

## CAL POLY PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Saturday, August 9, 2008  
Alumni Conference Center  
Cal Poly State University  
San Luis Obispo, CA

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT

Parent Members – Cynthia Boriskin, Yvonne Chavez, Marcus Cooke, Barbara Damerel, Nancy Gragnani, Debbie Hertzog, John Jernigan, Karen Jernigan, Connie Katz, Ira Katz, Linda Kuroda, Randy Otsuji, Patti Pasetta, Pat Patubo, Pat Saley

Student Members – Amanda Raudsep

Staff – Dr. Elie Alexroth, Rojean Dominguez, Dr. Cornel Morton, Craig Nelson, Nicky Nickelsen, Jessica Todd

#### NOT PRESENT

Parent Members - Ed Czisny, Maxine Czisny, Rob Boriskin, John Jones, Ron Hunnewell, Chris Patubo, Ross Whitt, Terri Whitt

Student Members – Chris Ho

#### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Barbara called the meeting to order and welcomed the members. Each provided a brief update about what their students are doing this summer.

#### CAL POLY FUND UPDATE

##### **Craig Nelson, Director of the Cal Poly Fund and Advancement Services**

Craig Nelson began his annual update by thanking the Council members for the major role they play in supporting the Parent Program's outreach and communication efforts. These efforts, in part, help boost Cal Poly's ability to raise much needed private support from parents and families every year.

The Cal Poly Fund is Cal Poly's annual giving program, which raises funds from alumni, parents and friends of the University through mail, phone and online solicitations. Through this program, alumni are asked to give to their college or department; and, parents are asked to give to the Parent Fund, which raises unrestricted gifts for use at the discretion of the President. Parents can also restrict gifts to any program of their choice.

According to Craig, 2007-08 was a tough year in fundraising overall. Although the University did receive two very significant and generous bequests - \$10 million and \$60 million – cash gifts were down, particularly from alumni.

Despite the decline, gifts to the Parent Fund were up. Parents gave \$747,000 to the Parent Fund this year, up 2% from \$733,000 in FY 2006-07. 7,800 of 19,000 families (40%) contributed. Unfortunately, alumni giving decreased by 6%. 9,600 of 120,000 alumni (8%) contributed. Although the University is grateful that parent giving has remained steady or increased over time, it is concerned about the decline in alumni giving. Possible explanations are being explored.

As the University prepares to launch its next Capital Campaign, the Cal Poly Foundation is implementing some new initiatives. One is the Parents for Philanthropy Council, a group of parent donors who are being recruited to assist the University in raising money from other

parents. (The Parent Council heard from Anne Harris, Director of Special Gifts and Mike Mantel, CPF Board Chairman about this initiative at the April meeting.) The group will be also taking on the “letter-signing” role that the Parent Program Advisory Council Chair has been responsible for in the past. There are plans to initiate a student philanthropy group as well, the purpose of which will be to instill an ethic of giving back among students that they will carry with them when they graduate.

## **UNIVERSITY UPDATE**

### **Cornel Morton, Vice President for Student Affairs**

Cornel welcomed the members back to campus and the Central Coast and thanked them for the time they dedicate in service to the University.

### BIENNIAL REPORT & CSU FACT BOOK:

Cornel distributed copies of the Student Affairs Division Biennial Report. The report includes the division’s mission and vision statements, department mission statements, a description of the ABLE pillars which guide the division’s work and examples each department’s contribution to these pillars between 2005 and 2007. He also distributed the most recent edition of the CSU Fact Book, which is a summary of the CSU system’s 23 campuses.

### COMMUTER SURVEY:

Cornel shared a preliminary and brief survey of Cal Poly commuter students undertaken by the campus’ Student Quality Advisory Committee. The survey group was enrolled Cal Poly students who are off-campus residents. To date, 1,874 surveys of 10,000 have been returned. 50% of respondents are women; 49% are men. Most are third-year students. Most live within four miles of campus. 61% have lived off-campus for two or more years.

