SenateRostrum

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"The Right Leader at the Right Time":

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I n early April of 2016, one of California's finest leaders will step down from his post as chancellor of the California Community College System. Brice Harris, who took office as chancellor in November of 2012, announced in Fall 2015 his plan to retire in spring. Chancellor Harris has led the system with dignity and class, and under his direction the colleges have achieved outstanding results. His confident and effective leadership and his personal charisma have earned the respect of everyone connected with the California Community Colleges.

When Chancellor Harris took his position, the state was just emerging from a devastating economic period, but the new leader of the system approached the situation with a positive attitude that coaxed and compelled others forward toward success. Bill Scroggins, Superintendent-President of the Mt. San Antonio CCD, describes the situation of that time and the chancellor's method of addressing the challenges:

> When Brice Harris took the reins of our system in 2012, we were in the worst four-year period in our history. Brice was energized by this, calling the denial of access "a crisis in the making" for California's future. Even then, he was optimistic, often saying, "I believe the best days are ahead of us!" He was right, largely because his leadership drove us to succeed.

Erik Skinner, Deputy Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, offers a similar perspective on Chancellor Harris' visionary and positive leadership style:

Chancellor Harris was the right leader at the right time. The California Community College System was poised to implement a bold, transformative plan to advance student success, and we needed someone who could move it forward. His leadership, strategic skills, and first and foremost his relationships at both the college and state levels allowed him to chart the path forward for numerous ground-breaking reforms. His tenure as Chancellor is marked by an unprecedented level of innovation which yielded many positive changes that will benefit generations of community college students to come.

In the past three years, California community colleges have made huge strides in increasing student success: course success rates, annual degree and certificate awards, transfers to the CSU system, and success rates in remedial English and math courses have all increased. At the same time, more than two thousand associate degrees for transfer have been developed and approved throughout the state, the system has signed a student transfer agreement with nine Historically Black Colleges in the southeastern United States, and major initiatives or pilot programs in the areas of institutional effectiveness, inmate education, career technical education and workforce development, online education, common assessment, educational planning, and community college bachelor's degrees have all been instituted and are in many cases already showing positive results. The chancellor's influence has been a key factor in all of these achievements of the California Community College System.

Chancellor Harris' leadership style and personal characteristics have been essential to the success that the California Community Colleges have enjoyed during his tenure. Grossmont-Cuyamaca CCD Chancellor Cindy Miles offers the following comment on these qualities:

> California's community colleges may never again see such a consummate leader, communicator, and statesman as Brice Harris. In three swift years

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as our state chancellor, he applied his practical and political wisdom to guide innovative transformations in California Community Colleges that will improve the achievements and prosperity of our students and communities for years to come. With a wild array of competing constituencies and soaring demands, these have not been easy changes to enact. Despite the challenge, however, Brice is ever the gentleman with just the right words, broad smile, and laser focus on what matters.

Constance Carroll, Chancellor of the San Diego CCD, likewise notes Chancellor Harris' outstanding record in leading the system:

> Brice Harris has done a phenomenal job as the leader of our enormous community college system. Under his leadership, the colleges have seen their budgets restored after a ruinous recession and have received strong guidance to excel in ensuring student success. Brice has been supportive of innovation, including the bachelor's degree pilot, and he has lent his support to funding more full-time faculty. Above all, Brice has been accessible to all of us, returning calls and emails within just a few hours despite the many demands on his time. Brice Harris has achieved many things benefiting the California Community Colleges, always with a gracious and professional manner.

The comments from these respected district leaders highlight various important aspects of Chancellor Harris' leadership style, including his support for creativity and innovation and his wisdom in terms of political, fiscal, and hiring issues. However, they also indicate another important characteristic that has allowed the chancellor to advance the system in such significant ways: the relationships he establishes by being personally responsive and taking specific interest in each individual with whom he interacts.

Chancellor Harris has served not just as an example but also as a personal mentor for many administrative leaders throughout the system. Sunita Cooke, Superintendent-President of the Mira Costa CCD, tells this story of her initial experience with the chancellor:

> I first had the opportunity to talk with Brice Harris when he was Chancellor at Los Rios Community College District. I knew that he was highly regarded as a leader and led a well-run district. At a Community College League of California conference, I decided to introduce myself to him and sit down to pick his brain. As I talked with him, he displayed his humility and his humor. He did not rush to give me advice and tell me how I should do things. Instead, he asked me questions and when prompted, he shared his approach to similar issues. Most importantly, he gave generously of his time and experience.

This personal interest that Chancellor Harris takes in helping and acknowledging those around him extends not only to college CEOs and other administrators but also to Chancellor's Office staff and to the leadership of other constituencies. Pam Walker, Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs in the Chancellor's Office, makes the following observation:

The personal touch that Chancellor Harris takes with all those around him is a characteristic for which many who have had the pleasure to interact with him will remember him, and that quality has been a key to his success in his position and the success of the community college system.

> Brice Harris is an "old school" leader. He writes notes of thanks and of caring and to endorse great work and that's not a practice found today but everyone likes to be thought of.

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The chancellor's charismatic and visionary leadership style has helped him maintain strong relationships with all constituent groups. Larry Galizio, President and CEO of the Community College League of California, offers this comment:

> Chancellor Harris is that rare person who inspires confidence, engenders respect, and is lauded as a highly effective leader by the multiple and diverse constituencies constituting California's Community Colleges. The League Boards and Staff are grateful to Chancellor Harris for his intense focus on student success, institutional support, and exemplary leadership through economic recession and recovery. We will miss him dearly.

