

CAL POLY PARENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Saturday, July 8, 2006

Alumni House Conference Room

Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo, CA

MINUTES

ATTENDING

Council Members – Paul Bittick, John Cotter, Ed Czisny, Barbara Damerel, Melanie Dreike, Nancy Gragnani, Ron Hunnewell, John Jernigan, Karen Jernigan, Ira Katz, Connie Katz, Patti Pasetta, Pat Patubo, Frances Rivoire, Thanos Trezos, Carolyn Thom, Terri Whitt, Ross Whitt
Student Representatives: Dan Rivoire and Allison Byler

Special Guests:

Frank Cawley, Director of El Corral Bookstore

Jessica Gibbons, ASI student representative

Amy Stapp, Director of Mediation, Creative Mediation Services

Ryan McCombs, WOW Program Board Member

Todd Maki, ASI Student Body President

Craig Nelson, Director of Cal Poly Fund

Staff – Cornel Morton, Nicky Nickelsen and Theresa Rush

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Paul Bittick called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. He welcomed council members and acknowledged the guests who would be joining us throughout the morning.

Paul welcomed and introduced CPAA Alumni Board Liaison, Teresa Hendrix. The Parent Council bylaws call for CPAA Board Liaison who is appointed by the CPAA Board and serves both the Alumni Association and the Parent Program Advisory Council for a two-year term. Teresa indicated that she is an alumna of the journalism department. Her husband received his MBA from Cal Poly as well. After working for newspapers for 14 years, she joined the Public Affairs department at Cal Poly in 2001. She and her husband are the parents of two students. One is currently a senior at Cal Poly; the other is a student at Cuesta College.

Paul acknowledged those members whose students graduated in June and extended congratulatory remarks. His daughter, Andrea, graduated with a degree in philosophy. Andrea is enrolling in Humboldt State's Special Education Program and is student teaching. Paul proudly announced that Andrea won the President's Award for Community Service.

Melanie's daughter Sandra graduated with a biological sciences degree and is working for Central Coast Pathology in San Luis Obispo. She is applying for graduate school where she plans to study genetics.

Nancy Gragnani's daughter Layci is currently working for Ball, Inc. in Chicago, Illinois. She will be working as a marketing analyst. Nancy just returned from moving Layci to the Chicago area and visited the Rivoire's while she was there.

Robbie and Ken Williams were not able to attend the meeting and send their regrets. Robbie is experiencing back problems. Their son, Ken, graduated from the animal science program and plans to attend a veterinary school.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Motions to approve the minutes from the spring quarter meeting were made by Nancy Gragnani and John Cotter. The minutes were approved.

UNIVERSITY UPDATE

Cornel welcomed the Council members and began his update by introducing Todd Maki, ASI student body president. In this role, Todd represents the general student body and acts as official representative to the administration of the University and the general public. Cornel acknowledged Todd's service. He actively participates in service projects giving his time beyond classroom, and is highly respected among his fellow students.

Todd Maki thanked the Council members for inviting him to the meeting to talk about ASI, the role of student government, and his goals for the 2006-07 year.

ASI's purpose is to promote student shared governance in the decision-making process on campus, local and national initiatives. Through their involvement in campus advisory committees, for instance, students share their concerns and opinions on a wide range of matters that affect students such as campus computing, registration and scheduling and other areas.

Todd's goals for the year include developing a sense of collaboration and community within the university. About 75% of Cal Poly students are involved in one or more of the campus' 300 clubs. But, according to Todd, these organizations don't always work together and could be more effective and powerful if they coordinated efforts and became more connected to the University.

Todd also hopes to strengthen the involvement of individual students by continuing the campaign to increase the current goal for 25% voter turnout at ASI elections started by his predecessors. At most CSU campuses, voter turnout is 5-7%. At the UC campuses, voter turnout is 12-15%. During the last election at Cal Poly, voter turnout was 22%.

