

Minutes of the
MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE
January 25, 2010

APPROVED

PRESENT: Bruce Bishop, Monika Brannick, Valerie Chau, Haydn Davis, Ralph Ferges, Marty Furch, Barb Kelber, Stan Levy, Jackie Martin-Klement, Linda Morrow, Sue Norton, Patrick O'Brien, Perry Snyder, Diane Studinka

ABSENT: Lawrence Hahn, Teresa Laughlin, Roger Morrissette, Fari Towfiq

GUESTS: Sherry Titus

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by the president, Monika Brannick, at 2:00 p.m., in Room SU-30.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion 1 MSC Chau, Levy: Faculty Senate approval of the minutes of December 7, 2009, as presented. The motion carried.

Public Comments: There were none.

Announcements: Monika Brannick shared a letter from Barry Russell, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, of the California Community Colleges System Office. The emphasis was indicated (yellow highlighting) before the letter was received by Brannick.

Date January 22, 2010

To: Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers

From: Barry A. Russell, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

Subject: Avocational, Recreational, and Personal Development Courses ... Some Suggestions

In fall 2009, messages concerning some possible funding changes for certain courses at California community colleges began to surface from a variety of sources. After much discussion, several phone meetings, and some investigative activities, the Chancellor's Office makes the following observations and suggestions to guide colleges.

Why Is There Confusion?

In the 2009-10 Budget Act¹, language was provided that directed community colleges to

"the greatest extent possible, shall implement any necessary workload reductions in areas other than basic skills, workforce training, and transfer."

Although this language was clear about the classes to be included in the focus for 2009-2010, it gave no specific direction about all the other courses and programs being offered at community colleges. The budget was reduced \$120 million without identifying specific cuts that must be made or courses that must be eliminated. Subsequently, colleges are looking for direction. In addition, it is important to note that this limitation (at this point) is only attached to the 2009-2010 budget language. Budget language is still being crafted for the 2010-2011 year and it is yet to be determined if there will be a continued focus directly communicated by the Legislature or if more general language will be used. Whatever the action, it is probably fair to say that the Legislature has communicated an overall priority for colleges during this budget crisis...however long it should last.

¹ Budget Act of 2009, Section 482, item 6870-101-0001, provision 29, page 617

For 2009-2010 it is safe to assume all courses that are outside of transfer, basic skills, or career technical are potential courses for scrutiny as community colleges limit class offerings in response to large budget cuts across the state. In addition to focusing on these three areas, community colleges also must continue to respond to local community need and workforce issues through the noncredit offerings which are already restricted to 10 areas of identified content (California Education code 84757(a)).

So, the questions are:

- Where do colleges draw the line between the three categories and those outside?
- What courses do colleges exclude and what courses do they include?
- Do colleges discontinue very popular courses should they fall outside the designated areas?

What's Next?

The Legislative Analyst Office, legislators, and others are looking closely at both credit and noncredit offerings throughout the state and have found a variety of courses that seem to fall outside of the accepted areas listed above. There could be legislation or other actions taken to remove some local control of course offerings if colleges are not responding to the expressed intent of the budget language.

This is not a new question. In a review of documents all the way back to 1982, there have been several instances where recreational, avocational, and personal development courses have been addressed. In fact, in a letter dated January 31, 1984 to all Chief Instructional Officers, clear direction was provided that still remains appropriate today. The difference is that at that time, the Legislature mandated that the Chancellor's Office develop a list for a \$30 million reduction and at this time, there is no mandate from the current Legislature. Here is a quote from this 1984 memo:

"Recreational, avocational, and personal development courses are those which:

- (a) are not required courses or suggested electives leading to the completion of the requirements of a major offered by the college,
- (b) are offered primarily to provide recreational or avocational pursuits for students.
- (c) are of greater private than public interest.
- (d) should be offered as a community service class for a fee which covers the cost of instruction."²

It should also be noted that the language is very general intentionally so as not to focus or marginalize one specific sector of the curriculum. These types of courses can occur in virtually every curricular area of the campus.