The sentiments of President Galizio and the League are shared by other organizations throughout the system, all of whom will feel the loss of the chancellor's leadership.

Yet while Chancellor Harris has developed strong relationships with all constituencies, his fairness, common sense, and dedication to consultative processes have gained and held a special respect and admiration from the state's faculty leadership. Former Academic Senate President Jane Patton recalls her first interaction with Chancellor Harris:

> My first encounter with Brice was on a Chancellor's Office task force (way back when Kate Clark was president) about finance—and ways to reduce costs. He entered the room lugging a huge stack (over a foot high) of reports that his district, Los Rios, had to file! That dramatic visual made his point better than words could! My first impression: that this was a guy with a firm grasp of reality. My later experiences with him confirmed that impression.

Jane Patton's recollection of Chancellor Harris' ability to illustrate and address a problem he wanted to see solved is an example of the chancellor's direct, common sense approach to issues and to his desire to cut through unnecessary bureaucracy to achieve a goal. This quality always helped him to bring conversations to a practical level that has moved his interactions and consultation with faculty in positive directions.

Jonathan Lightman, Executive Director of the Faculty Association for California Community Colleges, notes Chancellor Harris' ability to work collegially with faculty and other constituencies through difficult moments:

> Amidst the politically charged (and often tense) atmosphere of Sacramento, Brice Harris always demonstrated leadership through inspiration and vision, never through anger, threats, or intimidation. Whether or not we agreed on an issue, we remained on the same team—dedicated to the same institutions, faculty, and

students. Brice will always be viewed as a true champion of the California Community Colleges and his leadership on behalf of our system will be missed.

The calm, inclusive approach that the chancellor always exhibited earned him the trust and confidence of all system constituencies and created a sense of teamwork that was key to the progress that the system has made.

My own experiences with the chancellor have led me to develop similar respect and admiration for him. I first met Brice Harris when he was chancellor of the Los Rios District and we were both members of the Student Success Task Force in 2011. Throughout that task force process, Chancellor Harris was consistently collegial and respectful of the faculty voice, often working with the faculty members of the task force to guide discussions in the directions that we believed would best serve the system. When he was appointed chancellor for the system, I knew we were getting a leader who would help us to move forward with fairness and wisdom.

Not only have I never had a moment to doubt that my initial expectations of Brice Harris's performance as the system's leader were correct, but if anything those expectations have been exceeded. In my first meeting with the chancellor after I became ASCCC president, he stated, "I get pretty busy sometimes, but if you need me for something that's urgent, just tell Karen [Gilmer, his executive assistant] that you really need to talk to me and she will get you through to me." The chancellor has lived up to that recognition of the importance of the faculty voice in all instances. He has consistently respected and listened to input from the ASCCC and other faculty organizations, and I have been proud to both work with him and learn from him.

The contributions of Chancellor Brice Harris to California's community colleges cannot be overstated. He has been an inspirational and strong leader who has earned the respect of the entire system. The Academic Senate, like all of our system partners, thanks him for all of his efforts and for his leadership and wishes him the very best in his retirement. 🦐

Workforce Task Force Recommendations:
Minimum Qualifications and Faculty Preparation

by John Stanskas, ASCCC Secretary, Standards and Practices Chair, and CCCAOE Representative

I n November of 2015, the Board of Governors approved 25 recommendations put forward by the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy. The Board directed the Task Force to only consider career technical programs in their deliberations, but implementation of the recommendations, especially those that are inherently academic and professional matters, will clearly have ramifications for all faculty. More specifically, of the 25 recommendations, four directly affect CTE faculty, and two directly impact minimum qualifications and equivalency:

- Increase the pool of qualified CTE instructors by addressing CTE faculty recruitment and hiring practices

  - Clarify legislative and regulatory barriers to hiring CTE instructors who may not meet existing college hiring standards but possess significant industry experience.

  - Disseminate effective practices in the recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty and the application of minimum qualifications and equivalencies.

- Consider options for meeting minimum qualifications to better integrate industry professionals who possess significant experience into CTE instructional programs.

  - Convene discipline faculty statewide to establish general criteria that may be used at local colleges when granting equivalency for minimum qualifications within CTE disciplines.

  - Develop and promote guidelines to implement Title 5 §53502, Faculty Internship Minimum Qualifications, for those disciplines for which a master's degree is not expected or required.

  - Convene representative apprenticeship teaching faculty, labor organizations, and other stakeholders to review the appropriateness of minimum qualifications for apprenticeship instructors.

Of course, any challenge in hiring qualified faculty at colleges, especially in career technical programs, should be addressed. Faculty must have the content knowledge of their discipline, and they must be able to teach knowledge and skills to our students to ensure that students are well qualified to move into their careers of choice once they complete degrees or certificates from their community colleges.

Recruiting and hiring faculty to meet the needs of and reflect the diversity in our student population is a complex problem and one that is being addressed in multiple forums. The Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Advisory Committee of the Chancellor's Office is working to construct a framework that takes the most diverse pool of future applicants—our students—and develops mechanisms that promote and encourage their eventual return to our colleges as faculty. This project is as valid in a potential AA to MA track as in an AA to industry track, thus supporting both disciplines where a master's degree is required and disciplines where it is not. The diversification of faculty and building systemic structures to train our own will be long-term endeavors.

Efforts are currently underway to create mechanisms to possibly standardize what industry can expect from a community college degree. The C-ID system, designed and implemented originally

by the ASCCC to facilitate transfer, is broadening its scope to call together CTE discipline faculty to identify common curricula and potentially common discipline preparation for certificate and degree attainment. This process will help provide consistent messages to industry about what a degree framework from a California community college provides.

