

ACES Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes: 8/26/09

In attendance: Gabby Rodríguez, Megan Caspers, Beth Regardz, Topsy Smalley, Margery Regalado, Nancy Fetterman, Winnie Baer, Francisco Tostado, Antonio Alarcón, Helene Jara, Rachel Mayo, Ed Braunhut, Deborah Shulman, Vicki Stanley, Susanne Muszala, Jim Knickerbocker, Nancy Phillips, Jeannette Richey, Rick Fillman, Diego Navarro, Beth Nelson, Victoria Bañales

1. **Budget update**—32% reduction-hit. We managed to keep a lot of programs and positions staffed, but did cut some services/positions to try to trim approximately \$70,000 in cuts. ACES had to dip into our one-time funds to balance our budget needs. The main programs and positions that we continue to support are: LIAs, tutorials, learning community coordination units, professional development, counseling.
2. Victoria Bañales, Beth Regardz, and Margery Regalado reported back on **our Washington trip: The Washington Center National Summer Institute on Learning Communities at Evergreen College, June 23-27, 2009**. (Other members, not present at this meeting, who also participated in the Summer Institute include: Renee Kilmer, Marcy Alancraig, and Julie Hanks). The group shared information and insights about relevant workshops that members participated in; highlights from the Institute's key note speaker; what other colleges are doing as far as their learning communities go; practices that promote "deep and integrative learning"; how to better support existing learning communities at Cabrillo (i.e., create a retreat to share pedagogies/ideas and maybe include guest speakers; develop a brochure with exciting titles/names for learning communities); how to create/promote more learning communities (i.e., FLEX workshop).
3. **Update on July 21 Meeting with Mary Planding**. Margery Regalado and Victoria Bañales reported back on the High Engagement's subcommittee's meeting with Mary Planding where ideas about creating a jazzy flyer/brochure to advertise for our ACES programs and learning communities were discussed. The group met with Mary Planding for about 2 hours and generated lots of effective words and phrases for marketing and advertising; the group also talked about target audience. Mary was going to send us key messages we could use, but alas, she's gone! We did take pictures of our brainstorming ideas, so Margery and members of the High Engagement team will try to come up with something. Victoria passed around a brochure from El Camino College as an example of what a Cabrillo ACES brochure might look like (with catchy titles, descriptions, and colors).
4. **DBA Update**. Beth Nelson and Antonio Alarcón were pleased to announce that all cohorts of the DBA were successfully up and running. They also reported that their first CTE cohort got off to a great start this summer with students bonding. Antonio and Beth talked about the real challenges in conducting massive recruitment over the summer. Over 1,500 phone calls went

out to students. Ideas were floated around on ways to help DBA with recruitment, including a flyer that was created by ACES over the summer to readily hand to students after they take their Assessment tests and calling students on English 255 or English 100 waitlists. Beth also talked about preparing materials for DBA and the need to use the same “language” and wording on all our learning communities’ documents for consistency.

5. **1-Unit BS Library Course.** Topsy Smalley shared her ideas about creating a 1-unit library course to support the needs of basic skills students. Topsy is experimenting with this idea in existing courses right now, but plans on creating a separate 1-unit course that any student could take to support his/her library research needs. Topsy will share more ideas and possibly a syllabus as the course develops and materializes.
6. **Update on High Engagement Team activities.** Margery Regalado reported that our efforts to promote a “Welcoming Center” are underway. Four welcoming tables will be set up the first week of classes to try and assist wandering students. Sesario Escoto is organizing these efforts for next week. The High Engagement Team’s larger goal is to create a system where several people around campus are equipped to answer most student questions (so that students don’t have to be turned away and ask others multiple times)—this would involve training/staff development so that more of us are equipped with answers and to also lighten the load of A&R during peak registration periods. Margery also reported that the “Getting Started” Bookmark was updated; the old bookmarks are going to be purged. New bookmarks should be available next week, and these now include “check off” boxes and a “pay your fees” step.
7. **Mini-Orientations.** The group discussed strategies for assisting basic skills students during the next two weeks, particularly students who weren’t able to get into their basic skills English or Math courses. We collectively came up with the idea to create four mini-orientations—two in Aptos and two in Watsonville—where we could help students better prepare for next semester. Our immediate goal is to not turn away students and potentially lose them altogether. By creating mini-orientations, the group felt we could at least send students to a place where they may get the information they need. Susanne Muszala, Antonio Alarcon, Francisco Tostado, and Victoria Bañales agreed to volunteer for this endeavor. Margery Regalado agreed to make sign-up sheets that will be available at the four welcoming tables.
8. **Report back on CLASS Summer Institute.** Diane Putnam attended the CA Leadership Alliance for Student Success this August, and the group reviewed her written report (see below):

