



# WestWords

A bi-weekly communique from the Office of the President

ISSUE #8: April 25, 2017

WLAC Colleagues:

I understand fully that the departure of two vice presidents, the yet-to-be-fully-realized impact of the Supplemental Retirement Plan, the challenges related to meeting the District's enrollment targets, the vision of a new State Chancellor, and the goals of a still-new President can create an unsettling combination of questions from the West community.

With this issue of WestWords, I want to relay to you, as completely and as transparently as possible, how we will continue to move the College ahead as we address each of these challenges.

## **Replacement of Two Vice Presidents**

- With Mr. Sprague's departure as of Friday, April 21, the position of Vice President of Academic Affairs has been accepted by Ara Aguiar in an acting capacity. The necessary paperwork has already been sent to the District for processing so that the announcement can be posted. An evaluation/interview committee will be named shortly as per the process outlined in the Human Resources Guide, and I will use the same process of campus engagement in the interview process as used to select the Vice President for Student Services. My goal is to have the position filled on a permanent basis as of July 1 or immediately thereafter.
- The position of Vice President of Workforce Education will not be filled. I am currently reviewing the organizational structures of other California community colleges to ascertain the best format to fit our needs related to workforce education and to proceed as soon as possible with a revised position announcement. In the meantime, all of the units formerly reporting to Mr. Pracher will report to me on an interim basis, with the exception of the Health Sciences unit, under the leadership of Carmen Dones, which will fall under the jurisdiction of Academic Affairs.

## **Selection of a Dean for Adult and Continuing Education**

- The College has received funding through Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) categorical funds to hire a Dean of Adult and Continuing Education.
- The recruitment process has concluded. We will be forming an evaluation/interview committee in the next couple of weeks.
- As of this writing, this dean will report to me until such time that we formalize a structure appropriate for West.

## **May 9 Visit of a Partnership Resource Team from the California Community College Chancellor's Office**

- As you may have heard me explain in various meetings, West must respond to an accreditation recommendation regarding our administrative structure; specifically, "In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends West Los Angeles College develop and implement a formal process for evaluating the administrative structure" (Standard IV.B.2). We are to provide a progress report by October 1, 2017.
- Additionally, a significant number of comments, complaints and concerns have been voiced to me over the past seven months about the re-organization that occurred five weeks before my arrival on campus.

- Therefore, I decided that these two factors required consulting with impartial, unbiased professionals who are well-versed in community college administrative structures. Utilizing the resources of the California Community College System through the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative, I have arranged for technical assistance through Partnership Resource Teams or “PRTs.” This new, “colleagues helping colleagues” type of technical assistance is available to colleges, districts, and centers that express interest in receiving support on self-identified issues. Please note, too, that there is no cost to West for this service, as we received a grant to cover any incidental expenses.
- The team of California community college professionals—which includes the chancellor of a multi-campus district, a director of human resources, and an academic senate president—will be on campus May 9 to meet with multiple focus groups to solicit input from a wide variety of individuals who currently hold positions of leadership in both the academic and administrative sectors of the College.
- Upon completion of their visit, the team will draft an Innovation and Effectiveness Plan (I&EP) and/or other activities or documents designed to assist us in our discussions.
- Some administrative changes may be made over the course of the summer after full review by the College’s leadership.
- Any changes to the academic structure will be fully considered and vetted through a series of consultations in both Academic Senate and College Council. Ideally, we will receive formal support for any organizational changes in our academic sector in early spring 2018 so that academic chair elections will be held in accordance with the new structure that will go into effect July 1, 2018.
- I realize that some of you may be suffering organization “whiplash,” having just gone through this process in August. However, the number of individuals who have expressed sincere concerns about our current structure, combined with the ACCJC recommendation, have convinced me that we need to re-consider how we organize ourselves, especially in light of the myriad changes that are occurring in California community colleges.

### **Potential Impact of Supplemental Retirement Plan**

- The full impact of the Supplemental Retirement Plan (SRP) will be realized over the next several months, which means that dialogues about staffing will occur on a regular basis through the end of the calendar year and into spring 2018. This is so because of multiple dates of off-boarding after all eligible employees who want to enroll in the SRP have submitted the required SRP enrollment materials by April 28, 2017. As a reminder,
  - Academic faculty must complete the 2016-17 academic year, declare resignation within 45 duty days of the end of the academic year, and resign no later than June 30, 2017
  - Academic administrators, academic supervisors, represented classified (clerical/technical, operations, crafts and supervisors), classified confidential and classified managers resign June 30, 2017 or December 29, 2017.
- Please remember, too, that the presidents of all nine colleges have been directed to fill a maximum of 80% of positions vacated by non-faculty, with the expectation that each position be evaluated against College need—a process that will be accomplished through the full consultative process of participatory governance.
- Further, any empty faculty position that occurs as a result of the SRP cannot be filled in 2017-2018; these teaching assignments will go to adjunct faculty and cannot be considered for re-hiring until the 2018-2019 academic year. As with vacant non-faculty positions, the College is expected to evaluate each vacant faculty position against institutional needs—a process that will also be accomplished through the full consultative process of participatory governance.

### **Final Distribution of the FON (Faculty Obligation Number)**

- The Faculty Obligation Number (FON), as established by State law, specifies the minimum number of full-time faculty that must be employed by a district based on growth and guides the annual hiring done by each California community college.

- Because of the District's decline in enrollment, our FON has fluctuated wildly over the past several months—from a high of 18 to a low of four (4). As of this writing, however, our number has been conclusively set at seven (7).
- Working from the original list provided by the Faculty Position Identification and Prioritization Committee (FPIP), and in consultation with the academic deans and leadership of Academic Senate, the following positions have been identified to be filled. Please note that these positions are NOT related to any retirements generated as a result of the SRP.
  1. Computer Science and Information Technology
  2. Business Administration, with specialization in a segment of the entertainment industry
  3. Child Development
  4. Earth Science
  5. Dental Assisting
  6. Communication Studies
  7. *(this tenure-track position still under administrative review)*

### **Movement of the President's Office**

Because the interaction between Student Services and Academic Affairs is becoming increasingly important in terms of establishing and operating student success partnerships (e.g., pathway initiatives), I believe it is vital that the vice presidents be in proximity to each other to facilitate the types of serendipitous conversations and dialogues that often lead to creative approaches to better serving our students. Therefore, early this summer I will be switching offices, occupying the fourth floor space currently housing the Vice President for Student Services while that office takes up residency in my current space.

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Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Jim Limbaugh*

Jim Limbaugh, President