

CAL POLY PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Saturday, October 25, 2008
Poly Canyon Village Conference Center
Cal Poly State University
San Luis Obispo, CA

MINUTES

PRESENT

Parent Members – Cynthia Boriskin, Rob Boriskin, Yvonne Chavez, Marcus Cooke, Barbara Damerel, Ron Hunnewell, John Jernigan, Karen Jernigan, Ron Jue, Teresa Jue, Connie Katz, Ira Katz, Linda Kuroda, Randy Otsuji, Patti Pasetta, Chris Patubo, Pat Patubo, Pat Saley, Ross Whitt, Terri Whitt

Parent Guests – Steve DeBranch, Tonya DeBranch, Susan McKinley, Jeanne Stone, Patrick Sullivan, Sharon Sullivan

Student Members – Dan Kinsel, Laura Butler (Graduate Assistant, Orientation Programs)

Staff – Preston Allen, Dr. Cornel Morton, Nicky Nickelsen

NOT PRESENT

Parent Members – Debbie Hertzog, John Jones

Student Members – Antonio Ramirez

Staff – Jessica Todd (staffing Parents' Weekend check-in during meeting)

TOUR OF POLY CANYON VILLAGE

Preston Allen, Executive Director of University Housing and Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Barbara Damerel welcomed the members and expressed her appreciation to University Housing for the opportunity to hold the Parents' Weekend check-in and tours, and the fall Parent Council meeting at the new Poly Canyon Village facility. She introduced Preston Allen, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Executive Director of University Housing, who provided a private, comprehensive walking tour of the grounds, apartments, amenities and common areas.

Poly Canyon Village spans approximately 30 acres and is located at the base of Poly Canyon. The village was built as part of the Cal Poly Master Plan which calls for an increase in campus housing for at least 3,000 students. Currently, 1,500 students are living in an area of the complex which is part of Phase I of the project. When Phase II of the project is complete in fall 2009, Poly Canyon Village will provide space for 2,700 students. Future student housing projects will be built to accommodate the remaining spaces called for in the campus master plan.

Poly Canyon Village is designed for second-year students who wish to continue their on-campus living experience and includes a Sophomore Success residential life program designed to facilitate student success and retention during the second year.

The village includes nine 4 and 5 story buildings with 618 apartments. Throughout the complex there are four floor plans, housing four to six students in private and shared bedrooms. Eighty percent of the apartments are four private bedroom units. Each unit has two full-sized bathrooms, furnished living rooms, fully-equipped kitchens and large counter space for quick dining.

The facility also includes a knowledge center with group study areas, conference rooms, lounges, a smart room with state-of-the-art educational equipment, a music room with sound

proof walls, wireless internet access throughout, and a post office, copy center and dry cleaning service. Students can dine at Jamba Juice, Einstein's Bagels and Peet's Coffee or shop for deli and grocery items at Village Market. Recreational amenities include a pool, sun deck, a sand volleyball court and a basketball court. TVs, a fireplace lounge, billiards, ping pong and a piano are also available. In addition, hiking trails are just a step away.

The housing payment includes all utilities, cable TV and high-speed internet access. All bedrooms and living rooms are fully furnished and include a weekly custodial service which lightly cleans the kitchen and bathroom areas weekly. Rooms have keyless entry. Laundry facilities are available throughout the complex with notification available for students when their laundry cycle is finished. Parking is available in two parking structures, one which opened under Phase I. The campus core is a 4-5 minute walk to from Poly Canyon Village and most other facilities are within a 7-10 minute walk from the village.

According to Preston, students were involved in the planning of the project to ensure Poly Canyon Village would truly reflect their needs and desires. In the five weeks since opening, he is proud to report that overall, the complex has met or exceeded students' expectations. The use of bicycles by residents was greater than anticipated--a plus for the campus and the community--so additional bike racks will be installed to accommodate that demand.