Hiring faculty may be a rather complex issue if the applicant does not meet the letter of the minimum qualifications as codified in the Disciplines List. The task force recognized this challenge by recommending that discipline faculty assess and solve the inconsistencies in the application of equivalencies across the colleges. In doing so, colleges must distinguish their role in workforce training. Many other agencies exist that provide workforce training in addition to the curriculum offered by community colleges, including private colleges, industry associations, occupational groups, and our own economic development not-for-credit programs. What makes us different is that our primary focus is to serve students and help our students achieve their short—and long-term goals and dreams. This priority often coincides with the needs of industry and serves to grow regional economies, but our primary concern is our students. Our goal is not only to train future workers to master a skill required by industry, but to additionally train students to communicate, calculate, and think critically, to master the immediate skill set for a job as well as the skills required to advance in a career. This broader focus distinguishes our collegiate-based system from other training programs. Of course, our not-for-credit courses may be beneficial to industry since they may not require the same curricular review or instructors who meet minimum qualifications and therefore may be more responsive to short term needs of industry.

For credit and noncredit instruction, colleges must employ instructors who not only have mastered the scope of a field—either a degree with a specific discipline focus or a number of years working in industry—but can also communicate to students the content and importance of that discipline knowledge, how it relates to other areas of study, how that knowledge can be applied in a variety of fields, and ultimately how the discipline relates to the fabric of society, which is the general education component of any degree.

To assist in addressing these challenges, the ASCCC is facilitating the creation of discipline specific guidelines that may be used locally to allow potential new employees to demonstrate they have qualifications that are at least equal to the minimum qualifications. In this area, faculty can work to clarify and perhaps find commonality among the colleges to better serve our students as regions and as a system. This effort must happen in conjunction with the other initiatives we are pursuing and may be the fastest to accomplish.

To begin to address the needs related to minimum qualifications, the ASCCC Standards and Practices Committee will undertake the following actions: First, CID Discipline Input Group meetings are scheduled for April 8 for the disciplines of real estate, paralegal, environmental control technology, industrial systems technology, water and wastewater technology, and machining and machine tools. These meetings will provide an excellent opportunity to engage practitioners regarding minimum qualifications and perhaps find some commonality regarding when and how equivalency is determined for a discipline. Secondly, a webinar is scheduled for April 13 to clarify the scope of the issues and clarify what is and is not permissible with respect to the minimum qualifications and equivalency. Third, a presentation is scheduled for the ASCCC plenary session that overlaps with the CIOs, CSSOs, and CCCAOE. This event offers a prime opportunity to engage several constituencies and collect feedback. Lastly, a meeting regarding these issues is planned for May 5 in conjunction with the CTE Leadership Institute in Anaheim. The ASCCC invites all interested parties to join in this conversation as we work to improve our service to students. 🖋

April 8: Discipline Input Groups for CTE Disciplines, April 8 *c-id.net/dig_mtg.html*

April 13: Webinar regarding equivalency practices and minimum qualifications *www.asccc.org/content/faculty-minimum-qualifications-brown-bag-lunch-2016-04-13-190000*

April 21: ASCCC Plenary Session Presentation *www.asccc.org/events/2016-04-21-150000-2016-04-23-230000/2016-spring-plenary-session*

May 5: One day in person event in Anaheim prior to the CTE Leadership Institute *www.asccc.org/events/2016-05-06-150000-2016-05-08-000000/2016-cte-leadership-academy*

Beyond Efficient Curriculum Approval Processes—Timely Catalog Publication

by John Freitas, ASCCC Curriculum Chair

and Craig Rutan, ASCCC Area D Representative

The efficiency of curriculum approval at the local, regional, and state levels has been and continues to be a hot topic in the California community colleges. The report of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy, with its focus on Career and Technical Education (CTE), includes a recommendation to "evaluate, revise, and resource the local, regional, and statewide CTE curriculum approval process to ensure timely, responsive, and streamlined curriculum approval." In response to this recommendation, the ASCCC Curriculum Committee drafted a white paper on effective curriculum approval processes which was distributed to local senates in Fall 2015 and presented at the curriculum regional meetings and the ASCCC Fall Plenary session. The ASCCC also adopted a resolution and published a *Rostrum* article encouraging local senates to review, evaluate, and improve their local curriculum approval processes as needed; furthermore, the Curriculum Committee is bringing forward a position paper on effective curriculum approval processes for adoption at the Spring 2016 plenary session.

Many colleges are already examining their local approval processes and are working to shorten their curriculum approval times to a matter of weeks instead of months or years. Even with the most efficient college curriculum approval processes in place, other processes that occur after final local curriculum approval may delay the availability of new courses and programs to students. For example, approval by the Chancellor's Office could take several weeks, depending on how many proposals have been submitted by other colleges. Additionally, the review of career technical education program proposals by regional consortia can add delays of several weeks or even months. While delays because of regional and state processes are beyond the control of colleges, other local processes may delay the availability of curriculum once it is approved by the governing board. One important post-approval process that falls into this category is catalog publication.

