. While West "moves into the fast lane," we want to do so in the best possible ways, and so our learning continues—collectively and individually. For example, while many of us in a breakout session on teaching the iPod generation could only guess at the meanings of "IM-language" examples, students and younger employees/faculty "translated" for us. The evidence of the efficacy of the retreats is captured in the evaluations submitted. Last year, 81.4% of the participants rated the retreat very high for "interest, importance and relevance. ■

Things Fall Apart: The Centre Can Hold–Reflections on Accreditation and Faculty Leadership

BY RICHARD MAHON, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

Two stars appear in the firmament. First, the number of colleges on warning (or worse: probation or show cause, the final stage prior to revocation of accreditation) seems to be increasing. Second, the number of colleges with chancellor, president, and other top administrative positions that are vacant or have recent or interim appointees also seems to be on the rise. These twin stars call to mind lines from W. B. Yeats' famous poem, *The Second Coming*:

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world

Accreditation Standard IV, "Leadership and Governance," begins "The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator."

Given the very reasonable expectation that colleges seek "continuous improvement," it seems odd that that colleges continue to invest messianic hopes and expectations in the role to be played by chancellors and presidents, as though a college cannot make commitments to its mission, develop new academic programs and the student support services to support them, establish priorities, use data to assess institutional effectiveness, or make improvements without a permanent incumbent sitting in the CEO's chair. At too many colleges, the CEO announces his or her departure and time stands still. No wonder so many colleges are being sanctioned by the Accrediting Commission.

A college is, after all, a *community*, not its leaders. There seems to be widespread agreement across the state that there has been a significant decline in the longevity of CEOs. It is not uncommon for screening committees to read letters of application from college presidents who have served their current college for two, three, or four years and are already looking to "move on." If (say) the average CEO serves for four years, and if it frequently takes a year to conduct a recruitment for a permanent chief executive, the result is that colleges potentially spend a quarter of their time stagnating, *if* the expectation is that the CEO is responsible for leading the institution.

If the average term of office for administrators is four years and accreditation visits happen every six years, then colleges are very likely to be responding to prior recommendations when there is a change in leadership. A new president or chancellor who does not respect the role of other leadership constituencies and cannot support a work in progress risks setting his or her college up for a new cycle of recommendations.

If the introduction of Standard IV is taken seriously, colleges must begin to think more broadly about where institutional leadership is rooted. Standard IV expresses the expectation that colleges seek "leadership throughout the organization," not just from administration.

Who do faculty "work for"? While faculty are evaluated by their peers, faculty do not work for their colleagues or for administrators, or for their governing boards: faculty serve students.

Faculty work to provide "student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness." Compared to the often too-fleeting tenure of administrators, faculty are the *only* constituency on most community college campuses in a position to innovate, evaluate the effectiveness of those innovations, fine tune and seek "continuous improvement of the institution."

Standard IV also requires that colleges "acknowledge the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator." What are those responsibilities? Rather than faculty working for administrators, the governing board and administrators work for faculty, since it is the responsibility of the governing board and administrators to provide fiduciary oversight and organize resources so that a college can most effectively fulfill its mission and educate its students. Board members don't provide student-learning programs. Administrators don't provide direct services to students.

A committed governing board and effective administrators are crucial to college campuses, but it is faculty who teach and counsel and provide library services to students, and it is the job of governing boards, administrators, and staff to support the work of faculty as they provide *direct* service to students.

An effective president is able to work collaboratively and support ongoing institutional commitments, even while providing a new perspective for colleges and helping them to overcome problems that previously had proven insoluble.

One faculty member at the Academic Senate's January 2009 Accreditation Institute noted that her college went on warning, in part, for not meeting eligibility requirement #5, which requires that colleges have adequate administrative capacity (this particular college had 13 interim administrators at the time of the site visit that led to the college being placed on warning). While functioning with 13 interim administrators would certainly be a challenge, colleges do not belong to administrators and should be able to draw on the shared vision of governing board members, administrators (permanent and interim), staff, students, and above all, *faculty*, to define and refine the college's mission and to develop planning processes that evaluate institutional effectiveness and allocate limited resources in a way that best enables the college to fulfill its mission. These processes should be ongoing and a temporary vacancy in the president's chair should not incapacitate a college while a search is underway to fill that vacancy.