Poly Canyon Village is also LEED certified, which meets the University's goal of incorporating sustainable building practices into new campus construction.

University Housing will be accepting applications for fall 2009 housing. Current freshmen students can place their name into a lottery process during a priority sign-up period which begins at the end of January.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

After the Poly Canyon Village tour, Barbara called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. The following parent guests were warmly and invited to introduce themselves. Guests were:

Steve and Tonya DeBranch, parents of Brad DeBranch (City and Regional Planning) from Bakersfield;

Susan McKinley, parent of Allen McKinley (Architecture) from Reno, Nevada;

Jeanne Stone, parent of Andrew (Civil Engineering), Daniel (Architectural Engineering) and Michael (Architecture) from Irvine; and

Patrick and Sharon Sullivan, parents of Timothy (Landscape Architecture) from Ladera Ranch.

Maxine and Ed Czisny were recognized for four years of outstanding service as members of the Parent Advisory Council. Maxine and Ed, you will be missed! Chris Ho was recognized for his one year of service as the ASI student government representative.

Dan Kinsel, an electrical engineering student from Escondido was welcomed as the newly appointed WOW Board representative. Dan is responsible for parent and family programming for WOW 2009 and related orientation programs. Antonio Ramirez, a psychology major from Guadalupe was introduced as the newly appointed ASI student body representative.

UNIVERSITY UPDATE

Cornel Morton, Vice President for Student Affairs

Cornel welcomed the Council members and thanked them for the feedback they offer at these meetings, mentioning that he always leaves with appreciation for the honest, genuine and forthright comments everyone provides. He will continue to pass these comments on in meetings with colleagues. Various administrators and staff also receive a shortened version of the minutes. He expressed appreciation to the guests joining the meeting for taking time to come forward to learn more about university and consider further participation and involvement.

POLY CANYON VILLAGE

The fall quarter began with the opening of Poly Canyon Village to 1,500 Cal Poly sophomores. Feedback from students has been positive. The additional campus housing will allow sophomores to continue to live in close proximity to classes, faculty, the library, recreational facilities and other students, which will help them stay engaged in campus life and focused on their educational goals. The Sophomore Success program, which operates out of Poly Canyon Village, offers resources, support and programming for these second-year residents.

FALL ENROLLMENT AND BUDGET

Fall enrollment at Cal Poly reached 19,466 full-time equivalents (FTEs), almost 2% above its target enrollment. Full-time equivalency is 12 units. The master plan calls for an enrollment increase to 21,000 FTEs by 2012. The University will meet that, given the demand for access to the CSU.

Since enrollment targets are affected by the state budget, the CSU is reporting that 10,000 fewer qualified students will be admitted to its campuses next year alone. Currently, the state is reporting a \$20 billion deficit. The CSU is reporting a \$35 million deficit. This year, reductions are equating to about \$1.6 – 1.8 million for the CSU system. Budgets at Cal Poly were reduced by just over 4.0% after the start of the fiscal year. The initial reduction turned out to be lower than 4%; but, the funds committed to that first reduction are being held and will be placed towards a mid-year cut expected in the first part of 2009.

UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Within the university, there are four strategic initiatives underway which are engaging departments campus-wide. These initiatives are also a priority within the Division of Student Affairs. The initiatives are:

- 1) Progress toward Inclusive Excellence
- 2) Progress toward Diversity
- 3) Assessment
- 4) Preparation for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) review/university accreditation slated for 2010-2011

NOTE: The following definitions and explanations, which Cornel summarized during the meeting, were taken from Cal Poly's Academic Program's Web site at:
www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu

Inclusive Excellence and Diversity:

This is a model of education developed by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and is widely adopted throughout US higher education. The model is based on the assertion that *a university must be inclusive in order to be excellent*. The quest for diversity within the institution is not only a matter of achieving social equity for under-represented populations; it is also critical for those in the majority if they are to be fully prepared to live and work in an increasingly diverse and interdependent global society.

