

## CAL POLY PARENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Saturday, April 21, 2007  
University Union, Room 220  
Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo, CA

### MINUTES

#### ATTENDING

Council Members – Paul Bittick, Rob Boriskin, Cynthia Boriskin, Yvonne Chavez, John Cotter, Ed Czisny, Maxine Czisny, Barbara Damerel, Melanie Dreike, Nancy Gragnani, Ron Hunnewell, John Jernigan, Karen Jernigan, John Jones, Patti Pasetta, Pat Patubo, Chris Patubo, Bob Rivoire, Dan Rivoire, Frances Rivoire, Terri Whitt, Ross Whitt

#### Staff Guests –

**Andrene Kaiwi-Lenting**, Assistant Director, Student Life and Leadership  
**Cat Dickstein, Dan Kinsel, Chelcee Thomas, Paul Foster** (WOW Parents Committee)  
**Mayor Dave Romero**, City of San Luis Obispo  
**Elie Axelroth**, Cal Poly Counseling Services  
**Bonnie McKim**, College of Liberal Arts Advising

Staff – Cornel Morton, Nicky Nickelsen

#### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Paul Bittick called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. He welcomed members and parent guest Charlene Grandfield.

#### MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Motions to approve the minutes from the summer meeting were made by Ross Whitt, John Jones and Bob Rivoire. The minutes were approved.

#### NEW BUSINESS – BYLAWS REVIEW

Paul Bittick called for additions/changes to the bylaws from the floor. The bylaws were approved with the following editorial suggestions and changes:

##### Article V

A term extension of up to one year may be granted at the discretion of the Vice President of Student Affairs.

##### Article VI

The Chair and Vice Chair shall be appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs and announced at the spring meeting.

....meeting, distribute them to all Council members and prepare...

##### Article VIII

Council meetings shall be held...

#### PARENT PROGRAM ITEMS

Nicky Nickelsen announced that Ms. Jessica Todd has been hired as the Parent Program's new administrative assistant and will be starting Monday, May 7. Jessica has worked as the assistant director at a preschool for the past six years and brings administrative experience as well as problem solving and customer service skills valuable in working with parents.

She indicated that a revised Parent and Supporters' Handbook will be published for release to parents of new Cal Poly students during the Summer Orientation, Advising and Resources (SOAR) sessions. John Jones, Barbara Damerel, Nancy Gagnani and Terri Whitt offered to review the drafts of the publication.

### **ORIENTATION PROGRAMS PRESENTATION**

**Andrene Kaiwi-Lenting** - Assistant Director, Student Life and Leadership  
**Cat Dickstein, Dan Kinsel, Chelcee Thomas, Paul Foster** – Wow Parents' Committee

At the January Parent Advisory Council meeting, Lisa Bruce (Orientation Programs staff) and Matt Howard (WOW board member) provided a summary of the various orientation programs Cal Poly offers and announced the shift of family orientation programming from WOW weekend to Summer Orientation, Advising and Resources (SOAR). The WOW program's Parents' Committee returned to show the Parent Advisory Council a draft of the parent presentation they are creating for SOAR.

Andrene Kaiwi-Lenting, assistant director, Student Life and Leadership and advisor to the WOW Program, thanked the Council members for being available to help welcome our new parents and families during the Resource Fair and the Coffeehouse. Andrene expressed the WOW program's interest in having the feedback of current parents in their creation of orientation programming for SOAR. She explained the impetus for expanded family orientation programs and indicated that Cal Poly wants to be prepared to answer questions of parents and family members so they have time to prepare for the transition. Eleven SOAR sessions will be held in July. To view a schedule, see: <http://studentlife.calpoly.edu/ori/soar/>

The WOW Program's Parent's Committee presented a sample of the presentation parents will see during one of the family orientation sessions planned for SOAR. A PowerPoint presentation was shown; and, Council members were asked to provide their feedback. (See attached presentation.)

