San Jose City College Academic Senate welcomes our New Chancellor

Dr. Deborah Budd

Dr. Budd received her Bachelor’s degree in Business Economics and Physical Education from the University of California at Santa Barbara, her Master’s in Education from Stanford University and her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from San Francisco State University. Prior to her arrival she served as President of Berkeley City College.

Our SJCC Academic Senate welcomes you to meet our dedicated faculty that you will find are committed to student success!

SJCC AS WELCOMES OUR NEW CHANCELLOR TO OUR DISTRICT AND CAMPUS COMMUNITY

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Our Shared Governance Responsibility

Welcome Back! Your Academic Senate closed out the Fall 2015 semester with a lot of positive energy. And now as we launch into Spring 2016 there are many “pots on the stove” for your senate to tend to as part of our shared governance responsibility. Some of the more significant agenda items include:

- Assisting the process for establishing 10 New full-time faculty hiring committees.
- Continuing our collaborative work with the EVC Senate to finalize our District Academic Senate (DAS) Bylaws & Constitution.
- District Budget Allocation Model- Continue to advocate for adequate allocation of resources for our college's programs as well as a transparent budget process.
- Strengthen our Distance Education program via clear guidelines & requirements for faculty as well as advocate for necessary technology resources.
- Ensure our college’s positive Accreditation status via our collective participation in ongoing committee work.

Our shared governance responsibility is only as good as we share it. I encourage you to continue to be actively involved in our efforts to keep SJCC great for our students!

At your service,

Jesus Covarrubias

SJCC Academic Senate, President

Academic Senate Executive Team

Jesus Covarrubias, President
Michael Berke, Vice-President
Phil Crawford, Treasurer
Fabio Gonzalez, Past President
Rachel Hagan – At-Large Senator
Iyun Lazik – At-large Senator

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In my role as Accreditation Tri-Chair for Standard 1B (Institutional Effectiveness), I have become acutely aware of the importance of the SLO assessment process in the accreditation self-study. In the Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions, it states: “Student achievement and student learning are core to fulfillment of the mission of an institution of higher education”. Additionally, the focus on SLO assessment has expanded from assessment measuring and reporting to measuring, reporting, analysis and improvement. This focus requires that the institution provide evidence to:

- ensure learning is the institution’s core activity;
- support and produce student learning;
- assess how well learning is occurring;
- make changes to improve student learning;
- organize its key processes to effectively support student learning;
- allocate its resources to effectively support student learning; and
- improve learning as an important means to institutional improvement. (from the Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions)

Looking back over the last 6 years, it’s clear that we’ve come a long way in terms of measuring and reporting SLO assessments, but we have little evidence that SLO assessment data is being used to improve student learning.

After sharing my thoughts with the AS President and Vice President, I was invited to address the Academic Senate on this topic. My main point was we’ve always had learning outcomes and we’ve always assessed them in the form of grades and critiques. In fact, learning outcomes have been and should remain the sole responsibility of the faculty. To say that a majority of faculty members have not embraced SLO assessment might be an understatement, but it doesn’t matter whether our attitudes are positive or negative; we still have to assess SLOs. Not doing it or doing it poorly puts the entire college at risk of accreditation sanctions, which ultimately hurt us, especially our students.

It’s been suggested that the push for data driven assessments comes from the No Child Left Behind forces, and I think that’s an accurate assumption. As a Fine Arts instructor, I am horrified by the destruction caused by that movement, especially to Fine and Performing Arts programs. I am also scared that it could happen here. If the stick that’s used to threaten us is sanctions based on SLO assessment performance, then our best strategy, in my opinion, is to own the stick. While we are being told what is expected of us, we are not being told how to meet those expectations, at least not yet. If faculty take responsibility for the entire SLO process and strive to create meaning and value from it, there will be no need for sanctions. If, on the other hand, faculty resist the SLO process and fail to show any progress, that’s an invitation not only for sanctions but for interventions by people or agencies outside the faculty. Clearly, our academic freedom would be at stake.

