SENATE ROSTRUM

ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES NEWSLETTER
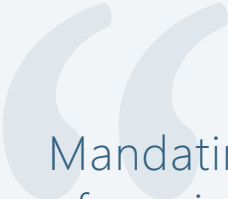
Perspectives on Student Success

MICHELLE L. PILATI, PRESIDENT

While student success has always been a concern for educators, the spotlight on this topic began to burn brighter than ever last year. ASCCC responded with conversations focused on how best to define student success—and in-depth discussions about problematic means of incentivizing student success. As a consequence of the passage of Senate Bill 1143 (Liu, 2010), the California community college system (under the auspices of our Board of Governors) convened a task force with finding ways to increase student success as its goal. Over the past year, it has become evident that philosophical, broad, and multi-dimensional definitions of student success are not to be implemented—but rather fulfillment of the "completion agenda" and its objective metrics. Leaving aside a nuanced definition of student success and focusing on more traditional metrics for quantifying student success, what approaches have faculty embraced and what additional efforts could faculty support?

Faculty have embraced the concept that student preparation is critical for success. The recent changes in prerequisite regulations are intended to prompt robust faculty discussion of not only what skills students need to succeed, but why they need them. As colleges employ content review for the establishment of prerequisites, faculty will need to revisit their course outlines of records (CORs) and how those CORs are implemented in the classroom, taking measures to ensure that any new or modified prerequisites are justified. No prerequisite should be established without the commitment of all faculty who teach the target course to teach it in a manner that relies on the skills obtained in the prerequisite course or courses. As new prerequisites are put in place, accurate assessment methods and effective basic skills offerings will become even more critical than they already are. Thus, measures already taken by faculty are forcing us to think more about student success.

In the spring, the faculty supported a proposed Title 5 change to effectively link repetition for a substandard grade and withdrawal, establishing a system where a student gets three "takes" of a course, with some limited exceptions. Students—and faculty—will need to be conscious of the importance of students succeeding in a course the first time. This change will have a significant impact on the way we operate and how students think about course-taking, although some colleges have already adopted these limits. As faculty, we will need to ensure that we are effectively educating students as to the impact of these changes and possibly modifying how we teach our courses: students will need information as to their likelihood of success in a course in advance of the last date to drop without a W. Incorporating some early assessment into every class will be necessary. Keep in mind that this change is likely to go into effect in Spring 2012—with no "grandfathering" options.

What other approaches can faculty embrace? At the present time, the SB 1143 Task Force appears likely to offer a broad array of inter-related recommendations. Ideas on the table include regulatory changes aimed at increasing goal attainment at our colleges by

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mandating some of the fundamental foundations of a successful educational experience—e.g., assessment, placement, orientation, prompt remediation. The recommendations are still in draft form, and it is unclear what will and will not be maintained in the final report of the task force. All the early indications hint at an agenda that is accurately described as ambitious and, possibly, costly. Mandating the provision of services and specified coursework taxes both instructional and support services at a time when resources are scarce.

If we are to implement an aggressive, service-heavy agenda in the current environment, where might the funds come from or how might we change how we operate? The following list is not exhaustive, but it likely reflects some of the various perspectives on the topic:

1. Function more like a system and "leverage" the power of "economies of scale." Establish, across all 112 colleges, one assessment for placement option, a single enterprise management solution (with the joining of Datatel and Banner, 80% of us are using one system), one course management system, and a centralized degree audit system that can integrate information from all colleges. And, of course, e-transcripts should be a component as well. With all the dollars saved from such efforts, we should be able to afford to do anything we want—and now the cost of changes to any of these systems would be distributed across the state. While this certainly would yield some significant cost savings, the costs of implementation and the time to implement would need to be considered. After watching the decade-long process that is Banner implementation (probably not quite a decade—but are we really done yet?), I shiver at what this all would mean. And that's in advance of even considering the challenges of identifying an assessment for placement option that truly works for us all, not to mention the cost of the diagnostic assessment that many would advocate for.

2. Serve fewer students. Teach no more than two levels below college level and simply turn all those who are not up to our entrance standards away. Become selective community colleges. While this means we will never "produce" all the necessary

degrees, we will be able to produce a number that is more proportional to the state's investment.

3. Abandon standards. Pass all students all the time; just move them through the system. Let them remediate at the CSU or UC.

4. Cease offering all "high-cost" programs—or offer them at whatever cost the market will bear. Create a revenue source within the college.

5. Stop teaching the courses you should not be teaching. If colleges simply only offered the courses that students need to reach their educational goals, our funding would be sufficient. Through the abuse of repetition and withdrawal, catering to lifelong learners, and the entertainment of the elderly, we have been denying courses to more appropriate students. If we planned our course offerings with students in mind (just, of course, the "right" students), we would discover that we've actually had sufficient funding all along.

All snark aside, we can certainly agree that success would be more commonly realized if students availed themselves of all appropriate support services (note "appropriate" support services, not merely those that are currently available) and were guaranteed a space in the courses that they truly need. How we do this in the current climate is not clear. When the recommendations of the SB 1143 Task Force are ready for public vetting, there will be a wide array of public forums for feedback to be provided—including our own fall plenary (November 3-5, 2011 in San Diego at the Sheraton). We hope to have faculty present at all such meetings—please watch for Town Hall meeting beginning in October. More information will be available on our website. ∎

For up-to-date information on future senate events and senate awards please visit our website at www.asccc.org

I Fought the Law...

