COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION

ADVOCATE

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Governor promises to 'protect' higher education in latest budget proposal

Faculty leaders remain skeptical

ACTIVISM

Although the governor has taken pains to say he doesn't anticipate further cuts to higher education, community college leaders – like their counterparts in the K-12 system, are concerned about continuing budget reductions.

"Of course we were pleased to hear that the governor is trying to protect higher education, but it must be understood that our higher education system has already endured significant cuts that are going to affect our current and future students," said CCA President Ron Norton Reel. "And while he says that he is trying to 'protect' higher ed from cuts, this doesn't mean there are no reductions."

Governor's budget

Although the governor's proposed budget provides a $126 million to fund enrollment growth, it would also cut $10 million each from the Part-time Faculty Compensation and Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, and reduce the SB 76 Career-Technical Program by $28 million. The governor also proposes suspending of all mandates. CCA/CTA staff is analyzing this proposal to make sure that "suspending mandates" does not equate to suspending collective bargaining.

Reaction to budget

"The governor will have a real problem on his hands if that's the case," Reel said.

The governor continues to tinker with his 2010 budget, and is floating a variety of proposals as well. Most recently, he suggested that the state could save $1 billion by building and operating prisons in Mexico – and putting that money into the coffers of the CSU and UC higher education systems. Earlier, in his State of the State address, the governor appeared to promise that the state would no longer spend more on prisons than it does on higher education.

"That in itself was a relief to hear, since we as educators, have always maintained that access to quality education will greatly reduce our prison population," Reel said.

The independent Legislative Analyst's Office, however, was critical of the proposal and has urged the Legislature to reject it because it would constrain the state's ability to allocate funding where it is most needed each year.

Students plan protests

Community college faculty and students, along with students and faculty from the California State University and the University of California have participated in numerous actions this past fall over budget cuts that have already taken place. Students at Southwestern College protested upcoming class cancellations while Solano College students staged a mock funeral in November to say farewell to student empowerment programs, affordable textbooks, CalWorks services and numerous classes that had been eliminated.

Some colleges, like Imperial Valley College, have proposed closing three off-campus sites while others, like College of the Canyons have reduced as many as 500 course sections and have turned away thousands of students.

Many students plan to hold campus activities on March 4 and to join a protest in Sacramento on March 22. The Student Senate for California Community Colleges and the California State Student Association are spearheading the protest at the state capitol.

Southwestern College union leaders reinstated, but campus uproar over course cuts continues

Instructors were furloughed over free speech incident

What started out as a student protest at Southwestern College in October over the anticipated cancellation of more than 400 spring course sections, erupted into a full free speech battle for four faculty union leaders who were slapped with a two-week furlough for their involvement in the protest.

That action by the administration garnered national attention in the media and from civil liberties organizations, and resulted in further protests on the Chula Vista campus throughout the fall. Supporters of the faculty even organized a blog, *saveourswc.blogspot.com*, which features an interview with faculty association president Phil Lopez, one of the four faculty who was furloughed.

Four are cited

Lopez, president of the Southwestern College Education Association, was taken aback by the suspension, especially since he only became involved by chance, when he passed the rally following a union meeting he had attended. Before the afternoon protest was over, however, Lopez along with past association president Janet Mazarella, PAC Chair Andrew Rempt, and another member, Dinorah Guardinia-Costa, were cited by campus police under Penal Code 626.4(a): …"Consent to remain on campus has been withdrawn… when there is reasonable cause to believe that such person has willfully disrupted the orderly operation of such campus or facility."

Phil Lopez, president of the Southwestern College Education Association, addresses one of several rallies that took place after the furloughing of four faculty.

Lopez says he was charged for inciting students to march from the rally to the president's action – something he claims he didn't do, but if he had, it is a constitutionally protected action.

In a statement of support for the Southwestern faculty, CCA President Ron Reel said, "When a college president and governing board support cutting 25 percent of all course offerings and exclude faculty from important decisions, the right response is to challenge these cuts…Retaliating against faculty for standing up for their students is a reckless course of action."

Reel, along with Jim Groth, CTA Board member for that area, and U.S. Rep. Bob Filner also participated in a well-attended rally in support of the faculty on Nov. 13.

