Minutes for the Department Chairs Retreat
Friday, September 13, 2013
8:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Mentry Hall Room 343

Welcome and Overview: Jerry Buckley

Jerry welcomed the department chairs, acknowledging the incredible and noteworthy work accomplished by the faculty leaders in attendance.

Jerry noted that we have had an interesting 5 – 6 years. The CCC System is the largest educational system in the world. We have lost approximately 200,000 students system-wide over the last 5 – 6 years. It is estimated that it won’t be until 2017 or 2018 until we are back in full financial operation. Currently, it should be noted that projected increases in section offerings is not due to growth; rather, it is due to restoration dating back to the last few years, and it will take a while to get back to the point we were at before the recession, both in terms of students served as well as financially. Ironically, we get less money per student than the UC System, CSU System, or even K – 12; CCCs are required to do more with our students due to outcomes expectations. We face a multitude of ongoing challenges, including that 50% or more of our students are part-time, so we don’t have an easy system to navigate. As finances are slowly restored, we will continue to have to be creative and efficient on how we serve students. SB-1456 requirements will be both beneficial but challenging to implement. Jerry is looking forward to working with our group. He promises to be honest, ensure the College adheres to appropriate federal and state regulations, and that we maintain our high Accreditation standing in an effort to best serve our students.

Why do we need Accreditation? We need to ensure that students’ coursework and degrees transfer (where appropriate), that our students continue to qualify for financial aid, etc. Accreditation is not a necessary evil; it is a continuous self-assessment and thus opportunity for Colleges to ensure stakeholders positively impact student learning.

Role of Department Chairs, Duties, Support, Etc.: Jerry Buckley

Throughout the last year, we have faced a multitude of proposed changes which continue to impact our Colleges that include: (1) student learning outcomes assessment and requirements from ACCJC, (2) the implementation of the Transfer Model Curriculum or TMC, (3) the CCC System effort to standardize courses from institution to institution via C-ID (formerly CAN), (4) removal of repeatability from our courses and resulting changes in “families”, and (5) the introduction of “Doing What Matters for Jobs and the Economy” in our efforts to supply in-demand skills for employers, create relevant career pathways and stackable credentials, promote student success, and get Californians into open jobs.

Our Colleges have been faced with budget reductions, increased student demand, decreased staffing levels, continual non-classroom workload (e.g., department and student dynamics, personnel), and ongoing need to continually implement our mission when serving our students with limited statewide support. Innovation only works if it can be plugged into a sustainable strategic plan, supported by Program Review processes, prioritized at the division and College level, and eventually implemented based on established priorities. While there is never enough general fund money to support all that we identify, we can continue to look at other revenue streams to ensure we meet the needs of our students. What we do here is very special, recognizing that continuous improvement involves thinking...
of ways to always do better. In examining the “Department Chair Query” conducted by Nicole Faudree, the single most important theme that surfaced in the survey involved department chair workload. Jerry noted in his observation that it appears the Department Chair’s formula for contractual reassigned time in the COCFA contract is very simplistic and should be further examined. For example, there is no recognition for the duties that CTE faculty chairs take on as part of their program sustainment (e.g., individual accreditations, advisory boards).

Duties from department chairs in the COCFA contract were highlighted, whereby major duties were noted such as: providing input into the scheduling process, making corrections to the schedule and catalog, adjunct faculty staffing needs and evaluations, preparation and submission of annual department budget, additions/deletions/modifications of curriculum, etc. It was also discussed that other department chair duties, implied in day-to-day roles, are missing from the contract such as mentoring, primary responsibility of SLO assessment, working within department dynamics, and time spent on continually handling student complaints.

In Education Code, faculty members (e.g., department chairs) do not manage classified employees. As such, classified staff technically report to the dean or manager. However, it was acknowledged that it is sometimes very difficult for department chairs to lead the department without any formal authority.

Our CIO is also proud of the fact that our department chairs and faculty members continue to provide quality teaching as evidenced by the reputation of College of the Canyons and its successful students; as educators, we continue to inspire our students and equip them with the tools to succeed. While colleagues may disagree from time to time, we must never lose sight of why we are doing what we do: for our students.

