

Oxnard College Academic Senate
March 28, 2005
SSC 101/102

I. Call to Order—2:30 pm.

Officers Present—Lynn Fauth, David Magallanes, Jeannette Redding, Mary Jones, Tom Stough.

Voting Senators—Mark Bates, Brett Black, Robert Cabral, Elissa Caruth, Frank Castro, Carolyn Dorrance for Winston Sarafian's position, Gloria Guevara, Chris Horrock, Greg Kaapuni, Christiane Mainzer, Jim Merrill, Gary Morgan, Leo Orange, John Norbutas, Jim Petersen, Anthony Rodriguez, Ralph Smith, Ana Maria Valle, Jerry White.

Non-Voting Faculty—Toni Allen, Tom Barth, Amy Cook, Margarita Corral, Ross Fontes, Gloria Lopez, Lucia Haro, Amy London, David Lopez, Olivia Menchaca, Cecilia Milan, Andres Orozco, Everardo Rivera, Vern Simmen, Vish Viswanath.

Guests—Lydia Ledesma-Reese, College President; James Meznik, District Chancellor; Kitty Merrill, student and media representatives.

II. Additions to Agenda—none.

III. Announcements

- a. President Ledesma-Reese and Her Hiring Priorities—The President stated that she must make her hiring recommendations on Friday, April 1. Based on known retirements, death, reduction in force and full-time hiring obligations, five slots are available: Counseling, Auto Technology, History, Electronics, Journalism and one half-time pre-retirement each for Theater Arts and Mathematics (net: six slots). She has given one of these billets to Judy McCarthy in the Educational Assistance Center. So, five positions remain. Auto Technology has been advertised, thus four positions. She must consider district consolidation, loss of enrollment and those positions that will generate new State funds. Secondly, she must weigh trends in areas set to grow as determined by research and demographic surveys. For example: one such area that has been identified is introductory courses in teacher education integrated into subject courses, such as those required of mathematic, science and English secondary teachers. Another area with growth potential is special education.

Having said that, the President has decided to fill one billet with a counselor, despite that fact that counseling brings no State funding. The recent layoffs of part-time counselors has resulted in evening hours are not being staffed. Thus, three positions are left.

A.M. Valle was pleased that Counseling is part of the President's priorities. However, one counselor is still not enough. C. Dorrance: what's needed in teacher education is someone with a minimum of a master's degree in education. She was uncertain why this must be linked to a science subject area. J. Merrill: whoever is hired won't carry full load in education courses. Rather, the best-qualified person in the chosen subject area is the one who should be hired. Further discussion took place. (The President left the meeting at 2:45 pm.)

b. Other Announcements—none.

IV. Forum with James Meznik, VCCCD Chancellor, Facilitated by Mary Jones

M. Jones explained the format of this forum: each speaker must be recognized by the facilitator, with a maximum speaking time of two minutes per questioner. Mutual respect is key and the facilitator is neutral.

E. Caruth: education is a right, not a privilege. Why have you chosen to deprive students of their free speech rights through the closing of the Journalism department?

Answer: Meznik agrees with student free speech in principle. He spoke about how California's community college tuition was formerly free and how "the promise was never kept" on A.B. 1725. He went on to say that many are forgetting one thing: one journalism position has been eliminated, but other venues can be created for facilitating student speech. For example, many campuses pay for their student papers through assessments on student fees. The three District presidents have talked about how to create a student paper for the entire District. Meznik noted that the Ventura County Star has pushed many other newspapers out of business. A student newspaper is a separate issue from journalism enrollment. This is also true at Ventura College. The District will attempt to keep student newspapers available on all three campuses.

D. Magallanes: what is your definition of a marginal academic program?

Answer: there are multiple causes of a marginal program, such as low faculty involvement and low enrollment. Meznik stated that many new journalists are not coming from journalism programs. If they're not enrolling, we can't offer the curriculum. He noted that he doesn't know whether the curriculum is up-to-date, but that the journalism profession is technology-driven.

D. Magallanes, follow-up question: how do faculty become involved in these decisions?

Answer: by working with KH Consultants and by conducting program review through the Academic Senate.

Magallanes, follow-up question: how is the College to grow with these program cuts?

Answer: “do it smart”. For example, Meznik asked: why was a slot filled with a journalism professor when the program was low-enrolled? There is a “disjunction between expectations and roles. We must pick winners.” Counselors don’t bring in State funding, but the colleges must have them. Meznik asked: are counselors available during evening hours? He spoke about Oxnard College reaching out to military families and their unique needs in and out of the curriculum.

Jim Merrill spoke about stewardship of academic programs. He noted that Journalism was, in fact, growing its student base. Toni Allen was doing precisely what Meznik described, i.e., bringing student journalism into the modern age. Example: the joint program with OCTV. Question: Meznik said that budget cuts were to be made “as far from the classroom as possible”. Then why were administrators indemnified by having their contracts extended by two years?