California community colleges face challenges from many quarters, and administrative instability is only one among many. It is sometimes the case that the departure of a respected administrator leaves a gap on a college campus—sometimes a huge gap; things sometimes *do* fall apart. If administrators are the centre of a college's commitment to planning and serving students, the centre may not hold. But if the faculty are the long-term life of the college—as certainly should be the case given the frequency of 20, 30, and even 50-year teaching careers—then administrators can move on and the centre can hold. Things don't need to fall apart. ■

Basic Skills and Career Technical Education (CTE)–Contextualized Learning

BY DAN CRUMP, CHAIR, OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I really hesitated about using this title for my article (I know, it looks pretty basic, but….) because I don't want to give the impression that this article is an all-encompassing article about contextualized learning and its value with basic skills and CTE programs and projects. It is just the starting point to describe some of the efforts that have been going forth on this important initiative.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is working on a grant with the Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative, which focuses on contextualized curriculum for Career Technical Education and includes outreach, literature review, and professional development. Outreach has occurred already in a variety of forums—inclusion in the Academic Senate's Basic Skills Initiative in Newport Beach in August and a presentation at the Academic Senate/RP Group Strengthening Student Success conference in Anaheim in October (I was there and was encouraged by the work that is being done out in the field). Work has started with the professional development portion of the grant including two-day workshops (Pasadena in October and San Jose in November). These workshops addressed both the theory and practice of working with students with basic skills needs that all faculty can immediately apply to their classes. The multiple ways to integrate contextualized teaching and learning were discussed. The project will also be presenting at the Academic Senate's Vocational Education Leadership Institute in March 2009 (more on that will be included in my report about the Institute in the next issue of the *Rostrum*).

We faculty in the community colleges are blessed with a bounty of knowledgeable people to help with these important initiatives (I am privileged to be an acolyte, neophyte, participant and facilitator with them all). My hats off to some of the many people that have been involved in the planning, policy and presentation arenas–Lin Marelick, Barbara Illowsky, Linda Collins, Janet Fulks, Jessica Pitt, and Julie Adams. ■

Sources of Information

Basic Skills Initiative—http://www.cccbsi.org/ (especially under Effective Practices, Partners in Success, and Resources)

Student Success Conference—www.rpgroup.org (go to Proceedings/2008 Strengthening Student Success)

Have you submitted a successful program yet for the BSI database? The website is operational and open to the public (http://bsi.cccco.edu). You can search for programs that other colleges have instituted. We still need your effective practices and programs. Please submit them so that we can share what works well. For more sharing, a second web site, this one a pilot for a virtual, regional consortium, is currently under development with the San Diego area CCCs.

The Basic Skills Initiative—What We've Done, What's up Next

BY BARBARA ILLOWSKY, PAST BASIC SKILLS INITIATIVE DIRECTOR

"What's happening with BSI funds?" Lately, that is the question I am asked most often about the Basic Skills Initiative. Fortunately, it is an easy (and happy) question to answer. As of press time, the $33.1 million Basic Skills Initiative categorical funds are still in the budgets—both the current and next year's proposed budgets. I do not know the reason(s), but I suspect it is because 1) the high number of adults with basic skills needs is still a major problem in California; 2) more and more careers requiring an associates degree need employees with the critical thinking, reading, writing, ESL and mathematics skills that the BSI addresses; and 3) the Basic Skills Initiative is one of the most successful initiatives the California community college system has undertaken!

This article discusses BSI activities from January 2008 to the present, along with a peek into the next stage of the BSI. To refresh your memory, in February 2007, the Chancellor's Office funded the literature review *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Success in California Community Colleges*. The rest of 2007, the Project (led by the Academic Senate) provided workshops throughout the state on the contents of the literature review, focusing on the 26 Effective Practices identified, helping colleges with their Self-Assessments and preparing their Action Plans. A website was also developed (http://www.cccbsi.org) to provide resources for colleges.

Building on the work in 2007, the Senate has undertaken the following activities:

Spring 2008:

Working with the System Office, Senate representatives have begun recoding of basic skills level courses submitted by colleges. According to faculty reviewing the System Office records, there are numerous inaccuracies from the colleges. Discipline faculty, with support from System Office Vice Chancellors Patrick Perry and Carole Bogue-Feinour, created a draft of discipline-specific rubrics that indicate the number and description of courses below transfer level. The rubrics describe appropriate coding for basic skills levels. The purpose of the rubrics is to provide curricular information that creates a better coding system and a more accurate picture of student

The Bay Area Workforce Funding Collaborative (BAWFC)—http://www.sff.org/programs/community-development/bawfc—is a public/private partnership of 14 philanthropic foundations and the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) designed to increase the economic security of low-income Bay Area residents while meeting the workforce needs of key industry sectors in the region. The BAWFC invests in workforce training efforts that promote the development and sustainability of career ladder initiatives that lead from entry level positions to progressively more skilled occupations in the health care and life sciences sectors. In addition, the BAWFC supports systems reform efforts aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of workforce development practice in the Bay Area region, and ensuring that state and local workforce, education, and economic development policies are responsive to the needs of local communities and critical industries. To date, the BAWFC has conducted two grant cycles distributing $6.5 million to 20 Bay Area workforce development projects. http://www.sff.org/programs/community-development/bawfc.

success and progression. The draft guidelines about development and use of the CB21 rubrics are at: http://www.cccbsi.org/bsi-rubric-information.

