

# **CAL POLY PARENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

Saturday, July 30, 2005  
Alumni House Conference Center  
Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo, CA

## **MINUTES**

### **ATTENDING**

Council Members – Paul Bittick, Alison Byler, John Cotter, Melanie Dreike, Connie Friel, John Friel, Virginia Genovese, Pat Patubo, Sue Richardson, Tony Richardson, Frances Rivoire, Carolyn Thom, Thanos Trezos, Crystal Williams, Jordan Whaley  
Staff – Cornel Morton, Craig Nelson Nicky Nickelsen, Theresa Rush  
Parent Guests – Nancy Gagnani, Patricia Pasetta, Connie Katz, Ira Katz, Valerie Zentmyer

### **WELCOME/INTRODUCTION**

Frances Rivoire called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM. She welcomed all and read the Council's mission statement as a reminder of the role of the Parent Program Advisory Council. She recognized the time and commitment of every member, emphasizing the value of everyone's contributions and expressing appreciation for their attention and participation. As chair she hopes to lead the group through a year filled with robust goals and great achievements.

Pat and Chris Patubo were acknowledged as newly appointed members. They will serve through June 2008. Allison Byler is the new student representative. She will serve through June 2006. Guests Patricia Pasetta, Connie and Ira Katz and Valerie Zentmyer were warmly welcomed.

Motions to approve the minutes from the April meeting as written were made by Melanie Dreike and John Cotter. They were approved.

### **UNIVERSITY UPDATE**

#### **Student Affairs Division Strategic Planning Process**

Within the past few weeks, the division has brought to closure its strategic planning process. The last Student Affairs Division strategic plan dates back 7-8 years ago. The division has undergone an intentional process to create an updated plan that sets priorities which address the current needs of students.

During spring quarter, the division's middle management attended a planning session led by the Associate Vice President, Denise Campbell. They established four pillars that tie into the division's vision statement, "Investing in Greatness". The pillars are: **A**dvocating, **B**uilding Cooperative Relationships, **L**earning and **E**nhancing Opportunities. Strategic objectives will be built around these four pillars.

During the division's annual retreat in October, the department directors/coordinators will share their action plans for the coming year.

#### **Summer School**

Approximately 3,710 students enrolled for summer quarter with an average load of 8.43 units. Last year, summer enrollment fell below 800 when the University's summer course offerings were scaled down due to budget reductions. The 2003 summer enrollment was 3,664. The CSU's target for summer enrollment is 25% of a campus' enrollment during the regular academic year.

#### **Incidents of Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cornel reported a documented increase in the number of reported incidents of cheating and plagiarism. Coupled with this data is a general sense among faculty and administrators that a spike in cheating and plagiarism is occurring. The introduction of specific types of technology is contributing to these activities. Faculty seem willing to confront the problem, but are looking for effective ways to do so. Following his meetings with the college deans and department chairs earlier in the year, Cornel began working with professor Joe Grimes, director for the Center for Teaching and Learning to discuss the development of programs and resources that will help faculty address these problems. The Division of Student Affairs will partner with the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide resources and assistance in the future.

Currently, orientation program leaders and resident advisors discuss Cal Poly's academic expectations with students. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (formerly Judicial Affairs) coordinates student disciplinary action and works with faculty to adjudicate charges of cheating and plagiarism.

Incidents of incivility have also been addressed, resulting in the need for civility dialogues that reinforce expectations about mutual respect, especially when disagreements occur. Recent incidents have involved opposing views about the Iraq war, gay marriage, abortion rights, and other controversial topics. Opportunities to assist faculty in fostering environments that show respect for others also exist.

*Council members responded as follows:*

Tony Richardson inquired if these incidents were related to coursework or exams. Cornel indicated that cheating and plagiarism is related to both. Students are using cell phones to text message answers and are copy papers from the Internet.

Ira Katz inquired about the monitoring of cell phones during exams. Jordan Whaley indicated professors usually ask students to place the cell phones on a desk at the front of the room or turn them off. They also prepare different versions of the same test. Allison Byler indicated that tests are often administered based on the size and format of the class.

Carolyn Thom suggested informing parents about what they can do to reinforce values with their students. Ira Katz echoed this comment.

Paul Bittick mentioned a recent incident on campus in which a Mustang Daily reporter plagiarized her stories.

Pat Patubo mentioned the name of a Web site that may be a useful tool in addressing plagiarism. The verbiage from [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) reads: "Recognized worldwide as the standard in online plagiarism prevention, Turnitin helps educators and students take full advantage of the internet's educational potential. Used by thousands of institutions in over fifty countries, Turnitin's products promote originality in student work, improve student writing and research skills, encourage collaborative learning, and save valuable instructor time."