How can community colleges respond?

While not giving colleges specific direction, the Chancellor's Office would highly recommend that each college visit their course offerings and review them for three priorities: basic skills, transfer, and career technical. If courses do not fit into one of those three categories, then further analysis should be done according to the four points (a through d) listed above. Note that option "d" provides a way to continue offering a course as a community service class without affecting the state budget.

It is the opinion of the Chancellor's Office that this is a local decision and not one that should be made at the state level. The reality, though, is that if courses that are perceived as recreational, avocational, or personal development are not voluntarily removed from the credit/noncredit offerings, the Legislature or others may choose a more intrusive method.

It would be prudent for colleges to also focus on communication with their local communities and governance groups as these changes take place. The budget message should be clear to all sectors (boards, administration, faculty, staff, and students) that the necessary limited focus on basic skills, transfer, and career technical education requires subsequent changes in scheduling and course offerings.

Where will this take us?

In the next Legislature, the issue of funding community college courses will inevitably include some review of courses which the Legislature interprets as outside the scope of the community college mission. If California community colleges have proactively changed or removed the offering of these courses voluntarily, there will be less evidence to support further reductions in state funding based on this one point of contention.

As you study your offerings and take action to reduce course offerings to meet workload reduction goals, please focus first on sustaining basic skills, transfer, and career/technical courses and programs. With a statewide response to this reduction of \$120 million, hopefully the chance of further state budget reductions based on this issue can be minimized. If you have any questions or concerns throughout this process, please feel free to contact the Chancellor's Office Division of Academic Affairs at 916.322.6881.

cc: Chief Executive Officers, Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges

² Letter to Chief Instructional Officers by Allan L. Petersen, Dean, January 31, 1984.

Senate members discussed the memo and its potential impact on Palomar faculty, staff, and students. Monika Brannick noted that Berta Cuaron will bring the issue forward at the next Chairs and Directors meeting scheduled for January 29.

Committee
Appointments:

Motion 2 MSC O'Brien, Chau: Faculty Senate approval of the following committee appointments:

Academic Technology Committee
(09-11) Mathematics and the Natural and Health Sciences
Martha Martinez/Math

Human Resource Services Planning Council
(09-11) faculty member at-large
Rosie Antonecchia/Counseling

Student Services Planning Council
(08-10) EOP & S Faculty member
Trong Nguyen

The motion carried.

Patrick O'Brien noted that Senators are needed to serve on the Instructional Planning Council and the Finance/Administrative Services Planning Council.

Motion 3 MSC Bishop, Chau: Faculty Senate approval of the following committee appointment:

Instructional Planning Council
Sue Norton, Senate member

The motion carried.

Motion 4 MSC Levy, Chau: Faculty Senate approval of the results of the ballot for the following committee appointment:

Equivalency Committee
Byung Kang, Library
(09-11) Social and Behavioral Sciences

The motion carried.

Elections: Monika Brannick reported that there are two additional vacancies on the Faculty Council due to Kathleen Sheahan's and Brent Gowen's sabbaticals this semester. Including the vacancy that existed previously, there are a total of three council vacancies (Past President, and two at-large). There are also two regular Senate vacancies with terms through May, 2011.

Senators discussed the election guidelines outlined in the Faculty Constitution. Because membership hasn't fallen below two-thirds, a special election is not called for at this time. The Senate can, however, fill one of the Faculty Council vacancies (Past President), as that position is appointed by the Faculty Senate from within the Senate membership.

Motion 5 MSC Snyder, Furch: Faculty Senate approval of the appointment of Patrick O'Brien as the Past-President designee to the Faculty Council through May, 2010. The motion carried.

Stan Levy added that a call for nominations would be distributed to all faculty members in early April to fill the remaining vacancies, as well as those that will become vacant as a result of current Senators' terms ending.

Curriculum: Monika Brannick reported that the Curriculum Committee would be meeting within the next two weeks.