John Cotter: John asked how ASI tries to pull the average student in. Todd indicated this is a challenge. In the past year, ASI has tried to offer programs and speakers on topics that interest students. "Seeking Next" was a program on sustainability initiatives, which is topic of interest to many students. Todd indicated that students need to take the initiative to "put their foot in the door." Once they do that, they are exposed to a multitude of options and can get caught up in a whirlwind of activities.

ASI also visits the students in the residence halls to inform students of ways to be involved and to encourage them to seek out opportunities that interest them.

Connie Katz: Connie asked what ASI is doing to help the off-campus student feel more connected.

Todd indicated that ASI does not visit off-campus students; usually students get involved through a club that interests them. Off-campus students are dispersed throughout the community. Connie suggested visiting the two complexes that house freshman students – Mustang Village and Stenner Glen.

Teresa Hendrix: Teresa mentioned that her niece stayed in Stenner Glenn. She suggested housing assign an off-campus liaison to work with students living in these complexes or try to inspire the off-campus complexes to mirror programs offered by campus housing.

Allyson Byler: Allison indicated that her experience has been that ASI's presence is substantially more visible now than in the past years. According to Allison, "We can only go so far. The clubs try to tap into the interests of students. The students need to take the initiative to find something that interests them and get involved."

Cornel: Cornel indicated that the division has a very skilled student development staff. Preston Allen, Housing Director, meets with members of the Off-campus Housing Association to foster strong relations.

Thanos Trezos: Thanos expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that Cal Poly cannot guarantee freshmen campus housing. He feels first year students should be guaranteed on-campus housing. The first phase of the new housing complex is scheduled to open by 2008.

Nicky reminded the members of information conveyed in the minutes from the January meeting regarding the decision to open the 800 bed complex to sophomore students, instead of freshmen. It is as follows:

"The decision to place sophomores in Cerro Vista was the result of proforma data and market analysis. Cal Poly adjusts its freshman enrollment according to the number of students it graduates out of each of the colleges annually. Since the number of graduates fluctuates from year-to-year, the size of the freshman class is unstable. This instability makes it difficult to guarantee maximized occupancy levels, a condition which is necessary to pay off the construction loan. Cal Poly conducted a market analysis, including a student survey, which found that a high number of sophomore students were interested in residing on campus their second year. Consequently, Cerro Vista was opened to sophomores instead of freshman. When the 2,700 bed Poly Canyon Village complex comes online, all freshmen will be offered campus housing."

Ira Katz: Ira stressed the importance of helping first-year students living off-campus adapt and become involved in and connected to University life. He indicated that, due to his son's unsuccessful experience living off-campus during his first year, his daughter will be attending another University. Ira indicated that students need to feel that they are welcome. He suggested offering an extension of the WOW program or some type of ambassador program. Bringing programs to the students in the off-campus halls might bring the students together for healthy activities (other than drinking) and feel engaged and a part of the University. Ira indicated that he sees "emptiness" in the faces of new students living in the off-campus complexes when he visits his sons. Combined with alcohol, this makes for an unsuccessful experience. Students don't do as well academically or emotionally when they feel unconnected, lonely and depressed. He has struggled to help support his own student. And, although he believes parents cannot be helicopter parents, they cannot abandon their students, either. He hopes that the University will do something for these students to help them along until they can be accommodated on campus.

Paul thanked Todd for his presentation and suggested the Council extend an invitation to Todd to return if they have additional questions. Todd thanked the members for their time, for being involved and for bringing to his attention important concerns about off-campus students and their adjustment. He indicated that he will look at including visits to Mustang Village and Stenner Glenn in ASI's program to visit to new students in the residence halls.

Cornel reinforced Paul's invitation to Todd and thanked the members for their candid comments. He mentioned that conversations about helping students succeed are frequent among student affairs folks. The goal is to continue to partner to help retain students by promoting their engagement, mentorship, and surrounding them with support from staff and faculty in their academic major.