RICHARD MAHON, CHAIR, 2010-2011 EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE

Resolution 17.01 F10 "Responses to Violations of Law, Policy, and Procedure" asks the Academic Senate to "develop a resource document to provide guidance to local senates in reacting to and dealing with administrative violations of state and local policies and regulations." Such a resource document would presumably help faculty members identify the authority responsible for responding to violations of law or regulation and how to effectively notify that authority so that the violation will stop.

A variety of authorities can be identified with regard to California community colleges, among them local boards of trustees, the Chancellor's Office, and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. What follows focuses on violations of *educational* standards. The fear that criminal activity may be taking place on campus should be referred to local district attorneys or grand juries, and a persistent pattern of enrolling classes beyond safe levels might be taken up with the local fire marshal.

Seeking remedy to a violation of law or regulation from local trustees can be difficult, since by design local trustees rely on local administration both to obey the law and to guide the board in the proper application of law and regulation. If local administrators can be brought to acknowledge that a practice of the college is in violation, then local trustees are likely (one would hope) to require prompt correction of the violation. But if administration itself persists in the violation, it is unlikely to acknowledge to the local board that it has violated law or regulation.

The next step might be the Chancellor's Office. After all, the Chancellor's Office dispenses apportionment to districts, and clear evidence that a district is in violation of Education Code or Title 5 regulations should be of concern to the Chancellor's Office.

Education Code §70901 mandates that the Board of Governors establish minimum conditions entitling districts to receive state aid. Currently there are some 15 minimum conditions that districts must meet in order to receive state funds. The Board of Governors can withhold funding from any district that does not meet established minimum standards. One of the minimum conditions that districts must substantially meet in order to receive state aid is to support local academic senates as per the regulation. Years of funding reductions, however, leave the Chancellor's Office with inadequate staff to keep up with all the services it should provide and notably short in the Title 5 enforcement department.

Nevertheless, the Chancellor's Office does provide a vehicle for seeking legal advice. Just as local boards, chancellors, and presidents have the standing to seek legal advice, so do local academic senates. Appeals for advice from local academic senates have low priority for staff time: "Although Legal Affairs is not required to issue opinions for individuals, constituent groups or representative organizations, it may do so at its own discretion when time and staffing permit." For more information on seeking information through the Chancellor's Office, see "Guidelines for Seeking Informal Legal Advice and Written Legal Opinions" at *www.cccco.edu/Portals/4/Legal/guidelines/guidelines_ for_legal_advice.pdf.*

If the problem concerns the administration's interpretation of Education Code or Title 5, the Community College League provides a "Board Policy and Administrative Procedure Service" in conjunction with the law office of Liebert Cassidy Whitmore. If the college subscribes to the service, a review of the criteria for minimal legal compliance may provide the clarity that the administration and, perhaps, the local board needs. The service is summarized at *www.ccleague.org/ i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3312#liebert.*

If the administration agrees that there might be a problem and wishes to engage in a dialog, the senate and administration could request "Technical Assistance." The summary of the service, as it appears on the Academic Senate website, is to "help districts and colleges successfully implement state law and regulations that call for effective participation by faculty, staff and students in district and college governance. The services offered will be most effective if used before major conflicts arise and prior to a heightened level of local unilateral action by any the parties involved in the local decision-making process." While the visit will not result in legal advice, in many cases the dialog leading up to and resulting from the visit can help parties resolve differences amicably. The service is described at *www.asccc.org/services/technical-assistance.*

If the violation causes the college not to meet accreditation standards or eligibility requirements, an urgent letter to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) might get more attention. An article by Terry O'Banion in the Summer 2010 issue of FACCCTS on "The Faculty and The Rogue Trustee" told the story of Maricopa Community College in Phoenix, Arizona where an anonymous complaint to the regional accreditor ("The Higher Learning Commission") led to an ad hoc review by external educators which in turn provided leverage to the district to insist on additional training to trustees on observing their proper role.

There are also a variety of federal agencies that can be asked to respond to specific kinds of violations, including the Office of Civil Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

A sense of proportion should be maintained when considering whether to pursue action on a suspected violation of law or regulation. Many violations are probably unintentional and a collegial and perhaps discrete pointing out of the lapse may be all that is necessary for the issue to be addressed and resolved. Some violations, however, begin innocently, but become known and yet continue to be unresolved. In cases where violations begin to affect the ability of the college to carry out its mandate and fulfill the public trust, such issues must be addressed and resolved. ■

Nominations to the Board of Governors

Community college faculty have two representatives on the state Board of Governors which makes policy for colleges much like the local board of trustees makes policy for local districts.

The Academic Senate recommends faculty to the Governor for appointment to the Board of Governors and must send at least three candidates forward for each open position.

The Senate annually calls for nominations of colleagues to the Board of Governors faculty positions. Former senate presidents, accreditation leaders, faculty serving locally as trustees, and faculty with a perspective of statewide issues are all excellent choices to recommend. An individual or senate may nominate someone, and the Senate has a candidate review process that can be found at *www.asccc.org/resources/board-governors*

Please consider the qualifications and talents of the faculty you know and speak with them about service at the state level on the Board of Governors.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE OCTOBER 31, 2011.