### **CAL POLY HOUSING**

Cornel thanked the members for welcoming and hosting the parents and families of newly admitted students and helping answer their questions on Friday – Admitted Students' Day. Given the concern about the limited on-campus housing available, Cornel provided the following summary of the process and the options the Cal Poly Housing office made available to new students and their families.

Cal Poly opened the housing application process on Tuesday, April 17 and received over 2,800 housing applications. Our Residence Hall designed capacity is 2,726. With the early admits and athletes included, the total residence hall spaces reserved was 3,304 for Fall 07 Freshmen. Of these 3,304 students, almost 2,900 "accepted" their admissions to Cal Poly. As a result, the on-campus housing application process was closed the same day it opened.

The expected freshman yield is 3,815 and the new transfers yield is 914. This totals 4,729 new students looking for housing with most starting on-campus.

Due to the high numbers of applications received, Housing posted the following notice on the application system for those who applied for housing on Wednesday, April 18:

"As of today, Wednesday April 18, 2007, there is a possibility that on-campus housing may have reached its capacity with the applications received yesterday April 17, the first day the housing

application was available to Fall conditionally admitted students. We are currently checking numbers of applications, payments, and Admissions "acceptance" numbers.

At this time, you are welcome to proceed with the Housing application process; however, please be advised that we may not be able to accommodate you with on-campus housing. If we cannot accept your application and payment, we will notify you as soon as we can so you can make other arrangements."

As of 4pm on the 18th, an additional 136 applied knowing that Cal Poly may not be able to accept their payment or house them. The next day, the following message was posted:

"All on-campus housing spaces for new, incoming students have been reserved. At this time, we can no longer accept additional applications for Fall Quarter housing. We have taken into account anticipated cancellations and will not be maintaining a waiting list. However, spaces are still available at complexes belonging to our Community Partner program. These complexes are privately owned and provide off-campus housing to Cal Poly students. Two of these complexes which are within walking distance to the campus. See: [www.slo-offcampushousing.com](http://www.slo-offcampushousing.com)."

The Housing Director met with the Off-Campus Housing Association prior to Admitted Students' Day. As you know, housing set up two information tents: one for students who have campus housing, and one for those who did not make it in. Off-Campus complexes were available to provide information and make arrangements for students who did not have housing upon arrival.

Cornel noted that although Poly Canyon Village cannot come soon enough; the first phase will open in fall 2008. The University will not be able to accommodate all first-time freshmen on campus next fall, especially given future enrollment increases; but, there will be more available spaces than in the past. Campus housing will be reserved for freshmen and sophomores only.

## **VIRGINIA TECH TRAGEDY**

### **Elie Axelroth, Director of Counseling Services**

Prior to introducing Dr. Elie Axelroth, Cornel Morton summarized Cal Poly's campus response to the Virginia Tech tragedy, which was as follows:

- President Baker sent an e-mail message to all students, faculty and staff, expressing sympathy to the victims and providing links to counseling resources. The message was posted on the Cal Poly Web site with a link from the home page.
- An assembly was held in the UU Plaza Wednesday at Noon. President Baker, ASI President Todd Maki, Dr. Elie Axleroth and a member of the Campus Interfaith Council spoke. The names of the victims were read and a moment of silence was observed. Speakers offered their wisdom and advice on making sense of and productively dealing with the tragedy.
- A candlelight vigil was held Wednesday evening Cornel Morton spoke.
- Postings on the Web include the Public Affairs News Web site at: <http://calpolynews.calpoly.edu/> and the Cal Poly Portal News section. A link to the campus emergency Web page is on the Cal Poly homepage.
- Members of the faculty were asked to take time to talk about the incident in class and offer support to students.
- Housing and Residential Life staff took steps to make contact with each student living in the residence halls and checked in on students with a prior history of disciplinary problems or other challenges.

- A letter of condolence from President Baker to the Virginia Tech President is being prepared.
- ASI, Inc. is preparing banners for students to sign that will be sent to VT.
- UPD had a booth at the Admitted Students' Day Resource Fair on Friday from 8-3. They answered questions and handed out a Q&A flyer.