The Project held seven regional meetings in the North and South in May and June. The regional meetings were attended by almost every California community college. Close to 1,000 faculty, administrators and staff participated in these two-day events, which covered institutional, counseling, and pedagogical methods. During these two days, strategies and techniques that can apply to classrooms and other student interactions were presented.

The Student Equity Plans for all community colleges—where available—were reviewed, analyzed, and presented at all regional meetings. During the presentation, the Student Equity Plans, Accountability for Community Colleges (ARCC) report, and the college's action plan were provided to each college in attendance.

Summer 2008:

The Project held a statewide Summer Teaching Institute, August 10-13, 2008. Over 300 faculty attended the free (including travel, room, board and fees) conference. The institute was open to teams of faculty from each college attending, with one full-time and four part-time faculty members on each team. The training concentrated on teaching pedagogy. Participants received hands-on training that could be implemented right away, creating products and lessons to employ in their classes for fall. The needs of Career Technical Education (CTE) programs were integrated into the entire institute. The Summer Teaching Institute addressed issues raised in the spring regional meetings concerning incorporating and training part-time faculty who teach a large portion of the basic skills courses.

Fall 2008:

Basic Skills Coordinators two-day meetings: These meetings included the role of the basic skills coordinator, developing action plans in a shared governance format, staff development, buy-in from faculty and administration, linking to K-12 outcomes, and sharing of challenges and programs. Adjunct and noncredit issues were integral to the discussions.

BSI Innovation Incubation—Integrating Instruction and Support Services: One two-day meeting was held, consisting of counselors, instructors and support staff. The goal of the conference was to encourage a productive dialog among instructional and counseling faculty toward the creation of new models of collaboration that would better meet the needs of students who struggle with the academic and social transition to college.

Theory and Practice (CTE): Two-day meetings were held with the majority of attendees being those who teach basic skills level courses. These workshops addressed both the theory and practice of working with students with basic skills needs in career courses that all faculty could immediately apply to their classes.

Basic Skills Faculty—From Here to There: Plotting a Path through the Basic Skills Curriculum and Creating an Accurate Picture of Student Success in Basic Skills: Much of this regional meeting is described in the section above about the rubrics. In addition, activities of the two-day meeting provided background information, researched by discipline experts, about course content, course descriptors, exit competencies, and standards.

Other activities:

The RP Group is working on three papers: (1) a literature review to scan the United States for effective practices used to improve the transition of student from high school to college, (2) an adult education to college transition paper, and (3) a student equity paper. These papers will be completed this spring and available on the BSI web site, distributed at Fall Plenary, and sent to colleges.

The Project has formed an intersegmental group under the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) comprised of UC, CSU, CCC, and high school representatives to review (and revise as necessary) the mathematics competency statements. Several of the representatives in the group were also involved in the original development of the 1993 mathematics

competency statements. This intersegmental group will publish a new version of the competency statements.

Other resources developed to help colleges include the "Basic Skills Handbook" (check out this useful handbook on the BSI web site), articles in *iJournal* and the *Rostrum*, a chapter in a Jossey-Bass *New Directions for Community Colleges* book, a paper titled "A Comparison of Basic Skills Success Rates and Basic Skills Action Planning: Strategies in the California Community Colleges," and newsletters. In addition, focus groups on non-credit faculty were convened to discuss issues relating to basic skills level non-credit students and programs. A paper of those findings is under development.

And, of course, BSI presentations and workshops were held as part of various other conferences or at colleges requesting them.

2009 and beyond:

Are you exhausted yet? No? Well, here is a tiny preview into 2009 and beyond BSI activities. By the time you are reading this article, non-credit and CTE workshops may have already taken place. These workshops extend the BSI activities into much needed, and often, lower funded and less acknowledged programs. The next phase of BSI activities will be coordinated by the Los Angeles Community College District, with Dean Deborah Harrington as the project director. They include a Summer Leadership Institute to train college BSI leaders in innovation, motivation and implementation and the creation of a permanent Professional Learning Network among our 110 Colleges and a CCC Center for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Other activities include developing a system of regional networks, including collaborative projects/programs that support faculty addressing basic skills students, increasing local capacity to use evidence to assess student and program progress, and expanding the pilot virtual network in partnership with California Educational Technology Collaborative (CETC) and the Academic Senate. And, of course, the Academic Senate will continue to provide BSI workshops. More information about upcoming BSI activities will be sent out to the local academic senate presidents and posted on the BSI web site.

In short, the Basic Skills Initiative is alive and well because we are all working together for its continued health. Let's keep it that way! ■

BSI/CTE Regional Meetings

April 9-10, 2009, CTE/Basic Skills - Hilton Arden West, Sacramento

April 23-24, 2009, CTE/Basic Skills - Pleasanton Marriott

April 23-24, 2009, Basic Skills Regional Meeting - Northern California in the Bay Area

April 30-May 1, 2009, Basic Skills Regional Meeting - Central California at Hilton Arden West, Sacramento

May 7-8, 2009, Basic Skills Regional Meeting - Southern California in the Los Angeles Area

April 23-24, 2009, Noncredit Southern California at San Diego Hilton Resort and Spa

May 7-8, 2009, Noncredit Northern California at Hilton Arden West,Sacramento

May 8-9, 2009, Noncredit CB21 Meeting at Hilton Arden West, Sacramento
Recommended for: Noncredit mathematics, ESL, reading, and English (writing) faculty

Find the description for these events and registration information on the BSI website at: http://www.cccbsi.org.