The “Department Chair Query” results from each question were briefly discussed. Several items were noted:

1. One concern that arose had to do with department chair input during the summer months when department issues arise. Our CIO will look at options to address this concern, although no promises are made.
2. Another issue had to do with instructors running student clubs. While faculty advisors are not requesting more money, what about FLEX credit? What about an adjunct that could be a lead faculty sponsor for a club (which is currently not allowed)?
3. As the College continues to grow, it is important to balance the duties of our department chairs along with their teaching needs in order to maintain teaching quality (for the sake of their students).
4. A question about having an administrative assistant for the department chairs to utilize was also raised.
5. What about asking an adjunct to write and update Curriculum? The concern is that our adjuncts want to teach, and we want to be careful to overburden them and thus be mindful.
6. Managing the department website. Would be easier to have someone else do the job. In response to this, the College is in transition to use SharePoint, which will hopefully be easier than the current system in place (i.e., FrontPage). Barry Gribbons also noted that the College will hire a point person to assist department chairs with making changes to their department websites.

Jerry gave the group a compliment on behalf of our Chancellor, noting that we have the right team in place at our College to get the job done (which is not always the case at other Colleges).
Accreditation Update: Jerry Buckley

A College-wide kick-off on Accreditation will begin during the week of September 16th. Jerry shared some initial thoughts on Accreditation (just in case a department chair cannot attend). A reference document, the “Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation” (2013), will be sent out to the department chairs shortly. Jerry noted that we should begin by gathering our evidence first for each of the respective standards.

The Self Evaluation consists not only of the 4 Accreditation Standards, but also the 21 Eligibility Requirements as well as Commission Policies. Various additional focus areas were noted such as:

1. Rubric for evaluating institutional effectiveness.
2. Rubric for evaluating distance educational programs.
4. Institutional-set targets and outcomes.

An Accreditation Steering Committee has been set-up to fine-tune the details in conjunction with College personnel serving on each of the Standards committees. A first draft of the Self Evaluation is estimated to be completed by December 2013.

Performance Indicators and ARCC 2.0: Barry Gribbons and Daylene Meuschke

Background:

1. 2004: AB 1417 created ARCC (i.e., Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges), which entails annual presentations to the Board on ARCC Indicators and Self-Assessment.
2. Student Success Task Force later recommended changes via ARCC 2.0.
3. The recent ACCJC Annual Report included questions on performance indicator targets this Spring 2013.

Student Progress and Attainment Rate (SPAR) – the percent of students (with valid Social Security Numbers) who attain their goal: degree/certificate, transfer, or transfer prepared. Successful outcomes include students who have:

1. Earned an AA/AS degree or certificate (as approved by the Chancellor’s office)
2. Transferred to four-year institution
3. Achieved transfer-ready preparedness (with GPA ≥ 2.0)

There is an identified issue with persistence when analyzing COC’s (as well as some other CCCs) current SPAR data: at times, “unprepared” students are ranked higher than “prepared” students, which does not necessarily make sense. This will be followed up by our Institutional Research group with the State Chancellor’s Office. Performance Indicators for the College, as determined by faculty and administration input, are noted as follows:
Answers to questions: Jerry

1. How will AB 955 affect us, and what is your position? AB 955 allows for contract education during intersession periods only, when College has been at cap for 2 years. Courses can only be offered at-cost. This would not benefit the College in terms of money gained. The initial intent was to allow for CTE classes to be offered; it has since been changed to include the potential offering of all courses leading to certificates, degrees, or transfer preparation as of 9/13/13.

2. What percent of department chair release time should be spent on APR? Depends on the program. Program Review is planning and also entails budgeting. In a sense, you are always doing this.

3. SPAR (Student Progress and Attainment Rate) – why should department chairs care? Metrics that are handed to us may or may not seem initially useful, albeit there are now statewide expectations imposed upon us that we should focus on to continually improve upon student success at our College.

4. Is there one individual that we can request to email students MyCanons? No.

5. Will we be able to hire more FT faculty? To meet and exceed some of the current challenges in staffing, we need more FT faculty. Therefore, our CIO hopes to continue encouraging our District to pursue, where appropriate, the hiring of more FTF.

6. If we are not publicizing a year-long schedule, why do we have it? (see below)

Scheduling Process Discussion: Deans and Department Chairs

The following were discussed:

1. Several Year-long Scheduling Challenges were identified
   A. Turnover in staffing – circumstances change.
   B. Causing unnecessary changes. Is there a way to let adjuncts know that we will assign you class(es) without assigning the specifics?
   C. Limitations in classes and space. What about limitations in specialization?
   D. Class issues. A cancelled course (fall) with low enrollment, that is possibly a prerequisite to a spring class, may impact courses planned.
   E. Last-minute class additions and impact on adjunct staffing and hiring.
F. Strategic Enrollment Management – need to make a commitment upfront to scheduling wisely. For example, if a prerequisite CTE class is scheduled to be offered and later results in low enrollment, we should adhere to the decision to offer the class and not later cancel it, as this impacts future semester enrollments. As a result of this, we should also try to anticipate low enrollments and thus offer other courses which we know will fill in our efforts to balance and achieve FTES targets (see part I below).