The campus is watching V-Tech's response, reviewing the University's campus emergency management plan and considering how Cal Poly might respond in a similar situation. The campus emergency management plan includes an emergency messaging center which would be responsible for coordinating communication to faculty, staff, students, the community and families.

Cornel introduced Dr. Elie Axelroth, Director of Counseling Services, to speak about steps her office has taken to support students and to discuss counseling resources available to them following the V-Tech incident.

Dr. Axelroth thanked the Council members for their attention and noted that she has been interested in attending a Council meeting for some time. The V-Tech incident seemed to create another impetus for her visit; and, as a result, she prefaced her discussion by indicating that she would focus her talk first on the steps taken to support students following the recent tragedy, and then on Counseling Services in general.

The steps her office has taken in response to the V-Tech incident are as follows:

- A Counseling Services intern, who is also the Student Liaison for the International Student Programs Office, has taken steps to check in with Cal Poly's Asian American groups, offer support and determine if they have experienced hostility or backlash of any sort. No such incidents have been reported at this time.
- Counseling Services has posted "Tips for Managing Stress In the Aftermath of the Virginia Tech Shooting" on the Health and Counseling Services Web site at: <http://www.calpoly.edu/~hps/>
- Elie met with the Housing staff and will be attending the RA "Town Hall Meeting" to discuss any RA concerns.
- The Counseling Services office is accommodating "walk-ins" – rather than requiring an appointment - to allow more immediate access to services, especially for current clients who might be more anxious or under more stress than others.

According to Dr. Axelroth, Counseling Services views outreach as a primary part of meeting its responsibility to serve the mental health needs of individuals and groups on campus. In their outreach efforts, she and her staff try to make the counseling experience welcoming and supportive. Her office works with staff in Housing and Residential Life, the Dean of Students office, the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and Cal Poly's Care Team (a committee convened to respond to students in troubled times) to assess situations, address concerns and provide support to students.

Safety is also a consideration for Counseling Services staff. Dr. Axelroth stated that, in her viewpoint, "the best safety measure is communication." No walls or barriers are big enough to ensure the safety of students, faculty and staff in situations such as the one which occurred at Virginia Tech. A sense of community, she stated, fostered through good communication is one of the best safety measures the campus can take. She feels that when Universities reaches out to students in need, the threshold for violence is potentially lowered.

As part of their outreach efforts, Counseling Services provides a brochure to faculty that serves as a guide to assist them in helping the emotionally distressed student. Outreach to students happens through referrals of students to Counseling Services. Information is provided at student events and during orientation.

Dr. Axelroth indicated that she and her staff do not overstep the bounds of the FERPA law/do not break a student's right to confidentiality, unless they perceive the student is an immediate danger to him/herself or others. Her staff does, when appropriate, ask students if they wish to contact their parents/family or sign a release allowing staff to talk to them.

Terri Whitt: Terri Whitt suggested that students program the word “**ICE**” into their cell phones with a number of a person they wish an emergency responder to call “in case of emergency.”

John Cotter: John Cotter expressed concern about notification processes and privacy laws and indicated a related story was reported in the 4/20 edition of the *San Diego Union Tribune*. See: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/education/20070420-9999-1n20counsel.html>

John Jones: John Jones indicated his employer (City govt.) has a canned system in place that uses text messaging to notify employees of an emergency. It also allows responses back to the system.

Cornel Morton indicated that in the event of an emergency, the Cal Poly home page would turn into emergency information.

## **GUEST PRESENTATION – TOWN/GOWN RELATIONS MAYOR DAVE ROMERO**

San Luis Obispo City Mayor Dave Romero, who is serving his third two-year term as mayor, has a long history as a citizen and resident of the city. In 1956, he began his career as the City's Public Works Director, a position he retired from in 1992. He served on the City Council for eight years and has served as a part-time lecturer in the College of Engineering at Cal Poly. Mayor Romero discussed three important themes in his presentation on town/gown relations.