Investigation called off

The administration later called off its investigation and declined to file criminal charges against the professors. Ultimately, three of the professors received little more than a two-week paid leave. A fourth had been allowed back on campus shortly after the incident had taken place.

While much of the uproar surrounding the faculty's "suspension" has died down, the Southwestern CCA chapter continues to oppose the administration's proposal to cut course offerings by 25 percent.

Although many other colleges are feeling the budget ax, Southwestern has a healthy reserve fund that is twice as large as required, Lopez said. Last year, he said, the college predicted a $5 to $6 million deficit and ended up $2.1 million in the black.

Lopez maintains cutting such a large number of courses is not necessary given that reserve.

"Cutting 400 class offerings translates to 15,000 to 16,000 students who will be denied a place at the college," he said.

Lopez said the faculty association objects to the "top-down" decision-making process that went into the decision to eliminate courses in the spring. If nothing else, the incident has mobilized faculty to organize. With three seats open on the board of trustees in November, Lopez says he expects the association will be getting involved in an election later this year.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Accrediting Commission must address faculty concerns

More cooperation is needed

SPEAKING OUT

By Ron Norton Reel
CCA President

For the past two years, CCA has made a concerted effort to work with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), but it hasn't been easy.

The commission is, of course, the two-year college subset of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges authorized by the Department of Education to oversee accreditation in the western United States. It has been the cause of much disquiet among community college faculty.

Let me say that although CCA has always been a staunch supporter of the accreditation process, we have become increasingly concerned that the commission is encroaching on areas that we believe should be determined by the collective bargaining process under California law.

Student Learning Outcomes

For example, one of these issues that has been a hot topic on our campuses recently is that the Accrediting Commission has suggested that Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) be required as part of instructor evaluation. Again, we are not opposed to our colleges assembling SLOs, should union and faculty decide to do so, but we, the union, must be part of the process in determining how they are to be used. We do not believe they should be used as part of faculty evaluation.

CCA is not alone in its concern that the commission has been overreaching its jurisdiction. Administrators and boards of trustees are also expressing concerns regarding the policies that were being followed. The situation has so roiled some, that several individuals who were serving on accreditation visitation teams no longer wish to serve. Concerns are also being raised by the California Community College Board of Governors and the Consultation Council, an alliance of statewide faculty associations and the academic senate. In reaction to this concern, the chancellor this summer assembled a task force to examine the situation.

The task force, which includes representatives from eight constituencies, created a survey that was sent to every local college president and faculty liaison to the accreditation process for each college. From the information collected in the survey, the task force developed seven recommendations.

Meeting requested

Once the recommendations were completed, the task force requested a meeting with Barbara Beno, president of the commission, and other commissioners to provide a "low-key" and less formal approach to address our concerns and to reach some sort of consensus.

Task force representatives initially met with five of the commissioners who then made it very clear they could not respond on behalf of the entire commission. Later, the task force decided on a letter to the Accrediting Commission requesting permission to appear at its January 6, 2010 Public Agenda meeting.

A letter from Beno on December 11 rejected the task force's request. The task force then sent another letter pointing out that the commission's own bylaws allowed the allowed the task force to address the commission.

Permission denied

Commission Chairperson Lurelan Gaines, however, informed Chancellor Jack Scott in a letter, that — in consultation with Beno — she decided against granting the task force permission to address the commission. Instead, she indicated that the commission would respond in writing to each of the suggested recommendations in due course.

Becoming annoyed by the lack of respect shown by the commission, the task force decided to attend the commission meeting on January 6 to demonstrate its solidarity. We truly wanted the commissioners to see a consolidated effort to ensure the success of the accreditation process we all support.

When we showed up at the designated time and place, a note was posted outside of the meeting room that the commission was in closed session and no public entry could take place until both of the doors were opened. Once the doors were opened and we entered the room, Beno read a communication that stated the chancellor's task force would not be able to make a presentation at this public session. The task force members stayed until afternoon and finally left without having any commissioner ask for any of us to speak.

The next day, Chancellor Jack Scott received an email granting him permission to speak for five minutes on Friday, Jan. 9 at 2:00 p.m. Dr. Scott, accompanied by Nicki Harrington, representing college chief executive officers, and Academic Senate President Jane Patton, arrived at the appointed time and was given his allotted five minutes, exactly. Neither Harrington nor Patton were allowed to speak.

