

Cal Poly Parent Program Advisory Council Meeting

Saturday, April 24, 2004

Performing Arts Center

Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo, CA

MINUTES

ATTENDING

Council Members – Kirk Brewer, Gloria Edelen, Connie Friel, John Friel, Virginia Genovese, Betty Long, Bobbe Michallik, Walter Michallik, Sue Richardson, Tony Richardson, Bob Rivoire, Francis Rivoire, Franklyn Silva, Henricka Silva, Jennifer Stuppi, Paul Stuppi, Carolyn Thom, Thanos Trezos, Floyd Watson, Maryann Watson, Crystal Williams, Kenneth Williams, Robbie Williams

Staff – Dr. Cornel Morton, Nicky Nickelsen

Parent Guests – Chis Dreike, Melanie Dreike

WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

Kirk Brewer called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m. Kirk asked each of the members to share their vision for the Parent Program Advisory Council. Comments follow:

Maryann & Floyd Watson: Continue to be available to parents, answering questions, providing referrals and sharing parent perspectives. Become informed about Cal Poly's advising system. Advocate for improved advising.

Thanos Trezos:

Promote the use of the administrative systems in place so that they serve students effectively and efficiently; for example, ensure that within their first year at the university all student have discussed and documented their academic and career plans with a faculty member or academic advisor. Become a political arm of the University to support academic and administrative issues. Consider establishing letter campaigns as necessary.

Crystal Williams: Continue to provide a warm, welcoming environment and opportunities for parents to be involved so that they enjoy their visits to campus.

Gloria Edelen: Continue to serve as a conduit for information. Be available to provide new parents with a moment of time to establish a contact, have their questions answered and gather the perspectives of other parents. Continue its role as an advisory group and supportive partner of the University.

Betty Long: Offering the perspective of an outgoing member, Betty noted that she felt the Council has made great progress communicating with parents, answering their questions and providing a means to register concerns and be involved during the past three years. She hopes the Council will continue to develop programming for parents, noting that parents are an important source of private support that is critical to sustaining the University's educational mission.

Ken & Robbie Williams: Make a concerted effort to ensure the parents know there is a Parent Advisory Council representing them. Encourage parents to listen to their children and provide feedback to the Council, so Council members may effectively provide feedback to the administration. Communicate to parents about timely issues that affect their students such as the health services and athletic fee referendums, Mardi Gras, etc. The Council should be recognized as ambassadors. Consider providing shirts to Council members and volunteers to increase visibility at events.

Kirk Brewer welcomed Chris & Melanie Dreike, parent guests, to the meeting. The Dreikes are from Torrance and have a daughter, Sandra, attending Cal Poly. They have generously volunteered several times during the past year at Parent Program events.

Bobbe & Walter Michallik: Advocate for improved advising. Parents have a wonderful opportunity to engage in dialogue and provide their perspectives to the University via the Parent Council, but most are not aware it exists. Raise awareness so that feedback to the University is representative of all parents and communication is strengthened.

Virginia Genovese: Continue to develop the content of e-mail messages in order to provide more useful and timely information to parents. Strengthen the visibility of the Parent Council. Encourage parents to have their children seek out a faculty mentor and office hours. Having the VPSA on the Council is helpful and appreciated. Invite other administrators and staff to speak at Council meetings and to hear from the Council members.

Kirk Brewer: Utilize the online newsletter for timely updates and to communicate “on the limb” about issues such as Mardi Gras, the fee referendum and to provide parents with tips about how to support their student’s success. Consider calling on administrators or staff who are well-informed about administrative issues to advise on or assist with drafting communications to parents.

John & Connie Friel: Continue to be an advocate for the University. Avoid becoming an adversary group. Strengthen linkage between the parent community and the University. Have done well to make parents feel welcome. Approach issues of concern, gather information from the University Updates and communicate with parents.

Franklyn & Henricka Silva: Continue the current work of the Council.

Frances & Bob Rivoire: Encourage parents to act as role models to their role. Be proactive in reaching out to parents. Cornel’s comments are valuable; invite representatives from the various colleges such as deans and faculty or staff as well. Invite a representative from the community to speak to and hear from parents. Develop specific functions beyond Council meetings and events. Create a greater sense of focus; provide a structure for advising on issues which need attention.

Carolyn Thom: Provide parents with information to help their students cope with stress, manage time, get involved in extracurricular activities and create a balance in their life that allows them to be happy, well rested and successful at Cal Poly.

Tony & Sue Richardson: Be available to “compare notes” with other parents, who may often believe that they or their students are the “only” ones having a challenging time or problem. Communicate back to parents through the University e-mail link or Web site. Continue volunteer involvement. New parents gratefully accept the opportunity to talk to parents of current students.

