

April 1, 2011

APRIL 2011

Dear Mesa College Community:

The spring semester has been a whirlwind with momentous changes impacting every segment of our community. While budget problem looms large, it is important to pause and acknowledge the many significant and wonderful events and activities sponsored by our Mesa community – students, faculty, staff and administrators. Not a week goes by without major campus events such as Canyon Day, Tents of Tolerance, Festival of Colors, Languages Dept Conference, Women's History Month, Black History Month, Student Services Fair, etc.. The list is long. It is these kinds of activities and the commitment of the individuals who organize them that make Mesa a vibrant, exciting college, and helps to put into perspective the problems we face.

BUDGET UPDATE

My thanks to all of you who attended the March 31st Chancellor's Budget Forum presented by Chancellor Carroll and Executive Vice Chancellor Terry Davis. They presented an overview of the history of budget decision-making in California and the current crisis we face. The Powerpoint presentation is posted on the SDCCD website at www.sdccd.edu; I encourage those who were unable to attend the forum to take a few minutes to view it. At President's Cabinet and at the last Academic Senate meeting Mesa College Vice President of Administrative Services Ron Perez presented the Mesa College budget scenario. Regular updates will be provided at the weekly President's Cabinet meetings (Tuesdays, 2:00-3:30 pm, LRC 435).

Certain impacts of the state budget are known: an increase in student fees from \$26 to \$36 per unit, effective fall 2011; a workload reduction for the CCC system that translates to a \$10 million reduction for SDCCD. This is in addition to over \$30 million reduced over the past three years in the SDCCD budget. Uncertainty surrounds how the next part of the state budget will be resolved, but further reductions of similar magnitude are likely.

Over the past two weeks, I have heard from many individuals, including students, who are concerned about classes. I want to emphasize that our goal is to maintain our core classes and programs, which are primarily delivered in the fall and spring semesters. This will mean a very small summer session. Based on input from students, faculty and administrators, we are looking at a minimal set of summer offerings to meet needs of students in programs that require summer for completion (allied health programs with specialized licensing requirements) and those students who have petitioned for summer graduation. Within the next few days, we hope to finalize this list of offerings in time for posting on the web by April 15th. As more specific information is available, I will keep the campus informed – please stay tuned.

ACCREDITATION UPDATE

Mesa's Accreditation Follow-Up Report was submitted to the Commission by the March 15th deadline. It will be considered at the Commission's June meeting. Sincere thanks to all

individuals who participated in developing a very excellent report in a remarkably short time frame. The report may be accessed at www.sdmesa/accreditation.

For those who want to follow along with accreditation, the ACCJC Spring Newsletter, at www.accjc.org/newsletter, contains a great deal of information about upcoming challenges in the accreditation world. The lead article, entitled "The Future of Accreditation" discusses the increasing tendency to view accreditation agencies as responsible for all aspects of institutional quality. I encourage you to access and read this article.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The annual Mesa College President's Cabinet Retreat was held on March 7th, an earlier date than usual so that the outcomes could be worked on and completed prior to the end of the academic year. Also attending the retreat were members of the Strategic Planning Committee and the co-chairs of the Program Review Committee. A major focus of the retreat was planning and the next steps.

The Mesa College Strategic Planning Committee continues its weekly meetings. Major planning documents approved through the consultation process include the Integrated Strategic Plan; the summary of the environmental scan; and a single document that combines college goals, performance indicators, measurable objectives and annual priorities. The committee is now focusing on putting all planning documents -- these and others approved prior to this -- into a single document by the end of the academic year. The committee is also discussing a change in name, structure, and membership of the Strategic Planning Committee, based on input received at the Academic Senate. More information on the recommended committee changes will be forthcoming soon.

PROGRAM REVIEW

At the March 22nd President's Cabinet, the Program Review Committee Report for 2009-2010 Year One was accepted. Ten programs completed the process successfully and their lead writers were commended for their efforts. In addition, the 23 members of the Program Review Committee were commended for their exemplary work. Three recommendations for the 2011-12 year were made by the committee:

1. It is recommended that the existing program review process and forms be reviewed and revised according to the recommendations given by the Strategic Planning Committee in their December 2010 Report and the recommendations received during the College's October 2010 onsite accreditation visit as well as the findings from the present Program Review Pilot.
2. It is recommended that an automated system be piloted for use in the Program Review process.
3. It is recommended that the format of the lead writer training be revisited with changes made to reflect the revised process.

FACILITIES FORUM

The Mesa College annual Facilities Forum is scheduled for next week with two sessions:

- Wednesday, April 6, 2:30 pm in G-101
- Thursday, April 7, 9 am, in H-117-118.

Vice President of Administrative Services Ron Perez and GAFCON Diane Malone will present an update of the current construction status for Prop S/N. As construction moves forward, the college has been reviewing the overall campus build-out to assure that it is in accord with Prop S/N, within the budget allocations for each facility, and that we follow a comprehensive approach to the entire college.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW ELECTED CHAIRS AND ACADEMIC SENATE OFFICERS

Congratulations to the following faculty elected to next year's Academic Senate: Rob Fender, Vice President, Guadalupe Gonzalez, Secretary, and Erica Specht, Senator-at-Large. Congratulations to Madeleine Hinkes who will move from the vice president role to that of Academic Senate President next year. And congratulations to each of the newly elected department chairs and to those continuing chairs elected for another term. Thanks to each of you for stepping into leadership roles.

UPCOMING EVENTS

As the end of the academic year fast approaches, please plan to join students and colleagues for upcoming celebratory events. It means a great deal to our students when we celebrate their successes with them.

- Scholarship Gala, April 29, 2011, Doubletree Hotel
- Commencement, May 14, 2011, USD Jenny Craig Pavilion

And of course, spring break (April 18-22) is just around the corner. My best to each of you for a relaxing break. Thanks for all you do!

Liz