



March, 2009

Setting the Record Straight

We want to applaud the UPM Executive Council's efforts at solidarity exhibited in the past two semesters. We understand the importance of this effort given the tenuous nature of our contract negotiations and the potential for a strike vote. We do, however, recognize that these efforts can be inadvertently compromised and we want to set the record straight on a couple of issues that were misrepresented in UPM newsletters regarding actions or positions of the Academic Senate.

A recent UPM newsletter reported that the Academic Senate had proposed to the Trustees a Program Revitalization and Discontinuance Policy but, according to the newsletter, "...the board rejected it and implemented one of their own choosing."

There is an enormous difference between rejecting a procedure and adding language to it. The Board of Trustees adopted the Academic Senate's Revitalization and Discontinuance Policy exactly as we wrote it and without resistance. Our objection was to the addition of a sentence restating the Board's right to make the final decision. California law gives the Board that power and we felt it was a statement of the obvious and did not need to be in the policy. Our greater concern was for the Board's circumventing of the agreed-upon process for vetting policies with this last-minute add-in. We have since worked with the administration to solidify a procedure for vetting 10 + 1 Senate/Board policies and we have reviewed this procedure with the board members.

In a second instance, a UPM newsletter carried a letter asking that UPM's Executive Council "...inquire of our attorney what legal authority the Academic Senate possesses to create a 'zero tolerance' program regarding individual faculty and their participation in program review. Please have our attorney explain the scope of their authority."

Goodness! We would suggest that such a request should have been sent to the Senate rather than printed, unfounded in a newsletter and certainly we should have been consulted before UPM spent your union dues to have an attorney answer this question. COM's Program Review Handbook, written by members of the Academic Senate and approved by the Institutional Planning Committee, includes the following statement:

Faculty members involved in Program Review volunteer as participants and faculty who choose not to participate shall not be penalized.

The zero tolerance refers to our expectation that all those who do choose to participate in program review, including faculty, staff, administration, and the board must follow the IPC-approved procedures. That comment was made at a board meeting to the board of trustees.

As we have pointed out before, the faculty needs and deserves a strong Senate and a strong union. And, to maintain solidarity we need a union executive council that unites rather than divides the faculty.

Yolanda Bellisimo
President, Academic Senate

75% Rule

The Academic Senate has, for the past few years, watched with alarm as our full time faculty dwindles and the percent of our units taught by full time faculty dips below the state mandated level. According to state law, 75% of all community college credit units are to be taught by full time faculty. Most colleges – including ours, don't meet this mandate and schools routinely file, and the state approves, exemptions.¹ Currently at COM, the number of units taught by full time faculty is approximately a resounding 51% overall, 24% under the state mandated floor.

Because we like data and we apparently also like depressing ourselves, the Senate decided to look at the percent ratio of part time to full time faculty by department and discipline (the State only looks at the college as a whole).²

Here are the highlights of what we discovered³:

- Only two departments meet the 75% rule – Communications and the Social Sciences
- Thirteen disciplines have no full time faculty at all, six of which offer more than a full load of units (15 units) each semester including Physics, Anthropology, Architecture, Japanese, French and Real Estate
- Twelve disciplines have at least one full time faculty member but also have over 30 units (the equivalent of two full time faculty) per semester taught by part time faculty including Nursing, Math, Biology, English, Chemistry, Art, Business, Music, PE, Spanish, English as a Second Language, and Court Reporting

The bar graphs below will give you an idea of how are full time and part time faculty break down by discipline and by department.

1 - In addition to exemptions, the district can exclude certain units from the part time side. As an example, the formula excludes 'backfill' by part time faculty for full time release units and sabbaticals. Schools can also exclude overload units in calculating the percent, even though, in many cases, full timers are teaching overloads because they can't find part time faculty to teach these courses.

2 - Data were gathered from Program Review, the Banner data, and the Fall 2008 Schedule of Classes.

3 – Our figures include part time units taught for full time faculty on sabbatical and full time units taught as overload. In computing figures for the State, these units are not counted. We realized that our strict adherence to excluding sabbaticals, overloads or other full time faculty out-of-class activities did not do much to alter the stark findings. We don't come anywhere near 75% no matter how precise our calculations.

Our Upcoming WASC Self Study

We want to thank all of those members of the college community who have volunteered their time to serve on critically important WASC self study committees. Faculty, staff, students and administrators serve as teams for each of the standards set out by WASC. We proudly list our team members here:

I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Members:

Cathy Summa-Wolfe (chair)
Robert Kennedy
Tara Flandreau
Patricia Torres
Nicole Cruz

II: Student Learning Programs & Services – Instructional Programs

Members:

Win Cottle (co-chair)
Jim Arnold (co-chair)
Janice Austin
Sara McKinnon (SLO Facilitator)
Nanda Schorske
Meg Pasquel
Alice L. Dieli
Becky Brown (SLO Facilitator)
Derek Wilson

II: Student Learning Programs & Services – Student Support Services:

Members:

Becky Reetz (co-chair)
Bob Balestreri (co-chair)
Nick Chang
Armond Phillips
Ron Gaiz
Robert Flynn
Radica Portello
Emy Bagtas
Andrea Hunter

II: Student Learning Programs – Library and Learning Support Services:

Members:

Susan Andrien (chair)
Carl Cox
Joan Risch
John Marmysz
Gaylene Urquhart
Steve Brown
Jon Gudmundsson

III: Resources – Human Resources

Members:

Linda Beam (chair)
Melinda Molloy
Connie Lehua

III: Resources – Physical Resources

Members:

Kathleen Smyth (co-chair)
Don Flowers (co-chair)
V-Anne Chernock
Barbara St. John
Andy Haber

III: Resources – Technology Resources

Members:

Steve Dodson (chair)
Marshall Northcott
Ingrid Kelly (DE)
Dong Nguyen
Michael Irvine
Derek Wilson
Andy Haber

III: Resources – Fiscal Resources

Members:

Al Harrison
Bonnie Borenstein
JR Dobbson
Paul Fanta
Peggy Isozaki
Kathy Joyner

IV: Leadership & Governance

Members:

Yolanda Bellisimo (co-chair)
Todd Mcleary (co-chair)
Phil Kranenberg
Peggy Dodge
Rose Jacques
Bernie Blackman
Kathleen Kirkpatrick