Cornel Morton reported that an online alcohol education pilot program will be implemented this fall for about 750 freshman students. The application includes an educational component and asks students to monitor and report on their behavior over a specified timeframe. The online survey is 4-6 hours administered over several segments. Data from the survey is expected to be available within the next year.

NEW BUSINESS:

Paul Bittick outlined a list of future topics for Council meeting presenters and asked the members for feedback and additional ideas.

Thanos Trezos will present on energy conservation this fall. The Parent program will provide a speaker from facility services to discuss energy use and conservation on campus.

Topics for future meetings may include: Cal Poly's student enterprise projects, campus planning and construction, and academic advising. Paul would like to see the town-gown relations improved. He would also like to see student participation co-exist with university activities in order to be more successful.

The bylaws, which must be reviewed every two years, will be reviewed at the January meeting.

Also in January, members will be asked to consider applying for a future leadership role. Paul encouraged new members to consider the opportunity to participate in this fashion. Leadership is a two-year appointment in which the selected candidate serves as Vice Chair for one year and Chair for the following year. Because it is a two-year commitment, next year is a good year for new members to consider leadership roles. The Council will also look at the new member appointment process to determine how it can be formalized.

Patti Pasetta: Patti would like to hear about parking on campus. Paul suggested inviting Bill Watton, the new police chief a meeting.

Carolyn Thom: Carolyn would like to know how the development of the new housing complex on campus will impact the demand for housing in the community.

Nancy Gragnani: Nancy would like to discuss how best to reach out to parents beyond the Council.

John Cotter: John agreed with Nancy. He feels the Parent Council members can take a lead role in reaching parents in their local areas.

Nicky reported that sometime in winter quarter, Advancement Services will be setting up alias lists that will allow the Parent Program to e-mail parents by geographic area. We could use the lists to introduce Council members to other parents in their area. The lists will also allow the Parent Program to invite parents to specific alumni events across the state.

Karen Jernigan: Karen offered to promote the Parent Program Advisory Council by taking their pictures and sending news releases about their membership to local newspapers.

Thanos Trezos: Thanos has a son who is attending Cal State San Marcos. Its First-Year Experience Program offered in the Housing department works to help freshman have a positive first-year experience. He offered to share their program with the Parent Council. They do not have a Parent Program.

Cornel confirmed that he has attended conferences involving all 23 CSU campuses in the state during which the First Year Experience each campus provides was discussed.

Ira Katz: Ira congratulated Cornel, Nicky and Theresa on their responsiveness to concerns.

Allison Byler: Allison indicated that the WOW program is constructing a new link on their Web site geared for parents.

PARENT PROGRAM UPDATE

The Parent Program has 35 volunteer parents for New Student Welcome Events (NSWE) for this summer. More volunteers are needed in specific areas. The new NSWE brochures were distributed to members.

Matt Calkins, an art and design student and the Parent Program's graphic artist, is refreshing our logo and designing new letterhead. We can look into the cost of business cards for parents once the new logo is ready.

WOW Family Orientation Weekend will be held September 16 and 17. Council members are asked to welcome new parents and answer questions at our Welcome Booth. This year it will be held on Mott Lawn in front of Mott Gym.

Homecoming and Parents' Weekend will be on October 20, 21, and 22. The event will be publicized by way of a postcard invitation that is being mailed to all parents. The postcard is being designed for alumni, parents and reunioners.

Matt Calkins is also working on a postcard to send to parents of new students urging them to sign-up for our e-news service. The postcard allows us to reach nearly everyone, which we cannot do during WOW.

The fall newsletter will not likely be printed. It will be available online and parents will be sent a link to the publication

Next winter, the Parent Program will work with the Admissions Office to step up the e-communications parents of admitted students receive from the University.

Nicky distributed an e-com that Admissions sent to parents of new students who signed up on the Admissions VIP page for parents. Parent Program links were included.