Reassignment

BY WHEELER NORTH, CHAIR, RELATIONS WITH LOCAL SENATES COMMITTEE

Resolutions 1.03 F05 and 1.02 F07 (available on the Academic Senate website at *http://www.asccc.org/Res/Search.aspx*) seek to examine and research reassigned time issues. In the former resolution the Senate was asked to survey the field, which has been done annually for several years, and report; in the latter it was asked to do further research and expand upon this; and both resolutions emphasized the need to determine best practices. The purpose of this article is to start the conversation by introducing these issues based upon some initial survey data.

Reassigned Time: What is it, who gets it, when and how do they get it, and how much do they get?

I'll partly answer the first and the last together. Full-time faculty are contracted to teach based upon formulas of teaching or non-teaching time that represent a "full" load. All or part of this can be reassigned, which is reassigned or "release" time. It appears that most, if not all, districts provide for faculty to work in capacities beyond 100% where some or all of their load may be either teaching or non-teaching duties. Many districts reference this in terms of percentage, but some use other nomenclature such as hours of Full Time Equivalent—Faculty (FTEF).

The Academic Senate regularly conducts a profile survey of local senates seeking answers to questions about senate composition, including some inquiries about reassigned time. This data exists in several sets over several sampling periods. It is also important to point out that these datasets are fairly small. The earlier dataset includes 10-40 respondents over several annual sampling periods, and the latest sample, from September 2008, includes 56 respondents. So the percentage values likely do not reflect the whole (all local senates in the state) with detailed accuracy, but these datasets do provide a place from which we can begin a discussion and build a case for more research.

In looking at the data it is fair to say that community colleges are very divergent in how they implement non-classroom and non-teaching load allocation given their extreme institutional diversity across the state, but the data reflects that most colleges support their local senates with some reassigned time; 92-96% of respondents affirmed this.

The "who" question, while also showing our diversity, was partly answered by these datasets. Reassigned time at colleges variously includes the senate president, vice president, curriculum committee chair, other senate officers, SLO coordinator, staff development coordinator, professional development coordinator, and the planning and budget committee chair. Obviously this short list misses a few positions. High on the missing list is support for faculty accreditation (co)chairs. Also missing are positions such as honors coordinator, affirmative action officer, academic affairs (co)chair, and a host of other specialized, often temporary reassignments such as grant coordinators.

Then there are some jobs which, while called reassigned time, are better described as regular non-teaching or non-classroom loads such as department chairs, work experience coordinators, campus newspaper coordinator (or other director type role such as running a radio station, physical education or sports events, or maintaining certification and records—Federal Aviation Administration, administration of justice, nursing, etc). This also gets confusing in areas such as student services where a non-classroom load may be spread across counseling, DSP&S, and EOPS duties in partial loads. Traditionally these are not considered to be reassignments because of the requirements for qualifications in these specialized areas. But these tasks may be partial loads in smaller colleges and thus perceived as reassignments.

Now for the challenging questions—when? How is reassigned time determined and how much is allocated for

these reassignments? In responding to the latter anecdotally, most who have taken on these roles would agree that the amount of time reassigned does not cover the actual time we spend doing those tasks. Are there a few who take advantage of this? Probably, but it is likely a small number, and the most effective way to resolve these situations is to have a formal process for determining who gets the reassignment and how they are evaluated.

In many cases these reassignments are determined by position and are often contractually specified or endorsed by policy. A local senate may receive reassigned time contractually (52% of respondents). Often Board policy will define specific roles/reassignments. Department chair reassignments are almost always defined contractually, whereas Board policy may define requirements for affirmative action officers or equal employment opportunity representatives who would be temporarily reassigned for complaint investigation or employee hiring duties. Local senate bylaws might define reassignment expectations either in hard numbers or by defining duties for each position.

Then there are a host of reassignments where the person selected is chosen because of an election, expertise, or seemingly by magical ascension into the role.

Because of the extremely complex interaction of various ways these positions are filled; how long assignments last; the qualifications needed for different reassigned positions; various constraints like budgets, policies, contracts and staff availability; the never ending tidal wave of time critical "fires"; and the brute human factor of being an intensely energetic society of colleagues, there is no way to develop a single formula that will fit all cases for allocating or filling reassigned time. How do you juxtapose a long-standing philosophy that senates appoint faculty against the time honored tradition of hiring by committee when policy and contract aren't clear, the job needs to be filled yesterday, and it is not clear if this is a hiring or an appointment?