If the stick is sanctions based on our SLO assessment performance, what’s the carrot? What are the benefits of faculty driven SLO assessment? First, we can improve student learning and student achievement through the process of assessment and analysis. As a case in point, I was very resistant to SLO assessments when they were implemented at the time of our last accreditation self-study. I thought they were a waste of time and a personal affront to me as an instructor. I just hoped they’d go away, but after a while, I realized they weren’t going to. At that point, I began to look for ways to make the process easier and less painful. To my surprise, the (continued on next page)
system that I created not only made assessment easier; it also had a positive impact on student learning. I didn’t really change anything about what I taught, but I began to try new ways of presenting material and tracking student performance.

Another potential benefit of faculty driven assessment is program improvement. The process of developing program SLOs and aligning course SLOs to them helps create cohesion in a program and leads to a more integrated and positive experience for students. In the Art department, this process also led to more communication between faculty about how classes impact each other. We started sharing more about our teaching methods, which has led to a stronger, more energized department.

Finally, a faculty that is dedicated to student success and continuous improvement of courses and programs through meaningful assessment of both quantitative and qualitative data is at the heart of a great educational institution. We have so much talent, creativity and passion here at SJCC! What we need now is to claim our ownership of the entire process, which includes creating the learning outcomes, developing the means of measuring them, assessing them, analyzing the data, reporting the results and planning for improvements to courses and programs based on our findings. We need to support faculty through training and other professional development activities. During my visit to the Senate on 12/2/15, I was pleased that my suggestions were met with a positive reception. I requested that the Senate develop and adopt a resolution stating that the SLO assessment process is solely the purview of the faculty and that the Senate supports the training and development of faculty in making assessment meaningful and purposeful.

I’d like to thank the Senate for their insightful questions and comments regarding this issue, and I look forward to working with them to craft such a resolution.

Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

The Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC), as a standing committee of the Academic Senate, is charged with:

- Developing procedures related to Institutional, Program, and Course SLOs, their assessment and reporting of same
- Providing guidance and support to faculty and staff in the development of SLOs and SLO assessment tools at the course and program levels, as well as in aligning SLOs across the three levels: course, program and institutional, as well as Service Area Outcomes
- Organizing and implementing a plan to assess Institutional SLOs for the college
- Coordinating with Division Deans and administrative staff to review and maintain processes, and ensure current practices are relevant, meaningful and appropriately linked to the Program Review Process.

Visit the ASCCC website for useful information: www.asccc.org
Cultivamos Excelencia (Cultivating Excellence), SJCC’s

Newest Program to Increase Transfer

By Jessica Breheny & Robert Gutierrez

The Cultivamos Excelencia: Undergraduate Research Scholars Program is the newest Title V, Hispanic Serving Institution grant program created and facilitated by Metas. This program offers a unique opportunity for San Jose City College students to conduct university-level research and provides access to valuable resources to get students transfer-ready.

The principal goal of the program is to motivate and retain Latino students to complete a degree at a research university. By working together, San Jose City College and the University of California, Santa Cruz will use a combination of tutoring, mentoring, research skills instruction, transfer advising, and, perhaps most important, participation in undergraduate research experiences to encourage students’ self-efficacy, skill development, and motivation to complete their bachelor degrees on-time and with a highly honed set of analytical and writing skills.

Cultivamos Excelencia started this semester with a motivated cohort of students who plan to transfer and who are excited about their studies. We are in the process of hiring a counselor for the program and are working with our University of California, Santa Cruz partners to hire graduate student mentors. Many of our own San Jose City College faculty have also offered discipline-specific support for students’ research projects, and we are hoping to find a few more volunteers. The program will also host a Family Day so that students’ families can learn more about transfer and the exciting work that is being done at San Jose City College and the University of California, Santa Cruz. In addition, we are providing instruction in research methods and writing through English 1C and will hold a summer undergraduate research institute and symposium. After students complete the program, they will receive ongoing transfer support after they have completed the program. Cultivamos Excelencia will give students, who might not think they can succeed at a research university, a head start in university-level research and study.

We are excited to help the Cultivamos Excelencia: Undergraduate Research Scholars program students explore their research ideas and their transfer goals, and we look forward to seeing what innovative projects emerge from their academic interests. Stay tuned for updates, announcements, and invitations to campus-wide events, and let us know if you would like to support one of our student researchers!

For More Information Contact:

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