Most students indicated what they liked about campus was a comfortable place to relax when not in class and the spontaneous campus environment. More than 50% of students rated proximity to academic buildings as important to them. Approximately 50% of students enjoy the location, amenities and living quarters of off-campus living environments.

38% spend 1-5 hours on campus not attending class. 25% spend 6-10 hours on campus not attending class. 30% spend their time in the library and the University Union when not in class. 60% of commuter students work on or off-campus. Of those, 24% work on campus. Of the students working on campus, 48% of those work 10 hours and 44% work 20 hours. Of the students working off campus, 28% work 1-10 hours and 45% work more than 20 hours.

52% agree with the statement that they feel moderately connected to the campus community. 25% disagree.

The University has also received very informative narratives that will provide an understanding how off-campus students stay connected to Cal Poly. Students are mentioning Club involvement, flyers, Facebook, e-mail, personal connections, finding one’s niche, and networking as important to ways to stay connected to campus. The survey also asks for suggestions to help off-campus students feel engaged so that the University can assess how to spend resources. Students mentioned the Cal Poly Portal as a popular means of finding campus and community news.

While Cal Poly’s resident community is growing significantly – the first phase of Poly Canyon Village opens this fall – the University is careful to not lose sight of the needs of its large off-campus student population and will use this data to identify ways to support and encourage the

involvement, sense of belonging, and success of students living off campus. The results of the survey are still coming in; reminders will be sent to students who have not responded asking them to complete the survey.

Patti Pasetta: Patti indicated she loads her daughter's Campus Express card with much of the spending money she needs. This is one way to encourage her stay on campus for meals, etc.

Pat Saley: Pat inquired about progress in ensuring campus housing for all incoming freshmen. Cornel indicated that the goal is to do just that. Poly Canyon Village represents 2,700 beds for sophomores. This frees up the 800 beds in Cerro Vista apartments for freshmen. There are plans for the construction of another 2,000 – 2,300 bed complex in the future to help the University keep pace with the projected growth in enrollment.

Marcus Cooke: Marcus expressed his compliments on the collaborative efforts of SLOPD and the University, citing the initiation of community BBQ's as a nice way to bring students and residents together. Cornel added that the work of Cal Poly's Student Community Liaison Committee is instrumental in promoting positive town/gown relations. San Luis Obispo will be hosting the next town gown conference this fall.

Randy Otsuji: Randy suggested partnering with local businesses to allow students to use their PolyCard/Campus Express off-campus.

Ira Katz: Ira commented on the lack of urgency to graduate in four years that seems embedded in the culture of the Cal Poly student body. Especially when resources are an issue, Ira feels the University needs to pay attention to its staffing, increase scholarship support, improve the campus climate, facilitate the development of relationships between students and faculty and set the expectation of student success. His observation is that Cal Poly is uneven in this expectation; Cal Poly students should know that they can, will and should graduate in four years.

Ira suggested teaching assistants be made available to students. He indicated Cal Poly has some catching up to do in the use of technology to offer courses online that students can take in the evening or during the summer. Parents, he indicated, should be rewarded with scholarship money for students who make timely progress to degree.

Cornel indicated that large institutions often struggle to sustain the levels of local attention to students they would like, especially given limited resources. A sustained commitment to students is something which must constantly be reinforced at the department and college level. This is a goal Cal Poly continues to strive for – to be certain every faculty and staff member knows they have a unique and individual role to play in our student's success.

Ideally, every student should be able to point to at least one person they can rely on – someone who has their best interest at heart – whether it is a member of the faculty or staff. To help promote this notion, Student Affairs staff make it a point to visit every first-year faculty member to Cal Poly, to welcome and introduce them to the ways the Division of Student Affairs partners with staff in the academic departments, and to instill in them the expectation that they will play a more intrusive role in the lives of their students.

#### PROPOSED "STATEMENT ON UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS":

Cornel reviewed Cal Poly's proposed "Statement on University Expectations" - a statement that encompasses what the Cal Poly University community is about. The statement speaks to the

expectations we have for individual and collective membership of the community, collaboration, and rights around free expression. It also speaks to the campus climate – that we aspire to be a campus where all are valued. The statement applies to students, staff, faculty, visitors and vendors – anyone who attends, works at, visits or conducts business at the University.

