

Senate Chair's Report – November 2010

The CSU Budget

The CSU finally has a budget (mostly.) While the allocation of an additional \$260 million from the state government and \$106 million from the federal government is certainly welcome relative to past budgets, the horizon still has a lot of dark clouds. The budget comes with additional enrollment expectations for current and future years which create chaos in our enrollment planning/management. And the federal dollars are a one-time allocation that comes with ongoing enrollment expectations. That context will likely trigger requests for a 5% tuition increase for spring 2010 and an additional 10% for next year. (And we're going to start calling it "tuition".)

The Graduation Initiative

It appeared that the steps taken to reduce enrollment (prior to receiving a budget with expectation of enrollment growth) were likely to result in improved graduation rates and thus the emphasis of the Graduation Initiative would be on under-represented minority graduation rates. A pair of CSU conferences was held which highlighted approaches to these issues in Georgia and Florida. Most of the successful models embodied "high-impact practices." These imply significant increases in faculty and advisor interactions with students which are challenging to implement in a budget environment characterized by fewer dollars-per-student.

The Early Start Initiative

The November 19 deadline is looming for the submission of initial campus plans to implement the Early Start Initiative goals. The Implementation Task Force hopes to discover approaches in these plans which allow for efficient preparation for baccalaureate study as well the ready articulation of "start" and "complete" in this context. The Math Council and English Council are heavily involved in defining the Systemwide approach to these challenges.

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

SB 1440 Implementation

Most of the meetings that I attended in October were directed toward the implementation of SB 1440, "The Transfer Bill." The Implementation Task Force is planning to meet on November 2 for the first time, but many of the community college districts are already working on their plans. One meeting I attended, the Central Valley Degree Completion Summit, sponsored by the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, had elements that were both encouraging and worrisome. On the encouraging side was the strong interest in providing smooth pathways for students. The scary part was watching a large group of mostly community college and CSU administrators, with only a scattering of faculty, tackle the job of determining the course patterns for the transfer AA degrees in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and liberal studies. Jane Patton, president of the community college Academic Senate, and I were there to persuade this group that a statewide approach to these issues would be a better model and that approach would include discipline faculty who proposed the needed curricular pathways. I can update and elaborate on the issue at our plenary.