Many colleges started reviewing their curriculum approval processes several years ago when they transitioned from paper curriculum management processes to electronic curriculum management systems. What colleges found is that processes that once took only days suddenly required months. Colleges quickly realized that by implementing their existing processes using technology, they had become less efficient. While many colleges have been able to streamline the approval through the curriculum committee, they often only went to the governing board for approval once or twice a year. This practice raised the question of why curriculum should not be forwarded to the board upon every instance of the curriculum committee or the local academic senate approving curriculum recommendations. The answer was simple: Every course, degree, and certificate that a college offers,

through credit or noncredit, must be included in the college catalog. When colleges originally developed their approval processes, those processes were designed to make certain that the governing board approval was coordinated with the publication of the next edition of the catalog. In other words, the availability of new curriculum to the students was being driven by catalog publication schedules.

Catalog production can sometimes take months, and most colleges will produce a new catalog every year or two. Title 5 §55005 requires colleges to publish course standards before a course can be offered to students, including transferability, degree applicability, and whether the course is eligible for general education. For many colleges, this information is only published in the college catalog, which means that new courses are not available to students until the new edition of the catalog is published. Therefore, while curriculum committees and academic senates streamlined their curriculum approval processes, students may have been forced to wait months or years before the new courses would be available. Furthermore, any changes to course standards that are legally required to be published in the catalog will also face a similar publication delay, which has serious implications for students who are intending to transfer or graduate. Finally, many colleges will not offer new degrees or certificates until they are published in the college catalog due to confusion about catalog rights, even though the course has been approved by the district governing board and the Chancellor's Office and is listed in the Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory.

While the curricular content of the college catalog is within the purview of local senates and curriculum committees, its publication is a college operational matter. Typically, the college curriculum specialist is responsible for preparing the new catalog for publication based on an established schedule. If the catalog publication schedule is preventing the offering of new curriculum or the dissemination of updated curricular information to students in the timeliest manner possible, then local senates should work with their college administrations to identify and implement improvements to the publication process and timeline. Some possible solutions are as follows:

- Producing a catalog addendum each semester.

- Producing an online version of the college catalog that is updated each semester once all applicable course and program approvals are final.

- Including each of the course standards information required by §55005 in each schedule of classes.

Finally, technology plays an important role in helping or hindering catalog production. After all approvals are final, if course or program information is not entered into the curriculum management system in a timely manner, or if the curriculum management system and student information system are not communicating with each other, catalog production may be further delayed. The ability to offer new curriculum and disseminate the correct curricular information should never be driven by technology. Rather, the technology should be adapted to the needs of the college to properly serve its students. If issues with the curriculum technology are causing delays in offering new curriculum, then local senates should work with their administrations to identify solutions.

Curriculum is the heart of the college. Faculty develop and revise curriculum to meet the needs of their students, and students are right to expect that their colleges will do everything possible to ensure the additions and revisions to the curriculum are implemented. Publishing the college catalog on an annual or biannual basis does not serve students well. Such a publication schedule limits access to new courses and programs and prevents important changes to information about transferability, degree applicability, and general education applicability from being published and available to students and transfer institutions. As local senates continue to refine their local curricular processes, they also need to be mindful of the catalog publication process. If the catalog publication process is delaying the offering of new curriculum, then local senates need to work with administrators to identify and implement solutions to ensure that newly approved and revised courses and programs are offered to students as soon as possible. 🖋

The Search for a New Chancellor

by Geoffrey L. Baum, President, Board of Governors, California Community Colleges

and David Morse, President, ASCCC

In late 2015, Brice Harris announced his retirement from his post as chancellor of the California Community Colleges effective in April 2016. Chancellor Harris has been an exemplary leader, and our system will certainly miss his guidance, vision, and advocacy. Yet the 113 colleges of the system and the more than two million students that we serve will continue to move forward, and thus an outstanding new chancellor must be appointed.

Whereas our system's vice-chancellors are government employees that must be appointed by the governor, our chancellor is unique: it is the one position that the Board of Governors selects and appoints. Therefore, at its November 2015 meeting the California Community Colleges Board of Governors began the process of selecting a new leader for the system. A screening committee was appointed, and the board authorized the hiring of an independent consultant to assist with the search.

The search screening committee, which is chaired by Board Vice-President Cecilia Estolano, is composed primarily of members of the Board of Governors, including members who represent students, classified staff, and faculty. In addition, the Board approved the appointment of additional committee members to represent the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the CEO Board of the Community College League of California, and the Foundation for California Community Colleges. The Academic Senate President was chosen to represent the ASCCC, with the vice-president also attending committee meetings as an alternate. The motion from the November 2015 Board Meeting charged the committee with "developing the position description, interviewing candidates, and recommending finalists for interviews by the full board."

The consultant chosen to assist with the process is the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), a non-profit organization representing governing boards throughout the country. The search consultant assigned by ACCT to this particular process is Narcisa Polonio, ACCT's Executive Vice President of Education, Research & Board Leadership Services. Dr. Polonio has facilitated over 300 board retreats and

presidential searches and directs the Trustees for Student Success Initiative.

The search screening committee began its process on January 20 with an extensive Equal Employment Opportunity training session followed by the initial committee meeting. The committee received an overview of the search process, were introduced to ACCT and Dr. Polonio, and then engaged in an active and extensive discussion of the desirable qualities of a new chancellor that led to the development of the position description.

As a general statement of ideal characteristics, the committee approved the statement that the new chancellor should be "a visionary leader who has a passion for all students and their success, is dedicated to the community college mission, has a strong history of advocacy on behalf of public education, and who will make a commitment to lead the system for a minimum of five years." Additional characteristics identified by the committee were as follows:

- A results-oriented leader who is skilled in outreach and cultivating relationships that support the advancement of the system and which enhance opportunities for students to succeed;

- An effective and persuasive communicator for the system who articulates a vision and educates and energizes;

- A dynamic leader who can assemble a strong team and empower them to effectuate positive change in a highly regulated system;

- An innovative leader with the demonstrated ability to take strategic risks, develop deliberate and measureable goals, and translate them into action; and

> Whereas our system's vice-chancellors are government employees that must be appointed by the governor, our chancellor is unique: it is the one position that the Board of Governors selects and appoints.