For more information about the Board of Governors, visit the CCC Chancellor's Office website at *www.cccco.edu/ChancellorsOffice/BoardofGovernors/tabid/190/Default.aspx.* ■

California Community College Association for Occupational Education (CCCAOE): Not Just for Deans

SID BURKS, CCCAOE PRESIDENT ELECT, WITH DIANNA CHIABOTTI, AT LARGE REPRESENTATIVE

The California Community College Association for Occupational Education (CCCAOE) is an umbrella organization representing career technical education (CTE) and economic development professionals. Many educational disciplines have their own professional organization, but CCCAOE is the only voice that speaks for all of career technical education in the California community colleges. The association is recognized by the Chancellor's Office as the voice of CTE for the community college system and maintains direct contact with many of the responsible vice chancellors in the Chancellor's Office. CCCAOE has also retained an advocate in Sacramento and is actively working to develop relationships with legislators and to heighten their awareness of the importance of CTE and economic development.

One of the primary missions of CCCAOE is to provide professional development opportunities for CTE and economic development professionals. To that end, two conferences are held each year—one in the south in fall and one in the north in spring… This year's spring conference will be held in San Francisco and is offered concurrently with the Academic Senate's Vocational Education Leadership Institute. CTE faculty can attend the Academic Senate Vocational Leadership Institute for a nominal fee of $50. This year faculty members attending the Vocational Education Leadership Institute can also attend any CCCAOE breakout session at no extra cost. The Senate website and the CCCAOE website will have more information soon.

Although CCCAOE was an administrator's association when it began, the current organization welcomes faculty to join and to step up to positions of leadership within the association. The association also encourages faculty members to serve as faculty representatives to the regional CTE deans' consortia. The president elect, Sid Burks, joined CCCAOE as a faculty member and has made it his goal to attract more faculty to the association during his term as president. CCCAOE works closely with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges on CTE issues, projects, and conferences. The association is developing a certification program to equip faculty members to move into positions as administrators of CTE or economic development programs. Training sessions will be held at various conferences and may be made available at the regions through the Regional Consortia.

CCCAOE retains the term occupational education in its name, as opposed to career technical education, because the organization's name was established before the term "California Community Colleges" was trademarked. If CCCAOE sought to change its name to incorporate today's preferred terminology, trademark restrictions would prevent the use California Community Colleges in its name.

As the funded mission for community colleges becomes narrower and the pressure for degrees, including CTE degrees, becomes greater, CTE needs to have a strong advocate in addition to the Academic Senate. CCCAOE's singular focus allows it to be a unified voice for CTE programs and an advocate for CTE faculty. We encourage you to explore the CCCAOE website (*www.cccaoe.org*), and consider attending a conference and becoming a member. ∎

The Course Outline of Record vs. Academic Freedom

BETH SMITH, VICE PRESIDENT

Faculty are obligated to teach to the Course Outline of Record (COR). This requirement is in Title 5 and accreditation standards and should be in all contractual job descriptions. Yet, ensuring that faculty adhere to the basic content, objectives, and evaluation methods for the course seems to be an untouchable subject, and discussions of teaching to the COR often challenge our collegiality. As peers we must be willing to protect, defend, and teach to the COR as fiercely as possible, and we must respectfully challenge our colleagues who veer away from it. Retaining academic freedom to create and teach the course as each teacher sees fit is the professional right of each faculty member. Despite all the possible controversy to the contrary, academic freedom and teaching to the COR are not necessarily in conflict. Both principles are, in fact, the same, and faculty need both.

Academic freedom applies to two parts of course creation which are, first, developing, and, second, carrying out the COR. Faculty design the COR, which describes all sections of the course, and then design the class syllabus, which describes an individual section of the course. Because both require academic freedom to develop and deliver, faculty may become confused about why and how academic freedom protections apply to a course or to an individual. Faculty are the writers and directors/producers of the course with the COR as the script. The discipline faculty, academic senate, and curriculum committee have all endorsed the "script", and now it is up to the individual classroom teachers to create a syllabus for the course that includes their own artistic license with the material. All elements of the COR must be included, and more can be added to the individual instances of the course, but objectives and content cannot be eliminated from the course.

The Shakespeare play *Romeo and Juliet* has been performed in many different versions. The play has been a musical, a high school play, several movies, and many professional productions around the world. It has also been produced with a variety of settings—western, medieval, roaring 20s, and various ethnic influences, ages, and persuasions—all at the discretion of the director and producer. The themes for the play remain the same, as does the script, but there is creative license for the director and producer to see Romeo and Juliet through their own particular lens. When the marquee says Romeo and Juliet, everyone knows what story to expect, and disappointment is rampant and critics unforgiving when the production is something other than what was advertised.