Paul & Jennifer Stuppi: The program does a good job of getting parents involved. Council members focus a bit much on the problems of their specific students. Consider if these situations representative of all or most students and then advise and communicate.

A motion to approve the minutes of the February Parent Advisory Council meeting was proposed by Crystal Williams. The minutes were approved.

UNIVERSITY UPDATE

Cornel Morton, Vice President for Student Affairs, provided the following University Update.

Student Housing North: The University, with encouragement and support from faculty and students in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design, is making a thoughtful effort to consider sustainability in the design of new buildings on campus. The Student Housing North Project will be designed with LEADS standards in mind. The first phase of Student Housing North was scheduled to open in fall 2007 but is facing additional delays due to the discovery of an endangered snail on the site. The first phase is now slated to open in fall 2008. A news release regarding the snails was distributed to the members.

Summer School: The CSU budget calls for a 6% reduction in enrollment. This reduction results in just under 1,000 fewer students on campus for Cal Poly. Although the reduction impacts admissions, it will allow the University to continue to focus on serving the needs of its currently enrolled students. Cal Poly will manage its enrollment reduction by offering a limited summer session. There was discussion about offering courses through Cal Poly Continuing Education; however, that entity was unable to reach an agreement about compensation with the California Faculty Association earlier this year. The reduction of summer school is a temporary action that will impact some students. The University is working with Alan Hancock and Cuesta Community colleges to provide classes suitable to student needs where possible. More information is available at:

http://www.calpolynews.calpoly.edu/news_releases/2004/2004_news_releases/april_04/summer04.html

A link to the summer schedule is available from this site as well.

On a related topic, Cornel reported that the CSU has established a Blue Ribbon Task Force to study progress to degree without compromising the integrity of academic programs. With the approval of faculty, the number of units required for graduation for some programs have been reduced.

Mardi Gras:

The San Luis Obispo community's Mardi Gras celebration, held in March, was a difficult weekend. 41 of the approximately 200 arrests made were Cal Poly students. Three of those arrests were for serious crimes (i.e. assault with a deadly weapon, inciting a riot and tossing an M80 in the direction of a police officer) and were referred to Judicial Affairs, Cal Poly's campus disciplinary office. Following the event, many students expressed discontent about how situations were handled or how they were treated by local police.

ASI, Inc. (Associated Students, Inc.) hosted a student forum on campus after the Mardi Gras celebration. The students arrested were invited to participate in a workshop to discuss the weekend and receive counseling on University expectations for student behavior off-campus. Most arrests involved alcohol and underage drinking. Counselors and the University's Judicial Affairs officer facilitated the workshops. Students were encouraged to discuss their experiences and consider what they could have done differently. Many students said they felt "challenged" by pre-event publicity and harassed for being in the wrong place at the wrong time during the event. Discussions have ensued regarding an end to the Mardi Gras celebration, but the community organization that plans the event has made no commitment to do so at this time. An open letter to the San Luis Obispo Community signed by Cal Poly President Warren Baker, Cuesta College President Marie Rossenwasser and Mayor Dave Romero called for an end to the Mardi Gras event.

In order to address recurring issues related to students' relationship with the town, particularly those involving alcohol, a University/Community Alcohol Task Force was created and

commenced following the event. The task force is comprised of the San Luis Obispo Police Chief, San Luis Obispo's DA, representatives from Alcohol and Beverage Control, county officials, owners of local bars and University officials. The issue of substance use and abuse at the Mardi Gras celebration was also discussed at length during the University's recent Substance Use and Abuse Advisory Committee meeting.

In an effort to partner with parents and formulate tangible solutions to the problem of underage drinking, Cornel indicated that, beginning fall 2004, the University will implement parental notification on second offense when underage alcohol-related violations occur. Currently, Cal Poly students receive a letter Cornel sends to them after public notice of their arrest for any under-age alcohol violation. The intent of this letter is to notify students that the University is aware of the incident, concerned and will provide resources to assist the student. The letter makes no presumptions with regard to a student's guilt or innocence, but does list resources available to students including contact information for ASI's legal service and Health & Counseling Services. The dean of the student's academic college is copied on the correspondence.

In the event a student is arrested a second time for an underage alcohol-related offense, a letter will be mailed to the parents. Because Cal Poly's student body is generally bright, talented, thoughtful and responsive to high expectations, parents will not be notified of first offenses, allowing students the opportunity to correct their behavior and seek assistance from University staff. Repeat offenses are generally few in number. UCSB implemented parental notification two years ago on first offense.

Council members suggested updates to parents regarding issues such as Mardi Gras be included in the e-newsletter. Paul and Jennifer Stuppi and Maryann and Floyd Watson suggested there be some way of addressing issues between students and the police. Both cited situations involving unfair encounters with police officers themselves or their responsiveness to complaints registered by students vs. resident neighbors. Cornel indicated that ASI President Alison Anderson is proposing an advisory committee to the SLOPD to allow for constant and regular feedback between students and the police. John Friel suggested a parent be available to attend one or more of these sorts of meetings.

