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November 14, 2011

Dear Senate President,

Subject: Student Success Task Force Recommendations

I wanted to share some notes from last Wednesday’s (November 9, 2011) Student Success Task Force (SSTF) meeting. The meeting began with a review of the feedback provided on the website, as well as the emails and letters received. A copy of the summary of the feedback is attached to this message – and available on the [Senate’s 1143 page](#). Following this, SSTF members and Chancellor’s Office staff who had made presentations reported on the feedback received at those events. The majority of the feedback received was consistent with what we heard at Plenary, and there was little, if any, unqualified support expressed. A summary of the Academic Senate positions was also provided (and is attached).

**Categorical Consolidation - Removed**

Prior to the meeting recommendations 8.1 (consolidation of the categoricals) and 4.1 (tying course offerings to education plans, de-funding all noncredit outside of career development or college preparatory (CDCP), restricting state support to courses in a student’s education plan) had been identified as topics to begin with. After a brief discussion, it was decided that 8.1. would be modified to encourage collaboration between categorical programs (“de-siloing”) and the proposal to consolidate would be removed. It was stated that any gains achieved from the proposed consolidation were not great enough to justify the effort involved in achieving this. The goal is to get all areas of the college to work together and focus on student success – a goal we all can agree on.

**De-Fund Non-CDCP Noncredit - Removed**

The discussion of 4.1 began with a proposal to modify the recommendation related to noncredit. One member asserted that statute should not be amended to defund any noncredit area and offered to revise this recommendation. It was not clear what the final language would be, but it was clear that the drastic action of ceasing to fund all non-CDCP noncredit will no longer be a component of the recommendations.

**Differential Funding for Courses Not in a Student’s Education Plan - Removed**

As the SSTF members discussed 4.1 it was apparent that the language could be read a number of ways. It was not clear what tying apportionment to student educational plans would really mean and how it would be monitored. It was proposed that funding could be limited to courses that exist in a “program of study”. But it was then noted that this would not permit the introduction of stand-alone courses or the development of new programs. While it was not clear how this issue was resolved, the recommendation to require student to pay “full freight” for courses not in their education plan was removed. The concept of permitting the mixing of community service and credit remained; the expectation is that this will be modified to be consistent with the Academic Senate’s proposal to permit community members to register for courses, pay full cost, and not earn credit.

**Chapter 1**

The discussion about this chapter focused on the importance and value of working with K-12 and the interest in seeing K-12 standards raised.

**Chapter 2**

The need for faculty involvement in selection of an assessment and any matriculation-related technology was noted. A discussion about cut scores ensued. It was not clear what the final decision was – but the proposal to have a common cut score for the first “college-level” course resonated with

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some members. The reason for varied leveling of courses below college level seemed to resonate with all members. The Chancellor stated that common assessment had to be mandated and that to not do so was unfair to students. In summarizing the decisions made about 2.1, the Chair stated that the language would reinforce the role of faculty and that common assessment would be mandated. The issue of a common cut score was left undecided. Technical issues were discussed for the rest of Chapter 2, with no major changes made.

### **Chapter 3**

The general concerns with all elements of Chapter 3 were discussed. No substantive changes were made.

### **Chapter 5**

As written, Chapter 5 includes ESL as “basic skills”. The concerns expressed about this were noted and the language will be revised. Given that the Academic Senate and others support the California Community College’s (CCC) “taking over” adult education, it was suggested that this might be a recommendation. One member expressed concern about this, questioning whether or not the CCCs were any better at adult education than K-12 and questioning the wisdom of taking something on that might ultimately be an unfunded mandate. It was not clear how this would be addressed in the next iteration of the recommendations.

### **Chapter 6**

There was a brief discussion of Chapter 6 and a reminder of the commitments made at the Academic Senate Plenary Session. The bullets under both recommendation 6.1 and 6.2 that would give the Board of Governors or the Chancellor’s Office the authority to mandate activities for Flex Days was removed in favor of a statement that the Chancellor’s Office could recommend and encourage a focus for flex activities.

### **Chapter 7**

There was little discussion of this chapter.

### **Alternative Funding – Language to be Modified**

Recommendation 8.3 was described as “enormously divisive”. Despite the unqualified opposition of some groups, a proposal to somehow modify the language of this recommendation was discussed. The concept was to not have a new funding formula, but to have a “hold harmless” mechanism for colleges that opt to engage in innovation that might reduce the usual apportionment received. It was not clear what this would mean or how it would work. After a vote on this contentious issue that supported keeping this ill-defined proposal in the recommendations, one supporter suggested that it should be revisited due to its contentious nature. To this observer, it was not clear how this was different from 8.2 – which provides funds to support innovation.

The day began with some clear “wins” and ended with what appears to be a loss, but one that will hopefully be revisited and modified into a recommendation that does not clearly create a divide. It was not clear when a revised document would be available for review.

I hope this extract from my 11 pages of notes provides enough detail for you to have a sense of what transpired. If you have any questions or concerns, please visit the 1143 page of the Academic Senate website (<http://www.asccc.org/1143>) and post them there.

Best wishes to all as we enter the holiday season,



Michelle Pilati, Ph.D.  
President

Attachments