The same is true for community college CORs. The course description has been published in the catalog, students have registered, and faculty have been assigned or hired to teach the course according to the COR. Everyone is expecting the course as advertised, and that's what faculty must deliver. The teacher of record may choose to use computers, lecture, selected readings, group work, and cooperative learning, but the course content is still the same as defined by the COR. All faculty in the discipline know the course content, how to pace it, and how to evaluate it. Creative means to deliver or assess the course are worthy of discussion within the department or amongst faculty teaching the course. Sharing ideas for the course and agreeing to the key elements to convey to students is the collegial aspect of teaching.

At some point, discipline faculty or departments should approve the component parts of the COR prior to it reaching the curriculum committee. Faculty should know what content is proposed and how

acquiring the knowledge and skills in the course will be measured and grades awarded. The step of asking all the faculty teaching the course to sign or agree to the COR as part of the curriculum process reminds faculty of their opportunity to contribute to the development of the course and understand the goals of colleagues when teaching it. If all faculty teaching the course have the opportunity to contribute to its design, there will be greater buy-in to the content and outcomes for the course. In some instances, a course is taught by only one person or departments may be small, but this crucial aspect of collectively creating a course can save time and prevent conflict later.

Student learning outcomes provide one means to engage faculty in conversations about teaching to the COR. As faculty establish and assess SLOs, conversations can begin about how and what to teach in the course. Sharing materials, syllabi, and evaluation tools will help everyone teaching the course to determine appropriate tests, quizzes, projects, and other assignments, plus it can define reasonable grading standards or rubrics. As faculty begin discussions of establishing prerequisites, it will be critical for all teachers of a course to be on the same page with expectations for students and each other regarding preparing students to succeed in a given course. The best way to get on the same track is to talk about the curriculum collegially and help everyone create the best course possible. Faculty can routinely share syllabi, visit each other's classes, discuss data about student performance in the course, and evaluate one another on adherence to the COR.

Some faculty may argue that teaching to the COR creates standardized instruction, and in some ways this is true. The course should be the same script in every section of the course, and all stakeholders (students, discipline faculty, curriculum committees, senates, and colleges) have the right to expect truth in advertising. The teacher of record for a given class has the right to apply the COR according to his or her individual style, and that's where academic freedom comes into play. As with Romeo and Juliet, the themes and story must be the same no matter who teaches it and how it's delivered. Some standardization is important for articulation purposes and for the establishment of prerequisites, and compliance with Title 5 and accreditation standards require faculty to ensure that teachers are teaching to the officially approved COR.

The COR and academic freedom protect faculty when used together. Some disciplines routinely field challenges to the curriculum from outside the institution—occasions when an individual or group wants to push and direct the content of a college course in a particular direction. By using professional expertise to establish the COR, faculty are free from unjustified or biased voices external to the institution that attempt to corrupt or commandeer certain courses or experiences for students. Academic freedom protects the development and delivery of official courses in these instances, and once a course is approved by the senate and board, no one has the authority to change the content—not speakers at a board meeting, newspaper editors, or faculty on the campus—except the faculty within the discipline.

If senates feel strongly about adjudicating academic freedom inquiries, they could develop a peer review panel to handle such situations. The panel could help assess whether or not the teacher's academic freedom has been curtailed or whether the teacher's approach to the script actually creates a new play. Faculty within a discipline could serve on the panel, or it could be a collection of faculty from across the campus. Through some faculty sponsored mechanism, instructors of the course must be held accountable for teaching the COR and given license to provide the artistic setting in which to teach it.

Faculty must know the boundaries for standardization and individualization, which means recognizing legitimate challenges to academic freedom. No one benefits from having students succeed in a course that does not provide the content advertised in the catalog and described in the COR. Both the institution and students lose in that scenario—the institution because it has failed to guarantee to other entities that students are receiving the content, knowledge, and skills defined in the COR, and students because they are expecting and relying on the content, knowledge and skills published in the college catalog description of the course. Academic freedom gives us license to customize our instruction as long as we stick to the script, and both regulation and good practice require that faculty do so. ∎

Training Your Replacement

DAVID MORSE, SECRETARY, AND LESLEY KAWAGUCHI, AREA C REPRESENTATIVE

At the Faculty Leadership Institute in June 2011, a large number of the attendees were brand new academic senate presidents. Energetic, enthusiastic, and eager, many found the tasks and knowledge they needed to bring to their new position to be overwhelming. Some had at least one year of shadowing the previous senate president as president-elect. Others had served years ago and hoped to refresh their skills and update their knowledge. And still others found themselves elected and taking office with little mentoring or assistance from the previous presidents. If we wish for new faculty leaders to be effective immediately, they need to be cultivated and trained before they take office.

Many of us have found ourselves or our senates in an uncomfortable position at some point—the current leader wishes to or must step aside, but no good candidate for replacement is immediately available. Indeed, the same scenario occurs not only with senates, but also with other faculty leadership positions: curriculum committee chair, department head, and others. In order to ensure a smoother and more effective transition from one leader to the next, and to ensure to the greatest extent possible that the person taking over the position is prepared and ready for the job, we must take a thoughtful, carefully planned approach to the issue.

An example of this situation arose recently at Long Beach City College (LBCC). The terms for academic senate president at LBCC follow the same pattern as those of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges: one year terms with a limit of two consecutive terms. In Spring 2011 the faculty at LBCC found themselves in a familiar position: the sitting president was no longer planning to continue, and no readily apparent candidates who were both willing and prepared to take on the assignment were forthcoming.

