

CAL POLY PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Saturday, February 2, 2008
Robert E. Kennedy Library, Third Floor
Cal Poly State University
San Luis Obispo, CA

MINUTES

ATTENDING

Council Members – Cynthia and Rob Boriskin, Marcus Cooke, Barbara Damerel, Nancy Gragnani, Ron Hunnewell, John and Karen Jernigan, Teresa Jue, Linda Kuroda, Randy Otsuji, Pat and Chris Patubo, Patti Pasetta, Pat Saley, Ross and Terri Whitt

Student Representatives – Chris Ho and Amanda Raudsep

Staff – Penny Bennett, Navjit Brar, Dr. Jean DeCosta, Nicky Nickelsen, Jessica Todd

Guests - Brandon Souza (ASI President), Ron Jue (parent)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Nancy Gragnani called the meeting to order at 9:24 a.m. and welcomed members and guests. She conveyed Dr. Morton's regrets for being unable to attend, as he is in Washington D.C. attending a meeting for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Members provided brief updates about their students' involvement and progress. Student representatives Chris Ho and Amanda Raudsep shared information about the programs with which they are involved. Chris is currently working with the Sexual Assault Free Environment Resource (SAFER) Program. SAFER is a campus organization which works to make Cal Poly a safer place by raising awareness about sexual violence and providing resources to the campus community.

Amanda is working with a committee of student volunteers to plan family programming for Admitted Students' Day and Open House -including the Parent Coffeehouse – for April and WOW Family Orientation Weekend for fall.

ASI STUDENT GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Brandon Souza, President, Associated Students, Inc.

Brandon Souza spoke to the members about an upcoming student fee referendum, which, if passed, will fund the expansion and renovation of Cal Poly's existing Recreation Center, including the cost of operating the expanded facility and related programs over the course of the facilities' lifetime. Brandon explained that ASI, Cal Poly's student governing body, has launched a neutral, informative campaign called "Think Bigger" to educate students about the proposed expansion and encourage them to participate in the upcoming vote.

According to Brandon, although the Recreation Center was built just 14 years ago, its popularity has quickly exceeded its capacity. Overcrowding has caused students frustration and disappointment. Students have had to be creative and flexible in planning their recreation activities around peak times of usage.

During winter and spring quarter 2007, visits by ASI's student leaders to clubs, organizations and residence halls corroborated earlier findings from a 2004 survey of 4,400 students that supported the need to expand and renovate the center.

The expansion is planned to add an estimated 69,000 gross square feet to the existing 92,000 square-foot facility which would translate into less time waiting for machines and weights, more

options for exercise classes, and new spaces (studios) for various club, dance and fitness activities.

If the referendum is passed, preliminary site planning would begin summer 2008. Construction would begin during summer of 2009 and the renovation would likely be completed by fall 2011.

ASI's educational campaign includes a Web site - <http://www.recexpansion.com/index.php> - broadcast e-mail messages encouraging students to read the voter pamphlet and vote, visits to student groups, and an informational marketing piece that lists ten facts about the expansion. The facts included in the piece are as follows:

1. The Rec. Center will remain open during construction.
2. The total square footage of usable space will double.
3. The weight and exercise room will triple in size.
4. Air conditioning is planned for high demand areas of the facility.
5. A Multi-Activity Center is planned for indoor soccer, floor hockey, concerts and events.
6. Two existing Sports Complex fields will be outfitted with synthetic turf.
7. The fee increase does not take effect until the facility opens.
8. A new leisure pool is planned.
9. Two new gym courts for basketball, volleyball and other activities are planned.
10. The proposed increase is \$65 per quarter.

Students may vote via the Cal Poly Portal on February 27 and 28 from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Karen Jernigan: Karen asked what proportion of the vote is needed for the referendum to pass. Brandon indicated that greater than 50% of voters must vote “yes” for it to pass. He stated that Cal Poly's student body has a good voter turnout compared to most college campuses. In the last election, 25 ½% of the Cal Poly student body voted. Some schools report as little as/an average of 6%.

Pat Saley: Bearing in mind that parents are often paying the fees, Pat inquired about the cost of the increase. Brandon indicated that students will pay nothing until fall 2011 when the project is complete. Upon completion, the existing University Union fee will be increased to \$65 per quarter. ASI will use the revenues from the fee increase to repay the construction bond, provided through the CSU, over a 30-year period.