- An entrepreneurial leader committed to diversifying funding streams in partnership with the Foundation for California Community Colleges by building external community relationships.

These attributes were agreed upon unanimously by the committee members. Acting as the committee chair, Vice-President Estolano made a concerted effort to solicit individual input and reactions from all members and also allowed comments from members of the public who were in attendance. As a result, the process of developing the job description was both open and inclusive and reflected the priorities and perspectives of all of the committee participants. The full job description and announcement can be found at *californiacommunitycolleges.cccco. edu/Portals/0/ChancellorSearch/Chancellor-Search-Position-Brochure.pdf.*

Further meetings to screen applications and interview candidates were scheduled for March 2016. Once the committee has selected finalists, the individuals chosen will interview with the full Board of Governors. The Board hopes and expects to make a selection by May 2016 and that the new chancellor will be able to take office by the beginning of the 2016-2017 academic year.

The choice of a new chancellor is the most important responsibility of the Board of Governors. The current Board has made an explicit effort to be inclusive in this process and give fair and sincere consideration to the voices of the constituent groups within the community college system. With an open, collegial process, the California community colleges can expect to have a strong, effective, and dedicated new chancellor who can lead the system into the future.

Open Educational Resources and Z Pathways

by Cheryl Aschenbach, North Representative

Dan Crump, American River College

and Dolores Davison, Area B Representative

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has long taken a firm stand on the cost of textbooks, urging faculty to seek alternatives and to try to develop methods by which costs can be kept down for students. One promising solution to the problem of rising textbook costs is the development and adoption of Open Educational Resources, or OER. In recent years, legislators have also become interested in ways to save students money, with bills focused on OER passed by Senator Steinberg in 2012 (SB 1052 and SB 1053). In 2015 Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla has joined in, with the passage of AB 798, also known as the College Textbook Affordability Act.

The goal of the College Textbook Affordability Act of 2015 is to reduce the costs of course materials for California college students by encouraging faculty to accelerate the adoption of high-quality no-cost and low-cost course materials, especially Open Educational Resources. The legislative strategy will be implemented through the OER Adoption Incentive Program, which provides funding for faculty professional development focused on significantly lowering the cost of course materials for students while maintaining the quality of materials. As part of the legislation, the State of California has allocated $3 million for the program, and each California State University and California community college can request up to $50,000 for its campus OER program.

OER are high-quality teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others. A wealth of OER options are available at the California Open Online Library for Education (www.cool4ed. org), though colleges are not restricted to this collection of materials for purposes of the AB 798 grants. Local programs funded by the grants may also include other resources such as ebooks and ejournals that are freely and legally available to all students. OER include, but are not limited to, full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, faculty-created content, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.

AB 798 provides funding to campuses that wish to pursue using OER as an option to reduce student textbook costs. In order to apply for the incentives, local academic senates must complete two requirements:

1. Adopt a resolution that states its support to increase student access to high-quality OER and reduce the cost of textbooks and supplies for students. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has crafted a resolution template for local senates to use if they desire:

Whereas, The significant rise in costs of textbooks is a barrier to college attendance, student access, and student success;

Whereas, Many colleges are interested in reducing the cost of textbooks to increase student access to necessary course materials; and

Whereas, The intent of the College Textbook Affordability Act of 2015 (AB 798, Bonilla, 2015) is to reduce costs for college students by encouraging faculty to accelerate the adoption of lower cost, high-quality, open educational resources (OER);

Resolved, That the Academic Senate of _____ support efforts to increase student access to high-quality open educational resources and reduce the cost of textbooks and supplies for students in course sections for which open educational resources are to be adopted to accomplish cost savings for students.

2. In collaboration with students and campus administration, create and approve a plan that describes evidence of the faculty's commitment and readiness to effectively use grant funds to support faculty adoption of OER. This approval can be signaled in the format of a resolution, a senate directive, or other locally established process, but the plan should be approved only after it has been vetted by faculty, students, and administrators.

These two requirements must be completed and submitted for review by June 30, 2016. For full details, colleges should review the legislation. The resources and support services on the California Open Online Library for Education website include sample academic senate resolutions, sample templates for grant proposals, easy access and discovery of OER, and more.

The faculty-led California Open Educational Resources Council (COERC) will be conducting webinars in Spring 2016 to review the resources and services available as well as distributing print and digital communications describing the opportunities and resources available. In addition, members of COERC will be available to provide advice and guidance about OER.

The COERC CCC representatives, in cooperation with COERC, will be sending out additional memos and communications via social media and an online community connected to the COOL4Ed website.