ACTION ITEM: Consider a role for parent participation in advisory committee meetings related to student/police relations.

Athletics/Health Services Fee Referendum:

Cornel Morton announced that students passed two referendums, allowing for an increase in the Health Services and Athletics fees every student pays quarterly. The Athletics fee generated the most interest and passed by less than 500 votes. This fee provides funding for athletic scholarships. Funds were being diverted from the Athletics department's general fund for this purpose to the disadvantage of the Marching Band, Cheerleaders, Pep Squad and others. Without the fee increase, some sports would have been eliminated.

Some students expressed discontent, indicating that notice and information about the referendum was inadequate. Cornel verified that the referendum was conducted according to prescribed CSU policy but offered to meet with students who want to express their concerns. Opponents of the referendum were also critical of an increase in athletic fees during a time when layoffs are slated. They also argued against paying for programs which, they argued, benefit only one segment of the student population. Those in favor of the athletics fee referendum argued that athletics are value-added programs which enrich University life for the entire student body.

Thanos Trezos inquired as to whether there was a means for students to express their citizenship and deliberate the fee increases. There were informational forums held on campus prior to the vote. An article about the Health Services fee referendum was published in the *Parent Connection* newsletter.

Student Profile: Cornel provided the Council members with a copy of the Division's Student Profile publication titled ***Discovering Student Community: Images of Success***. The publication provides a glimpse into the co-curricular life and experiences of Cal Poly students.

PARENT PROGRAM DISCUSSION ITEMS

Newsletter: Nicky Nickelsen indicated the spring newsletter was mailed to parents and requested feedback. The Web site and database refresh project is progressing.

Web site: Text for the Web site was provided to the Library's Media Services staff at the end of March. **Special thanks to Tony Richardson, Thanos Trezos and Virginia Genovese for taking time to review and comment on the draft text.**

Database: The Library's Media Services staff will be adding fields for parent contact information to the Summer Advising Program and WOW registration application to assist the Parent Program in collecting data. They will collect name and e-mail address information only. The Parent Program will then e-mail those parents whose information is provided, notifying them of the Parent Program's services and encouraging them to sign-up for our e-news service. Providing them with the form will allow us to collect the rest of the contact information we need that the Library cannot release to us (phone, address, student data and volunteer interests).

Maryann Watson suggested we e-mail these parents the e-newsletter right away, rather than wait for them to sign up after their initial notice from the Parent Program.

Handbook: The Parent Program and WOW program will begin work on the 2004 Parent Handbook this summer.

Events: Upcoming events are as follows:

Viva Cal Poly (for Orange County alumni and parents): Thursday, May 13, 2003

*****New Student Welcome Events**: Sunday, August 15

*****WOW Family Orientation**: Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 11 & 12

*****Homecoming & Parents' Weekend**: Friday & Saturday, Oct. 15 & 16

*****Council members are asked to be available to volunteer at these events**

MEMBER RECOGNITION

Kirk Brewer was recognized and thanked for his service as Council chair. He will be formally recognized at the July meeting.

Betty Long was recognized for her three years of service as a member of the Council. Betty was the first local parent Council member. She served on the University's Web refresh parent focus group, was a Homecoming judge and was a valuable resource during housing discussions. She was thanked for her thoughtful comments during Council meetings and for her reliability as an e-mail network coordinator and volunteer at campus events. Betty was presented with a plaque designed by Parent Program student graphic artist, Mickey Pucko and a Cal Poly history book signed by Dr. Morton.

Mike and Mary Cox were recognized for their three years of service as members of the Council. Mary became involved with the Parent Program as an e-mail network coordinator. Both Mike and Mary dedicated many hours of their time volunteering at campus events. Their thoughtful

comments and guidance during Council meetings and feedback following events is appreciated. Mike and Mary will both receive plaques designed by Parent Program student graphic artist, Mickey Pucko and a Cal Poly history book signed by Dr. Morton.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

John Friel provided the council members with a letter of endorsement of the University's Student Success Council. Minor corrections were suggested. The letter will be signed by Kirk Brewer and John Friel and sent to Dr. David Conn and Dr. Cornel Morton, Co-chairs of the SSC on April 20, 2004.

ADJOURNMENT

The summer meeting will be held Saturday, July 10th, 24th or 31st. Information will be forthcoming by e-mail. Kirk Brewer adjourned the meeting at 10:30 AM.

Please forward additions or corrections to calpolyparent@calpoly.edu. Thank you.
Respectfully submitted,

Nicky Nickelsen