

Colleagues,

Welcome and Thank You

First, I would like to welcome all of you back from your Winter Break, if you had one. By now, you are probably aware of the huge enrollment growth we are experiencing this semester. Unlike other community colleges, CSUs and UCs, which are responding to the enrollment growth with enrollment caps and operational budget cuts, our district is fortunate enough to be eligible for funding for every one of the students that is filling our classes.

This is due to the way that colleges are funded which includes “restoration” funding which, if you have had a decrease in enrollment followed by an increase, allows you to be fully funded for the number of students you enroll in any particular year that is equivalent to the highest amount you achieved within the past three years. We are looking at earning \$4 million in restoration funding which closes almost half of the \$9 million budget deficit. The remaining amount can be recaptured next year if we add an additional 800 or so FTES on top of what we have achieved this year.

Although the primary reason for our enrollment growth is the dire national economic situation, there are groups and individuals on campus who have maximized this opportunity with great diligence and conscientiousness. I would personally like to thank the following groups and individuals:

- Performance Goals Committee (Ellen McAlister, Monica Rivas, Judie DelFrate, Jeff Nelson, Rod Pavao, Jim Burrell, Steve Lipman, Jeff Cormier, Rachel Lowenberg, Linda Retterath) – for increasing class efficiency to be closer to the state standard while also allowing for enrollment growth
- Division and Department Chairs – for cancelling low enrolled sections and adding high demand classes
- Student Services and Counseling faculty and staff – for directing students to appropriate classes and providing special opportunities for registration and enrollment
- Marketing staff – for publicizing the fact that our district is welcoming students

We have demonstrated that we can come together, make sacrifices, take actions that some believe will hurt the district, and generally take risks together to move toward success.

Our Biggest Challenges

Bridging Two Cultures

Before I took office as Mission College Academic Senate President last June 1, 2008, I had noticed as a Senator that this district has two cultures: an insider and an outsider culture. The insider culture consists of all those faculty, staff and administrators who are members of participatory governance groups and who, as a result, are privy to current issues, discussions and decision-making on critical issues.

The outsider culture consists of everyone else, which is the vast majority of the district community. These are folks who do not have the time to attend meetings of participatory governance groups or don't feel they have time to read the minutes and may rely on inconsistent sources of information and are therefore operating at a disadvantage in terms of their participation in decision-making.

My highest priority upon taking on this job last June was to try to begin to bridge this gap between the two cultures. To that end, I took the following steps:

- I continued the practice, which Cathy Cox initiated, of sending out regular shared governance/president's reports to share brief descriptions of current issues/actions
- I began sharing detailed meeting notes on meetings of committees that did not provide meeting minutes publicly
- I began sharing Board meeting documents, first with all users, and later with only Senators (at the behest of District Council which promised it would post all documents on the web)
- I vigorously advocated (and continue to) for transparency and timely posting of meeting minutes for EVERY group in the district including the Board of Trustees

But my actions as an individual can only go so far. So, in order for us to continue to bridge the gap between these two groups, I believe we need to set the following expectations for each group in the district:

Decision-makers – in my opinion, all those in the position of making decisions that affect an entire group should be conferring with the affected groups through the open shared governance process on the decision-making and use the advice as the basis for the final decision

Committees – In my opinion, all committees should post (send out through email or post on the website) meeting times and locations in advance of their meetings. Further, in my opinion, all committees should take and publicly post minutes in a timely manner.

Committee members – All committee members on participatory governance groups are there as representatives of constituencies. In my opinion, every committee member should be giving brief summaries of meetings to their constituencies on a regular basis and should be regularly getting feedback from constituencies on critical issues to bring back to the participatory governance group

Individual District Community Members (administrators, faculty, staff) – in my opinion, each community member has a responsibility to stay apprised of current events, discussions, and decisions by reading meeting minutes and communicating any concerns to his/her representative on the participatory governance committee (or to those in leadership roles). Faculty are paid for 5 hours of institutional responsibilities each week. There is no reason why a faculty member should be uninformed as to college and district goings-on given that there are now meeting minutes available for most groups. (I will show you how to find these minutes at the end of this message).

In my opinion, when one of these individuals/groups fail to fulfill these standards, the entire communication and participation system breaks down and the result is

miscommunication, intense emotional reaction, and poor decision-making. The college is currently working on creating a Shared Governance Plan which will include recommendations on structure, committees, operation, communication, process, roles and responsibilities of the shared governance groups. You should be getting information on it from your representative group soon.

Recommendation: I urge you to stay on top of issues by using your paid time for institutional responsibilities to read meeting minutes and documents.

The Budget Crisis

In times of crisis, there are a number of phenomena that predictably develop across all institutions, groups and situations, from the international arena to our own personal lives. It can be attributed to human nature. Among others, they are as follows:

- Feelings of fear, anger, resentment toward leaders and perceived competitors
- Decision-making based on limited information and emotional reaction rather than on thorough, objective information
- Uncivil behavior that results from the fear, anger, resentment and limited information
- Communications breakdowns – failure to share appropriate information widely, failure to consult with appropriate individuals/groups, failure to raise concerns in an appropriate manner where it can best be addressed
- Failure to empathize with other groups/individuals

If crises are managed well, these phenomena are anticipated and addressed before they arise. If not, these phenomena arise unchecked and create long-term damage that lasts long beyond the existence of the actual crisis.

