

Senate Chair's Report – September 2010

The CSU Budget and the Senate's Budget

The status of the State's and the CSU budget is still in flux. EVC Quillian will be meeting with the Senate and will be able to give an update and current speculation about the situation and our Budget Specialist, David Hood, will add his perspectives. In the meantime, planning for the 2011-2012 budget is gearing up. SBAC (The System Budget Advisory Group) met on October 1 for discussions of initial strategies.

The Senate's budget is stable relative to last year, and thus our current strategy is to maintain the structure of last year. This leaves the Committee Chairs with reduced assigned time and with the encouragement to utilize teleconferencing and similar strategies, where appropriate, to reduce our travel expenses.

The Graduation Initiative

The efforts to increase the "efficiency" of matriculation and to close "gaps" in graduation rates were begun last year (with acknowledged minimal input from the Senate or the faculty.) The efforts are now mostly campus-based with ongoing reporting to the Chancellor's Office. At this stage, Senators' efforts to ensure academically sound processes should be targeted at their campus plans, with either personal involvement or by ensuring effective representation.

Early Start

The efforts to move up the remediation process for incoming freshman are in the initial planning stages on the campuses (with a November 19 deadline for submission of initial plans.) While the idea seems positive (and somewhat innocuous) at face value, the systems and resources required to accomplish the goals are significant. The Implementation Team has met once to advise on some basic parameters will help to coordinate (and track) campus efforts and that attempt to uphold principles of campus autonomy and sound academic programming. I believe it would help the System effort and ensure maximum benefit to our students if the Senate would take a lead role in creating an efficient systemwide articulation process, possibly modeled on the IGETC (Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum) process. Since it is likely that many of our students will "Start" their remediation at a campus (including community colleges and possibly even high schools) other than the one they plan to enroll, a system that allows for a transferable determination of remediation "start" and "completion" is essential. And if this system is to be appropriately faculty-determined, it makes sense that the Senate take on this role. (Obviously we should also work to ensure that all of the efforts be designed to uphold the CSU mission and our academic values.)

SB 1440 Implementation

All of the political prognosticators are predicting that this bill to authorize the community colleges to offer a 60-unit transfer Associate Arts degree. As those degrees are designed by the CCs, the CSU campuses are required to create complementary 60-unit baccalaureate degrees for each transfer AA. I can envision a very cumbersome implementation of this legislation, with each major in each of the (73) community college districts creating a transfer AA of its own and then each CSU campus creating the complementary BA or BS for each of these (~3000) AAs. Or, there could be a collaborative effort whereby the community college discipline faculty create a systemwide version of each transfer AA and then the CSU faculty work with this much more limited set. Fortunately, the CC Academic Senate has already embarked on efforts which will lead to these systemwide transfer degrees, and better yet, they wish for the CSU discipline faculty to participate in these discussions and advise them on the content of their degrees. This will allow us to forestall many structural obstacles which could arise for students and create the maximum flexibility for the CSU design efforts. If done well, these transfer AAs could slip seamlessly into our current degree patterns, or require minimal adaptation. In my mind, anything that avoids the need for totally re-engineered degree patterns on our part would serve us and the students well.

Future Plans

I've already learned (or at least had several lessons) on the unpredictability of the chair role, so making predictions about the future is precarious. But I am committed to helping lead the Senate on a proactive and creative track as we deal with challenging budgets and situations. It is clear that we can contribute in ways that no other group can, and I hope to make the most of this asset.

CSU Campuses

Bakersfield
Channel Islands
Chico
Dominguez Hills
East Bay

Fresno
Fullerton
Humboldt
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay
Northridge
Pomona
Sacramento
San Bernardino
San Diego

San Francisco
San José
San Luis Obispo
San Marcos
Sonoma
Stanislaus