

May 19, 2011

May 2011 President's Update

Dear Colleagues,

This is my last President's Update for the 2010-11 year and my last as your interim president. I will take this opportunity to review some of our major accomplishments and outline some of the tasks for the upcoming year.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

We have several administrative changes underway. The screening committee for the permanent Vice President of Student Services position has been formed. They will commence work soon with the intent of completing the selection of a permanent VPSS for spring 2012. In Instruction, the selection process is underway for the dean of Social/Behavioral Sciences & Multicultural Studies position with an anticipated completion prior to the start of the fall semester. The selection process for a permanent Dean of Humanities will start in the fall semester with the intent to fill for the 2012-13 year. With Dean Bergland's impending retirement, we will start the process of finding a replacement. And very shortly, we anticipate the announcement of the permanent president for Mesa College.

RETIREMENTS

Best wishes and congratulations go to our retiring faculty: Art Boyd, Counseling, Houria Graves, Languages, Walt Seymour, Business/Accounting, Jerry Schad, Physical Sciences, and Tom Teegarden, Mathematics.

ACCREDITATION

Having our accreditation reaffirmed was a major milestone. The Commission recognized the strength of the college and took the unusual step of reaffirming accreditation and also requiring a follow-up report. That report was submitted in March and will be reviewed by the Commission at its June meeting. This report is available at www.sdmesa.edu/accreditation. The college's focus to re-invigorate work on strategic planning before the team arrived was a likely contributor to our success.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Planning is one of Mesa's strengths. This year has seen the culmination of our college-wide integrated planning efforts led by the Strategic Planning Committee through weekly meetings. The committee's recommendations have been reviewed by the President's Cabinet and by the individual participatory governance groups. Comments and suggestions have been incorporated into the plan. The product is an integrated, aligned planning structure that links overall institutional planning with planning at the program level. Program reviews are clearly linked to resource allocation and institutional planning. Data on institutional effectiveness informs the

process. An annual review of the effectiveness of the college's planning efforts will occur each spring and will inform the next year's goals, objectives and annual priorities.

The Strategic Planning Committee's work has been summarized in the new Institutional Planning Manual. The manual describes the current status of planning, recognizing that there is still work to be done to define some of the individual processes. This work will be continued next year by the newly-formed Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee. Special thanks go to Professor Donald Abbott, the author of the Institutional Planning Manual for creating a manual that captures very effectively the full scope of the new Mesa College integrated planning model. [Note: the manual will be posted on the Mesa website within the next few days.]

During the Strategic Planning Committee's shared governance consultation process, the committee heard questions about the membership and role of the committee itself. This discussion was continued at the President's Cabinet Retreat and resulted in a recommendation to change the committee's title, broaden the membership, and re-define the charge. The new committee, Planning & Institutional Effectiveness, was approved at President's Cabinet on May 3, 2011 and will start work in the new academic year with new membership. It is not often that a committee decides it no longer needs to exist, but this is precisely what the Strategic Planning Committee has done! To assure continuity, there will be a joint meeting of the outgoing SP Committee and incoming PIE Committee. As its final act, the Strategic Planning Committee created a listing of tasks for the new committee.

The Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee is one of two participatory governance committees charged with planning that report directly to President's Cabinet, the other being Program Review. The recommendations of each committee are submitted independently to the President's Cabinet for review and adoption.

The Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee is designed to advance the overall planning work for the College, whereas the Program Review Committee advances planning at the unit level – program or service area. These two committees work in tandem as illustrated on the Integrated Planning Process diagram (approved by President's Cabinet, March 1, 2011).

Following the sustainable continuous quality improvement model, the Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee is responsible for assuring that the College's planning framework is consistent with accreditation standards; for guiding the annual assessment of progress on stated goals, objectives and priorities and recommending changes as indicated; and for assuring the integration of planning across the campus.

PROGRAM REVIEW

Parallel to the work on the Integrated Planning Model, the Program Review Committee has also been at work to simplify and streamline the Program Review process. The committee's recommendation was presented at President's Cabinet on May 17th and is currently being reviewed through the consultation process. Key features include an annual process and a Goals Matrix that links resource allocation requests to program goals.

As noted above, the Program Review Committee and the Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee are co-equal committees, each charged with a different aspect of the college's planning.

The new planning model integrates the research function into both committees: Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and Program Review. After extensive discussion, the Research Committee voted to disband the committee after many years of dedicated work that resulted in an outstanding body of work. Thank you to the members of the Research Committee for many years of dedicated service.

