

Joint Academic Senate Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges

Summary of the Joint Meeting – January 22, 2009

GUESTS:

Mike Wangler, Academic Senate President – Cuyamaca College
Beth Smith – Academic Senate South Representative

RECORDER: Diana Routhieaux

CALL TO ORDER (10:08 a.m.)

1. Introductions

2. Announcements – Chris Hill and Mike Wangler

- A. Equivalency updates will be finished this semester. Deadline for turning them in to the Vice President's office is Feb. 20, 2009. They will be reviewed for compliance and consistency. The goal is to be compliant. By the end of March 2009, we will know if faculty members meet the equivalencies or not. The proposed policy will allow those who do not meet the standards, extra time to meet the equivalencies.
- B. Equivalencies can no longer be granted, they must be met. Credentials are for a lifetime. Eminence is problematic at the state level and no longer in Title V. Most colleges now have it under Equivalency. We are trying to be compliant with Title V.
- C. Optional plus and minus grading is being proposed for Fall 2009.
- D. Pending senate resolution –Policy and Procedures to evaluate District level services is being worked on. It's an accreditation recommendation. April 2009 there will be a final version of the resolution for the Fall reports.

3. Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Update – Beth Smith

Beth Smith passed out clickers and asked the audience to participate by using the clickers to answer the questions projected on the screen. Statewide questions included:

Approximately what percentage of California students are placed into at least one Basic Skills course in reading, writing, ESL or Math? Answer: 70%.

Chris Hill said 70-85% of the statewide students are assessed. 27% of assessed students actually take suggested classes with only a 10% success rate of the 27%.

Approximately how many total faculty members serve 2.7 million students in the California community colleges? Answer: 60,000 faculty

What percentage is tenure and what percentage are temporary faculty?
Answer: 30% are full time. 70% are temporary – Statewide

4. Academic Calendar – Chris Hill for Brad Tiffany

Chris said there are questions about the Academic Calendar Spring Break. The break moves around because of the Easter Holiday weekend. Brad has been one of the co chairs for the calendar for years, he left due to illness. Chris asked for thoughts and comments about break.

Comments included:

It would be make more sense if Spring break came after the first 8 week session and the 2nd 8 week session. Students do better with a break after instead of during the session. Breaks during the session, change the students momentum.

The break needs to correspond with the kid's week off in the Grossmont Union District. Charter Schools have other schedules. Some students take courses here and other places and there are different schedules.

When the break changes, teachers have to decide when to give tests during the class. The teacher's entire calendar has to change each year with the changing dates for Spring break, even for online classes.

There is a lot of merit for an 8 week break, but considerable pressure to at least have a long weekend for Easter weekend; it could raise some concern for payroll.

Classified contracts have a day during the spring break. That would have to be renegotiated if Spring break was moved.

The formation of the calendar used to be on a 3 year cycle, now every year is new and Spring Break is moved. Changing the break, makes the summer sessions a week late. In the Fall, Thanksgiving week seems almost useless, students are gone and don't show up for Tuesday or Wednesday night classes. So many faculty and students are gone that week why not give Thanksgiving week off? Teachers end up reviewing everything on Monday because so many were gone, instead of continuing on course.

Possibly start the school year earlier allowing for the break. Start earlier and not have as long a professional development. There could be contract issues.

The Fall calendar revolves around Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – the third Monday of January. Every 6 years that holiday shifts the calendar by a week. Classes start a day earlier every year. We just went through that.

The valid argument is, what is the proper way to offer the classes to the students, and what makes it best for us to provide the information? If having Spring Break following the Easter vacation is the best way, so be it. If having Spring Break sit in the same spot every year, works best, then that's how it should be. When we went from starting after Labor Day to starting classes much earlier, we didn't have any problems. Students tend to show up for classes.

Why do we have a need to have a spring break? What drives the need to have a Spring Break?

Are all the Mondays in the Fall semester contract?

Some holidays are statutory and some are floating.

Why not roll the Mondays into Thanksgiving week to serve students.

A week off in November would be worse for student momentum, especially in an 8 week class.

In Biology if there is a Monday class, we have to cancel the labs the whole week, because everyone gets the same lab. Fall Biology 120 students have 1 less week of class, but we have to make sure the students have the same opportunity as those taking the class in the Spring.

The Veterans Holiday Floats, it should be more consistent, closest to the holiday. Some years it will be on Friday instead of Monday. Paid contract hours can be more flexible. With a floating holiday, we could cancel Thanksgiving classes and

have them another evening. There are a lot of ways to make the calendar flexible, we can be more innovative and serve the students better. Currently we use the inherited calendar from Grossmont Union School District.

5. Textbook issues – Scott Barr

There is now a District level Task Force, chaired by President, Bill Garret for Textbook issues and costs. Scott reviewed the State Academic Senate Spring 2005 publication - the ability to balance board value and competing economic interest, in his presentation.

Should faculty members control their choice of required materials or should the providers of the material control their profit margins to control the cost to the students? Public concern is that the cost of educational materials is rising faster than the cost of living. Some students pay more than \$800. a semester for books. The public supports lower costs. The financial aid to cover the costs of books is decreasing.

In times past, it cost less to purchase books at the college bookstore than elsewhere. Now, the college bookstores don't always have the lowest possible prices.

Should faculty insist on net cost and know what the bundled items are? Some of the books that are bundled together by the publisher are not necessarily the books the instructor will use for the class, but some of those unnecessary books and workbooks cannot be returned.

The instructors need to meet the due dates for ordering books, so the bookstores can provide used books to sell to students, not just new ones.

Public Domain is that textbooks should be free.

Ways to keep book costs down:

1. Know the correct edition of the text book to be used in the class and buy used books.
2. If more than one book is recommended, know when and if the additional books will actually be used by the teacher for the class.
3. Know if you qualify for financial assistance programs.
4. Find out if the Library has the book available for temporary use.
5. Compare prices – The correct ISBN# on the syllabi will be required for the students benefit.
6. Check out online stores like whywaitforbooks.com or directtextbooks.com.
7. Rent to own text books– Chegg.com
8. Book exchanges. Grossmont is looking to adopt a website for book exchanges.
9. E-text versions are cheaper. No resale.
10. Book loan programs save students money. EOPS has a lending library.
11. Faculty can let students know about websites that save students money on books.
12. Faculty can require textbooks that can be used for 2 sequence courses.
13. Libraries have some textbooks that can be used for free.

Brad finished by saying he hopes the Academic Senate looks at resolutions to keep book costs down for students.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.