Dear West Community,

For those of you who could not attend the recent Town Hall meeting on May 16, I wanted to provide a topic recap followed by a summary.

**MAY 2011: TOWN HALL TOPICS**

- **BUILDING PROGRAM:** General Classrooms and Student Services expected to complete in Fall 2011; *LA Times* article; TLC & 10100 Jefferson property updates.

- **BUDGET:** A plan for a 5% budget reduction is in place, but this still leaves us with a deficit in 2011-12.

- **ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR:** Culver City Bus Update; the Impact of Grants; AB515 For-Credit Extension Classes; Gala 2010 Funds.

**LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT:**

- **Faculty & Staff Recognition Soiree:** Thursday, May 26 @ 2:00 pm | FA Courtyard
  No formal program just good company, sweets and performances from the WLAC Jazz Band.

- **Graduation:** Wednesday, June 8 @ 5:00 pm | Athletic Field
  I am pleased to announce this year’s keynote speaker will be Mr. Austin Beutner. Mr. Beutner recently stepped down as LA’s First Deputy Mayor to explore a run for Mayor in 2013. Mr. Beutner has the backing of both current Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and former Mayor Richard Riordan. Learn more about him at [www.LATimes.com](http://www.LATimes.com) search word “Beutner.” I want to encourage you to participate in the ceremony. It means a lot to students when they see faculty and staff at graduation.

**BUILDING PROGRAM**

All in-progress projects are within their budget allocations.

- **General Classrooms & Student Services Buildings:** Construction slowed for a period but has picked up again. We anticipate completion in Fall 2011 and hope to occupy the buildings in Spring 2012.

  VPAA Bob Sprague - General Classrooms Building: Among the amenities in the General Classrooms Building are smart classrooms, offices with windows, and for the first time Behavioral & Social Sciences and Language Arts faculty offices will all be housed in one building. However, some of the divisions’ classes will still be taught in the CE building.

  VPSS Betsy Regalado - Student Services building: The building will include all services except ASO and the Health Center. They will be located elsewhere. The Assessment Center will double its capacity to 50 testing stations. The food service area will open into the mall courtyard with indoor and outdoor seating. The food court vendor has not been determined. District is soliciting vendors for proposals.
**LA Times Article:** Regretfully, West did lose money on structure designs that possibly will never be used. However, after reviews by BuildLACCD and an independent party, as well as Turner, we contend the amount is $18 million, not $39 million. The District continues to push for a correction by the *LA Times.*

**Teaching and Learning Center Building (TLC):** It appears that the architect submitted plans for TLC to the DSA assuming there would be few changes requested. In fact, DSA requested substantial changes requiring the architect to redo the plans and resubmit them to DSA. The process has taken six months thus far. The completed plans are now with DSA. We hope to have them approved in 6 to 8 weeks. Once approved, construction is expected to resume in the beginning of August.

**10100 Jefferson Blvd. Property (Around College Blvd. Entrance):** You may recall that the Board approved the sale of the 10100 Jefferson Blvd. property at the minimum of $40M. Since then the District has done initial appraisals of the land. The appraisals did not come close to $40M. The District believes that it is because the improvements to the property were not considered. More appraisals to set a sale price are being done.

**Phase 1 Projects:** Currently, we now have $21 million for the completion of bond projects. Phase 1 projects include a scaled back Watson II Center with improved teaching facilities; enhancements to the existing Athletic/PE facilities; and improvements to some existing older structures. The affected programs are now working with Turner on the programming requirements of the new projects.

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**COLLEGE BUDGET**

VPAS John Oester - We had not heard the Governor’s revised budget announcements. The 2011-2012 budget may be a little less grim due to unexpected increased tax revenue to the State this year and the Governor’s intention to extend a number of taxes, at least temporarily. We are operating under the District’s direction to plan for a 5% reduction to our budget and to have a backup plan for an overall reduction of 8% and 10%.