PROGRESS ON SLOs/AUOs

During this year, Mesa College has made progress with SLOs and we are well on our way to meeting the fall 2012 accreditation deadline. Special thanks go to Professors Ed Helscher and Saloua Saidane for their facilitation with this important work. A status report on SLOs was presented at the May 10th Cabinet meeting; it demonstrates considerable progress during the spring semester. Because of the 2012 deadline, it is important for the college to maintain focus on the work and I have recommended that periodic progress reports on SLOs be made to President's Cabinet.

FACULTY POSITIONS PRIORITIZED

At the May 3rd meeting, President's Cabinet approved the list of prioritized faculty positions, the list being effective through the 2011-12 year. The prioritization process was carried out by a subcommittee of President's Cabinet and following the established procedure and principles. In addition, the subcommittee recommended a simplified set of criteria for use in future prioritization processes. These new criteria will be incorporated into program review so that future requests for faculty positions will become part of the regular planning process, thereby eliminating a separate request.

BUDGET

The Governor's May budget revision was presented on May 16th. Some good news was that estimated revenues have increased by an annual \$2.8 billion, or as much as \$6.6 billion over the two-year time frame, reducing the overall state deficit. However, the governor emphasized the need to focus on reducing the structural deficit – or wall of debt – that amounts to an ongoing \$9 billion annually for the next 4 to 5 years. Recognizing the impact of the current budget cuts, he is proposing to increase funding to Prop 98, which would provide the CCCs an amount of \$350 million towards reducing the deferrals. This will not reduce the March budget reduction (an amount of \$10 million to SDCCD). The May revision requires approval by the legislature and extensions of temporary taxes are still proposed for a future election. Absent either of these, an all-cuts budget is still a possibility, but most believe that this is now less likely. However, we can expect continued uncertainty into and beyond the summer.

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

This year, our goal has been to assure that we can complete our campus build-out as planned in the campus facilities master plan. We've been guided by four principles: the commitments made in Prop S & N, keeping within the budget allocation to Mesa College, keeping within the 25,000 student limit, and assuring that we build a comprehensive college. This has meant making some changes and I appreciate the willingness of faculty and staff to work with us. At the annual spring Facilities Forum, Vice President Ron Perez and Project Manager Diane Malone provided a status update, now posted on the Mesa website. We still have some further changes to finalize and will be providing more information on these in the near future. We hope to present this information at a mid-June President's Cabinet meeting.

A-100 AND CONFERENCE ROOM

This year, the fourth floor LRC conference room, LRC 435, has been used the President's Conference Room. It has become apparent that the loss of a conference/meeting room in A-100 building has created scheduling conflicts and difficulties. Therefore, we are creating a conference room in A-100 and renovating the offices for staff, the president and vice president of instruction. The renovation will occur through June. Temporary offices for the president and vice president of instruction are on the 4th floor of the LRC. President's Office: Rooms 468 (Liz), 467 (Beth), and 470 (Jane). Vice President of Instruction: Rooms 472 (Tim), 471 (Mila), and 112 (Brandon). Interim VPSS Brian Stockert and his staff will move to A-111 and will remain there through the 2011-12 year at which time the VPSS office will move to the new Student Services Center. All phone numbers will remain the same as currently.

THANK YOU

The end of the spring semester normally brings joy and satisfaction in the successful completion of another school year. This year, the uncertainty of the state budget casts a shadow over the joy. However, we should take great satisfaction in this year's achievements. Mesa College is a strong and vibrant community college. Our students leave well-prepared for their next step of further education or careers.

It has been a great pleasure and privilege for me to have served in the role of interim president; thank you for your collegiality and friendship. I feel privileged to work with talented and dedicated people. I am grateful for the commitment of the Academic Senate leaders – Cynthia Rico Bravo, Madeleine Hinkes, Rob Fremland and Peter Jacoby, the Classified Senate leaders – Robin Watkins and Michael McLaren, and the student leaders—Shahzeb Naqi and Daniel Tjandra. Special thanks go to the deans for their ongoing hard work and commitment. And I want to recognize the outstanding support of the members of the Executive Staff: Vice Presidents Tim McGrath, Ron Perez and VPSS Brian Stockert, PIO Lina Heil, and Executive Assistant Beth Cain. These five people work exceptionally hard and my personal thanks goes to each of them.

Thanks to each member of the Mesa College community for making this a successful year. Best wishes for a good summer!