Jean DeCosta: Jean added that there is definite problem with overcrowding at the Rec Center. It is not unusual for students to experience long waiting periods to use equipment. Not only is the overcrowding an inconvenience, it is a safety issue. Crowding around machines that are set close together limits movement and increases the potential for injury. Future enrollment increases, coupled with the campuses expanding residential community, and an increasing demand by college students in general for facilities that help them lead healthy lifestyles are contributing to the increased demand for an expanded facility.

Jean added that when a referendum is passed, financial aid awards are adjusted accordingly for those students receiving aid.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Nancy and Barbara congratulated new members Marcus Cooke, Teresa Jue and Linda Kuroda on their recent appointment to the Parent Advisory Council. They will serve through January of 2011. Marcus is the parent of Shelley, a Materials Engineering student from Chapel Hill, North

Carolina. Teresa is the parent of Kaitlin, a Graphic Communication student from Huntington Beach. Linda Kuroda is the parent of Scott, a Computer Engineering student from Sacramento. Nancy indicated that this quarter, as part of the appointment process, Cornel conducted conference call interviews of the prospective members. She thanked Barbara Damerel and Rob Boriskin for assisting with the interviews.

Motions to approve the November meeting minutes were made; they were approved as written.

Nancy announced that the selection process for the next Chair-elect of the Parent Advisory Council will take place prior to the spring meeting. The appointed member serves as Vice Chair from June 2008-May 2009 and Chair from June 2009-May 2010.

She invited term-eligible members - those who have at least two years of service remaining to their three-year term (or one year left if they are granted an extension) – to complete a Prospective Leader Questionnaire. Completed questionnaires will be reviewed by a nominating committee of five members who will consider each nominee's qualifications and suitability relative to the responsibilities of the positions. The nominating committee consists of the current Parent Advisory Council Chair and Vice Chair and three members whose terms are ending within the year. The committee recommends to the Vice President for Student Affairs the candidate or candidates they believe are most qualified to serve. The Vice President for Student Affairs appoints the new leader, who is notified in writing and formally introduced at the April meeting.

UNIVERSITY UPDATE

Dr. Jean DeCosta, Dean of Students

In Cornel's absence, Dr. Jean DeCosta provided the University Update to members. Jean has worked at Cal Poly for the past 15 years and is a tenured member of the Cal Poly faculty. She holds a Doctorate in Organization Development, a Masters of Science in Education, and a Bachelors degree in Psychology. She has taught education and psychology classes, worked as the Director of the Employee Assistance Program, the Director of Employment Equity, and now serves as the Dean of Students for the Division of Student Affairs.

Jean indicated that her primary responsibility as Dean of Students is to be an advocate for students in the resolution of problems and issues that interfere with their progress to degree. To this end, she works with not only with students, but with faculty, staff administrators and parents.

Jean serves as the campus representative in matters involving student deaths and chairs the University's Care Team, which provides administrative and emotional support to students and families during difficult times.

Inclusive Excellence Retreat

This past November, approximately 50 Cal Poly administrators – Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Heads and Directors – attended a two-day retreat near Santa Barbara to address concerns about campus climate and discuss ways the University can increase, recognize and honor diversity.

The first day of the retreat was facilitated by Lee Muh Wah, a nationally acclaimed lecturer and trainer, and founder of Stir Fry Seminars. Mun Wah, who is also a Chinese American community therapist, documentary filmmaker, Special Education educator, performing poet, Asian folk teller and author, is best known for his film the Color of Fear.

Though a series of “mindful listening” exercises, Lee Mun Wah guided participants through a process of discovery with their peers and taught them communication skills that he believes can foster the creation of a supportive community. During the second day of the retreat, the group began to generate ideas/establish a framework for creating an inclusive campus environment.

Since the retreat, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs sponsored a ½ day seminar for division staff called “Mindfully Resolving Conflicts”, also facilitated by Lee Mun Wah. Other efforts will be forthcoming.

Karen Jernigan: Karen asked Jean to confirm that lack of diversity is, in fact, such a serious issue on the Cal Poly campus. Jean indicated that yes, unfortunately, Cal Poly continues to struggle, as it has for some time, with a lack of diversity among its student body, faculty and staff. She went on to explain that diversity, or lack thereof, directly impacts the quality of education our students receive, including our ability to adequately prepare students for the global workplace, where cultural competency is expected and necessary for success. The entire campus community benefits from interacting with people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs; and, students specifically, have told us they expect the opportunity to live and learn in a diverse environment will be provided as part of their college experience. Jean added that because we know the campus lacks diversity in many ways, it is listed among the priorities the administration has indicated it will address as Cal Poly moves forward with its strategic planning process and prepares for an upcoming WASC accreditation.