In addition to OER materials, interest is increasing around the state in creating "Z Degrees" or zero textbook degrees, which are degree pathways that can be achieved without the student having to purchase a single text throughout his or her academic career. In his January 2016 budget proposal, Governor Brown included funding of up to $5 million to explore these degrees. A number of colleges around the country are pursuing the idea of a zero cost degree, and in light of the governor's budget proposal California community colleges should consider all programs that might benefit from a Z pathway. Students who are seeking a certificate should not be excluded from the opportunity to benefit from low or no cost textbooks and materials where those materials are appropriate. Community colleges in California should refer to zero or low cost pathways rather than just degrees, as many of our students are not seeking a degree but instead are interested in a certificate to demonstrate that the student has mastered a specific skill or profession. Those certificates are of equal, if not greater, value to students who are seeking to skill build or to earn certification for employment.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges will continue to advocate for lower costs for students, whether through increased financial aid opportunities, lower fees, or the adoption and use of OER materials and Z pathways and degrees. 🪶

The Reemergence of Noncredit in the California Community Colleges

by Cheryl Aschenbach, Lassen College, ASCCC Noncredit Committee Chair

and Jan Young, Glendale College, ASCCC Noncredit Committee

According to the website of the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges, "The California Community Colleges is the largest postsecondary education system in the nation." In 2014-2015, the latest full year of data available on the Chancellor's Office Datamart, the system served 2,317,934 students and generated 1,176,671.31 FTES. While little doubt exists that the system serves an incredible number of students, some might question whether the system and its individual colleges are serving all the students who need to be served.

The Chancellor's Office also notes that the "primary missions of the system are preparing students to transfer to four-year universities, workforce development and training, and basic skills and remedial education." To those working within the system, this three-pronged focus is nothing new. But California community colleges are not in all cases truly serving all students seeking transfer, workforce training, or basic skills development.

As of 2014-2015, 94.2% of the 1,176,671.31 system FTES were credit, meaning that only 5.8% of system FTES were generated through noncredit (67,816.39). Noncredit has never been much more utilized; even at its peak in 2008-2009, noncredit only accounted for 7.5% of the system's total FTES. An estimated 80,000 students were lost in noncredit during budget cuts, resulting in a loss of 31,142 noncredit FTES. Noncredit felt cuts more significantly because of the lower funding rate for noncredit: colleges felt less incentive to retain noncredit sections.

If the California community colleges desire to serve all who seek transfer, workforce training, or basic skills development, then a large majority of the system's 113 colleges need to do more with noncredit.

> Noncredit opens doors to students who may not otherwise consider attending a community college.

Noncredit opens doors to students who may not otherwise consider attending a community college. Financial barriers are eliminated by the fact that zero unit courses carry no fees for students. Therefore, students do not need to

navigate a complicated financial aid process to access a no cost education.

Noncredit courses also offer more flexibility and options than credit. Courses do not need to be structured around lab versus lecture hours and unit computations; courses can be written for the actual amount of time needed to accomplish outcomes, whether 3, 11, or 75 hours. Noncredit courses can be offered with structured enrollment start dates and end dates like credit, or they can be offered in an open entry/open exit format that allows students an opportunity to start the day they show an interest in the course and leave whenever they accomplish the outcomes.

The flexibility in noncredit extends to the fact that students can repeat a class until all outcomes or educational goals are met. For a student struggling with basic math, the chance to take parts of a class over again before moving on to the next level or even while taking the next level can improve understanding and boost confidence.

Noncredit courses also work well in environments closer to and less intimidating to prospective students than community college campuses where credit courses are primarily taught. Elementary schools, adult schools, workplaces, and community-based locations are more accessible, more familiar, and more comfortable to noncredit students.

Although noncredit can start students on a path to transfer, workforce preparation, or basic skills, students can also accomplish very different educational goals. Noncredit can be used to improve language skills for second language learners, to prepare for citizenship, to become familiar with parenting skills, to learn to help children learn basic skills, to retool job skills as seniors or reentry workers, to improve

Although noncredit can start students on a path to transfer, workforce preparation, or basic skills, students can also accomplish very different educational goals.

one's own basic skills, and more. Some of these goals might be possible through credit, but the barriers of an enrollment process, assessment, and financial aid can be daunting to students; in addition, some of these goals rank very low among college priorities when measured against the transfer and workforce preparation focus of credit.

Noncredit courses also have the advantage of often having more counseling and student support embedded within the courses, and noncredit can be structured in a way that encourages more hands-on pedagogy and instructor-student interaction with material to better foster student development. While credit courses may very effectively embed student support and offer a tremendous amount of instructor engagement with individual students, such a structure is more the norm in noncredit.

Colleges have long made less use of noncredit because the fact that noncredit was funded at a lower rate was a deterrent, especially when budgets were tight. At many colleges, faculty compensation also differs between credit and noncredit sections, with noncredit being paid at a lower rate per hour. In addition, noncredit has been stigmatized as "not college" when in fact California community colleges offer noncredit courses that may be as rigorous as credit counterparts.

California community colleges are currently undergoing an effort to increase access through noncredit, and California state legislators and the governor are to thank. The education trailer bills for the last three years all included items that encouraged an increase in noncredit instruction to better serve underserved populations.

In 2013, AB 86 (Education Omnibus Trailer Bill, 2013-2014) was passed. AB 86 amended California Education Code §84830 and directed

the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and the State Department of Education to provide two-year planning and implementation grants to regional consortia comprised of community college districts and school districts for the purpose of developing regional plans to better serve the educational needs of adults through elementary and secondary basic skills, classes and courses for immigrants including citizenship, English as a Second Language, and workforce preparation courses in basic skills, education programs for adults with disabilities, short-term career technical education programs with high employment potential, and programs offering pre-apprenticeship training activities. All five areas of focus are noncredit areas, and consortia were encouraged to first identify underserved adult populations then begin considering how to increase access and services to these populations.