Cal Poly's University Learning Objectives have been expanded to address the notion of Inclusive Excellence. In March 2008, President Baker approved an Academic Senate resolution establishing Diversity Learning Objectives (DLOs) as an addendum to the University Learning Objectives (ULOs) previously adopted in 2007.

First, a word about Cal Poly's University Learning Objectives (ULOs). The ULOs state that all students who complete an undergraduate or graduate program at Cal Poly should be able to:

- Think critically and creatively
- Communicate effectively
- Demonstrate expertise in a scholarly discipline and understand that discipline in relation to the larger world of the arts, sciences, and technology
- Work productively as individuals and in groups
- Use their knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society
- Make reasoned decisions based on an understanding of ethics, a respect for diversity, and an awareness of issues related to sustainability
- Engage in lifelong learning

The recently added University's Diversity Learning Objectives (DLOs) state that all students who complete an undergraduate or graduate program at Cal Poly should be able to make reasoned decisions based on a respect and appreciation for diversity as defined in the Cal Poly Statement on Diversity. They should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of relationships between diversity, inequality, and social, economic, and political power both in the United States and globally
- Demonstrate knowledge of contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups to our local, national, and global communities
- Consider perspectives of diverse groups when making decisions
- Function as members of society and as professionals with people who have ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are different from their own

The DLOs do not require the teaching of a particular point of view or set of values. The DLOs do not insist that diversity be addressed to an equal extent in every course; instead, each program is responsible for ensuring that the required learning takes place, drawing on the totality of curricular, co-curricular, and other experiences during a student's Cal Poly career.

In the Division of Student Affairs, departments are identifying programs and services that fulfill Cal Poly's ULOs and DLOs or enhancing programs and services as appropriate.

Assessment:

Outcomes related to the University Learning Objectives, Diversity Learning Objectives and strategic plans are being explored across Cal Poly through assessment efforts. In the academic colleges, the expectation is that assessment efforts measure impact on student learning in programs (English, biology, etc.), in portfolios and in capstone experiences (senior projects).

For instance, a program assessment might measure the outcome "Graduates can write reports in APA style" or "Graduates make original contributions to biological knowledge." Outcomes for a program are included in class syllabi, the catalog or on the Web site. When students demonstrate they are meeting these outcomes, the institution knows learning is taking place.

For Student Affairs departments, assessment is similar in programs where staff members work with students. Career Services for instance, measures outcomes such as, “Students will demonstrate an ability to formulate and construct a resume that will be effective for their job search.” Staff members measure this outcome by reviewing resumes against criteria. Results are used to improve career counseling sessions. Well-written resumes meet the University Learning Outcome – communicate effectively. The Parent Program is developing outcomes for its work with parents.

WASC Accreditation:

The WASC accreditation is Cal Poly’s opportunity to reaffirm its accreditation status with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), a non-governmental regional accrediting organization. WASC accreditation is important because it allows our institution to demonstrate to the public and the educational community that our programs meet or exceed accepted standards of quality. It also keeps us eligible for federal funds that support a variety of programs, including student financial aid. The WASC reaffirmation process does not simply check whether or not we are in compliance with a set of specified standards, but instead involves an institutional self-study that provides us with an opportunity to work together to improve the university.

The entire review process is tied to the university’s institutional mission and its new university learning objectives. The process began with the development of a self-study proposal, approved in December 2007 that set the stage for two major evaluation phases, both of which include site visits by a team of peer reviewers: the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR), culminating in winter 2010, and the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER), culminating in fall 2011. During the self-study, WASC asks us to consider such questions as: Where are we now? Where are we going? How are we going to get there? How do we know we are doing a good job? and What evidence do we have to support our judgment?

The themes Cal Poly has chosen for its self-study are:

- 1) Our Polytechnic identity;
- 2) Integration and Student Learning;
- 3) Learn By Doing; and
- 4) The Teacher-Scholar Model

The self-study is not just an exercise to satisfy WASC; it is an effort to acknowledge our strengths and work together to improve the university.