**Diane Putnam’s Notes from Fall CLASS Institute:
CA Leadership Alliance for Student Success, Aug. 9, 2009**

Participants at the SF summer institute included 3 reps. from 13 CA community colleges around the state: the college president or CEO, a faculty member,

and a governing board member (Gary Reece attended for Cabrillo). Other colleges from our area included Gavilan and Hartnell (there's a complete list of participants in the folder).

Faculty were asked to attend only part of the three-day institute--Sunday evening reception & dinner, and Monday morning faculty focus group, discussion with Jack Scott, Jane Patton from the state Academic Senate, and a rep. from our accrediting body (WASC), and then lunch.

The focus group with faculty addressed these questions:

-What do you see as key elements in an appropriate definition of student success in CA Community Colleges?

-What do you and faculty colleagues at your college see as the most substantive challenges involved in pursuing an effective student success agenda within your college? (follow up: not directly tied to resources, potential strategies for addressing challenges)

-What are key lessons that should be taken from work on the CA Basic Skills Initiative about the elements of an effective student success agenda within your college?

-How would you describe how consistently and effectively your college uses data in targeting and monitoring efforts to improve student success?

-Are there issues that are tough to talk about in regard to the student success agenda on your campus? How might the conversations be supported?

Some highlights from that conversation:

--acknowledgment that more full-time students and faculty lead to greater student success all-around; more needs to be done to encourage students who can to take advantage of financial aid and go full-time.

--a big challenge is changing the culture of the whole institution to better welcome, advise and teach today's students--across all components and admin/faculty/staff positions.

--there needs to be better integration and more dialogue between faculty/staff in instruction and student services.

--staff development and broad buy-in are essential to any coordinated efforts towards improving the teaching and learning experience.

--another challenge is guiding students early and throughout their careers so they meet with continued success in achieving their goals, even when those goals change.

--tough issues to address are inequities in student success among students of color and by gender; also, the whiteness of college faculty, administrators, and staff relative to students.

--another tough issue to talk about is letting go of strategies that are not working in favor of other promising efforts.

--assessment of student success, especially course completion and other course-specific measures, must not be used as punishment or to single out individual faculty or whole colleges. Rather, data should be part of an ongoing discussion for improvement.

--one goal is to identify successful programs and local initiatives and amplify their effects as much as possible college-wide rather than only supporting "flavor of the month" initiatives and "boutique programs."

During the moderated faculty discussion (which included the Academic Senate rep), the CEOs and board members listened; afterwards, there were some comments by Jack Scott (CCC Chancellor) and a couple of CEOs. Following that, other folks were invited to jump in with comments and questions. There was little disagreement among those in the room as to the key concerns and challenges around remaking the culture at our institutions to improve the student experience.

From here, the CLASS group will continue to discuss strategies to improve student success, especially given the budget picture statewide, at three more meetings throughout the next two years. The fall institute will focus on leadership for basic skills education, and faculty working on BSI will be invited to participate. The CLASS co-directors will visit each campus over the two-year initiative, and they will meet with faculty as well as administration and researchers.

In closing, it was emphasized that CLASS and its efforts are not intended to create a whole new statewide project or layer of assessment or top-down policy-making. Rather, they "are hopeful this initiative will complement and build upon the array of faculty-centered projects previously (and currently) funded by the Hewlett & Irvine Foundations in support of CA community colleges." More abstractly, Jack Scott referred to the two-year CLASS project as an attempt to be the "glue" that supports and expands the various success stories of students, programs, and colleges around the state.

9. Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities:

- Basic Skills Initiative Regional Workshop, Nov. 5-6, 2009 in San Francisco.

(The following people have signed up: Edward Braunhut, Jeannette Richey, Beth Regardz, Joyce Flager, Deborah Shulman, Susanne Muszala, Vicki Stanley, Lisa Simon, Gabby Rodríguez, and Victoria Bañales.)

- Faculty Experiential Learning Institute (FELI), January 11-17, 2010 at Cabrillo College
- On Course, Spring Flex, 2010 at Cabrillo College

10. ACES fall semester meeting dates/times will be decided over e-mail after individuals have confirmed their own Department meeting times/days.