1. The City of San Luis Obispo and Cal Poly are partners on various public works projects and services including the following:
  - Waste water treatment - since the late 1950's
  - Water delivery from the Whale Rock Dam - since the 1960's
  - City bus service – 50% of the ridership are Cal Poly students, faculty or staff with schedules oriented around that ridership
  - Construction of the Performing Arts Center
  - Fire protection – provided by the city to Cal Poly for the past 10-12 years
  - Fiber optic systems

In addition, the city has relationships with high-level Cal Poly administrators that allow them to provide mutual aid and work jointly to address community problems. According to Romero, SLO is a member of the California League of Cities an organization designed to help cities solve mutual problems. Twenty-three of the cities have college campuses as a major part of their communities. Based on the nature of the issues discussed at these meetings, SLO and Cal Poly seem to enjoy a good relationship, in comparison.

2. The City government and Cal Poly student government work together to improve relationships. Some examples are as follows:
  - The Student Community Liaison Committee is a 25-member organization that works to enhance communication and increase response among students, public officials and community members. The committee is made up of representatives from: Cal Poly ASI, Cuesta ASI, Cal Poly and Cuesta administrations, the SLO City Council, the SLO police department and the SLO County Board of Supervisors.
  - SLO Solutions is an organization that provides mediation services between neighbors.
  - The City sponsors good neighbor week.
  - Neighbor information is provided at WOW and on the Cal Poly Housing Web site under "Off-Campus".
  - The Substance Use and Abuse Advisory Committee is a group of Cal Poly, Cuesta and city officials, businesses, health officials and regulators who meet to generate ideas about addressing the use of alcohol and other substances.
  
3. How the students and SLO residents relate to one another is the area that is the most challenging to address.

Challenges:

- The City of San Luis Obispo benefits a great deal from the university and the students' presence in the community. Students, however, live in all areas of town; and, the mix of students with residents often causes ongoing neighborhood friction.
- The City's lack of affordable housing is a problem for the community. Many young families cannot afford to live in San Luis Obispo; and, as a result schools have closed and the demographic is aging. More and more of the housing stock are being used as rentals. Recruiting young people to work in the city and at Cal Poly is also difficult. Although the construction of campus housing and faculty/staff housing is expected, these are problems both the City and the University must continue to work toward addressing.
- The Poly Royal Riots in 1990 resulted in the cancellation of Poly Royal for 5 years (It was replaced by Open House, a shorter and calmer version of the long-standing tradition).
- The Mardi Gras riots in 2004 caused the cancellation of the City's community parade. Substantial expenditures of city funds on policing have been made during the past three years to prevent a recurrence.

Possible Solutions:

- The City is considering implementing a series of block parties across the city called "Neighbors Night Out". It hopes students and residents will come together and get to know each other in a relaxed setting.
- The City is hosting the 2008 Town/Gown conference.
- Homeowners associations are strong and do keep the City abreast of quality of life issues.
- WOW provides a community service day during orientation and the University has a Service Learning Program.
- Partnerships will continue between the City and Cal Poly and its students.

Mayor Romero concluded his presentation by stating "generations of Cal Poly students have helped make Cal Poly and SLO the envy of college campuses and communities." He indicated

the City will continue its partnerships with Cal Poly and its students to facilitate positive relationships between students and the community.

**STAFF PRESENTATION – CAL POLY ADVISING**  
**BONNIE MCKIM, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS ADVISOR**

Bonnie McKim is a graduate of Cal Poly with degrees in Social Sciences, Marriage and Family Therapy and Education. She also has a teaching credential. Bonnie is one of three advisors in the College of Liberal Arts and works with approximately 1,000 students majoring in Psychology, Social Sciences and Political Science. During her presentation, Bonnie discussed the advising resources available to students and explained the different advising structures in the various academic colleges.

According to Bonnie, the University does not require mandatory advising because the seven colleges and their associated majors have vastly different curriculums and advising structures. Each college has model that suits their student's needs; some colleges have peer advisors, some have advising centers with staff advisors. The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences have faculty advisors who assist students with coursework as well as serving as their scheduling and academic progress counselor. As opposed to other college staff advisors who work directly with students, CAFES has one staff advisor works with their faculty to train and support them to advise students in their department on their academic progress.