Bob Sprague reported regarding the 5% cut. We have trimmed the budgets in every area of the campus including course offerings. In the Fall 2011, we will offer 676 paid sections. That is a reduction of 40 paid sections from Fall 2010 offerings of 716 sections which was originally used as the baseline for Fall 2011. The Academic Affairs Vice President and Deans were charged with trimming the schedule in consultation with the chairs. In accordance with the guidelines for budget reduction set fourth by the College Council and approved by the college president, not all class types were treated equally. Emphasis was put on preserving students’ ability to progress toward degrees and certificates. Stand-alone courses, courses not leading to a degree/certificate, and classes with high repeatability were more likely to be reduced. The reduction in classes will sadly mean a reduction in our adjunct faculty ranks. This difficult reduction process is being done under the guidelines of the AFT contract.

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**ACCREDITATION**

Tracking progress and completing SLOs are vital for a successful accreditation. Work to systematically review and revise the SLOs will be ongoing from now through summer.

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**OTHER ITEMS:**

Several items arose from Q&A from the floor.

**On Campus Bus Service:** In March, West reluctantly accepted the Culver City Council’s direction to reduce on-campus bus service by 50%. The campus worked with Culver City Bus to make the cuts in a manner that would least impact our student body. To promote West’s interest, we will analyze how the new schedule is working for our students, faculty and staff. Concurrently the college is affirming the plan to reinstate the original pre-bond bus
route along B Street when the General Classrooms and Students Services buildings open. The college’s plan to service all students, particularly the disabled students, proposes the continuance of the bus on B Street at the level of the newly built elevator. Both items of college interest will be shared with the City Council at the June 13 meeting. Homeowners continue to press the City Council to reduce the bus service and not to resume the original bus route along B Street. West is prepared to continue the schedule as is. We will protest any further cuts or the removal of an on-campus bus stop. Watch for more information. Our position with the Council will be strengthened if we have a strong presence of faculty, staff and students at that June 13 meeting. Please consider joining us at the meeting, and contact Michelle Long-Coffee if you can.

Bill AB515 (Brownley): A bill is being considered to authorize the California Community College governing board to establish and maintain an extension program offering credit courses at the actual cost of the course. “The program must be self-supporting, without the use of any state general funds…the bill would require district boards to annually certify compliance.” A speaker from the floor suggested it is time for West to consider its position regarding this proposition. Does it present options? Or, will it create undesirable inequities for students who can not afford such courses?

Money Raised at 2010 Gala: In response to a question about the $80,000 allocated to the college from the Foundation from the money raised at the 2010 gala, the money is still untouched. The proposed plan is to accept requests for proposals (RFP) from across the campus for all or portions of the money. The Host Committee would act as the screening committee who will make recommendations to the president. This process and funding decision will occur under the new president.

Grants - Support and/or effect on 10100 Funds (General Funds): The question as to how our grant efforts enhances or siphons our general operating funds has been asked. The matter will be addressed at the next Academic Senate meeting. Watch for more information. I completely support the study of grant development, the use of grant funds, and its effects on the general funds.

AFT Meeting, May 19: AFT Chapter Chair Olga Shewfelt invited all faculty and staff to the AFT meeting on Thursday, May 19 at 1:00pm in HLRC 4th Floor.

CLOSING REMARK

Difficult budget times create tension. Under stress, we sometimes focus on the negative. I reflect on what I have experienced at West and have been impressed with the continued positive problem solving approach and the collegiality even in difficult times. Additionally, let us not forget to applaud our accomplishments this year in moving our students closer to the realizations of their dreams through education.

A letter was passed to me about one of our students – Du’Ron Fisher – who will be honored at Celebrating Excellence. He had twice failed at other colleges. However, at West, he is thriving. He wrote, “For a while I thought that college was not for me, but being here at West LA has proven to me that I can overcome my fears, and helped me realize that a college education is something that I can accomplish.” Du’Ron earned a 4.0 in Fall 2010 and a 3.66 in Spring 2011. This is a testament to all of you for what you do.

Thank you for your support during this academic year. The college level presidential search committee will interview candidates in mid June. It is expected that the final selection will take place in July.

Together Forward,

Rose Marie Joyce, Ph.D.
Interim President