Committees of staff, faculty and students are participating in working groups which are evaluating key questions in each of these areas. For instance, the working group on **Our Polytechnic Identity** is studying what the characteristics are of Cal Poly as a 21st century, comprehensive, Master’s polytechnic institution; who our peer institutions are; and what challenges/opportunities are associated with this distinction.

The working group on **Integration and Student Learning** is studying how well students are achieving academic program learning objectives; how well they are learning our new University Learning Objectives; how we can more effectively integrate the learning experiences of students; and how we improve academic performance of all students including underrepresented and minority students.

The working group on **Learn By Doing (LBD)** are exploring what the historical and theoretical foundations of the LBD model are; how it is implemented in programs across the university and

at similar universities; what impact LBD has on success after graduation; how it can be leveraged to assist in the recruitment and retention of faculty staff and students, especially those from underrepresented or minority groups; and how a campus-wide model of LBD contribute to student achievement of university learning objectives.

The working group on the **Teacher-Scholar Model** is looking at why the integration of teaching and faculty scholarship (research, scholarship and creative activity) is important; what the characteristics of the teacher-scholar model are; what the goals and expectations of faculty should be in terms of teaching and scholarship; and how successful are we currently in implementing these goals.

Cal Poly's reputation and the value of students' degrees depend on its ability to change with the times, as Cornel states, "to create integrated education for an integrated world." These initiatives are intended to do that. Cal Poly faculty member Bruno Giberti, who is assisting with the WASC self-study, proposed that the end result of the above efforts can be grasped by considering the difference between words we might use to describe a 20th century university vs. a 21st century university. See attached.

Cornel indicated that the demand for credentialed professionals is increasing. The absence of an undergraduate degree will make finding employment more difficult. He added that there will likely be a spike in those seeking a college education, as is often the case during poor economic times. Meeting these demands with quality education is becoming more and more important for our nation's future.

Barbara Damerel: Barbara commented that Darsie has been asked by employers to provide her college transcripts – proof of her degree - during the application process.

Maxine Czisny: Maxine inquired if it is practical for students who didn't graduate to return to school. Cornel indicated the University is trying to make it easier. Whatever it designs will have to be appealing to those students who did not complete their program.

Patti Pasetta: Patti asserted that mentoring is critical to ensuring underrepresented students attend Cal Poly. High school students need a teacher to motivate them, show they care about them and encourage them to consider Math and Science professions. Professional development for high school teachers may help.

Terri Whitt: Terri inquired about Cal Poly's graduation rate. Cornel indicated it is at about 90% for first-year students but drops off after the second year. Cal Poly's six-year graduation rate is 69% - the highest in the CSU but not comparable to our competitor schools including many of the UC campuses and private institutions such as USC. Their retention rates are greater than 80% in some cases. Cal Poly is hoping to increase its graduation rate to 75% over six years in the next 4-5 years. Housing more students on campus is part of that plan.

BUSINESS ITEMS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motions to approve the August meeting minutes as written were made by Marcus Cooke, Terri Whitt and Yvonne Chavez. They were approved.

WOW DEBRIEFING

Barbara led a discussion about WOW Family Orientation Weekend. Most suggestions were related to the distribution of the *Parent Handbook*. Many members felt that the cost of the book

and limiting its distribution to one area was a deterrent to parents. Many members felt the handbook should continue to be promoted at SOAR and that parents who don't attend SOAR should be offered one during WOW at the Parent Program booth and at the WOW check-in when they receive their family packet.