John Cotter: John suggested the Cal Poly Magazine feature information for parents that was designed for the newsletters.

Teresa Hendrix: Including information for parents is a possibility. Public Affairs is also reducing the amount of published materials it produces. It used to publish the Cal Poly Magazine four times annually; but, because of budget restraints it now publishes the magazine twice annually. Advertising was suggested to allow for a larger publication. Teresa stated the Public Affairs office is not currently equipped with staff to handle advertising, sales and billing. They might be able to establish a partnership with the Mustang Daily, since they are already set-up for this function.

Barbara Damerel: Barbara added that using on-line media is easy, quick, and one has the capability to download articles or print them if they prefer.

Paul Bittick: Paul closed discussion by asking members to continue to think of ways to improve communication with the parent community at large and send ideas to Nicky or Theresa.

DEMO OF PASS (Plan a Student Schedule)

Nicky demonstrated the new PASS application which students can use now to view fall classes and plan a schedule. PASS is available through the Cal Poly Portal and includes links to the class schedule, the catalog and other resources. She explained the benefits of the new system including its 24/7 functionality, the capability to see course information including descriptions, prerequisites and what requirements the course satisfies. It is not an online advising tool; however, it enables students to have more information about the courses they are taking as they choose them. A guest form of PASS will be available outside of the portal at a future date. Nicky distributed a handout with more information provided by Kimi Ikeda

Daniel Riviore: Dan indicated that PASS is basically the same as POWER; and added that students shouldn't rely on the schedules created by PASS. When they actually go to register, they may find that classes are full, leaving them with the need to create other options.

Nicky indicated that under both systems, students have been encouraged to create more than one version of a schedule.

As of fall quarter, the class schedule will be available exclusively on-line, the reason being that it is often obsolete upon printing.

PARENT PRESENTER – “Paperless Texts” by Ira Katz

Ira introduced himself as a psychologist, teacher, school board member and parent. With his school board member “hat” on, Ira Katz presented on a paperless textbook pilot program initiated by the Soledad School District where he works. An online interactive learning tool was provided to students in social studies classes in place of their textbook. The tool seemed to engage students on a different level and resulted in a 40% increase in test scores in this subject area.

When the school was using regular textbooks, teachers were challenged to get students to read the books and remember to take them home and then bring them back to class. Parents were concerned about the back problems the books were causing.

McGraw is the publisher for the online program. They provide computers to the students. Ira challenged Cal Poly to exploring paperless texts as a new and innovative approach to learning.

GUEST PRESENTER FRANK CAWLEY – “University Textbook Costs & Operations”

Frank Cawley, director of El Corral Bookstore, discussed his interactions with faculty interested in interactive textbooks and explained the difference between books in PDF format and truly interactive textbooks that are designed to engage students more intentionally in the learning process.

Frank also presented on the cost of textbooks, legislation intended to keep costs down, and trends in the publishing industry. He discussed El Corral's operations and spoke about an ASI resolution on textbook pricing which encourages faculty to respond to requisitions in a timely manner, reuse textbooks, avoid bundled books, and order textbooks with the widest possible availability to keep costs down. The resolution also asks El Corral to use all means possible to offer the fairest pricing to students and educate them about available discounts. Frank provided each member with a packet of information about the textbook costs and legislation and closed his presentation by mentioning that the publishers have a lot of control over the books that are on the market and how they are packaged. Unfortunately, this impacts the cost of textbooks.

Melanie Drieke: Melanie stressed that they are different types of learners and indicated that different types of learning models should be embraced whenever possible.

Karen Jernigan: Back problems are a health issue. Ways to reduce the number and weight of books should be considered.

Ira Katz: Ira expressed his delight in hearing that some Cal Poly faculty are exploring what options are on the market. He encouraged the university to do what it can to stress to faculty that ordering books in a timely manner can help save students money.