Response not acceptable

A 10-page letter was sent to Chancellor Scott on Jan. 20 responding to the seven recommendations. The ACCJC responses varied. Their stances included the fact they felt ample feedback from member institutions had been provided, suggested they provide sufficient workshops, continued to insist colleges need to be in compliance with standards as stated, suggested that compliance leads to institutional improvement, and finally regarding the recommendation regarding encroachment on negotiable issues suggested that this was not in the best interests of institutional quality or students to be discussed. The commission's response may be a starting point for discussions, however, the commissioners should spend some quality time in their March meeting and actually respond with conviction and cooperation as a guiding light a response that is not just defensive and accusatory.

When 110 of your 135 colleges begin to question the leadership and direction of an organization, perhaps it is time to address those recommendations and concerns before those clients go elsewhere.

CCA Calendar of Events

28th Annual Higher Education Conference: Joint Conference with AFT Higher Education
March 26 - 28, 2010 Palace Hotel, San Francisco

CCA Spring Conference and W.H.O. Awards — April 23-25, 2010 ..... Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, NV

CTA Presidents Conference — July 19-23, 2010, Asilomar

CTA Summer Institute — Aug. 1-6, 2010 ..... UCLA campus, Los Angeles

Contact 650/577-5184 CTA Regional Resource Center (CCA) or register online at *http://www.ccafca.org.*

ADVOCATE

The Community College Association exists to protect and promote the well-being of its members through collective bargaining, lobbying and representation activities, thereby advancing universal and quality public education.

It is an affiliate of the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association.

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The CCA Advocate is also available online at the CCA Web site: *www.ccafca.org*

CCA chapters wage successful campaigns to elect 'faculty-friendly' trustees

ABC funding proves valuable

THE BENEFITS OF A UNION

Several college boards of trustees in Southern California will be bolstered by the election of eight faculty-friendly candidates during the recent November elections.

CCA local affiliates, including faculty associations at College of the Canyons, Rio Hondo College and Mount San Antonio College made use of political action funds they obtained through the Association for Better Citizenship (ABC), CTA's political action committee, to help make a difference in their local elections.

The Rio Hondo Faculty Association played a crucial role in the re-election of incumbent Angela Acosta-Salazar, as well as the election of two new board members, Norma Edith Garcia and Madeline Shapiro.

"We put an incredible effort into this election. Along with our classified staff, we probably had 100 people working on it," said Adam Wetsman, president of the Rio Hondo Faculty Association.

Wetsman said many volunteers became involved when they were told the campus was facing a financial crisis just six weeks after the board of trustees had given the president a big increase in his compensation package.

"We weren't happy with the board and the administration and we thought it was important to change that," Wetsman said.

Rio Hondo was able to add $15,000 from its own political action fund to the $5,000 it received in ABC funds for campaign mailers and other materials.

Jennifer Galbraith

"The funding definitely helped," Wetsman said.

Mount San Antonio College faculty used ABC funds to help re-elect Judy Chen Haggerty and Dr. David K. Hall to the board for another four-year term.

"With a presidential search possibly coming up in the future, we wanted to keep a board that works well together and supports the students and the faculty. Both of these candidates were endorsed not only by the faculty association, but also by our CSEA units and the Associated Students," said Jennifer Galbraith, president of the Mount San Antonio College Faculty Association.

At College of the Canyons, the faculty association worked to re-elect two board members, Joan MacGregor and Michael Berger.

Over the past six years, CTA's ABC committee has provided funds to CCA faculty associations 37 times in varying amounts that total $223,650, according to Chaumonde Porterfield-Pyatt, the higher education representative who advocates for community colleges on the ABC Committee.

With only a few elections in the fall, the dispersement of ABC funds to the CCA chapters amounted to $15,000, a smaller amount than usual. In a major election year like 2008, nearly $82,000 was distributed to 10 CCA chapters.

Funds from the ABC Committee are not intended to finance a campaign, but rather to provide "seed" money for printing and mailing costs, which in many cases, is substantial.