## **WOW PROGRAM PRESENTATION**

Alison Byler, former WOW leader and member of team WOW provided a report about this fall's orientation programming. Cal Poly's Orientation Programs consists of one staff advisor, seven student board members, 50 team leaders and 500 student orientation leaders. She is one of seven board members who will be planning WOW 2006. The purpose of Cal Poly's orientation programs is to start to build a foundation between students and Cal Poly. Students are placed in small groups for five days to share experiences and get to know new friends, the university and the community.

Allison described the programming for each day, which includes “get acquainted” group time, SLO Bound, College Connections day, programming with Preface and Awareness Day. During its awareness sessions, the WOW program offers programs related to drugs and alcohol, diversity and civility. Blocks of time are included for processing in their groups. Students are given an opportunity to discuss how they feel about the issues presented.

The time spend with groups also includes evening activities and free time during which WOW leaders can schedule trips to the beach or drive-in, hiking, kayaking and other social activities. The program is voluntary, but students are asked to come with a good attitude if they plan to participate. Generally students get out of the week what they put into it.

Family Orientation Weekend includes kids’ passport activities throughout the weekend; a resource fair, President’s Welcome and parent sessions on Saturday and parent sessions and a BBQ on Sunday.

Cal Poly’s WOW program is nationally recognized.

### **PARENT PROGRAM UPDATE**

Nicky Nickelsen reported that the Parent Advisory Council functional responsibilities will be revised and distributed prior to the next meeting.

The following dates for upcoming meetings and events were announced. Council members are asked to be present to assist with programming.

- Fall meeting date - November 6, 2005
- New Student Welcome Events - August 14, 2005
- WOW Family Orientation Weekend -September 10-11, 2005
- Homecoming & Parents’ Weekend - November 4-5, 2005

The fall *Parent Connection* newsletter will reach mailboxes the first week of October. Matt Calkins, (Art and Design ’06) was recently hired as the Parent Program’s new graphic artist. The newsletter will include the Parents’ Weekend schedule which includes academic-related programming on Friday and the traditional Homecoming festivities and a performing arts event on Saturday. The academic-related programs offered by the colleges have been planned with the theme “sustainability” in mind. Many of the featured stories from the colleges are about how sustainability is incorporated into coursework and student projects. The newsletter will also feature news from the Division of Student Affairs, a calendar and other timely stories of interest to parents.

The Alumni Relations office has identified a list of parents who are also Cal Poly alumni. We are reviewing the list to determine a possible candidate for appointment to the CPAA board and the Parent Program Advisory Council.

### **BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **Discussion Item: *Letting Go: “Freshmom” Orientation***

Frances Rivoire called upon John Cotter to lead a discussion about the article *Letting Go: “Freshmom” Orientation* which he distributed at the April Parent Program Advisory Council meeting. John indicated he feels the article has fueled his feelings about what is important to him as a parent, noting he feels strongly that, “If I pay, I have a say.” He voiced frustration with FERPA regulations and the related policies and procedures in place that protect the release of student information. He invited comments from the Council members.

Crystal Williams: During a recent retreat she attended as an employee of CSU Chico, an exercise in understanding the views of people across various generations was presented. Participants were asked to discuss what the world was like when they were growing up,

compare the differences and discuss how these differences affect their behavior and their expectations of other generations. She noted that each generation is named and associated with specific characteristics; today's generation is known as the "millennials." The exercise emphasized the importance of communication, especially across generations. She expressed appreciation for Cal Poly's efforts to help parents stay involved and informed.

Allison Byler (student rep): When students arrive at college, the transition is an opportune time for students to begin to take responsibility for their actions and their future. Allison indicated that when parents allow their students to branch out, their students are more likely to learn to do things on their own and achieve their potential. She advises parents to trust their students, instill confidence in them and love them unconditionally. According to Allison, "We all play "dumb"; but, we know the reality of the situations we're in. Let your students make choices. If they fail then, let them work it out. They will be better people for it, and you will be proud of them for having grown and learned from their mistakes."

Ira Katz: Since their student is leaving home for the first time this fall, he and his wife are experiencing the anticipation and anxiety that comes with having an empty nest and wanting to ensure their student is successful. According to Ira, "As parents, we need to recognize that we have to grow up and deal with these feelings otherwise our students are at risk of being infantilized."