In the interests of fairness and equity, policies and procedures need to be worked out where they can. But also in the interests of functionality, flexibility needs to be tolerated. Sometimes we just don't know, or didn't see that something was coming, or had no appropriate applicants and still need to forge ahead or "lose everything." But one way to accommodate both interests, even when they do contradict, is to ensure there exists an effective evaluation process that is appropriate to the reassigned time being allocated. In so achieving this, when mistakes happen—when a person is mismatched to a job or role, or is in need of guidance or empowerment, or the role itself is badly designed—an effective evaluation process will remediate the situation.

As well (to directly address the white elephant in the room) some faculty may feel that some reassignments are based upon favoritism. Effective evaluation of all personnel, as well as effective institutional self studies called for by our accreditation standards, should reflect awareness of and correction for these behaviors in a positive manner. Let's face it, we're all human. When tasked with getting something done we are likely to go to those we know will get it done, particularly if it is of a critical nature. "Process patience" is a tough thing to master for many, but so too is tolerance.

This is where a second good rule of thumb is "don't go it alone." Anytime someone is being designated for reassignment through an appointment process, the decision-making should be inclusive. Get other perspectives, solicit input, make sure all who should be interested are aware of the opportunity and be inclusive of diverse reasoning for why a particular person should be appointed.

To sum up this initial dialog, the topic of reassigned time is very complex. It happens uniquely in every institution and often in each instance of implementation. It could be argued that how we go about making these decisions in part defines, or at least reflects, the culture and spirit of our institutions. The Academic Senate's Educational Policies and Relations with Local Senates committees are tasked with these activities and will be doing further research to begin discussions of best practices commonly used. ■

The results of the Local Senate's composition surveys can be found at the following link: http://www.asccc.org/surveys/Surveys.htm

The Digital Divide: Information Competency, Computer Literacy, and Community College Proficiencies

BY CATHY COX, MEMBER, COUNSELING AND LIBRARY FACULTY ISSUES COMMITTEE

For over fifteen years, since the popular explosion of the Internet in the early 1990's, computers and online information resources have been evolving from cutting-edge instructional enhancements into an essential aspect of lifelong learning and daily life. It is no longer enough for students to know how to find resources for assignments by using a library catalog to locate five or six books on a topic for their paper. A student writing a paper on contemporary politics, for example, might cite an Arabic news website, link to a video clip of the President's inaugural ceremony, and quote blog entries discussing the effect of an African-American president on Middle Eastern diplomacy. "Information competency" covers far more than traditional "library instruction", which focused on use of the card catalog and reference books.

There's not much disagreement on the need for information competency anymore. In 1998, with the adoption of the paper *Information Competency in the California Community Colleges*, the Academic Senate defined information competency:

> Information competency is the ability to find, evaluate, use and communicate information in all its various formats. It combines aspects of library literacy, research methods and technological literacy. Information competency includes consideration of the ethical and legal implications of information and requires the application of both critical thinking and communication skills.

In 2002, the Board of Governors was poised to take action implementing Title 5 changes that would have required information competency as part of the Associate degree, when a letter from the State Department of Finance halted the process and declared the requirement to be an "unfunded mandate". In spite of this setback, numerous colleges and districts around the state have moved forward to include information competency as a critical part of their instructional programs, either as a required class, by infusion into existing curriculum, or in other creative ways to meet locally determined needs. (The Academic Senate Educational Policies Committee has just administered a survey on information competency to local senates and the results shall provide a clear picture of the current status of information competency across the state.)

However, in order to become competent users of information in the digital age, students must first be able to use the basic tool of information retrieval, the computer. To many faculty it seems as if our students are born knowing how to use technology. Online chat is a part of many classes, "to google" is a verb that everyone understands, and we are inundated by student emails with the message "Sent from my BlackBerry". We offer courses via distance education, we expect students to register for classes online, and we pride ourselves on the number of computers on campus or the availability of wireless access to faculty and students alike.

With all that, it's easy to forget that not all students entering our colleges possess the computer skills they need to participate fully in the digital age. Many faculty assume that students have access to and will be able to use the Internet. However, Internet use is not a given for the entire population. According to a report issued by the Pew Internet & American Life Project in 2007, almost a third of Americans do not use the Internet. They note that "non-internet users as a group are disproportionately old and poor." (Horrigan, 2007). While that report looks at Americans nationwide, it's probably fair to conclude that even in California a significant percentage of our most vulnerable students do not use the Internet on a regular basis—and without basic computer literacy skills, they never will.

Computer literacy includes a set of skills which are much more basic than the critical thinking and research skills included in the definition of information competency. Without the ability to cut and paste text, import data into a spreadsheet, format a document, copy files to a different directory, etc., successfully navigating an online registration process or retrieving specific assignments from a class website becomes overwhelming. Simply signing up for a free email account on Yahoo can be a daunting task!