For faculty associations considering supporting candidates, bonds or parcel taxes, the time to prepare is now. Once an association selects a candidate or ballot issue, it needs to organize a budget and send Porterfield-Pyatt a letter of intent that it is going to apply for ABC funds. Letters of intent must be submitted at least 50 days before the election, while the application deadline is at least 35 days before. The ABC Committee then reviews the applications and makes its decisions. The link for the ABC Intent/Application is found on the CCA website for an easy download. Contact Porterfield-Pyatt at bettercitizens@verizon.net. or by cell phone: 559-300-2677, or home fax at 559-734-9465.

Lassen College faculty settles contract

Chapters around the state take action

After going two years without a contract, the Lassen Community College Faculty Association and the district have reached a contract settlement that will provide a salary increase, retention of health benefits and an agreement that Student Learning Outcomes be subject to collective bargaining when used in instructor evaluation — an issue on the Lassen campus that is still before the Public Employment Relation Board, (PERB).

The PERB case stems from a charge brought by the Lassen College faculty association against the district in 2008 when the college administration unilaterally changed its policy and started requiring certificated employees to submit a student assessment plan whenever they submit a course syllabus. When the administration topped off the demand by proposing that faculty be evaluated based on its Student Learning Outcomes, (SLOs) the chapter took the matter to PERB.

"The whole issue is still before PERB, but it is not in the contract," said Ross Stevenson, chief negotiator for the association. "We also successfully negotiated evaluation instruments for full and part-time faculty. That was important to us because the administration was evaluating faculty without approved evaluation instruments."

The faculty team also negotiated a 2.5 percent salary increase retroactive to July 1, 2009 and a 3.5 percent lump sum for the previous year. Both the salary increase and lump sum payments will also be extended to part-time unit members In addition, a memorandum of understanding regarding retirement incentives was also negotiated. Faculty who retire in the next 11 months will receive a lump sum of $1500 for each year of service up to a maximum of $40,000.

"Given today's climate, we're pretty pleased with the agreement," Stevenson said.

In other chapter news:

CTA Long Beach City College, Full-time represented several faculty in successfully getting their non-contractual release time restored after the district revoked it without adequate notice.

San Bernardino Community College District Teachers Association recruited 85 new members, both full- and part-time, as a result of an organizing effort that began in August with one-on-one contacts. This success was followed up with the first Reduction-in-Force (RIF) workshop offered by the association for members.

Merced College Faculty Association is organizing a political action committee for its board of trustees election.

Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association provided representation for an adjunct faculty member who was denied unemployment benefits. At the appeals hearing, full retroactive benefits were restored to the member by the panel judge.

Barstow College Faculty Association members received negotiations training while 12 executive board members of the Palo Verde Community College Faculty Association received leadership training.

Three chapters garner CTA Communications Awards

San Joaquin Delta receives Colmenares Award

Three local chapters of the Community College Association demonstrated they had the "write stuff" when CTA announced its Communications Awards recently.

San Joaquin Delta CTA, Rancho Santiago Community Education Faculty Association, and Coast Community College Association were among the winners of the 2008-09 CTA Communications Awards. San Joaquin Delta received the Jose Colmenares Award for outstanding overall contributions to communications, while Rancho Santiago received the Ralph J. Flynn Award for its website, *www.rsccdcefa.com*. The Coast College association was honored for its newsletter, the *Part-time Faculty Flyer*.

Honored at Council

San Joaquin Delta CTA mobilized its members and the community last year to not only replace board members with more faculty-friendly trustees, but to keep watch over the business of the college while it was going through a Grand Jury investigation. Faculty association members Steve Schermerhorn and Sam Hatch were instrumental in creating a communications plan that included a political action committee and a crisis committee to educate members about the issues during tough negotiations with the district.

Please see Three chapters, Page 5

Do you understand your 'Weingarten Rights'?

Don't hesitate to request union representation

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Your dean calls you into her office, shuts the door and asks you to sit down. She questions you about the way you handled a certain situation and begins to make accusations. You start to feel anxious and begin to wonder whether you could face disciplinary action.

Should you invoke your Weingarten Rights? The answer is yes, absolutely.

Based on the 1975 U.S. Supreme Court ruling of *National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) vs. Weingarten*, union employees are entitled to have union representation at meetings with supervisors that are investigatory or that could lead to disciplinary action. These rights have become known as the Weingarten Rights.

(The case is based on an employee who worked at a store lunch counter as a sales person who was a member of the Retail Clerks Union. She was summoned to an interview with supervisors and questioned about failing to pay full price for a box of chicken she had purchased. The employee asked for the presence of a union representative several times but was refused by the manager each time. The employee reported what had happened to her shop steward and other union representatives. As a result, an unfair labor practice proceeding was filed before the NLRB and the ruling in favor of the employee was appealed numerous times until going before the high court.)

To invoke Weingarten Rights, a union member should say something like this: "If my response to your questions could lead to my being disciplined, I request union representation at this meeting, and that the meeting be postponed until my union representative arrives." When the employee makes the request for a union representative to be present, management has two options:

- It can stop questioning until the representative arrives.
- It can call off the interview and proceed with the investigation without the benefit of the employee's input.

Employers will often assert that the only role of a union representative in an investigatory interview is to observe the discussion. The Supreme Court, however, clearly acknowledges a representative's right to assist and counsel workers during the interview.

The Supreme Court has also ruled that before an investigatory interview, management must inform the union representative of the subject of the interrogation. The representative must also be allowed to speak privately with the employee before the interview and at any time during the interview. During the questioning, the representative can interrupt to clarify a question or to object to confusing or intimidating tactics.

While the interview is in progress the representative cannot tell the employee what to say – but he or she may advise them on how to answer a question. At the end of the interview the union representative can add information to support the employee's case.

The website of the Teachers Association of Long Beach has cards that can be printed out and distributed to your association members to inform them about their Weingarten Rights. Go to *www.talb.org/contractandrights_weingarten_rights.php* and click on "print cards."

Employees must demand their right to be represented in these investigatory interviews. Don't be afraid to ask for what you are entitled to.

CCA/CTA: Where members come first

Check out these valuable services

CTA adds value to membership with an ongoing commitment to improve benefit programs and to enhance the lives of our members with greater choice of vendors. CTA, together with NEA, provides a selection of valuable benefits including financial services, insurance programs, credit card services and more.

Financial services

To assist CTA members with general investment and retirement information, CTA has launched an online website – California Educators Investment and Retirement Guide – *www.ctainvest.org*. The website features online calculators, webinars, 403(b) and 457 education, CalSTRS and CalPERS information, and articles to help with investment and financial planning decisions. We also urge you to read The California Educator's Guide to 403(b) and 457 Plans which is available at *www.ctainvest.org*. The Guide includes tips on choosing the investments in your plan, a checklist of questions to ask your financial advisor and more.

insurance plans

The CTA-endorsed life and disability insurance plans through Standard Insurance Company offer level term-life insurance options ranging from $25,000 to $400,000, and disability insurance with benefits up to 75% of educator's regular daily contract salary (benefits reduced by deductible income; applicants subject to eligibility requirements). Call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at (800) 522-0406 or visit *www.cta.org*. CTA also provides an auto and home insurance program through California Casualty's A+ Auto and Home Insurance with customized coverage to meet members' needs. Visit *www.calcas.com/cta* or call (800) 800-9410 for a quote today.

In addition, CTA and NEA offer automatic benefits and protection for members. The CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan provides an automatic death benefit of up to $2,000 and an additional accidental death and dismemberment benefit of up to $10,000. For more information, contact CTA Member Benefits at (650) 552-5200 or visit *www.cta.org*. The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance also provides up to $1,000 group term life insurance or up to $5,000 accidental death and dismemberment insurance in addition to the CTA benefit at no cost to members. For questions, contact NEA Member Benefits at (800) 637-4636 or visit *www.neamb.com*. CTA members can also have peace of mind with added protection through the CTA/NEA Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Insurance. Information can be found at *www.cta.org* or by calling the CTA Legal Services Department at (650) 552-5425.

Do not ask for whom the union calls...

Directors positions available

CCA activists will have an opportunity to make an even greater contribution to their union this spring by running for a position on the CCA Board of Directors.

The following CCA Board of Directors positions will be up for election at the CCA Spring Conference & Council, April 23-25, 2010.

If you are interested in declaring your candidacy for one of these positions, you can download the Declaration of Candidacy form from the CCA website *www.cca4me.org* or contact Bonita Lovell at the CCA office, 916-288-4921 or by email *blovell@cta.org*.

In order to be a candidate as an Officer or District Director, you must be a CCA/CTA/NEA dues paying member in good standing at one of the chapters listed under the district director position.

To be a candidate for one of the At-Large positions, please refer to the CCA Bylaws for definition and eligibility requirements. You can access a copy of the CCA Bylaws on the CCA website at *www.cca4me.org*.

The deadline for submitting the Declaration of Candidacy form is April 5, 2010.

Declarations of Candidacy will only be accepted electronically to *blovell@cta.org*.

All seats are two year terms, commencing June 1, 2010 and terminating May 31, 2012.

- **CCA Secretary**
- **CCA Treasurer**
- **District A Director**: *Butte, College of the Siskiyous, Lassen, Mendocino Part -Time, Napa Valley, Shasta*
- **District B Director**: *College of the Sequoias, Gavilan, Hartnell, Merced, Monterey Peninsula*
- **District C Director**: *Lake Tahoe, San Joaquin Delta, Sierra, Solano*
- **District D Director**: *Barstow, College of the Canyons, Kern, Taft, West Hills*
- **District G Director**: *Mt. San Antonio*
- **District H Director**: *Coast, Rio Hondo, Long Beach PT, Long Beach FT*
- **District L Director**: *College of the Desert Adjunct, College of the Desert, Imperial, MiraCosta, Southwestern*
- **Southern Part-Time Director**
- **Northern Part-Time Director**
- **Ethnic/Racial Minority At-Large Director**

CCA was right all along about AB 1725

Twenty years later, we're seeing the ugly side of the College Reform bill

SOUNDING OFF

By Alan Frey
Community College Consultant

Many of you who read this column were not around when the big Community College Reform Bill, AB 1725, was passed by the Legislature and signed by Gov. George Deukmejian in 1988 and touted as the "be all" and "save all" for the California Community Colleges future.

Most of the constituent groups that hovered around the workings of the community colleges were highly in favor of the legislation but one group stood out against the pack – the Community College Association.

At the time, we had grave misgivings about the reforms that were being pushed through and steadfastly argued against the changes. We were considered pariahs, traitors and a number of other salty terms by both faculty and management.

Yet, some 20 years later, the more onerous aspects of the reform measures are rearing their not-so-pretty heads.

We were considered pariahs, traitors and a number of other salty terms by both faculty and management.

Best-kept secrets exposed

We first start with one of the best-kept secrets of AB 1725 that just recently become controversial: The authority to adopt the regulations that interpret the laws passed by the Legislature. Much like the Federal Register interprets the laws passed by Congress and the federal government; we in California have a similar checks-and-balance system for interpreting our laws. It is called the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). This agency reviews regulations proposed by the various agencies empowered to enforce the laws to insure that the intent of the law is maintained.

But not so with the Board of Governors and the chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges. AB 1725 exempted the chancellor's office from having to review its regulations with the OAL and instead enacted a provision that says that the regulations written by the chancellors office shall go into effect unless two-thirds of the college districts object. For years this has been a sleeper provision in the law until recently when the chancellor proposed regulations that gutted the 50 Percent Law, severely impacting college faculty and collective bargaining.

The 50 Percent Law, which maintains that 50 percent of a college's budget be used in the classroom, has long been a thorn in the side of community college management, and this round-about gift to CC administration is the first true example of the folly of allowing a state agency to interpret the laws passed by the legislature.

CCA and other faculty groups have been working with management and other organizations to modify the law, but when things were not going their way, management representatives went directly to the chancellor's office for what we consider unnecessary relief. We as representatives of faculty have been taken out of the loop. Thank you AB 1725!

Peer Evaluation

The next issue to further unveil the dark side of AB 1725 is a topic about which I have waxed eloquently over the years — peer evaluation. Prior to its enactment, the evaluation of faculty and the attainment of tenure was a managerial function. It was one management did not like, as the onus of criticism fell on administrators' shoulders. AB 1725 changed all that and basically empowered instructors to evaluate their peers. As a result, management was relieved of the pain of having to tell faculty they were not worthy, and, as a result, the task has now fallen on faculty. (It should be noted that the reduced load of management in the evaluation process did not concurrently reduce their compensation, either).

…the only real shared governance occurs when management wants to cut budgets and does so through a 'budget committee.'

Add to this the fact that there is no real requirement for peer evaluation as, the chief counsel to the former Chancellor Tom Nussbaum noted, there was no legal definition of what peer evaluation is in the law and, therefore, whatever was acceptable locally was entirely admissible. Even further, the law stated that student evaluations of faculty were recommended and that faculty evaluations of management were desirable. The former has been enacted on all campuses but the faculty evaluation of management has been swept under the carpet.

In yet another "reform" the colleges were encouraged to institute a form of collegial governance, or as some called it, shared governance. The intent was to have those closest to the education process – faculty – share in the decision-making of structural and financial decisions for the college. My experience over the years has shown me that the only real shared governance occurs when management wants to cut budgets and does so through a "budget committee." No such deliberation happens when there is extra money to go around as management believes, they then know what is best for the institution. In essence, faculty get to participate when there are bad times, but are not offered the same consideration when times are good. Perhaps this scenario is best described in Murphy's Laws as "Parkinson's Axiom" which states, "Management wants to create subordinates, not rivals."

We as representatives of faculty have been taken out of the loop. 'Thank you' AB 1725!

Repeal of credential requirements

One other reform in AB 1725 was the repeal of the credential requirement to teach in a community college. While over the years this has created a form of local control, what it also has accomplished is that there is no true oversight of what qualifications an instructor in an institution of higher education should meet. The local establishment of equivalencies and minimum qualifications has, from my travels on many campuses, demonstrated that there exists great latitude in the caliber of faculty from institution to institution. Add to that the explosion of contingent part-time faculty, the ability of a district to monitor the masses has become problematic from the paperwork alone, never mind the monitoring of performance.

And finally as a part of the elimination of credentials, Faculty Serviced Areas were created and have slumbered in obscurity until just lately. While all faculty are supposed to be assigned a Faculty Service Area when hired, the only true application of this section of the law occurs when layoffs are contemplated. Since no significant layoffs have transpired in the 20 years since its enactment, FSA's have pretty much led a somnambulant existence.

Looming, however, in 2009-10 is the real possibility that the massive budget cuts community colleges have experienced will lead to widespread attempts to lay off full-time faculty and the Faculty Service Areas will play a paramount role when the bumping and qualifications game is played.

Three chapters

Continued from Page 3

Making use of a list-serve and an easily accessible blog, at *www.sjdcwatch.blogspot.com*, the union was able to keep its members current on important developments throughout the year. The chapter also distributed handouts and fliers on campus and in the neighborhoods of the trustees, and organized news events that included the picketing of a campus ground-breaking ceremony. In addition, Sam Hatch received the nickname "Hatchet Man" by the trustees for his letters to the editor and guest editorials in the *Lodi News-Sentinel* and *Tracy Press.* As a result of these efforts, the chapter was able to become a real resource for local media.

The Coast Community College Flyer was honored in the Newsletter and Newspaper category for chapters with 500-999 members. The newsletter is sent out to 950 members, administrators and trustees and is distributed at three of the colleges in the district and seven sites.

Colmenares was manager of CTA's Communications Department from 1977 until his death in 1984, while Flynn was CTA's executive director from 1976 to 1995. San Joaquin Delta and United Teachers of Los Angeles were each honored with the Colmenares Award during the CTA State Council meeting in Los Angeles on January 30.

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Imperial Valley political science professor teaches students to be part of the solution

Learning the value of community engagement

IN THE LIMELIGHT

Say "spa" to most people and they will conjure up visions of fluffy bathrobes and a day of pampering, but not to Gaylla Finnell's students at Imperial Valley College who are engaged in a very different spa – Students for Political Awareness.

A SPA day for these students may mean delivering food to impoverished areas of the county, tutoring disadvantaged children in an after-school program, sending tubes of sun block or Halloween treat bags to soldiers in Iraq, or sponsoring a campus showing of a documentary on the perils for immigrants crossing the nearby All America Canal.

"It's not just political action. It's political awareness. These students are trying to make people more aware of issues that our community and nation are facing. They are learning to be part of the solution," Finnell says.

Above, Gaylla Finnell gives a hug and some encouragement to one of the children in her students' tutoring project, Dream Builders. At left, Imperial Valley College student Marissa Paulsen shares a snack with one of the youngsters being tutored in the after school program.

From club to class

The program initially began in 2004 when students in Finnell's American Government class decided to hold a rally to debate reinstating the draft. The students found so much to say they decided to turn their energy into a club on campus. As an advisor, however, Finnell found it difficult to maintain continuity in the club with the turnover in student leadership. To address this problem, Finnell incorporated service-learning into her American Government courses, which provides the opportunity for new students to learn the importance of community service and to be active participants in SPA.

SPA is more than a compilation of "do-good" projects, however. In addition to showing the students the value of volunteerism, it is filling an unmet need in the community. There is likely to be a long-term impact as well. For example, with the Dream Builders after-school tutoring project in place, Finnell is hopeful that more underserved African American and Hispanic students will enroll at Imperial Valley College in the future.

The church pastor at Sweet Home Missionary Baptist Church in El Centro shares that hope.

"It has changed attitudes about kids going to college," says Rev. James Porter. "For many of these students, college was not an option. Now these kids have gone from failing to honor roll. Several of our past students are in college right now. That to me is a blessing."

In addition to supplying tutors, Finnell recently applied for and received a $17,000 technology grant from AT&T to purchase laptop computers and create a computer lab in the church hall for the program. Until recently, the pastor had been using his own computer for the 30 children in attendance.

Mentors and role models

Finnell's students are not only tutors to the neighborhood children, they are mentors and role models as well, especially to the middle- and high-school students.

"My students have embraced this project and have connected with the children. This has worked because the community invited us in and has treated us like family. A lot of government programs fail because they don't connect. That's been the difference," Finnell says.

The tutors themselves also find the program enriching.

"The kids seem to appreciate the help. They will bring back their homework with 'A's on it," says Will Haro, an IVC student who is considering a future in teaching. "That makes me feel good."

Each Thanksgiving for the past several years SPA members have collected food items and prepared more than 600 Thanksgiving meals for residents living in the north county in the impoverished communities of Niland, Bombay Beach, and nearby Slab City, a former World War II military base inhabited by a conglomeration of "snow birders," aging Hippies, vagabonds and children. The SPA students return again at Christmas time with gifts to fill the wish lists from families in the area. Last year alone, they brought 60 bicycles as gifts for the children.

"We have returning, current and future IVC students helping out. It's really grown over the years," Finnell said. "A lot of our students had never even been to Niland, so it's an education for them."

In addition to their volunteer work, SPA students hold regular fundraiser to support the various projects. In fact, close to $18,000 is raised each year. Although the core group of students consists of about a dozen students, as many as 300 get involved in the projects throughout the year.

Immigration issues

Finnell's students have also received "an education" on immigration issues which are so prominent in Imperial County which borders Mexico. Recently, her students presented a screening of "The 800 Mile Wall," a documentary that examines immigrant deaths along the border. They have also testified before meetings of the irrigation board on safety measures that must be implemented to prevent drowning deaths in the nearby canal. In preparation for the showing, students visited the local cemetery where many immigrants are buried in unmarked paupers' graves and invited guest speakers to participate in a "town hall" discussion following the film showing.

"How great of an education is that?" Finnell marveled, noting she had left the entire activity in their hands. "It was amazing to see them interacting with each other. Some of these students had never spoken up in class. This experience transformed them."

Finnell knows that political activists are not always welcome in this conservative community with a large military and agricultural presence. A minister's wife and one-time probation officer, Finnell has deep roots in the community and has worked hard to gain community support and trust.

It's the relationship

"We are not taking positions. We don't alienate people. We've really had to go out to organizations to develop relationships. Now they know they can come to us with their needs. It's the relationship that impacts the community," she said.

Indeed, participating in SPA has been a life-changing experience for quite a few Imperial Valley College students, including Gloria Lay, a graduate of IVC who is now a nurse and is enrolled in a master's program at San Diego State University. Lay initially became involved in SPA in 2004, when the club was raising funds for Hurricane Katrina victims. She went on to help found the Dream Builders program at the church. Through SPA, Gloria also became an intern in the office of state Sen. Denise Ducheny. A U.S. Army veteran, Lay started community college in her late 20's, after moving to the Imperial Valley with her husband.

"SPA has opened so many doors to me," she says. "I've seen so many changes in myself. It's been a great outlet for me to learn about the community and to get involved. I've learned that if you want to live, you have to give."