

**THE ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES OF
GROSSMONT COLLEGE
REGULAR MEETING ON MAY 15, 1995**

Those Present:

**Peg Hovde - President
Dave Wertlieb - Vice President
Barry Winn - Senate Officer at Large
Sheridan DeWolf - Senate Officer at Large
Oralee Holder - Past President**

**Administration of Justice - George Hernandez
Art -
Behavioral Sciences - Gregg Robinson
Biological Sciences -
BOT -
Business - Jed Ashley
Cardiovascular Technology -
Chemistry, Science - Bill Givens, Bill Bornhorst
Child Development -
Computer Science Information Systems -
Counseling and Student Development Services - Donne Leigh
Dance, Theatre Arts -
Disabled Student Services -
Earth Sciences - Gary Jacobson
English - Lance Parr
English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) - Virginia Berger
Family and Consumer Studies -
Foreign Languages -
History - Mel Amov
Humanities -
International Business, Marketing, Management -
Journalism, Telecommunication - Gay Russell
Library -
Mathematics - Corky Harrison, Bill Bradley
Music - Paul Kurokawa
Nursing - Ann Burgess
Occupational Therapy Assistant - Carolyn Shushan
Physical Education, Recreation, Health Education - Laura Sim
Physical Sciences - Bob James
Political Economy -
Respiratory Therapy -
Speech Communications -
Staff Development -
Guests: Trudy Bratten**

I. PRELIMINARY ITEMS

- A. Call to Order, 11:15 a.m.
- B. Approval of Agenda, M/S/U Ann Burgess, Barry Winn
- C. Approval of Minutes April 17, 1995. M/S/U Barry Winn/Dave Wertlieb

II. ACTION ITEM

- A. Resolution to appoint Joe Henry to the Curriculum Committee.
M/S/U Sheridan DeWolf/Laura Sim
- B. Resolution to reaffirm the charge, the direction, the structure and the voting procedures of the Instructional Computing Committee. M/S/U Oralee Holder, Laura Sim

As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons, they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

III. EXPANDING THE AAUP ETHICS STATEMENT

References in the following sections raise questions about how faculty interact with all members of the college community in carrying out their professional responsibilities and statements specific to students or colleagues should be interpreted as applying to other individuals.

A. DEVELOPING SCHOLARLY COMPETENCE

Every discipline requires scholarship. Just as doctors are obligated to keep abreast of new developments in medicine and attorneys are required to know evolving laws, faculty must keep up with new developments in their disciplines and in teaching methods. It is a faculty member's obligation to pursue professional and academic development enabling them to infuse appropriate changes in curriculum as necessary.

In addition, faculty have academic freedom to pursue the truth. The intellectual virtues of being open-minded, fair, honest and objective in the consideration of differing views, being thorough in research, avoiding the manipulation of data, reaching a well-reasoned viewpoint, and the like, should all be fostered within the intellectual character of the faculty member.

These attitudes toward learning are precisely what faculty are trying to get their students to acquire, therefore, faculty are obligated to teach and lead by example. Modeling and teaching critical thinking and attempting to instill in students intellectual virtues which foster critical thinking is a key responsibility for faculty.

In other words, modeling a democratic style rather than an authoritarian one is more appropriate. Instead of trying to control the beliefs, opinions and values of our students, encouraging pluralistic dialogue is an ethical necessity. Teaching students, by the example of our classes, to respect differing views and how to benefit from the wisdom often found in ideas with which one disagrees can provide a profound learning experience for students.

B. MAINTAINING HONEST ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Faculty have an obligation to ensure that students do their own work, that is, to prevent academic dishonesty. Types of dishonesty include copying from others, turning in work that is not the student's own, and using references without appropriate citation. Faculty must provide a definition of acceptable academic conduct on the first day of class through discussion and in writing. Furthermore, setting up testing situations that minimize the potential for misconduct is an essential strategy for preventing academic dishonesty.

Colleges should have a policy on honest academic conduct, developed by the Academic Senate. Faculty are obliged to make sure that such policies exist, are published, and provide appropriate due process standards. In addition, faculty need to openly express a zero tolerance policy toward academic dishonesty. Students who behave dishonestly should face retributive consequences consistent with the institution's policies.

Finally, there are rules and expectations of proper academic behavior that should be articulated and taught within the framework of the respective academic disciplines. Respect for students requires that all be held to the same standards of conduct. Holding students to different standards is demeaning and insulting.

C. **INSURING CULTURAL AND GENDER SENSITIVITY: RESPECTING STUDENTS AS INDIVIDUALS**
Respecting students as individuals is an ethical imperative for faculty. All students, as individuals, deserve the respect of faculty regardless of their cultural background, ethnicity, race, gender, religious beliefs, political ideologies, disability, sexual preference, age, or socioeconomic status.

One of the challenges of being an educator is to reach our students at their current point of understanding. When relating to students as individuals, faculty must recognize the unique circumstances of each student's life. In particular, some students may possess learning styles which hinder them from benefiting from traditional methods of instruction. Faculty have the responsibility to use all possible effective pedagogical tools to reach those students.