Some members indicated that with all the other expenses associated with the weekend, parents will be reluctant to spend more, especially if they don't understand the value of the publication at that moment. Others indicated that signs promoting the Parent Handbook near the WOW check-in area were not in clear view. If there must be a fee associated with the book, the suggestion was that the book should be effectively marketed to parents. Nicky indicated the budget situation contributed to Orientation Program's interest in charging a fee for the book and that in 2009, steps can be taken to scale down the size or features of the book to reduce costs. There is a possibility that the calendar insert could be eliminated if we partnered with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities on the calendar they produce for parents.

FRIDAY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Nicky summarized her efforts to organize a series of focus groups that would allow the Parent Program to capture, analyze and report responses from parents about their perceptions of their student's experiences related to academics and campus life. She explained that the survey results would have informed the Parent Program and the division about those factors parents believe contribute to or hinder their student's success and well-being. The information could also be shared as a form of constituent feedback during Cal Poly's upcoming Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation scheduled for 2009.

The focus groups were to be held on campus the Friday prior to Parents' Weekend and were to be facilitated by Cal Poly staff. A postcard was mailed to parents of continuing students. Due to a low response, the focus groups were cancelled. Many parents who did wish to participate wanted to provide feedback by phone or e-mail about a specific problem or problems their student was experiencing. Parent Program staff handled these on an individual basis, providing assistance, recommendations or referrals as appropriate.

Steve DeBranch: Steve indicated that introducing the survey in the context of the university's upcoming WASC accreditation and strategic planning process may have provided parents with a better understanding of the significance of their participation and could have prompted a greater response.

Susan McKinley: Susan suggested e-mailing the survey as a way of allowing parents to provide their feedback without having to spend time and resources traveling to campus. Nicky indicated that since the University only has e-mail addresses for parents who voluntarily opt into our e-newsletter (about 7,000 addresses - some with household duplicates), the announcement was mailed in an effort to obtain a more random sample. In addition, a focus group format allows for open-ended questions and opportunities to follow-up on participant responses, features that are useful when the goal is to obtain participants' perceptions about a service or product (in this case, their students' success and well-being.) After some discussion about benefits and challenges of survey types, many members agreed that as a starting point at least, it would be productive to survey those parents for whom we have e-mail addresses, even if that group does not represent a random sample of the parent constituency.

PARENT COUNCIL SURVEY

Barbara thanked those members who completed the survey sent to all members in July. She shared some of the results at the August meeting. Those responses deferred to this meeting

were related to training for new members, refresher training for existing members and the organization and hosting of member receptions.

Members felt it would be helpful to have a guide to assist them with answering difficult questions not already addressed in the *Parent Handbook* (change of major, securing classes, time to graduation, etc). They didn't feel a training session is necessary.

Dan Kinsele: Dan indicated the PolyRep manual has answers to these sorts of questions since they are often asked of guides. He suggested referencing that when compiling our guide.

Members suggested posting FAQs online for parents to refer to and for Council members to use as a point of referral when parents e-mail questions to them. Nicky indicated the handbook, which has FAQs in it is posted online; but, users have to click through the pages of the PDF to get to them. She will post them in another format.

Members indicated a guide to orient members to their role might be helpful so that they can get more involved earlier in their terms. Assigning new members a mentor was also suggested. Defining the mentor's role and new members' needs would have to be explored so that the purpose and usefulness is clear.

Members voiced a desire to continue to gather as a group when events and meetings are planned. Due to budget reductions, they agreed to host these receptions, which were formerly planned and hosted by the Parent Program, as members are willing and able.

Very special thanks to John and Karen Jernigan for hosting a reception this weekend in Cayucos and to all of the members for bringing a tasty dish to share.

CLOSING REMARKS AND AJOURNMENT

Barbara adjourned the meeting at 12:15 pm. Lunch was provided by Einstein's Bagels. The Parent Council then attended the Parents for Philanthropy Reception hosted by University Advancement prior to volunteering at the rest of the Parents' Weekend festivities. Thank you everyone for your commitment of time in service to Cal Poly!

Please forward additions or corrections to calpolyparent@calpoly.edu.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nona Nickelsen