

Department Chairs & Coordinators Minutes **Thursday, February 4, 2010**

Attendance: Eve Adler, Vini Angel, Zeny Baduel, Garen Baghdasarian, Fariba Bolandhemat, Fran Chandler, Anna Collier, Ron Davis, Frank Dawson, Judith Douglas, Vicki Drake, Lisa Farwell, Teresa Garcia, Helen LeDonne, Fran Manion, Jennifer Merlic, Eric Oifer, Toni Randall, Perviz Sawoski, Christine Schultz, Eleanor Singleton, Susan Sterr, Gary Todd, Toni Trives, Joy Tucker, Rhoda Tuit

Guests: Sherri Lee Lewis, Linda Sinclair, Jo Kidd, Georgia Lorenz

Note: The order of agenda items was altered to accommodate individuals' scheduling needs.

Announcements:

Fariba announced that goldenrod Conference Authorization Request Forms are required for all SMC employees planning to attend the Tech Ed conference April 11-13, even if they are NOT applying for college funding. The forms are required for liability reasons. Faculty planning to attend the conference should complete one of these forms and send it to Sandra Sanchez ASAP.

I. Student Evaluations Update, Sherri Lee Lewis

Student evaluation forms for on-ground classes have now been separated into two separate pages. One is the usual small evaluation form on which students bubble in answers with a #2 pencil. The other is now an 8 ½ x 11 sheet containing the free response questions that students formerly completed on the back of the bubble in form. Students will now be asked to skip the back of the small form and place their comments on the larger, separate Evaluation Comment Form. These comment forms will be returned directly to the departments where chairs will keep them on file, unopened, until grades have been submitted for the semester. At that time, chairs can view the comments and return them to faculty. The bubble-in Evaluation Forms will be returned to MIS for processing and results will be available to the faculty member, the department chair, and appropriate administrators via the faculty portal 7 days after grades are due. If a faculty member has not yet submitted their grades, the results will not be posted for that individual. Currently, only faculty can see their results on the portal, but MIS is developing a report for chairs and appropriate administrators as well and it should be ready for spring 2010 results.

To ensure that everyone understands the new procedures and that forms are returned to their proper places, a new instruction sheet has been created for faculty, as well as one for students indicating the proper drop off locations for completed forms on the various SMC campuses.

Faculty scheduled for student evaluation will be notified via email in the 2nd week of the evaluation semester. A question was raised about whether chairs would receive this notification as well. Sherri & Jennifer promised to get an answer out to chairs soon regarding that question.

Faculty scheduled for student evaluation of on-ground classes will receive a packet of information from HR (in the 4th week for classes ending before week 9, or in the 10th week for classes ending after the 10th week) containing the following:

1. A greenbar printout showing their section numbers, student counts, and instructor codes if appropriate
2. An instruction sheet explaining how the evaluations are to be administered.
3. An instruction sheet for each section to be given to the student who will collect the evaluation forms. This sheet details evaluation form drop off locations for each SMC campus.
4. A stack of Evaluation Forms
5. A set of small envelopes, one per section, to hold the completed Evaluation Forms.
6. A stack of Evaluation Comment Forms (8 ½" x 11")
7. A set of 9x12 envelopes, one per section, to hold the completed Evaluation Comment Forms.

Note that the student evaluation process for online classes has not been altered. The information above applies to on-ground classes only.

II. Veterans' Resource Center, Linda Sinclair

SMC now offers a Veterans' Resource Center located in LA 135. Linda Sinclair and Elaine Martin are the two counselors working there. The Center serves both veteran students and faculty who are working with veteran students. They can provide information on post traumatic stress disorder and other issues commonly faced by returning veterans. Linda noted that it's possible for a veteran to be in classes barely a week after returning from active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan. Please feel free to call Linda or Elaine or stop by the center for help if you have any questions or concerns regarding a veteran student or if you would like them to attend one of your department meetings to discuss these issues with faculty. Also please feel free to refer veteran students to the center, and encourage your department to do so as well, especially if you have reason to think the student may be in need of assistance.

III. Alumni & Friends Committee, Jo Kidd

The committee is looking for ways to keep in touch with alumni students and is aware that many departments have created ways to do so. Please share how your department keeps in touch with alumni with Jo by emailing her at kidd_jo@smc.edu.

Jo also asked encouraged faculty to please support student clubs by serving as advisors, and to support the alumni committee by joining even before you are retired!

IV. Senate Report, Eric Oifer

- *Accreditation:* The visiting team will be on campus March 8-11.
- *Full Time Faculty Hiring:* Dr. Tsang will announce his decision about the hiring of full time faculty this year after the Board Retreat on February 20.
- *Budget:* The projected deficit for SMC for 2009-2010 is about \$2,000,000. In addition, SMC's cost to backfill a percentage of the categorical funds that were cut from the state budget for 2009-2010 is about \$1,800,000.

- *Administrative Retreat Rights:* State Ed Code guarantees faculty retreat rights for administrators who meet minimum qualifications, but there are some areas of the law that are apparently unclear. For example, if an administrator is not fired, but simply prefers to join the faculty, is retreat to be permitted? Several issues related to this topic are currently unclear so SMC needs to clearly define the process and when it applies.
- *Debriefing on Full Time Faculty Ranking Process:* The ranking committee met on January 13 to discuss the process used last fall in an effort to inform next year's committee regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. Ranking committee comments included:

Committee members really liked scoring each request individually and allowing the conglomerate scores to determine the ranking, rather than having to vote each position up or down, or to compile a ranked list individually.