There are many reasons students lack the necessary computer literacy skills. One simple fact is that many students may not have access to computers in their homes. Although many students have used a computer at work, even someone with experience using computers for data entry or retail sales may have learned only the rote steps necessary to carry out a specific routine task. Age is another factor that plays a role in computer proficiency; while younger students may have learned computer basics in school, re-entry students even a few years older are much less likely to have had significant exposure to computers in their elementary and secondary classrooms. Immigrant students also have wide variations in their previous exposure to computers—some are extremely proficient, while others have never used a computer until they are required to do so for college related activities in the U.S.

As a system, we can't afford to overlook computer skills and assume that locally-imposed information competency requirements will magically lift students across this "digital divide". While information competency is a critically important skill for students, teaching information competency presupposes that students have the ability to use computers well enough to focus on critical thinking and evaluation of the material they find. Computer literacy is a far more basic proficiency and one that is important to all students, whether they are planning to complete a transfer degree, taking classes to improve their English, or working on a certificate or degree in a career technical education (CTE) program. Data exists from statewide CTE advisory committees, which include business partners of the California community colleges, showing that lack of computer skills results in lower student success rates in their chosen career paths.

Now, more than ever seems to be the time to begin discussions as to whether we should establish technological proficiency—"computer literacy"—requirements for both certificate and degree programs. What would such requirements involve? Where in the curriculum should they be placed? How would proficiency be assessed? Faculty should be asking these questions at the local level and developing answers in order to provide our students with the tools they need to succeed in the modern, ever increasing digital world.

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2009: A Year of Curricular Changes for California Community Colleges

BY JANET FULKS, CHAIR, CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Curriculum is the hub of our academic activities, the learning center from which the many important spokes emanate creating the learning environment for our students. For the last decade we have been catching up to the massive changes affecting the world of curriculum—changes in Instructional Technology, Distance Education, Title 5, as well as green and global curriculum issues and many others.

This year there are many things that will facilitate our work in curriculum. First, the long awaited Program and Course Approval Handbook (affectionately known as the PCAH) will be completed and available. This important document translates legal and mandatory regulations into everyday language that we can use to develop and approve our curriculum locally prior to sending it for System Office approval. The effort to update and improve the PCAH, with all the Title 5 changes, new and improved forms and many frequently asked questions about curriculum, was a joint effort between the Chancellor's Office, the Academic Senate, CIOs, credit and non-credit constituents, and other stakeholders. The final version of this document is being submitted through the approval processes in February and will be available this Spring. The PCAH will act as a textbook for this year's Curriculum Institute, July 9-11, at the Sheraton Park Resort in Anaheim. Thanks to the collaborative work of the System Advisory Curriculum Committee (SACC), and particularly the hard work of Stephanie Low at the Chancellor's Office, this handbook will make your important work on curriculum easier.

Another major change that will affect curriculum statewide is the implementation of CurricUNET for statewide submission of courses and programs for approval at the state Chancellor's Office. This plan has been discussed and coordinated for over four years. What does it mean? All curriculum and programs submitted to the Chancellor's Office will be submitted electronically, rather than on paper. This is going to revolutionize curriculum in many ways for our state. The electronic submission process will not require local colleges to purchase CurricUNET; access to the Internet is all that is needed. We will find that:

- Electronic submission will require that the application is complete. The use of fields and prompts will ensure that colleges double check and thoroughly complete the process before sending the application off, a problem with paper copies that often arrive without all the required components. Hard copies mailed with missing components used to take a long time to correct, so this issue will be corrected.
- Some components of the submission will use drop down menus limiting the responses to the correct ones aligned with Title 5. (This includes those typical problem areas such as units and hours, outside of class hours, TOP code, etc.)
- The approval process will be electronically advanced through the system making the process more efficient and providing real time updates on where the curriculum is in the approval

process. While the Chancellor's Office timeline from submission to approval of degrees and courses has been greatly reduced in the last two years, the electronic process will make that even more efficient.

- An exciting feature will be the ability to do research on curriculum by employing the statewide and nationwide search. As professionals, this provides an opportunity to learn from our colleagues and to get a better understanding of what we do with our curriculum. This feature will be available to the Chancellor's Office and colleges that own CurricUNET, but we want to emphasize that you do not need to own the product to submit programs and curriculum for approval. (In case you were wondering, presently 52 California community colleges do own it and already have this search capability.)

Training on the new CurricUNET process associated with electronic submission will occur at the July Curriculum Institute.