In order to avoid us falling into this trap, I promise the following to you:

- To provide you with as much information as humanly possible
- To rely on the recommendations of the Senate for decision-making on critical issues
- To advocate for transparency at all levels
- To be available to each faculty member who has concerns/questions
- To treat every faculty member, staff member, and administrator with the utmost respect regardless of whether I agree with his/her stance on an issue or not
- When I have concerns about decisions/actions/issues, to raise the issue respectfully either one-on-one or with the appropriate group
- To focus on issues and actions, not people or assumed motivations
- Never to have secret meetings or to make back room deals
- Always to put the interests of faculty, students, and the institution above all else
- To support all other faculty leaders in their roles

To that end, I ask that each dept/division invite me to a meeting or two this semester so that I can hear your concerns and appropriately represent you in participatory governance meetings. I have sent a request to all division and dept chairs asking to be invited to at least one meeting this semester.

In return, I ask the following of you:

- Read your meeting minutes
- Communicate with your Senator with your feedback on critical issues
- Advocate at your level for transparency where you have the control to do so
- When you have concerns/questions, communicate openly with your Senator or other faculty representative or with me – we welcome your feedback at any time
- If you disagree with something I have done in my role as Academic Senate President, bring it to an open meeting of the Senate, contact your Senator, and/or contact me and let me know your concerns
- Treat every faculty member, staff member, and administrator with the utmost respect regardless of whether you agree with his/her stance on an issue or not

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Off my soapbox and onto the week's events....

Board Meeting Feb 19

President Jack Lucas announced the following:

“ there will be no faculty layoffs effective in the 2009-2010 academic year. In addition, the Board believes that no general classified staff layoffs will be necessary. This expectation is based on the assumption that there will be no major fiscal surprises in the state budget.”

There was applause from faculty and staff.

There was a fantastic Marketing Powerpoint presentation by Peter Anning, Fred Chow and Ruth Carlson. I asked that it be uploaded to the web for all to see. I will let you know when it has been posted. It shows all the many marketing activities going on (buses, newspapers, yearbooks, mall banners and interactive kiosks, Google ads and much much more!)

Here is a brief summary:

A media preferences survey was administered to various age groups: recent high school grads; more mature students; and senior lifelong learners

Based on this survey, the recommended ad outlets are:

Web Google Adwords (ads posted on the right side of page on Google searches)

Fall 08 impressions (passive views) 149,420,000

Fall 08 clicks (on the ads) 14,731

Spring 09 impressions: 77,000,000

Spring 09 clicks: 8,500

- Most active websites: “myspace.com” with 20,000 clicks
- Direct outreach to high school students: newspaper and yearbook ads in 17 area high schools
- Outreach to university students – San Jose State and Cal State East Bay – newspapers

- Banners in malls
- Interactive (sound and animation) kiosks in malls

Chancellor's Senate Roundtable 2/23

Lengthy discussion about the purpose of the roundtable and the fact that it was created in response to a request from the Senate Presidents for more involvement in district level discussions and decision-making. The behavioral objectives issued to the former Chancellor requested this level of collaboration. Also, the Technical Assistance report in 2003 also pointed out the need for this type of collaboration.

Rocky Young and Mike Hill from the Brain Trust team will be coming to District Council March 4 for their last visit to the district. Chancellor would like feedback from the Senate Presidents as to what areas we should focus the discussion on. Feedback needed by Feb. 26.

Chancellor would like to make the district website the locus of information and communication on district issues and is working with IS toward that goal. Trying to get minutes and other documents posted for all to see.

GAP 2/24

Tomorrow at GAP we will be discussing which programs have received Full Approval in the Program Review process and which programs did not meet the minimum standard for completing Program Review. We will also be discussing the Accountability Report for Community Colleges report that we are submitting to the state for Mission College. Lastly we will be discussing the revised College Budget Allocation Model. The MCAS had a very productive discussion on this model last Thursday. Please read the minutes. You will learn a bit more about how the college budget allocation process works.

DBAC 2/24

We will be discussing the Position Control List. I believe this is the list of all positions in the district and whether they are filled or vacant or defunded. ACE has been asking for this for a long time and the Brain Trust recommended we have an accurate and up-to-date list at all times (which we haven't). We will also be discussing the Land Corp Special Funding requests recommended by the Brain Trust. A request was taken to the Land Corp for the funding recommended, but the Land Corp asked for more time to review the requests. They will discuss again in March. There is some concern about the critical nature of this funding and whether or not it will be approved.

DBAC will also be reviewing presentations on the 3 models being considered for adoption as a new district budget model: the RSAC model, recommended by the DBAC subcommittee BAMS; the current model with tweaks; and the 3 year rolling average model. There was concern that DBAC asked the BAMS subcommittee to look at the 3 models and come back with a recommendation and BAMS did come back with the recommendation to adopt RSAC, but DBAC decided not to accept the recommendation, but to review all 3 models itself. Ellen McAlister will be presenting the RSAC model and Worku Negash and Micheal Renzi will be presenting the other 2 models.

District Council 2/24

Organizational Review discussion – the Chancellor’s matrix is available at <http://dev-www1.wvm.edu/group.aspx?id=2569> Click on “Draft Organizational Review Matrix”. It is an impressive document and represents a lot of work to be done.

Vice Chancellor Search Update – a candidate will be selected within the next couple of weeks. 5 finalists were considered. It is hoped that the person selected will begin work in April.

Land Corp Special funding will be discussed here as in DBAC.

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Continue to read your meeting minutes and stay informed. You can now read the meeting minutes of all District Level committees at:

<http://dev-www1.wvm.edu/committeelist.aspx?id=38>

You can view meeting minutes of all College level committees at Inside Mission. Go to the District website and log in using username (first initial, last initial, datatel id#), password (mywebservices password). Click on “MyWVM”. Click on “Inside Mission” in the upper right hand corner. Click on “Committees and Groups”.

Or just go to: <http://paris.wvmccd.cc.ca.us/mc/committees.php>

I will be asking Lauren Johnson, our Senate Secretary, to put together a master schedule of all the committee meeting times and locations and send out.

Thank you.

Stephanie Kashima
Academic Senate President