Finally, a former LBCC academic senate president stepped forward and agreed to take on the job again, but with a specific purpose in mind: while she was in office,

she and other senate leaders would make a conscious effort to bring new members onto the local executive committee in order to help ensure that in the future the faculty would have a clearer and better trained set of candidates for the presidency. As a result, when the fall semester began five of the seven elected positions on the executive committee were filled by newly elected individuals who had not served on the committee previously.

This action by a local academic senate president is one that many faculty leaders might be well advised to imitate in some form. As new, continuing, and former senate presidents take their positions in the upcoming academic year, we are reminded that in these times, with the budget issues, 1440 degrees, the student success initiatives, repeatability concerns, and a myriad of local issues, effective leadership transition and the grooming of new leaders is essential.

THINK AHEAD

We should not wait until we need a new president or chair to consider who that person should be. Doing so often leaves us at best with a new leader who is untrained or underprepared and at worst with no willing and capable candidate at all. Instead, we should identify those who have the potential to lead and provide them with the proper opportunities and experience to help them succeed when their time comes to take command.

Not all members on any executive committee, local or statewide, will eventually serve as the overall leader. Such a situation is in no way a negative: not everyone wants to be the president, and some people are more effective in support roles or behind the scenes than in front of the room. However, if you look around at your senate leadership and see no one who seems a likely candidate for the presidency, then you do have a problem.

Senates need to think long term regarding leadership in order to make certain that potential leaders have been identified and are receiving the necessary experience to

prepare them for greater responsibilities. If all members of the senate or faculty leadership—executive committee members, chairs of major sub-committees, and others—have held the positions for extended periods and show no interest in moving into higher positions, then the senate might consider a conscious recruitment drive to bring some new faces into the picture.

TRAIN YOUR REPLACEMENTS

Once a senate or other faculty body has identified possible future leaders, those potential leaders should be trained and prepared for the position in question. Such training can be accomplished in various ways. Many local senates have created a president-elect position in order to provide for a smoother transition, allowing the future leader to shadow the activities of the sitting president. A similar system could be created for department heads, committee chairs, and other positions.

Institutes and other activities sponsored by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges are also important for giving future leaders a broader view of statewide issues and a more developed understanding of faculty rights and responsibilities. These events include not just the Faculty Leadership Institute that is held each June, but also the bi-yearly plenary sessions, area meetings, the Curriculum Institute, Vocational Education Leadership Institute, and others. Whenever funds permit, colleges should not limit attendance at these events to the current president or a select few regular participants, but rather should encourage other potential leaders to join in the state level activities in order both to prepare those individuals for possible future roles and to develop a more informed and involved faculty overall.

CONSIDER TERM LIMITS

Term limits on leadership positions can be beneficial in many ways. Potential new leaders, faculty bodies as a whole, and even the active participants in leadership themselves may find that limitations on service in a specific position can have advantages.

Many of us have seen situations in which an individual has remained in a particular position for an extended period of time. The person becomes identified with the position, and no one is willing to step forward to challenge for the chair. Even when the sitting individual is very effective, such a situation can become unhealthy.

New ideas and new approaches can strengthen any organization. Moreover, when the position of chair seems so secure in the hands of one person, others may tend not even to consider stepping forward, and thus when the sitting leader finally steps aside the body is confronted with the absence of a viable replacement.

In other cases, the chair himself or herself may appreciate having a way out of the position. Many leaders have remained in their positions longer than they wished because they are pressured with cries that no one else is ready, that no one else wants to take over, or even that no one else can do the job as well. While such claims are flattering and the boost to our egos often helps convince us to remain in a position we do not really want, the truth is that no one is indispensable or irreplaceable. Every one of our colleges has capable individuals who can step forward into leadership but who may postpone doing so because it is easier to leave things in the hands of the very capable sitting chair or president. Term limits may help chairs avoid being pressured into holding on to a position and force some potentially strong new leaders to become more involved.

LEARNING TO LET GO

Just as some faculty leaders have remained in a position for an extended time, others have, whether consciously or subconsciously, remained attached to their positions even after leaving them. As we nurture and train our replacements, we also need to let go of the ways in which we might approach specific situations. Senate presidents and other leaders need to develop their own styles as we mentor them and after taking office. Mentorship, making suggestions, and being a sounding board are critical and useful ways to help new leaders settle into their positions. However, micro-managing and second-guessing will not produce the desired outcome—strong and independent leaders who have been trained to replace us.

All of these ideas are meant as possibilities for consideration. Each local senate or other body will have to decide for itself and according to its own culture how best to grow its future leaders. The important thing is to remain conscious of the need to identify and train new leaders in whatever ways are determined locally to be appropriate and viable so that we do not find ourselves without strong and prepared replacements when our time comes to step aside. ■

Helping Veteran Students be Successful and Reach their Academic Goals!

KEVIN BONTENBAL, PAST CHAIR, COUNSELING AND LIBRARY FACULTY ISSUES COMMITTEE

Community college faculty, staff, and administrators are aware of the many challenges and issues veterans face when they return to college to pursue their education. These issues can range from emotional and psychological to financial or academic. On many campuses, these students can feel isolated and struggle at finding ways to feel like they are part of the campus community. Those who do feel supported and connected are fortunate to attend a college that has an effective veterans program which can provide support services for veteran students to help overcome some of the challenges these students face and assist them in reaching their academic goals.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has supported veterans returning to college through many publications and resolutions. Most recently, Resolution 20.01 "Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, Veterans and Financial Aid" passed in Spring 2009, asking that the Academic Senate work with local academic senates to promote better awareness of the G.I. Bill and the best strategies for utilizing and maximizing its benefits for veterans pursuing higher education. In responding to this resolution, a great deal of work has been done regarding the G.I. bill and financial aid. In expanding this effort, this article focuses more specifically on the impact and benefits a veterans program can have on the success of veteran students returning to college in pursuit of an education.

Many successful and effective veterans programs have a common goal of delivering an array of support services for veteran students through educational and career planning, as well as other essential services, referrals, and partnerships with the community. Successful programs can also provide assistance to veterans in helping them obtain the educational benefits available under the Montgomery G.I. Bill. Providing such services can ensure a positive transition back into school and increase veteran students' success into careers through education. The success of veterans programs is further realized through collaboration with other programs and services on campus and in the community. Such alliances can ensure an effective implementation of a comprehensive array of services and provide veteran students an opportunity to build a sense of community.

Some of the core values effective veterans programs strive to achieve include inclusiveness, removal of stigmas associated with veteran status, respect and appreciation, and camaraderie. Developing ways to include and provide benefits to this often silent group of students is essential. Efforts to destigmatize the use of available programs and services for veterans are also crucial in helping these students develop adaptive and productive attitudes and behaviors that will promote success in college. The most powerful communication a college can send is that it values veterans, a communication that can be achieved through demonstrations of respect and appreciation. Furthermore, programs that include numerous formal and informal ways for veterans to find each other and connect are immensely important.

> On many campuses, these students can feel isolated and struggle at finding ways to feel like they are part of the campus community.

Such activities are of even greater value when they are integrated within traditional college activities and courses.

In addition to these core values, other aspects of effective and successful veterans programs that colleges might consider, whether in the initial stages of developing a veterans program or expanding their program and services, include the following:

◆ commitment to assisting veterans from the moment they begin their studies through their graduation.

◆ available veterans outreach aides who can guide veterans from the start, even prior to their discharge.

◆ counselors who are proficient in personal, career, and academic matters.

◆ dedicated staff who are well-versed in the various benefits veterans may qualify to receive.

◆ veterans clubs or groups that can provide opportunities for veterans to dialog and connect with other veterans.

◆ specific academic courses that assist with transitioning from combat warriors into the college and civilian community.

◆ health care professionals that can assist veterans with their health care needs.

◆ transfer center personal who can assist veterans seeking to continue their education at a four-year university.

In the paper "Community College Support and Engagement of Servicemembers, Veterans, and Military Families," which was presented at the 2010 Whitehouse Summit on Community Colleges, Kathy McMurtry Snead and Andrea Baridon discuss, in greater detail than presented here, effective strategies that veterans program could build upon and provide in meeting the needs of veteran students:

◆ Provide a single point-of-contact or "one-stop shop" for information about campus resources.

◆ Raise awareness and knowledge among faculty and staff regarding issues facing veterans and their families.

◆ Promote and establish collaborations to enhance campus involvement between academia and student veterans organizations and other military family supports.

◆ Promote reintegration programs for families and act as a conduit to family assistance centers and on-campus veterans' centers.

◆ Institute flexible academic programming, scheduling, and availability of student services to meet these students' needs.

◆ Provide on-campus housing for families of veterans experiencing various disabilities that may place a student veterans at risk.

◆ Identify and track veterans and their families to monitor progress and facilitate targeted communication.

This list is not intended to suggest that all of these services must be in place for a veterans program to be effective and successful. In the current economic climate, not all colleges will be able to implement all of these services. This list simply provides strategies that have been identified by various individuals as valuable in easing the transition of veterans and their families back into college.

The implementation of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill in August 2009 significantly reduced a major financial barrier to veterans returning to college, and current funding levels of military tuition assistance and/or veterans' education benefits make college enrollment affordable for the overwhelming majority of military students. However, these financial opportunities and benefits are only one part of the picture. Without effective programs and services to assist veterans in overcoming many of the obstacles and challenges these students encounter, many veteran students fail to reach their academic goals.

Snead, K. & Baridon, A. (2010). Community college support and engagement of service members, veterans, and military families. Unpublished paper presented at The Whitehouse Summit on Community Colleges, Washington, D.C. (www.ed.gov/college-completion/community-college-summit) ∎

Three "Takes" of a Course: Limiting Withdrawals and Repetition to Alleviate Substandard Grades

BETH SMITH, VICE PRESIDENT

Earning a passing grade in a course on the first or second try is now more important than ever. The Board of Governors recently approved new regulations that limit repetition and withdrawal per student per course per district. All students will be limited to three "takes" of a course—whether repeating to alleviate a substandard grade or withdrawing, and whether new or continuing. The college will be funded for only three official enrollments in the course[1]. To see the final version of the new language for Title 5, please go to *www.cccco.edu/ChancellorsOffice/Divisions/Legal/RegulationNotices/tabid/411/Default.aspx* and access the document "Apportionment Limits for Credit Course Enrollment Repetition and Withdrawal." It is expected that these changes will go into effect Spring 2012. Students will not be "grandfathered" when the regulations are implemented, meaning that any previous official enrollments will count toward the total of three allowable takes per course.