TERB Forms: Copies of the following Tenure & Evaluations Review Board (TERB) forms were distributed:
Proposed Online Class Observation Form
Proposed Student Questionnaire for online evaluations (and currently-used forms as a basis for comparison).

Kelber explained that the proposed forms were developed by Work Groups within the Academic Technology Committee. The Work Groups were formed to address elements of Accreditation Recommendation #3: "To meet standards, the team recommends the college focus efforts on identifying processes to ensure the quality of instructional programs, especially the increasingly popular distance education courses, are consistent regardless of the location or deliver mode."

The Work Groups assigned to developing the Student Questionnaire and the Class Observation form have included Mary Ann Drinan (outgoing TERB Coordinator) and Kelber (incoming TERB Coordinator) because the documents being developed in those groups will have direct consequences for evaluations. The Palomar Faculty Federation (PFF) will also review these forms, as matters related to evaluations are covered in Section 17 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Lengthy discussion occurred regarding the proposed documents, and several amendments to the wording were suggested.

Monika Brannick commended members of TERB and the Academic Technology Committee for their continued work on these documents, as efforts are made to respond to accreditation requirements.

Kelber reported that the TERB would be meeting later in the day, and all Senate recommendations would be brought forward.

This item will be brought back next week for further discussion and/or action.

Policies & Procedures: Policies & Procedures will be discussed at next week's meeting. Monika Brannick reported that the task force will begin meeting again in February.

Review/Revision of Forms: Last semester, Senate members discussed the Application for Audit form and whether, given the current environment, accommodations should be made in any case, as the district is currently not soliciting enrollment. Approvals for audits and overlapping classes should be given with much discretion and only in rare cases. The Senate discussed whether it was appropriate to request that members of the faculty temporarily eliminate the student permission of class audits and enrollment into overlapping classes.

It has been pointed out, though, that the “audit” option is often essential for students involved in performance activities.

Monika Brannick reported that the Strategic Planning Council recently voted to limit the number of units in which students can enroll. In addition, the district will begin dropping students for nonpayment of fees, enforcing the requirements already stated but not currently enforced.

Senators discussed district policies relating to the action taken by the Strategic Planning Council, addressing policies pertaining to nonpayment of fees, financial aid, and registration. Students can register for a maximum of 18 units, and for students who want to enroll in 19 units or more, a petition will be required. Senators requested that this item be placed on the agenda for further discussion at next week’s meeting.

Academic Technology
Committee:

Monika Brannick indicated that the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) made much progress last semester and their work continues on several projects. Co-chair Haydn Davis will be out for approximately three weeks in February and asked for Faculty Senate input regarding the appointment of a co-chair to fill in during his absence. After brief discussion, there was support for a co-chair appointment from among the current members of the ATC.

Haydn Davis will bring this item forward at the next ATC meeting, so the appointment can be made.

Motion 6

MSC O’Brien, Furch: To move Academic Technology Committee to Action. The motion carried.

Motion 7

MSC Furch, O’Brien: Faculty Senate support of the appointment of a Co-Chair to the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) to assist during the current Chair’s absence due to medical leave. The appointment will be made from among the current membership of the ATC for this semester. The motion carried.

Accreditation & Draft

of the Strategic Plan 2013: Copies of the draft Follow-up Report to the Accrediting Commission, as well as a draft of the Strategic Plan 2013, were provided for information.

Learning Outcomes
Council:

Marty Furch reported that the Learning Outcomes Council (LOC) will be bringing forward a proposal to amend the Basic Skills Coordinator’s term. The proposal will likely be ready for consideration at next week’s Faculty Senate meeting.

She also commented that input has been solicited from faculty on General Education Outcomes, though few responses have been received. She encouraged faculty to visit the LOC website, and click on “Blog” to participate.

TracDat training is scheduled for February 18 and 19. Faculty wishing to attend should contact Furch for more information or to register.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Neault Kelber, Secretary