G. Classes at CCC – can instructors get to their classes back-and-forth between campuses readily?

H. Begin enrollment process earlier, as we are competing with other schools. How about beginning registration in late spring for the next fall semester? Department chairs were highly supportive of this idea. Summer registration can begin after spring break; fall registration can begin sometime in May. Students would still have a target date for paying their enrollment fees (hopefully taking into account Financial Aid distribution).

I. Allocation of sections – what about smaller unit classes to help students feed into higher unit classes? Answer – base decisions on FTES targets and not number of sections.

J. What about students that have to pay on the day either they enroll in a course or were on the waitlist and were bumped into the class? The back-and-forth of students adding/dropping creates problems for Instruction to manage true enrollments in our classes. On the flip side, the current system in place has served to minimize financial aid fraud, which was a recent issue. Another related topic of discussion involved the notion that continuing students are still in tier 2 for registration; new (high school) students are last to enroll, which is viewed as an ongoing problem.

K. Lack of flexibility if classes fill via year long schedule – cannot add any more. For example, during registration, if all our MATH 070 classes quickly fill (and the department chair identifies the need to add more MATH 070 classes due to inherently long waitlists), because the schedule has already been set, it is difficult to add additional sections at this point to meet the (perhaps unforeseen) needs of our students at that time.

L. Eligible adjuncts only get 1 class as per AFT contract, of which many will select the same classes. This causes a flexibility issue in scheduling for the department chair, as an adjunct is less likely to take two classes that are not back-to-back in scheduling, and more often than not, the classes have been staffed with eligible adjuncts, with the desired second class not immediately following in the schedule. Adjuncts do not want scattered classes and are thus more likely to reject COC’s offer of employment and work elsewhere first.

M. The department chairs advised that it might be easier if we schedule Summer/Fall at the same time, followed by Winter/spring at the same time.

N. Waitlists – changed from 20 to 10 waitlist. Can we go back to having a waitlist of 20? The noted concern is space.

O. PIO and marketing – can they help us out more?

2. Proposed changes to scheduling process
   A. Past problems included Schedule Builder. How can we make scheduling easier?
   B. Roll-over schedule? May not work if initial schedule did not work.
   C. What about Friday and Saturday classes? This could be scheduled. Department chairs are encouraged to discuss this further with their faculty as well as dean (in areas where Fri/Sat classes are not currently offered). We should try to make strides to utilize campus space better by incorporating Fri/Sat classes.

3. Rooms/Locations – great job with room utilization!

4. Parking – An issue for certain class times, specifically noon – 1 pm. How about beginning at 7 am? Valet parking in lot 2 was discussed but would not make a difference.
Equivalencies to Minimum Qualifications: Edel Alonso

As per AB 1725, minimum qualifications are now required. These are established by the statewide Academic Senate for CCC, submitted to the State Chancellor’s Office, who forwards them to the Board of Governors for final implementation. Minimum qualifications are revised periodically and include a “Disciplines List”.

Two types of Minimum Qualifications:

1. Academic disciplines do require a Master’s degree to meet MQ.
2. Applied disciplines do NOT require a Master’s degree to meet MQ. Instead, they require a BS degree and 2 years of experience in the field or AS degree and 6 years of experience in the field.

AB 1725 also allows individual community colleges to establish equivalencies to the MQ as determined jointly by the local Academic Senate and Board of Trustees. Equivalencies are equal to in level of achievement, breadth, and depth and not less than. Here is what has been decided (to date) by our Senate:

1. Option 1: Any Master’s degree AND 24 units of upper division and graduate level units in the discipline.
2. Option 2: Bachelor’s degree in the discipline AND 18 units of upper division and graduate level units in the discipline AND current enrollment in a Master’s degree program in the discipline with the Master’s degree to be completed within 24 months from hire date.

Equivalency to a Bachelor’s

1. Option 1: 60 lower division units, 60 upper division units for a total of 120 units including general education and discipline-specific units.
2. Option 2: 80 units including general education and evidence of 640 hours of significant professionally-sanctioned, discipline-specific training.
3. Option 3: 80 units including general education units and discipline-specific units AND current enrollment in a Bachelor’s degree program to be completed within 24 months from hire date.

