



COLLEGE OF MARIN

ACADEMIC SENATE

February 2010

Where did fall semester go?!

Even though fall semester went by at a shocking clip, the Academic Senate accomplished a great deal from September through December. Here are some of the important academic and professional issues we addressed:

- 1) **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that Protect Faculty**
The Academic Senate secured MOUs from the district on the discipline blueprints and on program review. The blueprint MOU gives the faculty a voice in the determination of which courses will be offered each semester and in the planning of the master schedule. The program review MOU protects faculty who participate in the program review process and those who choose not to. Both of these documents can be viewed on the Senate web page.
- 2) **Bolinas Lab Preservation**
For the past three years, the Senate has been arguing against the sale of the Bolinas Lab and championing the creation of a consortium to preserve and utilize the lab. It appears we are going to get our way. This fall, **Senator Joe Mueller** arranged a meeting between the representatives of several Bay Area non-profit environmental groups and the college president, who is supporting the effort to resurrect the lab. The consortium has applied for federal funding and will create a partnership for rebuilding and using the lab.
- 3) **Electronic Course Outline of Record**
The Senate and the Curriculum Committee approved a streamlined, electronic revision to the Course Outline of Record (COR). Dong Nguyen from OIM has designed a report format and from here on, all courses will be prepared in the electronic COR, making revisions, updating, and searches much easier.
- 4) **Syllabus Template**
WASC and Title 5 require that each class have a syllabus available to students and the public (not to mention WASC visiting teams). The Senate, with the guidance of Curriculum Committee Chair **Chris Schultz** and **Senator Radica Portillo**, designed a syllabus template that faculty can use in preparing syllabi. The template is available on the Senate web page and can be tailored to each instructor's needs. You can also get to the syllabus template from the COM home page. Go to faculty and staff, faculty handbook, Part VIII, Requirements for a Course Syllabus, and click on Academic Senate Syllabus Template. The Senate recommends that you have a syllabus for each course and encourages you to check out and use the syllabus template.
- 5) **Never-ending Policy and Procedure Revisions**
We have been working on the college's board policies and procedures for over two years. There are 50 policies and 77 procedures that come under the 10 + 1 law, which means that the Board of Trustees must rely primarily upon the Academic Senate in the composition of these policies and procedures and in the conduct of activities defined in them. Academic

Standards (AS) Chair, **Senator Rinetta Early** and the AS committee have put in a tremendous amount of work carefully reviewing drafts and legal citations and making recommendations to the Senate. The policies and procedures about curriculum and programs have been reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. Once vetted, 10 + 1 policies and procedures come to the Senate for approval. This past semester we approved policies and procedures for Non Resident Tuition, Withholding of Student Records, Open Enrollment, Admissions, and Philosophy & Criteria of International Education. We also approved procedures for International Students, Independent Study, Career/Technical Programs, and Contract Education. Course Repetition has repeatedly come to us, been voted on, then revised by the State, and voted on again. It seems appropriate that Repetition is repeating itself.

6) **SLOs, WASC Self Study, and Program Review**

With the help of our SLO facilitators **Senator Sara McKinnon** and **Becky Brown**, we charted our progress on the development of SLOs by programs and courses and we reviewed where we were on the WASC Rubric for SLOs. We also checked in with self-study co-chair and **Senator Blaze Woodlief** on the WASC self-study report while Senator McKinnon kept us up to date on the revised program review template and deadlines for the completion of this year's program reviews and administrative unit reviews.

7) **Conferences, Plenary, and Awards**

In October, Sara McKinnon, Becky Brown, Robert Kennedy, and I attend the SLO Research Conference in San Francisco where Robert and I received a POWER award for our college's work on research leading to institutional change. Sara McKinnon and I attended the Senate Plenary in beautiful downtown Ontario, CA. in November.

8) **Class Maximums**

The Senate's concern for pedagogical and safety issues around class size led us to request input from faculty members whose programs are most affected by inflexible class maximums. **Katrina Wagner** gave an excellent presentation to the Senate about the impact class maximums have on art courses. Science instructor **Becky Brown** and Auto Tech instructor **Ron Palmer** brought us crucial evidence supporting the need for change in how class maximum decisions are made. UPM addressed this contract provision with the district but to no avail. The Senate will continue to research more pedagogical approaches to determining class maximums.

9) **Continuing Faculty-led Research**

Senator Robert Kennedy has been involved in a major study of student access and success and has shared this information with the Senate over the past two years. This research has informed Senate decisions about the blueprint, master schedule and program reviews. We also proposed a restructuring of the college according to student pathways and this too is being implemented by the District as a way to better serve our students. Robert's data include a study of the distribution of students and courses taken in each department, a pathways analysis, and the creation of an Evidence Matrix faculty can use in constructing the discipline blueprint.

All this, plus senators keep up with research in the disciplines, teach classes, write letters of recommendation for students, attend governance and department meetings, serve on hiring committees, meet with the Classified Senate and members of the Student Senate, grade papers, volunteer as student club advisors, prepare exams, hold office hours, and attend COM athletic and cultural events. And that's where fall semester went.

Yolanda Bellisimo
President, Academic Senate

Faculty Handbook

Senator Sara McKinnon has updated the faculty handbook and prepared an electronic version. The faculty handbook covers a multitude of topics from parking permits to grading options to student conduct. The handbook can be accessed from any page of the college website under: Faculty and Staff - the fifth link down is the faculty handbook.

Summer Registration

In 2009, new and re-admit students began summer school registration one week after our continuing students were allowed to start registering, giving our current students a one week head start.

Since Santa Rosa and CCSF have cancelled their summer school programs, we are anticipating a large influx of new students.

We want to make sure that our continuing students are given enough advance time to obtain the classes they need. Therefore, Admissions and Records proposed and the Vice President agreed to allow our continuing credit and non credit students to register from April 20th to May 24th. New and readmitted credit and noncredit students will begin registration on May 24th. This will give our current students a five week head start on summer school registration.

Administrative Unit Reviews

WASC expects that all administrative units at a college prepare an administrative review similar to the program reviews prepared by each instructional program. This year's administrative unit reviews are complete and are on the intranet if you are interested in reading them. To view any or all of them, go to the COM intranet under the *accreditation* box and click "administrative program review." The reviews are prepared by the staff and administrators for each administrative unit and they address the mission and purpose of the unit, its budget needs, and evidence that the unit is meeting its goals.

Planning and Resource Allocation

The Planning and Resource Allocation Committee (PRAC) replaced the Institutional Planning Committee and the Budget Committee. PRAC is a shared governance committee responsible for overseeing long term planning and college priorities and for recommending how the college should spend its money in order to meet long term goals. PRAC uses instructional program reviews, student service reviews and administrative unit reviews to make recommendations about budget needs and priorities. PRAC is made up of faculty, staff and administrators and will make recommendations to the Superintendent/ President, and ultimately the Board of Trustees.

Even though the college is not exactly flush with money this year, the committee will still prioritize needs and make a case for funding the most vital unmet needs, especially those most likely to affect the quality of education we provide for our transfer students, our career and occupational students, and our ESL, and basic skills students.

Marin Community Foundation RFP

To our knowledge, the Marin Community Foundation has never invited the college to respond to a Request for Proposal (RFP) and yet they came to our College Skills Department, chaired by **Barbara Bonander**, and asked for a letter of intent to develop and offer a series of civic and job skills courses related to English as a Second Language (ESL). These courses would target ESL residents in Marin and would include a research component. Sara McKinnon prepared an excellent letter of intent and as a result, we have been invited to submit a proposal. We should hear shortly about the awards for this project. This is a fantastic opportunity for the college – first, it shows that our reputation in this field is respected and duly noted, and second, it gives us an opportunity to build an on-going, more encompassing relationship with the Marin Community Foundation. Hopefully, this will be the first step.

Thank You! Robert Kennedy

Senator Robert Kennedy decided, without asking our permission, to retire. He will be greatly missed by the Senate. We came to depend upon Robert's research about our students and our programs. It was Robert who envisioned the college pathways centered upon what students come to this college to accomplish and it was Robert who provided us with the data to show what students wanted from us in career/occupational programs, transfer and AA/AS degree programs, Basic Skills and ESL programs, and Community Education/Enrichment programs.

So much of the work the Senate has accomplished in the past three and a half years was done with Robert's support and steady hand. We will miss him and we wish him well in his new world as a retiree.

Our New Senator

The Academic Senate invited Rinetta Early to fill out the rest of Robert Kennedy's term as a member of the Senate and Rinetta graciously accepted our offer.

Rinetta currently serves as the Chair of the Academic Standards Committee and has worked extensively and tirelessly on rewrites of the policies and procedures. For years, Rinetta sat at the "little table" attending all our meetings and providing expert advice. She has been an incredible asset to the Senate and it is such an honor for the Senate to now have her at the "big table."

Faculty Members

Serving on Curriculum

One of the hardest working committees on campus is the Curriculum Committee and we should frequently acknowledge them and thank them for their commitment.

Committee members are:

Chris Schultz – Chair
A Joe Ritchie – Business
Karen Robinson – Counseling
Rebecca Beal – Non Credit ESL
Sara McKinnon – ESL
Derek Wilson – MMST
Kristi Kuhn – Performing Arts

Join the Curriculum Committee and make sure your discipline has a representative! The committee will have many revised course outlines to review this semester and the process will go faster with more eyes. If your discipline is revising outlines, it is very helpful to have someone on the committee.

Curriculum meets Thursdays from 2:15 to 3:45pm in HC 124. Contact Chris Schulz for more information. (415-485-9601)