In 2014, AB 860 (Education Omnibus Trailer Bill, 2014-2015) amended California Education Code §84750.5 to increase the funding of Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) FTES to the same rate as credit beginning in the 2015-2016 year. While noncredit FTES continued to be funded at 60% of credit FTES rates, CDCP had been enhanced to 71% of the credit rate since 2006 but still at level less than credit. The equalization of funding for CDCP created an opportunity for colleges to consider maintenance and development of noncredit courses without the disincentive of lower funding.

Building on the adult education efforts started under AB 86 (2013), in 2015 AB 104 (Education Omnibus Trailer Bill, 2015-2016) amended

Three years of legislative efforts have led to increased conversations about adult education and noncredit.

California Education Code §84900 to establish the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) under the supervision of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and the Superintendent of Instruction. AEBG expanded the scope of the adult education programs eligible for development by regional consortia to serve underserved adults. In addition to the original five areas of emphasis, two additional areas were added: programs for adults, including, but not limited to older adults, that are primarily related to entry or reentry into the workforce, and programs for adults, including but not limited to older adults, that are primarily designed to develop knowledge and skills to assist elementary and secondary school children to succeed academically in school. These areas are also included under noncredit.

Three years of legislative efforts have led to increased conversations about adult education and noncredit. These conversations are long overdue. While five of the system's 113 colleges generated 50% of noncredit FTES in 2014-2015 and the top 10 of 42 districts delivering noncredit generated 90% of the system's CDCP FTES in 2014-2015 (CCCCO presentation to ACCE, October 19, 2015), times are changing and more faculty are considering ways in which noncredit can open access to students. These changes require conversations about current course and program offerings, conversations that can be difficult, but the opportunity to redesign community college curriculum to better serve students and create greater access will be worth pursuing as more students can achieve their educational goals.

Ensuring the Quality of Your Online Courses:

Considerations for Local Policy and Practices

by Dolores Davison, Chair, ASCCC Online Education Committee

and Michelle Pilati, Interim Chief Professional Development Officer, Online Education Initiative

While local curriculum processes for the approval of courses for online delivery are intended to ensure that the course in question can be effectively taught online, these processes often do not involve any means of ensuring the quality of online instruction. Although some faculty argue that additional scrutiny of any sort that is not applied to campus-based courses should not apply to online courses, the truth is that the modalities are fundamentally different. If a campus-based course is taught in a room without seating, ventilation, lighting, or an instructor, the remedies are readily at hand. In fact, seating, ventilation, and lighting are not even controlled by the campus-based instructor. In contrast, the online faculty member is in complete control of the online classroom and may effectively create an environment as uncomfortable and chaotic as a room lacking seating, ventilation, and lighting. Furthermore, faculty may even opt to send students elsewhere—beyond the environment maintained by the college—potentially placing students in a space without technical support and potentially even in violation of laws intended to ensure student privacy. For these reasons, local senates should take steps to promote and ensure the quality of their colleges' online courses.

One obvious approach is to locally adopt a rubric intended to inform and possibly assess the quality of online offerings. Various sources exists for such rubrics, including Quality Matters (*www.qualitymatters.org/*), Blackboard (*www.blackboard.com/consulting-training/training-technical-services/exemplary-course-program.aspx*), and the Online Education Initiative (*ccconlineed.org/faculty-resources/professional-development/online-course-design-standards/*). A review of any of these rubrics provides the reader with standard principles related to quality online course design, principles that should be evident in the design of all online courses. Such rubrics can be employed to engage in formal reviews of existing courses or to facilitate a self-check. Ideally, such rubrics are used in the development of new online offerings.

The criteria employed to ensure quality in online courses also ensures the accessibility of all course components. This area is an increasing concern that all colleges should be actively addressing, as was discussed in the September 2015 *Rostrum* article "Accessibility in Online Education" (*asccc.org/content/accessibility-online-education*). Educating the entire college community about the importance of accessibility is essential to ensuring the availability of necessary resources. Identifying accessible options becomes a higher priority when colleges are faced with the students who need those options, which can be particularly challenging in online classes. Colleges need to continue to ensure that the needs of all students are being met, regardless of modality.

While quality course design and accessibility are important to offering the best possible online learning experience for students, another area of consideration relates to the use of proprietary resources that are not instructor-generated. While this subject often is a reference to materials provided by a publisher, various entities may offer materials or tools that faculty integrate into their courses. A number of levels of concern may arise with the use of such resources, including concerns regarding over-reliance on such materials, accessibility, the availability of support when using technologies not supported by the college, and student privacy rights (i.e., FERPA).

Transforming the Culture: Working Together to Benefit Students

by Julie Bruno, ASCCC Vice President

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Irene Malmgren, CIO President, Mt. San Antonio College

Julius Sokenu, CCCAOE President Elect, Moorpark College

and John Stanskas, ASCCC Secretary

At the Spring 2016 Plenary Session, various constituencies of the California community college system have an opportunity to engage in the most effective practice in serving students well: working together. With the implementation of so many initiatives including Student Success and Support, Equity, Basic Skills, and now the Workforce Task Force recommendations, in addition to our daily efforts in instruction and student support as well as ensuring the health of the institution through effective governance, no one area of any college can exist in isolation. In other words, to truly benefit our students and our communities, we need to work effectively and collegially across traditional boundaries of discipline, division, and administration. Every member of the college community needs to develop a larger perspective and see how all areas—instruction, student services, administration, or operations—fit together to create the whole. Now more than ever, educational leaders need to work together to inform and unify our colleges in a shared vision of service to our students.