Equivalency to an Associate’s degree

1. Option 1: 60 units including general education and discipline-specific units.
2. Option 2: 40 units including general education units and documented verifiable 320 hours of discipline-specific training.
3. Option 3: 40 units including general education units and discipline-specific units AND current enrollment in an Associate’s degree program to be completed within 24 months from hire date.

HR will verify equivalencies in consultation with the Department Chair and Hiring Committee Chair. Questionable equivalencies will be brought to the MQE Committee of the Academic Senate.

The next point of consideration for the Academic Senate will involve determining equivalencies as related to our ISAs. More information is anticipated to follow shortly.

Skills4Success Update: Audrey Green

In our efforts to address all students, Audrey asked the department chairs to think about participating in activities such as: freshman seminar (joint interdisciplinary seminar) for College Skills preparedness,
designated to satisfy Critical Thinking GE requirements. Other possible considerations for involvement may entail participating in subcommittees that involve: Curriculum Redesign, a common intellectual experience, learning consortiums, etc. Audrey also noted that 3CSN (California Community College Success Network) is hosting a free workshop at Mt. SAC, and our College can pay faculty for accrued mileage to attend this workshop.

**Overview of CurricUNET Assessment Module: Paul Wickline**

The CurricUNET SLO assessment module is now available. Beginning fall 2014, the SLO tables in the academic program review will no longer be used to record assessment results. Only the CurricUNET Assessment Module will be available.

We changed to CurricUNET because Program Review did not guide faculty through the kinds of questions that are essential to reflect on and respond to that which ACCJC expects faculty and institutions to consider when working with SLOs. Now, all full-time faculty have the opportunity to assist in this capacity. Moreover, the report that one can generate from CurricUNET is readily accessible, and it is not more work for faculty to enter this data through CurricUNET.

The SLO website features sample, downloadable WORD files under “Resources” for faculty to access. There will be upcoming trainings during October and November 2013. Paul illustrated use of the CurricUNET Assessment Module to our department chairs. During the presentation, the group requested that the Instruction Office provide a part-time staff assistant to help department chairs with transitioning into the CurricUNET Assessment Module.

**Program Review Update: Paul Wickline, Miriam Golbert, and Daylene Meuschke**

In an effort to help departments plan for completion of the Academic Program Review (year 3 update), a handout for a timeline to complete the various sections of the APR was distributed by the Program Review Committee. Clicker technology was also used by the Program Review Committee Chairs to evaluate our current processes in place. Participants were asked to respond to a set of prompts via “yes” or “no” (or multiple choice):

1. The program review training I received prior to writing the APR was effective - 61% said yes
2. The data provided for the APR were sufficient - 68% said no*  
   * Any additional data requests for Institutional Research must be submitted to Daylene by October 11th
3. The data were useful in understanding and analyzing my program - 73% said no
4. My manager’s (Dean) feedback/input was effective in assessing my program - 57% said yes
5. The APR was effective in determining the needs of my program - 61% said yes
6. The program review process (including SLO assessment) will lead to improvement in my program’s curriculum - 50/50 result!
7. The APR will lead to improvements in my program - 54% said yes
8. The program review process has increased my awareness of how my program helps fulfill the college’s mission - 63% said no
9. Were there terms, vocabulary, or concepts in the APR that were confusing? - 58% said yes**  
   ** Please email Miriam and Paul
10. Were there questions in the APR template that were confusing? - 64% said yes***  
   *** Please email Miriam and Paul
11. Have you attended an APR workshop or training in the last Academic year (12/13) - 74% said yes
12. What recommendations would you make to improve training? More FLEX sessions and one-on-one training with a member of the APR committee.

13. Please indicate the most important additional data you would like to receive that was not available? Major’s information.

14. Please indicate the most important recommendation you would like to see to improve the APR template. Removing questions.

15. The APR process ensures that there is a clear connection between department objectives and District’s Strategic Plan. – 75% said no.

16. As part of APR, my department reviews its progress towards department goals stated in the Educational & Facilities Master Plan. – 57% said no.

**ISLOs and Proposed LEAP Model: Paul Wickline and Rebecca Eikey**

On Wednesday, Sept. 25th from 2 – 3 pm, our College will host special guest Geoff Buhl, Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Chair of the Senate General Education Standing Committee (CSUCI), who will share his experience that he and other faculty have had in developing rubrics, signature assignments, and their proposal to redefine General Education using LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. If interested in attending this session, please RSVP to Rebecca Eikey by Sept. 24th. As part of our curriculum mapping endeavors at College of the Canyons, we have access to a plethora of supporting information and documentation that our faculty might be interested in perusing, available from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU).