

Proposal for Electronic Voting System

The current system of voting for senate officers and part-time representatives is conducted via a time-consuming and paper-intensive process. Secure, web-based electronic voting processes are now available for a reasonable cost. This proposal asks for Academic Senate consideration of the use of electronic voting for the 2008-09 Senate elections.

The advantages of electronic voting would be:

- Secure system
- Less paper
- Less time required to prepare the election
- Less time to open and count ballots
- Potentially greater participation
- Convenience

Question:

- Are write-in slots necessary?

Approve an electronic voting system

Amendment to include write-in option

Resolution to Support Inclusion of Part-time Faculty

Whereas, Part-time faculty are teaching a significant number of courses at the college, bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to students as well as colleagues;

Whereas, Part-time faculty often ~~feel the need for~~ greater communication and inclusion in departmental and college activities;

Whereas, Departments recognize the busy schedules of part-time faculty who have been hired to teach and serve students at Grossmont College;

Resolved, That the Grossmont College Academic Senate encourages departments to include part-time faculty in department functions, representation, and activities, such as department meetings, SLO development, Senate representation, etc., to the extent allowable by part-time schedules; and

Resolved, That the Grossmont College Academic Senate will solicit from the Part-time Issues Committee annual feedback highlighting the inclusion of part-time faculty in departmental and college activities and the contributions of part-time faculty in accomplishing department business.

1. How would I begin prioritizing the many components of the plan? By putting students first...

If our BSI plan is to come to fruition, it will require commitment from everyone on campus: administrators, faculty, counselors, and staff. The components of the plan are far reaching and will have an impact on each of us. But our first priority must be to our students, present and future. With the consensus of the chosen committee members, our first step in the planning process should be a two-pronged effort. First, we should continue to develop and improve the basic skills efforts that have already proven successful, i.e. Personal Development classes, tutoring labs and services, PUENTE, Project Success, etc. Second, we should evaluate our students' needs with both statistical and anecdotal research, a project that will help us think creatively and realistically about new programs and other options that would improve the achievement of both current basic skills students and those who have not yet been identified as such.

The first effort will include not only a replication of successful programs but permutations of them. Offering bridge programs in the summer is one such example. The Basic Skills draft as prepared last year is replete with many fruitful suggestions worth further discussion with an eye towards implementation. The second effort will reach out to students not enrolled in basic skills courses. Because we know that our basic skills students are often enrolled in general education courses, it is incumbent upon us to develop instructional pathways to help them succeed in those courses. By determining (through both statistical and anecdotal evidence) which classes result in the lowest success rates for our students, we can begin to analyze which skills and concepts are posing the most difficulties for our students. With that knowledge, we can begin to develop integrative assignments and strategies that will help all students learn, but most especially those with basic skill needs. Both of these efforts will require in depth discussions and research into the pedagogical soundness of the programs and strategies we devise. The learning styles and needs of our students are as diverse as their skill needs.

Of course, this will necessitate the training of administrators, faculty, counselors, and staff. As we begin to generate our pathways to success, we will have to find classroom space and mentor faculty and staff by developing on-site workshops and encouraging attendance at other statewide conferences. We will also need to allow sufficient time for development of programs and curriculum.

Other elements of the plan will be on-going, such as our objective to require assessment of all students, or our efforts to seek out additional innovative curricular strategies that support student success. Given our timeline, it would seem logical that our first efforts must be in the support of increasing the availability of successful Grossmont models and expanding programs as the initiative grows and time and money allows.

2. What strategies would I use to facilitate the work of the committee? Those time-tested (35 years) in the classroom and as the Project Success coordinator (15 years)...

The first organizational effort of the co-chairs must be to establish the committee. We must work with the divisions/departments choosing representatives, and begin that process this Fall. Once the committee has been formed, the members will prioritize needs and objectives and begin a discussion of pedagogical issues for the purpose of examining what we as a group know about the learning process particularly as it pertains to basic skills students in particular. We will also examine the research, as necessary, to ensure that the new strategies and pathways we develop at Grossmont will indeed be beneficial to our students.

Before the end of this semester, program strands should be assigned to the individual members so each member can begin to organize ad hoc committees to help them with their task of gathering information and prioritizing needs and goals for their respective strands.

Our first campus-wide initiative will be a workshop/retreat during Spring Professional Development Week to share our work to that point and to gather insights and ideas from the faculty and staff as a whole.

Bringing people together to accomplish any task requires mutual respect. With a task as titanic as this one, every member of the committee must bring knowledge, patience, a willingness to listen, and the motivation to follow through when gathering information. The co-chair must moderate and maintain an atmosphere that will allow for the free-flow of ideas, and then, with knowledge of institutional history and processes, make things happen. That requires communication and diplomacy on many levels. It also requires face-to-face interaction.

Additionally, a chair or coordinator of any committee or program must give the members the "space" and responsibilities concomitant to the tasks to be performed with a sincere respect for the intellect and insights of her colleagues. A chair is "available" but not a micromanager. The chair must coordinate and connect the overarching elements of the plan, but allow the members free rein to follow-through with their tasks as they relate to the plan. That said, a good chair must also keep in contact with the various members beyond the regularly scheduled meetings and help in a multiplicity of ways when help is needed.

Our work on this committee is an agent of positive change for Grossmont's students. Our success is their success.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
Sue Jensen