Cornel Morton: At a recent conference for higher education professionals, the topic of parent involvement among the baby boomer generation was raised. The term "helicopter parents" is sometimes used to refer to those among this parent constituency who tend to "hover" over their students and, at times, university officials. Cornel indicated that FERPA does play a role in our work; and, though we may be frustrated by it, we do try our best to help people understand it. Administrators grapple with the issue of how to help students at risk without disrespecting their rights to privacy. In cases where a life is in danger or the circumstances seem to necessitate family intervention, many administrators error on the side of disclosing the situation to parents.

Frances Rivoire: Cal Poly's Parent and Supporter's handbook answers many questions about a wide variety of issues. She feels it's a valuable resource we should continue to offer parents and suggested we refer other parents to it.

Melanie Dreike: The parent of two daughters, Melanie cautions against hovering too close. "They won't grow up," she says. "Instead, let them know they can talk to you if they need anything. The University does provide us with information to help us know what is going on. By providing the dates that grades are released, for instance, parents know when to initiate conversations about academic progress."

Paul Bittick: Many students are used to getting A's in high school; when they come to a University, they find that they are expected to work at a new level. Parents cannot be there to monitor their students. Paul advises the students he works with to know their faculty's office hours and use them.

Valerie Zentmyer: The government has decided that when students turn 18, they are adults. One day parents have control; and the next, they do not. Developmentally, the student may not be an adult, but it is time for them to make the transition. When that time comes, the decision about how they are going to handle their future is up to them. According to Valerie, "I found that once I 'got over this,' I was able to be proud of the person my daughter is. She is starting Cal Poly this fall and I know I've done my job. If our daughter chooses to let us help, we'll be glad to. But if she does not, I think of how much more proud we'll be that she is handling things on her own. That's a good feeling."

John and Connie Friel: The University can provide resources, help us answer questions and be involved in University life. Conversations about academic progress or other personal issues are discussions we need to have with our students.

Allison Byler: Allison advises parents who are concerned about their students' academic performance to tell them: "As long as you keep your grades up, you will always have options - opportunities to study abroad, offers for internships and the ability to change majors." According to Allison, "Once students realize they can reach their goals by maintaining good grades, they are more driven to do well."

### **Announcement: Parent Information Card**

Frances distributed Parent Information Cards for each member to complete. The information will be used to get acquainted with each other; and, to identify everyone's skills and interests. It will also help ensure everyone has an opportunity to be engaged between and during meetings.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER RECOGNITION**

Crystal Williams, parent of Adrienne (Bus '05), served as a Parent Program Advisory Council members for three years. She was recognized for her participation and service to Cal Poly. Crystal volunteered many hours of time at our events and provided thoughtful perspectives as a parent and staff member at CSU Chico.

John and Connie Friel, parents of Jonathan (Bus '03) and Brian (Arch '08), served as Parent Program Advisory Council members for three years. John was recognized for his leadership as chair during the 2004-05 year during which he and Connie generously hosted a social gathering for members at the start of the year. Both John and Connie represented Cal Poly parents well at University speaking engagements and at Parent Program events. They also provided valuable and thoughtful suggestions.

A moment of silence was observed for Pat Keeley, who passed away on Wednesday, July 27. He was also recognized for three years of service on the Council. Pat was kind man and a gentle spirit who was very proud of his daughter Meghan and generously supportive of Cal Poly. He will be missed.

### **CAL POLY FUND PRESENTATION**

Craig Nelson, Director of the Cal Poly fund recognized John and Connie Friel, the Parent Fund signers for 2004-05. Parents made 7,700 gifts totaling \$950,000 to Cal Poly in FY05. Cal Poly parents are far more generous than parents of any other CSU. The average parent gift was \$125. One out of every three gifts from individuals came from parents. This level of support is rarely seen even at private universities. One-third of all parent gifts are made from parents of alumni. The loyalty and generosity for many parents continues long after their child has graduated.

"Parents are the favorite group our students call during the phonathon," says Cal Poly Fund Director Craig Nelson. "They are always very friendly and are excited about their child attending Cal Poly. They want to know what is going on and how they can get involved." Even with rising college costs, Cal Poly is still one of the best university bargains in the nation. Private support helped Cal Poly maintain its distinction as the top public-masters university in the West, as ranked by *U.S. News and World Report*. Tuition at a comparable private institution costs many times more than Cal Poly's.

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Cornel announced that tickets are available for the Chandler Scholarship Quilt Raffle. The drawing will be held September 29 at the Division's annual fall gathering.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Frances Rivoire adjourned the meeting at Noon.

Please forward additions or corrections to [calpolyparent@calpoly.edu](mailto:calpolyparent@calpoly.edu). Thank you.  
Respectfully submitted,

Nicky Nickelsen