CREATIVE MEDIATION - SLO SOLUTIONS – Jessica Gibbons and Amy Stapp

SLO Solutions offers free conflict solution services to students. They specialize in resolving conflicts among neighbors, landlords and tenants, roommates and housemates and neighborhoods. According to a recent survey conducted by marketing students, only 6 percent of the student population is aware that these services exist.

SLO Solutions encourages communities to come together to solve their conflicts before they digress into worsening situations. Since they realize that students often contact their parents first for advice when conflict arises, Jessica and Amy asked to speak to the Council to determine how their organization can be more visible to the students. Parent Program e-news and the WOW and Open House booths were a few suggestions given.

As an example of how they have helped neighbors resolve conflict, Amy mentioned a situation in which SLO Solution mediated a parking and noise conflict involving 10 houses and 15 people. They did so in two meetings. Once the issues were out on the table, the core issue seemed to revolve around the neighborhood's concern for everyone's safety. The City was invited to discuss the implementation of measures to improve safety.

Carolyn Thom: Carolyn asked who the mediators are. The mediators are volunteers who receive 40 hours of training. Many have teaching and psychology backgrounds; but, there are a diverse group of people and professions represented. Most volunteers have mediated between 50 -100 cases.

Teresa Hendrix: Teresa suggested advertising in places that are frequently accessed by students: bars, bulletin boards, grocery stores, gyms, and businesses such as Jamba Juice.

Cornel Morton: Cornel thanked Jessica and Amy for stopping by. He indicated that students who go through the process learn to deal with conflict and problems more effectively, life skills that are invaluable.

WOW PRESENTATION – Allison Byler and Ryan McCombs

Allison Byler and Ryan McCombs presented the 2006 WOW program schedule. They reviewed the purpose of the program which is to introduce students to Cal Poly, the community, new friends and the resources available to them as a student.

The WOW program is structured as follows: 9 Executive Board members who serve a one-year commitment, 50 Team members who serve a two quarter commitment and train WOW leaders; and 400-500 WOW leaders who orient new students.

The program emphasizes academics, encourages awareness of issues college students face, and is a drug/alcohol-free environment. Students are encouraged to be open-minded through the week and most importantly, HAVE FUN! The schedule is as follows:

Saturday:

Move-in weekend begins
Resource Faire
Wowie/Parent Check-in
President's welcome

Sunday:

Bank Day – Banks of community coming on campus
Kid's passport – arts/crafts and bowling
Parent Sessions
Wowie/Parent Check-in
Family BBQ

Monday: WOW-O-Rama

Tuesday: SLO Bound

Wednesday: College Connections – PREFACE

Thursday: Awareness

Friday: Community Service, Block Party and Concert

Cornel thanked Allison and Ryan for their presentation and for the time they commit to the WOW program.

MEMBERS ADJOURNED TO LUNCH

Members met at J.D. Boone's Smokehouse for lunch at 855 Foothill Blvd., San Luis Obispo.

CAL POLY FUND UPDATE

Craig Nelson presented a banner year for donations from parents to the Cal Poly Parent Fund. This year, over \$741,000 was raised from more than 8,000 gifts, a 21% increase over last year.

Craig also mentioned a letter parent donors received announcing the creation of the new Cal Poly Foundation. This entity is a philanthropic foundation formed to guide and assist with the University's next phase of fundraising efforts. The board of directors includes donors, alumni and leaders in industry. The former Cal Poly Foundation has been renamed the Cal Poly Corporation. It continues to oversee and manage campus dining, El Corral Bookstore and many of the services parents are familiar with.

MEMBER RECOGNITION

Paul acknowledged and congratulated the following members for their service: Frances Rivoire for service as 2005-06 Chair; Robbie Williams and Ken Williams for Council service; and Allison Byler for Council service.

CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Paul Bittick adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Nicky Nickelsen and Theresa Rush