Students may be allowed three plus one "takes" of the course if, on an appeal basis, a student needs to repeat a course due to a **significant lapse of time** since it was last taken, or when there are specific extenuating circumstances such as flood, fire, or other extraordinary conditions beyond the student's control. Districts may allow more repeats, but there will not be apportionment provided for any additional "takes" beyond the three (plus one) now allowed. This change necessitates a culture shift for counselors and other faculty, students, and everyone at the college who sees students struggle to complete courses for any reason. Such a momentous change to current practice will require an equally momentous communication to everyone involved and consideration of interventions to improve success.

The reasons behind the change include increasing access for students, focusing more on student success, reducing the cost incurred from students retaking the same course many times without successfully completing it, and recognizing a political climate that sees the system as inefficient when students can retake a course up to six or more times on the taxpayer dime. Because of the budget situation, many districts have already self-imposed a similar limit to the number of times a student can take a course. All districts will now have to modify catalogs, programming, and college messages to students to ensure that apportionment is only collected for three official enrollments. Colleges may allow students additional attempts at a course, but the cost must be absorbed by the college.

For faculty, the greatest reason for such a change is to encourage students to complete a course on the first try. As senates consider this change and how it affects students and faculty, here are some ideas to consider:

♦ Assessment for placement becomes more critical. Placing students in the appropriate course for their skill level must be a priority. Students must have every possible chance to succeed in a course on the first try.

♦ Prerequisites are essential. And until content review and curriculum processes can be fully implemented, messages to students about the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in courses should be provided to students at every opportunity.

♦ Counseling and advising to students must change. Many faculty encourage students to drop a course

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[1] An official enrollment is understood to be the recording of a grade (A, B, C, D, F, including + or – grades where they exist, P or NP, or for returning students, C or NC), W or FW on the student's transcript.

or retake it in the summer or provide some other counsel that has seemed wise in the past. Now the message to students depends on how many times they have already taken a course. If the student already took the course once and failed, then the message to the student on the second try will be different and passing the course becomes more urgent.

- Additional interventions to promote student success need to be created and implemented as soon as possible.

- Petition processes for students to seek a fourth official enrollment in the course need to be created where they do not currently exist.

- The first week or two of the term become a keen opportunity for faculty to speak with students about goals and intentions. If a student is five months pregnant at the beginning of the course, is it realistic to believe she can successfully complete a semester long course?

- Faculty may want to incorporate some form of early assessment so that students who are not likely to succeed have feedback prior to the last date to drop without W.

- Should faculty be privy to the number of times a student has already taken the course? Should there be an identifier or number for each student on the class roster? Will this create profiling by faculty?

- Establish and publicize guidelines for successful scheduling of courses, such as leaving an open hour before or after a class for study and preparation time. While many students structure a schedule with as many units as possible in as few days as possible, it may be best to limit a student's units or scheduling options for the second or third take of a course.

- Require students to see a counselor after the first failure or withdrawal.

When students are unsuccessful in a first attempt at a course, how invasive should the actions of the college be when a student considers his or her next attempt? Because colleges pride themselves on offering course sections in different formats to allow learners of all types to find success, students should be able to repeat the course with a different teacher, delivery, or instructional method when the first attempt ended unsuccessfully. If a student took the course Mondays and Wednesdays during the last attempt, then for the next attempt he or she might be directed to take the course three or more days per week. Some course sections are offered with computer mediated or aided instruction. When a student fails in a "traditional" course, maybe he or she should be advised to take the course with the computer component the next time. Or, if the student took the course in a distance education format the first time, colleges may want to discuss limiting the student to a face-to-face course on the second try.

Required tutoring or visits to office hours may also be a consideration for students on the second or third try at a course. How students schedule their courses throughout a day or how many units they attempt during a term all affect student success. Asking students to leave an hour before or after a math class, for instance, will allow the student time to prepare for class or begin homework immediately while the information is still fresh. Developmental educators will have many other good ideas for ways to create better opportunities for student success.

Time will be short to communicate with everyone about this change, and all faculty will need to be informed about options for advising students, the petition process, and intervention strategies. Some of those strategies and options will be college actions, and some may be developed by departments or discipline faculty. Local senates may want to consider common language for syllabi. The common message could be a college-wide message, or it could be specific to departments. One positive outcome of asking everyone to include the same message in syllabi is that colleges can reach out to part time faculty who may not be in the loop about this significant change and how the college has decided to approach it.