Answer: there has been one management position cut, i.e., the position of liability administrator. “Historically, cuts are made on backs of classified [staff] and administrators.” Meznik mentioned that he doesn’t need a deputy chancellor. However, “bloat occurs [among] faculty as well”. Increased efficiency will result from these cuts. Meznik has been the president of a small college and knows “multitasking”. He stated that public colleges, including those in this District, must emulate the success of private colleges in recruitment. There will be a “uniform approach” to these issues and “all will share in the misery”.

C. Dorrance: do you believe in Oxnard being a comprehensive college?

Answer: “the core of the academy is what’s important”. In some cases, “we do a good job with upper division class preparation and vocational training.” For example: he loves attending the opera in Los Angeles and Orange County. He believes in a liberal arts base for all students. However, how can we afford it all? For example, how many sections of psychology and sociology classes must be offered to go with a vocational program? No college can afford to do everything and do it well. The foremost goal must be academic excellence, which draws people and money.

J. Redding: you’ve said that you’re a big supporter of shared governance. What is your position?

Answer: the well-known “10 +1” formulation of areas under faculty purview is a given, “but how do you make that actually work?” He also stated that the previous Journalism instructor spent too much time on shared governance issues, thereby allowing the Journalism program to decline.

On governance generally, Meznik said: the three Academic Senates have indicated that they will never take action speaking as one. We are three colleges, but must work under one board. Under participatory governance, the system works if consensus is developed. More systematic budget and planning are needed. Meznik described the District’s planning efforts heretofore as “rotten”.

C. Horrock: how will lifelong education be endangered by budget cuts?

Answer: why was a performing arts center proposed for a campus without a complete performing arts program? Programs can be “turned around”. We must look at the kinds of students not being served. He described an outreach program used successfully at a K-12 district of which he was superintendent. At certain critical points in students’ education, we identify their needs and offer comprehensive curriculum at the same time. Through service learning, we instill citizenship.

A. Rodriguez: what are your long-term and specific issues for Oxnard College?

Answer: the goal is to enable Oxnard to be the best college it can be. For example, it has perennial enrollment problems. OC can be the example to follow for handling under-prepared students. You must determine this for yourselves.

A.M. Valle: the College is being hit by Tidal Wave Two and increased student populations. Fifty-one per cent of the College’s students are on fee waivers. The faculty are very involved in improving student lives. Nevertheless, what she hears is that the District is involved in institutional racism. What plans do you have to assist this campus’ students?

Answer: the reality is that K-12 enrollment in this county has leveled off. Oxnard is more pro-development than other county cities. The global economy is continually searching for the cheapest labor pool it can find. Oxnard College must “quit walking around bent over and decide what it wants to be.” District budget allocation models will be examined as part of the upcoming review. “Don’t think you’ll always have the same base [of students], because you won’t.” His vision for Oxnard College is: the College must develop pride in what it does and self-assurance about its mission. Nonetheless, he is willing to commit start-up funds for a project. (The Chancellor departed at this point.)

V. Action Items

It was moved by A.M. Valle and seconded by G. Morgan to approve the Senate ballot for officer elections. Motion carried.

Announcement by F. Torres, Classified Senate President: Multicultural Arts Day on Wednesday, April 13. She is looking forward to lots of food vendors, lectures and high attendance by high school pupils.

Approval of minutes of March 14, 2005—M. Jones/J. Petersen/msc.

Faculty Hiring Priorities for 2005-06—C. Dorrance stated that there is a case to be made for teacher education, single subject credentialed. Preschool teachers will soon be required to have an Associate of Arts degree plus two education courses. However, linking education faculty hiring to a single subject discipline is fallacious. She noted the

contradictory message that Moorpark and Ventura Colleges have had their budgets for education courses slashed in the recent cutbacks.

J. Merrill asked: should Journalism be reaffirmed as a high priority? A.M. Valle: another counselor is needed. Merrill: we needn't be limited by a discussion of how many "billets" are available. M. Bates voiced a need in Mathematics, noting large class sizes and many retirements. G. Guevara suggested following Meznec's advice: think collectively instead of by department. Valle: look at retirements and program review. J. White noted that no fulltime coaches have been hired since 1978. The high WSCH ratios of both Physical Education and Fire Technology were discussed. B. Black suggested: go with last years' list minus program deletions. Guevara: where are we going with this? Valle: move to take the remnants from last year's list, putting retirements on top. Merrill: which retirements? Moved that: First: the Senate reaffirms last year's hiring priority list, second: adding an addendum that lost faculty members will be replaced and three: any education position created will be filled by the strongest candidate without limitation to mathematics and science. Valle seconded. White: does this address where we're going? Merrill: we don't have the luxury of time. After further discussion, Fauth called the question. Motion carried, one opposed, one abstention.

VI. Information Items—none.

VII. Committee Business—none.

VIII. Treasurer's Report—none.

IX. Excellence in Service Awards/Awards Banquet—get nominations in soon.

X. AFT Report—next mediation session on April 4.

Adjourned 4:20 pm.

Tom Stough, Secretary