John Jernigan: John indicated the challenge with these documents, though they are of value, is how to keep them in the forefront of people's minds.

Cornel indicated that these types of documents are often referenced as codes of honor at schools. When they are put on paper into something people see, they become something people believe in. Cal Poly's document is still in draft form. The draft statement will be presented to various governance groups on campus for comment and suggested modifications before a final draft is presented to President Baker and the executive committee for endorsement.

#### GRADUATE STATUS REPORT:

Career Services released Cal Poly's annual Graduate Status Report, which summarizes career placement, employment, salary and graduate school data from a survey provided to recent graduates. This year, Career Services saw a 10% increase in participation, likely because the surveys were distributed and collected at commencement. Cornel summarized some of the data collected including the following:

- 65% of respondents were employed full-time
- 5% of respondents were employed part-time
- 7% of respondents were seeking employment (up from 3% in 2005-06)
- 3% of respondents were not seeking employment
- 20% of respondents were attending/planning to attend graduate school
- \$50,000 is the median salary. Graduates in the fields of engineering, technology, accounting, sciences, construction and architecture were earning closer to \$60,000. Graduates in the liberal arts fields were earning closer to \$35,000.
- 15% of offers were made at Cal Poly Job Fairs. Cal Poly experienced an increase in employer participation at job fairs from 582 last year to 681 this year.

The 2006-07 report is posted on the Career Services Web site at:

[http://www.careerservices.calpoly.edu/students/career\\_planning/gsr.htm](http://www.careerservices.calpoly.edu/students/career_planning/gsr.htm)

#### UPDATE ON STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES:

Cornel indicated the FYE program continues to grow. Jeff Jacobs, a faculty member in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, is starting a peer-mentoring group where undergraduates will be trained to serve as peer mentors to first-year students.

The University is preparing for its 2010/2011 accreditation review by the Western Association of Colleges and Universities (WASC). The various departments in the Division of Student Affairs are conducting assessment exercises to measure how effective its services are in producing the learning outcomes they are meant to achieve. The University's academic departments are undergoing similar assessment exercises. Efforts are also underway to coordinate assessment efforts between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to achieve "inclusive excellence" – a model for co-curricular efforts.

#### **COUNSELING SERVICES PRESENTATION**

**Dr. Elie Axelroth, Head, Counseling Services**

Elie provided an update on Counseling Services since her last visit with the Parent Council in April 2006 following the Virginia Tech incident. Elie indicated that since that incident, Counseling Services has noticed a significant increase in anxiety among faculty, staff, students and parents. Fortunately, many members of the faculty and staff have become diligent about watching for and paying attention to students who may be in trouble or in need of support. In addition to a rise in anxiety, more students are coming to Cal Poly with existing conditions that require counseling – mental health problems, alcohol addiction, eating disorders, etc.

According to Elie, the Counseling Center's staff has not kept up with increased demands for their services. This affects wait time for appointments, and in some cases, student retention. International Association of Counseling Services (IACS), an accrediting organization for counseling services in higher education, recommends a ratio of 1 counselor per 1,500 students. At Cal Poly, the ratio is 1 to 3,500.

Waitlist studies at Cal Poly's Counseling Services reflect the staffing problem. In 2001, 98% of students seeking counseling were seen within 3 days. In 2005, that percentage dropped to 68%. In April of 2008, only 18% of students seeking counseling were seen in 3 days. In addition, Counseling Services is not able to see students on a weekly basis unless there is an emergency. A study of students seen in the Health Center and diagnosed with depression revealed that 15 months later 25% were no longer attending Cal Poly. Though the exact reasons why these students left was not verified, their reasons for seeking help may have played a part in their decisions to leave.

Counseling Services provides a number of programs to serve students in need of psychological counseling. For some Cal Poly students, counseling is mandated as part of a disciplinary sanction. Three years ago, Counseling Services saw 90 mandated students. Two years ago, it saw 120. Last year, it saw 157. With the opening of additional campus housing, more students will be living on campus, creating more referrals to mandated counseling. Alcohol and drug use are the most common referrals. Mandated counseling usually consists of three sessions.