The new Title 5 changes will challenge faculty to really examine how to help students pass a course the first time. Neither faculty nor students have the luxury to think "oh well, just take the course again later." All energy needs to be directed to helping students find success in a course, including some very strong directions to students, and faculty have the opportunity to help students become more realistic and committed to passing every course. ∎

Participate! How to Get Faculty Engaged and Involved

DOLORES DAVISON, NORTH REPRESENTATIVE AND JULIE BRUNO, AREA A REPRESENTATIVE

One of the major hurdles senate leaders face, regardless of their time on the senate, is finding faculty to participate in committee work. Unless the committee's work directly impacts a faculty member (i.e., a hiring committee), or he or she is compensated (i.e., union service or tenure review committees), many faculty would much prefer to just teach and mentor students, while avoiding committee service. How do you, as a senate leader, engage faculty so that they want to serve on committees, especially in cases where committee service is not a contractual obligation? Below are suggestions, compiled from senate leaders at breakouts at both the Spring 2011 plenary session and the 2011 Leadership Institute, that have assisted senate leaders in increasing faculty participation.

◆ Use a personal approach. One of the most common comments at the breakouts was how effective requests for service were when they came directly from the senate president, the committee chair, or a senator from a faculty member's division. Something as simple as a phone call, rather than a mass email, may be the difference when it comes to persuading a faculty member to participate. A face-to-face meeting over coffee about what the committee does and why you are asking that faculty member to become involved is a particularly effective tool, especially if you…

◆ Clearly define commitments ahead of time. When asking for volunteers, the more information you can provide, the more likely it is that you will be able to find someone who is willing and able to serve. Providing information including the time and dates of the meetings, expected length of the term of service, and work outside of the meetings does wonders when it comes to recruiting faculty to serve on a particular committee. This is especially helpful in cases where the committee

meets regularly; for example, if someone wants to serve as a senator, knowing when the senate meets can help the faculty member work his or her schedule around the meetings. It can also help faculty members…

◆ Play to their strengths. For committees which serve a particular population or a very narrow purpose, it is always helpful to recruit people who will be able to approach the committee on a level playing field. If you are recruiting for an ad hoc committee on online pedagogy, for example, asking someone who has taught online for a number of years means that faculty member will already have a background in the area and may not need to do as much "catching up" as someone who has never taught online. In addition, finding faculty who will complement the strengths of the committee is also important. A faculty member who is highly organized may become frustrated serving on a committee chaired by someone for whom organization is not a strength. The more you know about how a committee operates the better you can recruit for that committee, which leads to making sure that you…

◆ Know your committees' purposes, members, and leaders. It is far easier to recruit faculty when you know what the committee does and what its goals are for the next year. It is also helpful to avoid having personalities that conflict among the committee members; asking someone to serve on a committee with an individual with whom that faculty member has a conflict could be a recipe for disaster. Identifying possible conflicts by knowing the faculty is an important reason why you should…

◆ Use your senators. At colleges with smaller numbers of full time faculty, it is possible to know

most, if not all, of your colleagues; that becomes much more difficult at larger colleges. Your senators probably know most of their colleagues within their divisions and will be able to suggest people for service. They also may know part time faculty who are interested in serving, and can bring those individuals to your attention if part-time membership is usual within your local college culture and appropriate for the particular committee. Faculty who teach at multiple schools bring an additional knowledge and new perspectives to committee work. Knowing who is doing what and where also helps you to…

- Publicize the work of the committee and the faculty. One senate president commented that he posts the names of every faculty member along with his or her committee service and the approximate number of hours that each faculty member spends on a weekly basis on committee work. While this particular action may not be practical or desirable for your college culture, publicizing the work that the committee does (with annual reports, publication of minutes from the meetings, goals for the next year, and the like) validates the work that the committee has completed and demonstrates the importance of the committee within the college structure. It also helps to ensure that the faculty do not feel that their committee service has been a waste of time. To show that faculty participation is valued you must…

- Show appreciation. One of the most important things that you can do is to thank your committee members at the end of the year (or even before). Whether it's a note, an email, cookies at the last meeting, or acknowledgement in a public forum, letting your faculty know that you are grateful for their service goes a long way in having those faculty return the following year to seek other committee opportunities.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but hopefully it can provide some guidance for encouraging faculty to become more engaged in committee service at your college and more involved in the body as a whole. Remember, being a senate leader does not mean doing everything yourself (although it feels that way sometimes!); the more you can increase participation, the more people you have to draw from and the more perspectives you have to help with decision making. A faculty with active participation by the majority of its members is key to a strong and relevant senate on your campus. ■

Julie's Inbox

Dear Julie,

Our faculty argue frequently about whether or not a teacher may grade a student based on attendance. What's the real answer to this question?

Giving Fs to Absent Students

Dear GFAS,

This question is posed quite often by faculty who are trying to encourage students to attend class and participate. Nothing sends a message faster to students who are lackadaisical about attending class than earning a failing grade for missing classtime. However, Title 5 is fairly clear on this topic in §55002.a.2.A. It says that "the grade [in the course] is based on demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency...by means of essays... problem solving..." What this means for teachers is that they should give daily quizzes or assignments that students must complete in class in order to demonstrate proficiency with the subject matter. Many faculty award points for participation in class discussions, which a student can earn only if in attendance. Simply missing class cannot hurt a student unless he or she misses enough class time to warrant "excessive absences" in the class. Only after missing the defined amount of class time may a student be dropped from a class. Most districts have policies where an amount of time or a number of days of missed class constitute "excessive." If your senate has not contributed to the board policy where these definitions exist, then you might want to agendize such a discussion.

Good luck! ■