College Council Plenary Session Minutes
for
Thursday, April 3, 2008
1 p.m. - ATA-116


Absent: R. Block, E. Crippens, L. Jarmon
50+ guests signed-in
Due to a conflict with a class, the meeting was moved from ATA-128 to ATA-116.

Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by Fran Leonard, Chair, at 1:10 p.m.

Confirmation of the Agenda. The Council confirmed the agenda.

Minutes of the CC Plenary Session of March 6, 2008 were approved with R. Patterson’s name added to those present.

Public speakers. There were no public speakers.

President’s Report. Dr. Rocha presented the 2008-2009 College Budget Omnibus Action Proposal to all present for the Council’s consideration. He emphasized that this was the beginning, not the end, of a carefully planned, serious and meaningful consultation process agreed to mutually by members of governance and other bodies on campus, including but not limited to: the Budget Committee, the Joint Administrative Council/Department Chairs, the Academic Senate, the Divisional Chairs, the AFT Faculty Guild and the College Council.

Dr. Rocha then proceeded to explain the context for the Omnibus (meaning “all, comprehensive”) Action, the need to take action, citing the state of California’s budget deficit and the subsequent reduction in the funding to the community colleges in the proposed 2008-09 budget. In response to this, the LACCD Chancellor declared a fiscal emergency in anticipation of the cumulative district-wide cuts of at least $17M. Furthermore, the Chancellor has ordered a district-wide hiring freeze and purchasing and contracting freeze. In addition, the Chancellor requires that the College submit a balanced budget for 2008-09 that begins with no deficit.

The president reaffirmed that in preparing a balanced 2008-09 budget, the College “remains committed to the essential principle that while discretionary spending may temporarily be reduced or deferred, the college’s investments in enrollment growth, retention and academic quality will continue.”

Elements of this essential principle include:
1. Continuation of enrollment growth that eliminated West’s budget deficits in the two prior fiscal years.
2. Continuation of high school outreach and recruitment.
3. Continuation of our commitments to student success under the Ed. Master Plan.
4. Implementation of priorities under the strategic plans for Academic Affairs and Student Services.
5. No layoffs of regular faculty, staff and administrators.

To prepare a balanced 2008-09 budget, faculty, staff and students are required to participate and contribute input and ideas. West’s problem isn’t money; the focus is on what will make West the best college, including degree and certificate programs, which is the faculty’s responsibility and role. If a student enrolls in degree or certificate programs, the retention rate is increased.

At the end of this process, shared governance bodies of the Senate, the AFT Faculty Guild and the College Council will have participated in the development of the 2008-09 College budget through offering advice and engaging in consultation, per the agreement of the Executive Committee of the College Council and the dates of meetings listed on the Omnibus Action Proposal.

While we were not going to go through all 16 points at this meeting, Dr. Rocha emphasized that “omnibus” means “all,” “comprehensive,” meaning that we are not to pick and choose which measures we like because they affect me, personally. Our task is to balance a budget, not cut a budget.

Background: Three years in a row, West had a budget deficit. The college has addressed its deficit by outreach efforts to high schools, marketing and publicity and other strategies to achieve a “safe” level of FTES, which is about 9 to 10,000 FTES. Our task is not to cut classes or people but to concentrate on 1) increasing revenue and 2) holding the line on expenses.

Fact: Expenses next year will be higher due to salary step(s) and the increased cost of benefits. In addition, each college gets charged a proportional share of retiree benefits. We do not know at this point the amount of these increases.

West’s assets include plans to move forward with the satellite campus, and Jim Goodell is moving forward with Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Lot 7 land development.

Dr. Rocha also noted that ¾ of West’s growth has been through online class offerings. If we did not have online, we’d be smaller than LA Southwest.

The President then asked VP of Administrative Services, John Oester to go over the details of the budget handout.

Participants also received the Proposed Budget Omnibus Actions to Balance 2008-09 College Operating Budget with details related to increasing operating revenue and slowing the rate of growth of operating expenses.

Input from participants included:
- Develop and offer an online AA degree
- Submit to the DBC a proposal to audit the District’s overhead charge to the college of $7M annually.
- Explore ways to expand the evening program as an opportunity for incremental enrollment growth, including programs, course offerings attractive to older students.
- Continue to develop non-credit courses and certificate programs.
- Emphasize retention and completion in Basic Skills Courses.

**Student Success Committee - charge, chair.** Dr. Rocha then indicated that the handout with the charge to the Student Success Committee, dated April 3, 2008, be considered and discussed
with action to be taken on this item at the next College Council meeting, scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2008.

Dr. Rocha then left to attend another meeting.

Chair’s Report - Fran Leonard asked everyone to review the latest draft of the participatory governance map and asked for input regarding any corrections or additions to the map. This will be helpful for next year’s Accreditation Midterm Report. Olga noted that the Student Success Committee needs to be added to the map and both she and Bruce recommend that this committee report directly to the college president.

Standing Committee Reports
Planning - The College Planning Committee met on Monday, March 17th, for several hours to begin the process of reading through and evaluating the 13 proposals submitted for the set-aside funds. The committee will meet again on Monday, April 21, 2008, at 2:15 p.m. in the Winlock Lounge to discuss and rank the proposals.
Facilities - Allan Hansen reminded everyone of the shutdown of B Street, the shuttle provided for those parking in Lot 7, the trenching for communication lines and the rerouting of classes affected by the electricity being down from 8 am to noon. He also mentioned that Plant Facilities is operating with fewer personnel.

Action Items
After discussion of wording revisions, the College Council reached consensus on the charges to the CC Standing Committees.

Budget Committee
- Identifies discretionary resources and makes allocation recommendations for these funds.
- Periodically reviews budget reports and assesses progress of revenue and expense budgets throughout the fiscal year to promote fiscal transparency.
- Makes recommendations regarding any budget matters.

Planning Committee
- Responsible for assuring all program reviews and unit plans are submitted so that it can use these plans to make judgments as to college priorities for the allocation of resources.
- Uses the Educational Master Plan and unit plans to establish criteria for allocation of funds identified by the Budget Committee as discretionary.
- Develops and enforces policies that qualify a program to apply for funding of discretionary resources.
- Responsible for evaluating and recommending any new initiative/program to the Academic Senate, as appropriate, the College Council and the Administration.

Facilities Committee
- Serves as the shared governance committee that provides input to Bond Project design and other facilities policies.

Items and Issues for Consideration from CC Members
Textbook policy - Bruce will submit this to the CC Executive Committee
Report on the growth of online education in the last two years - Olga will submit this to the CC Executive Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

The next College Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2008, at 1 p.m.