Curriculums are also vastly different. The College of Engineering for instance, has an advising center with a set curriculum and flow charts to help students complete their courses in sequence and during specified quarters. Their advising is very lock step. Since students in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) have the freedom to select courses or modify their degree plan to fit their career goals or area of interest, there is not a flow chart available which lays out sequences of courses applicable to every student. The CLA allows free electives and major electives that offer students many choices; even students in the same major may have different courses. The advising needs of liberal arts students then, are vastly different from those of engineering students or other majors. Even among liberal arts majors, the content and frequency of advising differs. As an example, Bonnie stated that in any given day during her work with students in the three majors she supports, she may reference one or more among seven different Cal Poly catalogs to answer a student's question. The reason - students enter Cal Poly – or leave and return – at different times and there a curriculum changes in each catalog revision.

Another reason annually or quarterly advising is not mandatory is because advising is not a one-stop event; it is an ongoing process. Questions come up a different times; a deadline for one student (i.e. course withdrawal) may not apply to another student. Students are advised individually and questions are addressed as they arise.

In addition to staff academic advisors and faculty advisors (in the CAFES), many departments within the Division of Student Affairs offer advising resources – career advising, tutoring and study sessions, advising for athletes and students with disabilities, etc. There are also many advisors working in the Division of Administration and Finance - records and evaluations advisors, financial aid advisors and student accounts advisors. (See handout of Advising Resources).

Given this information, Bonnie suggested that parents can best support their student's academic success by encouraging their students to seek out advising. Advisors are available across campus. It is up to the students to take responsibility to find out where they need to go for

advising, who they need to talk to and develop the discipline to do it. Students are provided information at Open House, at WOW and at Summer Advising about the resources available to them. There is also an advising Web site available to students, staff and faculty. See: [www.advising.calpoly.edu](http://www.advising.calpoly.edu)

Faculty members print their office hours on the course syllabus and encourage students to come in; but, not all students use the services.

If you believe your student may need advising assistance, let him/her know that advising is not a “negative” thing; rather, it’s a resource to guide them and help their progress flow smoothly throughout their time at Cal Poly. Express your confidence in them that they will get the answer to their question and then let them do it.

Students can avoid problems with their academic progress by following some simple tips:

- Keep a folder for all advising materials, notes and information
- Document appointment dates and times, people spoken to and information provided.
- Keep a list of questions on hand for the next advising appointments
- Meet with advisors every few quarters or as needed to receive answers to questions and to stay on top of course progress.

Bonnie indicated that an online degree audit system will be part of a future upgrade to the PeopleSoft Student Administration System the University uses to track student records. When that upgrade occurs, it will be easier for students to see their progress and the work they have left to complete their curriculum.

Karen Jernigan asked when students should apply for a graduation evaluation. Bonnie recommended doing so four quarters prior to the expected graduation date. Evaluations are also performed on students who change majors. After the change has officially been made, an evaluation is provided to the student notifying them of their progress toward the new degree program.

## **UNIVERSITY UPDATE**

In the interest of time, the University Update was deferred to the next meeting.

## **MEMBER RECOGNITION**

Melanie Dreike, Frances Rivoire, Bob Rivoire and Dan Rivoire were recognized for their service as members of the Parent Program Advisory Council.

Barbara Damerel was appointed Vice Chair (2007-08)/Chair (2008-09). Paul Bittick was thanked for his service as chair. Nancy was introduced to her new role at Chair for 2007-08.

## **CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be held Saturday, July 14. Other announcements are:

1. New Student Welcome Events – August 12 in your local area.
2. WOW – Saturday and Sunday, September 8 and 9
3. Parents’ Weekend and fall meeting – November 9-10.

Paul Bittick adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m. Please forward additions or corrections to [calpolyparent@calpoly.edu](mailto:calpolyparent@calpoly.edu). Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nicky Nickelsen