Counseling Services also runs groups. They currently have about 8 groups of 4-5 students. Group discussions focus on relationship issues or social skills. Groups provide students with peers to talk to, helping them feel like they not the only one facing a particular issue.

Counseling Services has received Cal Poly fee monies to hire a full-time counselor to work with students who are on academic probation. Counseling Services will be offering a psycho-educational group in addition to working with them individually.

To address their staffing needs, a Health Services fee referendum will be proposed to Cal Poly students during Winter quarter. The referendum will increase student fees to allow Counseling Services to bring its staffing levels closer to IACS standards. Increased funding will enable Counseling Services to: see students within 3 days of their request for an appointment, see students for continuing care on a weekly basis, and offer services for students with problems (i.e. eating disorders) that require a referral to a provider in the community.

Ira Katz: Ira indicated that Elie's report is troubling on many levels. He suggested the following:

- 1) Using psychology students as peer counselors to address the needs of some of the students Counseling Services cannot see in a timely manner;
- 2) Approaching marriage and family therapists in the community to find out if they would consider seeing some Cal Poly students on a pro-bono basis; and

- 3) Developing an intern program that would allow students to complete required hours for their degree while taking on some of the counseling load.

Elie indicated that Counseling Services does have students working in the Counseling office who are assisting staff with the counseling load while completing the internship requirements for a doctorate in Psychology. Peer Health Educators are also available to advise and answer questions of their peers on most health and wellness related matters. CSU Healthlink is a CSU health insurance plan available to students who don't have insurance. The CSU policy has mental health coverage.

Marcus Cooke: Marcus inquired about Cal Poly's emergency notification and response systems should there be an active shooter incident on campus.

Students, staff and faculty may enroll in a text message notification service via the Cal Poly portal. Should an emergency occur, Cal Poly has a number of systems available to notify the campus and local community of the incident. A summary is listed in the Safety section of the Parent Handbook. Cal Poly also has a threat assessment team.

## **HEALTH EDUCATION PRESENTATION**

**Rojean Dominguez, Health Educator**

Misha Davies, EROS

Shalayna Vallier, TLC

Cal Poly Health Educator Rojean Dominguez summarized Cal Poly's Health Education Department and introduced peer educators Misha Davies and Shalayna Vallier to present on peer health programs. The Health Education program provides support, education, awareness activities, special events, information and referral services, free of charge to all Cal Poly students, staff, and faculty. It coordinates the electronic 21<sup>st</sup> birthday card program; developed a Faculty and Staff Alcohol Manual; coordinates Alcohol-Wise--an online alcohol education program that all new students are expected to complete; plans quarterly health campaigns; conducts individual and group consultations; and supports faculty with statistics. The program is part of Health and Counseling Services and consists of one Health Educator, one staff support person and more than 50 student peer educators.

Student peer educators are trained to work on one of three teams that address various areas of health and wellness and encourage a preventative approach to health and wellness. The teams are as follows:

Peers Understanding, Listening, Speaking and Educating (**PULSE**) is a student coordinated and driven leadership program dedicated to providing awareness and education about Wellness and Health Enrichment for Cal Poly students and the community. Students commit a minimum of four quarters to the program. Some students complete their internships and/or senior projects with PULSE, continuing for consecutive years. PULSE educators reach over 10,000 students through individual consultations, presentations, or educational interventions.

Student educators, who are part of the Thoughtful Lifestyle Choices (**TLC**) team do alcohol and other drug education and intervention, mental health awareness programs, communication and relationship programs and focus on the seven realms of wellness.

The Health Enrichment Action Team (**HEAT**) is comprised of Food Science and Nutrition and Kinesiology majors with special training in providing peer consultations. HEAT Educators offer confidential individual consultations as well as group presentations on eating disorders and

body image, dietary analysis, eating healthy in college, sports nutrition, nutrition facts and myths, supplements, vegetarianism, weight management and healthy snacking.