Another important change to curriculum as a result of the Basic Skills Initiative is the correction of curriculum coding in basic skills, also known as the CB 21 coding. Because of the increased requirements to report curricular and program success and the intimate connection between this accountability and the funding our system receives, there has been an emphasis on data based upon curriculum. Analysis of that data revealed errors in coding of the courses because they were coded *without* faculty input and *without* a basic understanding of the curriculum. In July, an Academic Senate and Chancellor's Office approved process for correcting that coding and creating the necessary integrity within our curriculum data will be introduced, with training for correcting that coding based on good curricular practices developed by faculty. (If you need more information on this review see the December *Rostrum* article, "What the Heck is Basic Skills Coding About Anyway?" This process has involved 150 faculty discussing discipline issues regarding basic skills courses and hundreds more vetting the rubrics created by these faculty. If you have not had a chance to review and comment on these yet, email Janet Fulks, Curriculum Chair, at jfulks@asccc.org to get the information and survey link. On May 9 and 10 the System Office and the Academic Senate will host a noncredit regional meeting to discuss the noncredit discipline courses.

Lastly, statewide discussions about pre-collegiate assessment and prerequisites have occurred as a result of the Basic Skills Initiative and several papers created by external partners. This topic can be found at each of our statewide institutes in the spring as well as at our colleagues professional conferences. These discussions by students, faculty, CEOs, CIOs, CSSOs, deans and others are identifying important issues and developing concepts that may change the way we look at prerequisites and pre-collegiate assessment.

Stay tuned to these important curricular issues and participate in the discussions and resolutions that are sure to be part of the Spring Session in April, June Leadership Institute, and July SLO and Curriculum Institutes. ■

Another important change to curriculum as a result of the Basic Skills Initiative is the correction of curriculum coding in basic skills, also known as the CB 21 coding.

Fishing in the Academic Senate's McElligot Pool

BY KAROLYN HANNA, NURSING FACULTY AND
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Have you ever read "McElligot's Pool" by Dr. Seuss? A young boy named Marco is chided by an old farmer for choosing to fish in a particular pond. The farmer says:

"You're sort of a fool!
You'll never catch a fish
In McElligot's Pool!
You might catch a boot
Or you might catch a can.
You might catch a bottle,
But listen, young man….
If you sat fifty years
With your worms and your wishes,
You'd grow a long beard
Long before you caught fishes!"
(Geisel, p. 27)

But Marco isn't dissuaded—in his optimism he thinks of all the possible fish he might catch….anything from a "thin fish", a "stout fish"' a "short fish" or a "long drawn out fish" to lobsters and whales "all thrashing their tails."

The Hayward Award—The Stanback Stroud Award—The Exemplary Program Award—what do these have to do with McElligot's Pool?? In a way, they are similar to the possibilities that Marco imagined.

You can be like that old farmer or you can be like Marco, the optimistic young man, when you receive announcements about award opportunities from the State Senate Office; either way, you and your faculty have a choice to make. It's quite simple—do you ignore the call for nominations, saying "we'll never win anyway" or do you choose to put forward the name of a colleague (or program)? Hopefully, seeing the success of a process used at one college—a process that could be adopted on other campuses, will encourage you and your senate to respond more optimistically to those announcements.

Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) has long held a commitment to recognizing faculty colleagues for their hard work, dedication to the college's mission, and exceptional performance in serving its students. In response to this commitment, the SBCC Academic Senate established a Faculty Recognition Committee—the primary purpose of which is to identify potential opportunities to acknowledge faculty excellence in performing their job responsibilities and participating in campus leadership. The Faculty Recognition Committee is composed of representatives from each of the twelve academic and instructional support divisions on the campus. Although information regarding award criteria and timelines is published campus-wide via e-mail, broad faculty representation on the committee ensures access to specific accomplishments of individual faculty members and/or programs in each division.

Recognizing that there are many discipline-specific award opportunities—opportunities for which individual departments are most aware of potential recipients, the Faculty Recognition Committee has chosen to focus on awards that are general in nature and for which a larger number of faculty might be eligible, such as those sponsored by the Academic Senate and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). In addition, SBCC established an

"SBCC Faculty Excellence Award" to recognize the contributions of one faculty member (full- or part-time), during each full month of the academic year (6 awards per year). The college also selects one faculty member to be the "Annual Faculty Lecturer"—the campus' highest faculty award.

Based on criteria and due dates published on the Academic Senate and ACCT websites, the committee establishes a timeline each fall semester. Calls for nominations are issued early and committee members are encouraged to solicit nominees from within their own division as well as campus wide. They may actually prepare the nomination or ask someone who works more closely with a potential candidate to prepare the written nomination. Although in an ideal situation, an individual's nomination would be kept secret, the committee has found that asking individuals for a copy of their CV and/or other data has ensured more complete and accurate information for inclusion in letters of nomination.

Documents are collected by the chair and shared electronically with committee members a week prior to the meeting. Before voting, committee members review award criteria and discuss materials provided to the committee; however they adhere firmly to a rule that decisions be based only on what has been submitted in writing—this practice has encouraged submission of higher quality materials. Decisions are made by secret ballot and submitted to the chair, who does not vote. In the event of a tie, the committee discusses candidates again, to clarify questions before a second vote is taken.