Students look to faculty as role models. Not only must faculty exhibit an appreciation and respect for students from all backgrounds, but it is also imperative that they teach and model behavior which is tolerant and shows appreciation and respect for others within their respective disciplines. Affirming individual students' abilities, strengthening their self identities, and assisting them to reach their full potential is a model worth emulating.

D. **ENCOURAGING THE FREE PURSUIT OF LEARNING: SECURING STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS**

The concept of a community college as defined by the California Community Colleges' Master Plan is one of the best examples of an egalitarian educational system of higher education in the world. One could say that the idea of open access is the quintessential expression of democracy in education and that open access exemplifies the free pursuit of learning.

As participants in the development of educational policies at our institutions we must remain diligent to protect students' right to freely pursue their education, watching closely to prevent barriers to access, particularly to those from historically under-represented groups. These barriers may include restrictive or difficult to accomplish admission procedures, lack of access to counseling, unjustified prerequisites, and in other ways. Faculty may incorrectly assume that references, examples, or methodologies they use are part of the students' experience or cultural heritage. Methods should be sought which can make learning more achievable to students. Faculty have an ethical responsibility as educators to reduce as much as possible all barriers to the pursuit of education and to seek new methods to assure our students' success.

E. **CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF TRUST AND SENSITIVITY**

Exploitation of students by faculty members can take many guises. Be it for personal financial gain, sexual gratification, or any other reason, such exploitation is to be avoided at all costs. It is a fundamental ethical principle that individuals in power and authority should not use their advantaged position for their own gain or to advance their own self-interest. In light of the fact that the educational profession is one in which trust between faculty member and student best maximizes the results of the learning experience, it is especially reprehensible for faculty to use their power and authority for such self-gratification.

Faculty are in a power position and as such there is no greater violation of authority and power in higher education than when a faculty member exploits the power of this relationship with students. Students may have fears and insecurities about their abilities and what the future holds for them. They may tend to view faculty with a sense of awe that is based on a projected expectation rather than personal experience of proved expertise or trustworthiness. They tend to trust faculty beyond areas of academic expertise. To take advantage of individuals under these conditions is ethically inexcusable.

For example, in cases where some students are being evaluated on the basis of academic standards while others are being evaluated on the basis of responsiveness to inappropriate advances or where personal services or favors are traded for grades, privilege or recognition, one can easily see that such behavior is a violation of ethics. Students must be evaluated solely on the basis of academic standards.

Faculty must be cognizant of the possible perceptions and interpretations their students may formulate in response to faculty-student interactions. Therefore, the faculty member is obligated to create a learning environment free of insensitivity, hostility, and coercion. Faculty must realize that such an environment often can be more contingent upon the perceptions of students than on the intentions of faculty.

F. ESTABLISHING ACADEMIC STANDARDS

California Community Colleges have the dual mission of preparing individuals for work and citizenship. Successful careers depend on acquiring the skills, knowledge and abilities to perform competently in the work place. So, to prepare students for the world of work and to avoid misleading them as to what they can expect once they leave the campus, it is important to evaluate students in a manner which is consistent with the academic standards of the discipline.

Academic standards should be determined in the context of one's academic discipline by the community of scholars within the discipline. They should not differ significantly from one faculty member to another within the same discipline teaching the same or similar course(s). If, for example, there is significant variation in grading criteria and standards among faculty who teach courses that are prerequisites for courses further in a sequence, then clearly students, subsequent courses, and the disciplines, are harmed.

Additionally, the mastery that faculty have of their own discipline and scholarship entitles them to their classroom and the freedom of the presentation of their subject matter. However, it is unethical for a faculty member to persistently interject material unrelated to the course such that the instructor fails to offer the agreed upon subject matter of the course.

G. MAINTAINING ACADEMIC FREEDOM

By nature and definition, a college campus embraces the value of academic freedom. In order to pursue truth, survey the marketplace of ideas, and acquire knowledge and understanding, both faculty and students must have the freedom to express their views and be safe from reprisals. However, there are obligations which accompany academic freedom.

The first obligation in maintaining academic freedom is to create a learning environment in the classroom which fosters the free exchange of ideas. In other words, we should encourage the expression of diverse views and the understanding of those views. For example, if the instructor of a philosophy class only permitted the view of atheism to be expressed and did not allow the counter view of theism to be expressed, or the contrary, that instructor would be undermining academic freedom.

The second obligation which is required to maintain academic freedom is to clearly distinguish when one is speaking for oneself and when one is speaking as a representative of the educational institution. The classroom IN PARTICULAR should not be used as a forum for the advancement of personal causes. Our obligation is to inform, not to indoctrinate. If a stormy political issue arises, we can certainly encourage a lively discussion of all facets of the situation. However, we cannot present just our view or advocate only our own position unless we do so in the context of debate or other such pedagogical structures where opposing views may be presented.

IV. CONCLUSION

Being a faculty member means being a colleague in a profession which involves participating in a profession where freedom of expression is of paramount importance to ensure the open exchange of ideas. Faculty are self-directed and, to a certain extent, determine the nature and quantity of their workload. Since tenured faculty have job security, the potential for individual tenured faculty having a less than conscientious work ethic is a possibility. It is important for faculty to maintain and strengthen standards of professionalism.

A recommendation on a framework and processes for developing local faculty professional expectations and accountability processes is currently under consideration by the Academic Senate's Educational Policies Committee.