The Educational Resources on Sexuality (**EROS**) Team is comprised of students trained in peer counseling and sexuality issues. EROS educators offer confidential individual consultations as well as group presentations on men's and women's health, sexually transmitted infections, contraception, sexual assault and sexual harassment, abstinence and safe sex practices.

The Thoughtful Lifestyle Choices (**TLC**) team explores a variety of issues within the area of lifestyle wellness. Individual confidential consultations as well as group presentations are available on Alcohol and the Law, Partying Smart, Relationships and Communication, Stress Management, Substance Abuse and Misuse, Sleep, Marijuana, Time Management and the 7 Realms of Wellness.

Cynthia Boriskin: Cynthia asked if the Alcohol-Wise course is mandatory for all new students.

Cornel indicated that he would like to make the course mandatory. The logistics of placing holds on students' ability to register needs to be worked out. Rojean indicated that despite the fact that it is not mandatory, the completion rate has been high. Last year the completion rate for the first part of the course was 93%. The completion rate for the second part of the course was 86%. The data showed that many students who returned to take the second part of the course learned what the program was intended to teach. Whether or not they will put what they have learned into practice is an unanswered question.

Ira Katz: Ira applauded the work of the Peer Health Educators and suggested they develop a program to stop and prevent bullying. Bullying, which starts in elementary school and can carry on for years, causes serious emotional problems and undue stress that can affect students even after it stops. Students should know that it is never OK to bully anyone for any reason. Differences should be welcomed and celebrated.

Rojean indicated that they do sponsor a program about respectful relationships at Paulding Middle School. Every year, they alternate the focus of the program.

Karen Jernigan: Karen inquired as to whether there is any outreach to students about how they can spend their time in ways that don't involve alcohol.

Health Education promotes a list of 101 things students can do in SLO without alcohol. They post the activity in bold letters on stakes along the walking paths across campus (i.e. #94 Hike to the "P".)

Barbara Damerel: Barbara complemented the Alcohol-Wise program indicating that it provides a reality check of sorts. Students can learn about the risks associated with drinking and decide what is right for them.

Karen Jernigan: Karen inquired as to whether the health educators take the approach that students should follow the law and not drink if they are not of age.

Rojean indicated her department and her peer educators do not take the "Just Say No" approach. This philosophy has been deemed ineffective in educational chronicles repeatedly. In the past 15 years, the problem of underage drinking has only worsened. Unfortunately, students are coming to college with well-practiced drinking habits – a product of our culture.

Misha and Shaylana added that although prevention is emphasized over abstinence, they do discuss abstinence as an option with students who are open to that and will support their peers by discussing ways to help them live by their choice.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Karen Jernigan requested an addendum be made to the April meeting minutes, adding an item for those members not present. Motions to approve the April meeting minutes with the addendum were made; they were approved. Future meeting minutes will include an item for members not present.

### SOAR AND SUMMER MEETING

Barbara led a discussion about the effectiveness of Parent Council involvement in the parent track of Summer Orientation, Advising and Resources (SOAR). Most members felt that attending SOAR to speak and staff the Parent Program welcome table was a very effective use of their time and agreed to make attendance at SOAR an annual standing commitment for Parent Advisory Council members. Because summer also involves a Parent Advisory Council meeting in August (followed by WOW in September and Parents' Weekend in October), the members agreed with a proposal to eliminate the summer Parent Council meeting and add more time to the other meetings as needed. The change does not impact the bylaws.

### PARENT COUNCIL SURVEY

Barbara thanked those members who completed the survey sent to all members in July. She received five responses and provided a copy of those responses to the members. She reviewed responses to the first page of questions. In the interest of time, responses to the second page of questions will be reviewed at the next meeting.

### **PARENT PROGRAM ITEMS**

Nicky will follow up with a WOW schedule and information regarding Parents' Weekend by way e-mail.

### **CLOSING REMARKS AND AJOURNMENT**

Barbara adjourned the meeting at 1:00 pm.

Please forward additions or corrections to [calpolyparent@calpoly.edu](mailto:calpolyparent@calpoly.edu).

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nona Nickelsen and Jessica Todd