Members felt the ample time used for discussion of the criteria prior to the ranking meeting was very helpful in making all committee members thoroughly familiar with the criteria so the ranking process could proceed more smoothly and uniformly.

The use of objective ranking was considered very helpful, though there were a few "kinks" that need to be addressed next time, including developing a way to handle multiple requests from a single area better.

Members felt that college goals and future directions should inform the process in some way.

The issue of defining departments vs. disciplines better, especially as they are used to identify which data to include in objective scores, needs to be addressed better. One suggestion was to ask Chairs to include a job description that would better define the request and could be used if that position was selected for hiring.

Additional comments from Chairs included a request NOT to limit the number of requests a single area could submit and support for incorporating district goals provided faculty input was not sacrificed. It was also pointed out that the district said only requests involving replacement of existing part time faculty were permissible, yet the scoring mechanism did not provide a clear way of eliminating those requests that did not meet this requirement.

- *The Bridging Research, Information, and Cultures Initiative (BRIC):* SMC has applied to be a member of the pilot group of California Community Colleges participating in the BRIC Initiative. From the BRIC request for proposals: "The BRIC Initiative is to strengthen inquiry-based practice and build cultures of evidence at the California community colleges in order to enhance student success and facilitate goal attainment. Acknowledging that research is fundamentally an intervention-based activity, BRIC seeks to encourage the use of research to optimize the conditions and

systems under which students learn. By examining institutional-level metrics and facilitating opportunities for practitioners to better understand how data and information can be used at the ground level, institutions can leverage collaborative discussions on ways to improve outcomes and enrich students' experiences." More information about the BRIC Initiative is available at www.rpgroup.org/documents/BRIC-TAP-Application-Final.pdf. Please contact Eric Oifer if you would like a copy of SMC's application.

V. College Report, Georgia Lorenz

- *Enrollment:* Spring enrollment is currently up by 11% (900 FTES) over the same day in the spring semester for 2009 and current efficiency is 97.9%.
- *Summer 2010:* We are planning a 5% reduction in our summer 2010 offerings compared to summer 2009.
- *Fall 2010:* We are also currently planning a 5% reduction in the fall 2010 course offering compared to fall 2009. Run 1 of the Fall 2010 schedule will be distributed to chairs during the first week of the spring semester and will be due back to Academic Affairs by March 8.
- *Accreditation:* The visiting team is scheduled to be on campus March 8-11. Chairs should please be available during this time period in case the team requests a meeting with them.
- *DPAC Update:* Recent actions taken by DPAC include completion of the 2009-2010 Master Plan for Education which is now available online. The plan is a bit later than usual this year because DPAC revised the format of the objectives to clearly link each objective with the appropriate Institutional Learning Outcomes, Program Review references, and college Strategic Initiatives and Action Plans. DPAC has also initiated a self evaluation process for its subcommittees to take place this spring with the goal of ensuring that the subcommittees are still useful and relevant, and to review their charges to determine if the charges need to be altered.
- *Purchase Requisitions:* Chairs should expect purchase requisitions for 2009-2010 will be due by the end of March. Please initiate any necessary purchases soon to meet this deadline.

VI. Sabbaticals Timeline

There is concern in the Senate about the declining number of sabbaticals applicants and one thought is that the timeline for faculty to develop proposals is too short. The sabbaticals committee may consider altering the timeline and asked for input from the Chairs about what the impact on scheduling would be if sabbatical awards were not announced until spring semester, after the fall schedule is completed. Chairs felt that the form they sign when a faculty member in their department submits an application is sufficient warning. Chairs are therefore not concerned with the possible extension of the sabbatical process timeline.

VII. AR4310 – Final Examination Scheduling

The Student Affairs Committee is modifying AR 4310 which concerns the scheduling of final examinations. The current draft reads, in part:

Final examinations are not authorized to be given in advance of the regularly scheduled time without the approval of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs. At the instructor's discretion, a student may be shifted from one section to another for a final examination.

The senate has asked the Chairs to both inform faculty of this regulation since there seem to be many violations occurring currently, and to provide input as to whether or not this regulation should be altered.

Discussion ensued. Some chairs want to leave the policy as is, while others pointed out that current practice is that it is fine to have the final early (i.e. in the last class period or as a take-home exam) provided that the instructor makes him/herself available to students during the regularly scheduled final exam period. Still others cited examples of classes for which there is no final exam but in which classes meet for other activities during the final exam period. Some suggested altering the final exam schedule to reflect the regular class schedule to avoid misunderstandings regarding exactly when instructors are expected to meet with their students. There was agreement that the current language of this AR does not reflect current practice, but the chairs feel that the issue needs further discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Next meeting Friday, March 12, 2009, 10:00-12:00, Business 111. Please send agenda items to Merlic_jennifer@smc.edu.

Note that the March meeting will occur on the 2nd Friday of the month instead of the 1st due to the Departmental Flex Day scheduled for Friday, March 5.