CULTURE OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND TRUST

While one might easily recognize that we would like our colleges to work collaboratively, most of us do not live in a world of unicorns and rainbows. As educational leaders, we are obligated to find commonality and foster collegiality. To truly ensure that we are working for the benefit of our students and our colleges and meet all the rules and regulation, we must innovate. Fear can be a hindrance. A culture of trust and goodwill is necessary for innovation to flourish. Some ideas to promote a collegial and collaborative environment are as follows:

Assume the best in each other. While ascribing malicious intent is easy in the absence of information, most leaders are doing the best they can, as quickly as they can, with the information at hand. All of us should start by assuming the very best of our colleagues before seeking to engage one another.

Recognize the altruistic reasons why we all entered the world of academia. Our colleagues have a great deal of skill, knowledge, and expertise. Nearly everyone in the academy entered the education field because they want to make the world a better place. We chose community colleges. We all want to help students achieve their goals and their dreams and to change the lives of individuals in our communities. If we can all remember that one common goal, we can build our respect and admiration of each other from there.

Recognize that innovation is risky, and celebrate the risk. If we are asking for innovation, or transformation, any idea takes boldness of thought and bravery. Innovative ideas are

inherently risky to propose. We need to trust and encourage each other to try new ideas as well as critically evaluate the idea and, if implemented, its effectiveness. We must accept that some ideas will fail. We should celebrate the attempt to try something new and cultivate a culture where ideas for change are not only accepted but celebrated. To serve our diverse student body well, innovation is an inherent component of a dynamic culture.

STEPS TO TAKE AT YOUR COLLEGE

Those colleges that have great relationships among all leadership groups on their campuses should cultivate those relationships. Misunderstandings should not be allowed to fester, and questions of motives should not taint the communication or the relationship. Colleges that do not enjoy collegial and collaborative relationships among college leaders might consider the following ideas:

- Have lunch with your colleagues. If you are reading this article at the ASCCC Spring Plenary Session, find your senate president, CIO, CSSO and CCCAOE colleagues and plan to sit together and share what you have learned. Otherwise, initiate this conversation when you return to your college.

- Have an honest dialog among leaders about what the college must accomplish and whether the college culture facilitates achievement or if it may need to improve. Determine how does each group contributes to the shared vision of the college. Keep the discussion informal and global if you can. Each educational leader will need to go back to constituent groups to discuss the details and process.

- Do not let the colleagues of your constituent group devolve conversation into negative personal attacks about other groups on campus or their leaders. Stay committed to the idea that each group represents specific interests and perspectives. All are required for genuine deliberation and effective decision-making. Retreat to respect the authority each group must have for the college to operate if you cannot find any other way to guide the conversation.

- Remember shared values, ideals, and vision.

Our students need us to work collaboratively and collegially to innovate so that our colleges remain dynamic, vital, and effective in our communities. We should all work to harness that power for change together.

The use of and concerns regarding proprietary materials are not limited to online classes; the increased availability of these materials has led to more faculty using them in all course modalities. While many of the materials are useful and in some cases provide information for students that are necessary for success in the course, the use of proprietary materials to the exclusion of instructor-generated content raises the question of why the instructor is teaching the course in the first place. While the physical presence of an instructor in a classroom-based class at least ensures that he or she is present to provide context to any proprietary resources employed to facilitate the presentation of course materials, no such assurances exist in the online realm. Materials produced by publishers with problem sets, ancillaries for the text, test banks, and even lecture materials are readily available and are often offered free of charge to the faculty member. Merely providing such resources to students in an online course absent any supporting instructor-generated material is akin to asking students in a classroom-based class to read the text in lieu of attending lecture. The presence of the instructor in the online classroom is more than simply regular, effective, and substantive contact; it is his or her involvement in all aspects of the course, including the construction of the materials used for instruction. Both preventing and defining "over-reliance" on proprietary materials are unique challenges best handled through local policies that are consistent with the local culture. Colleges need to find an appropriate balance between respecting faculty autonomy and ensuring an effective experience for students.

Accessibility is a concern whether or not proprietary resources are employed. Publishers often provide exciting tools that are beneficial to many students but may be woefully ineffective in meeting the needs of students with a wide variety of limitations. Only through our advocacy will publishers make the investment necessary to ensure comparable accessible experiences for our students who need them. Before requiring students to access any proprietary materials, faculty should consult with the appropriate campus entity to ensure the accessibility of such resources.

This practice is even more important if you are requiring students to purchase access to such materials. The recent amendments to Title 5 regarding instructional materials and access must also be followed. More information on those regulations can be found at *extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/ Miscellaneous/InstructionalMaterialsGuidelines1.28.13.pdf.*

Another issue regarding student access to proprietary materials arises when the students are leaving the local course management system and engaging with technology that is not supported by the college. The use of such resources potentially creates additional issues related to the Family Educational Records Privacy Act (FERPA). Local policies could address these issues by borrowing the following language from the Online Education Initiative Course Design Rubric:

- Software used for the course is adequat ely supported by the institution, including information for students on where they can obtain help

- All activities that might create educational records (as defined by the Family Educational Records Privacy Act) or that involve regular effective contact are conducted within district—or college-supported systems.

As accreditation standards require that online students have access to the same resources as campus-based students, such policies would ensure that faculty are not permitted to run afoul of those standards and students are not directed to resources that are not supported.

Ensuring that quality exists within online courses is a responsibility of both the individual faculty member and the local academic senate. In the interest of addressing this issue, the ASCCC and the Online Education Initiative will be working together to develop materials on effective practices with respect to integrating proprietary materials into online courses as well as other guidelines to ensure that online courses meet federal, local, and accreditation standards and provide the highest quality education to the students enrolled in those courses.