Subsequently, committee recommendations are sent to the SBCC academic senate for endorsement (or in the case of the ACCT Award, to the Board of Trustees) before nominees for state and national awards (or recipients of local awards) are notified. Following endorsement by the appropriate group (academic senate or board of trustees), a campus wide congratulatory e-mail is sent out. Committee members then work with candidates to ensure that all required information is complete, well-written and submitted to the local academic senate secretary, in accordance with the specified deadline(s).

The Faculty Recognition Committee also sponsors a reception at the conclusion of fall semester Flex Week to honor the individuals who were nominated for state and national awards as well as faculty selected to receive SBCC Faculty Excellence Awards during the coming academic year. Highlights of each individual's accomplishment are shared and nominees for state and national awards as well as recipients of local awards are presented with a certificate acknowledging their achievements. This event is well attended by faculty, administrators and members of the Board of Trustees and stimulates additional nominations in subsequent years.

Although the process described isn't all that unique, it has served the SBCC campus well. A quick look at the college website indicates that in recent years, seven SBCC faculty members have received the Hayward Award, one received the Stanback Stroud Award, four programs received Exemplary Program Awards (with several others receiving honorable mention), and three faculty have been awarded the Pacific Region ACCT Award—one of whom received the national ACCT Meardy Award.

The same level of excellence exists on all of our campuses—what's needed is a systematic approach to seek nominations and follow the process through to submission! Instead of ignoring those announcements from the Academic Senate office, why not adopt Marco's attitude, as he says….

"Oh the sea is so full of a number of fish,
If a fellow is patient, he might get his wish!
And that's why I think that I'm not such a fool

When I sit here and fish in McElligot's Pool!"
(Geisel, pp. 52-54)

Great opportunities do exist in the Academic Senate's pool of faculty awards. Encourage your colleagues to drop a line. You may be surprised with the result!

Reference:

Geisel, T. S. (Seuss), (1947). *McElligot's pool.* Reprinted in: Schulman, J. & Goldsmith, C., (2004) *Your Favorite Seuss.* New York: Random House. ■

An Academic Senate Foundation—Why?

BY JULIE ADAMS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the Academic Senate celebrates its 40th anniversary, the Senate enters into a new era. The 40 years of the Senate's existence has marked an incredible journey. When you think about the Academic Senate, many of you might think about the role the Senate plays in academic and professional matters. Some of you might also consider us an organization that provides professional development such as in our many initiatives, institutes, and other events. You might even think about the work we do for the disciplines including directing the disciplines list revision process. However, I would bet that most of you do not think about the tax code of the Senate. Why is this important?

Well, the tax code is important because it dictates how the Senate receives funding to continue the good work that it does. Since 1969, the Academic Senate has been a 501(c)(6)—IRS code for trade organizations. This designation allows the Senate to take advantage of tax benefits as we serve the faculty on our 110 California community colleges. Over the past 40 years, this tax code has been sufficient. Recently, however, there have been two situations that have caused the Executive Committee to consider different funding opportunities for the financial stability of the Senate.

The Academic Senate is funded by the Governor in his annual budget. In 2003, the Senate's budget was reduced by $30,000. While other categorical budget items were restored, the Senate was not. We have struggled to maintain our low registration rates for all our events in spite of the increases in costs associated with holding them. This year, the Governor again has threatened to reduce the Academic Senate's budget—this year by $60,000. While the Senate's budget was not cut in this fiscal year, the Academic Senate's Budget Committee has begun to plan for the worst and seek other opportunities for funding so we can continue to provide low cost professional development events.

The second situation is related to our activities on two initiatives. As many of you know, for the past two years the Senate has directed the Chancellor's Office grant funded professional development activities in addressing basic skills needs (the Basic Skills Initiative—cccbsi.org). In addition, the Senate is working with the Chancellor's Office, California Department of Education and other organizations in a project to strengthen articulation with community colleges and high schools (*Statewide Career Pathways: Creating School to College Articulation*— statewidepathways.org). Both of these projects have afforded the Senate an opportunity to build relationships across segments and among organizations. In these past two years, the Senate has been approached by nonprofit charitable organizations about creating additional partnerships to leverage funds to continue the good work that we are doing in a number of areas. However, since the Senate is a 501(c)(6) and not a charitable organization (501(c)(3)), the other charitable organizations cannot grant money to the Senate.

In response to these two situations, the Executive Committee has formed a nonprofit charitable organization—The Foundation of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. The purposes of the Foundation are to benefit, support, and enhance the excellence of California community colleges; to support, design and implement professional development for California community college faculty; to research, develop and communicate effective practices to promote effective teaching and learning in the California community colleges; and to promote a variety of activities and strategies to advance teaching and learning. The Board will be comprised of three Executive Committee members, two additional faculty members, and the Academic Senate's Executive Director (*ex officio)*. We are beginning to develop the operating procedures to appoint a board and begin the Foundation's work. If you are interested in serving on the Foundation board, please watch our website for announcements. The Executive Committee believes that the Foundation will provide new opportunities for the Senate to serve you—the faculty. ■