Nicky indicated that, at the Inclusive Excellence Retreat, participants had the opportunity to hear personally from seven students who face challenges or don't feel supported on a day-to-day basis, in large part because of their race, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. Jean added that the stories the students shared were difficult to hear, but, they confirmed the fact that Cal Poly's lack of diversity affects classroom experiences, student success, and ultimately, recruitment and retention. She indicated that it is already difficult to recruit some groups, particularly first generation college students and students of color; and, we know that many of those students who do gain admission and choose to come tend to leave if they cannot fit in or find the support they need to be successful.

Patti Pasetta: Patti indicated that she works in a school that serves low-income students whose parents are not college educated. She makes a constant effort to encourage her students to attend college by discussing the opportunities a college education can provide, posting information about how to plan and prepare for college in her classroom, and sharing her daughter's experiences at Cal Poly. She indicated that many of her students don't have anyone else encouraging them to even consider college; and, when they do, a lack of financial resources and the prospect of moving away from family are often barriers.

Teresa Jue: Teresa asked if Cal Poly provides resources to middle and high schools to help them encourage students to attend college and learn what it takes to gain admission. Jean indicated that the Admissions Office and Student Academic Services do work with specific “Partner Schools” – those who serve predominately low-income and first-generation students - to help them encourage their students to attend college.

Strategic Planning Update

Jean indicated that Student Affairs staff continue to implement their departmental action items developed during the division's strategic planning process in 2005. During the past year, they have spent additional time learning how to assess the programs and services they provide to determine if our objectives are being met.

Later this month, Student Affairs staff will be attending a CSU assessment workshop in Oakland facilitated by a consultant who is skilled in training educators about how to implement outcomes-based assessment.

First Year Experience Program

Jean indicated that the FYE program is growing and is continues to be an important component of the universities efforts to encourage student success. Since we know retention tends to drop during the sophomore year, the University remains committed to providing first-year students with a foundation that will increase their likelihood of continuing at Cal Poly during the second year and beyond.

Text Message Notification Service

Jean discussed a new text message notification service that allows the university to send alerts to Cal Poly students, faculty and staff in the event of an emergency or situation involving the campus community. Students must register for the free service via the Cal Poly portal by providing their cell phone number and e-mail address. Jean encouraged the Council members to remind their student to enroll in this service and keep their contact information updated. Although parents cannot register for the service, the University's home page – www.calpoly.edu – will be modified to provide necessary information to the public in the event of an emergency.

PARENT PROGRAM ITEMS

Nicky indicated that Admitted Students' Day and Open House will be held April 18 and 19. Council members are asked to assist with the Parent Program's welcome table on Saturday afternoon from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm as well as the Parent Coffeehouse from 7:30 pm – 10:00 pm. A schedule of shifts will come by e-mail. The spring meeting will likely be held on Saturday morning. The theme for the weekend is Destination: Cal Poly. Members were encouraged to send ideas for decorating the Parent Program table to promote the theme.

Nicky announced that as of this fall, Parents' Weekend will no longer be held in conjunction with Cal Poly's Homecoming festivities. The decision, which was made jointly by the Parent Program, Alumni Relations and Cal Poly Athletics, was due to the growth in attendance at the BBQ wine tasting and football game, the latter of which has sold out for the past three years. Since the venue for the BBQ and wine tasting events are currently at capacity, holding the events on separate weekends would allow us to accommodate future growth. Athletics holds a tailgate BBQ prior to every home game; so, we will continue to offer that event. The wine tasting event; however, would not be available during Parents' Weekend. Additionally, by separating the events, the colleges will not have as many commitments to fulfill in one weekend. During Homecoming and Parents' Weekend, they host or plan programming for Cal Poly's honored alumni and their families, the 50-year reunioners, parents and alumni at large. Many colleges also have their Deans Advisory Council meetings the same weekend.

Nicky shared samples of a publication called "The University Parent Guide" which she is considering passing out at WOW to promote Parents' Weekend. The guides, which are produced free of charge for universities, include campus and community information for parents and families. The cost to produce the guide is paid for through advertisements from local businesses which are featured in the publication. Many universities use the guide as a way to be able to provide a parent handbook to families. We do not plan to replace our student designed handbook with this publication; however, we may consider using it to advertise Parent's Weekend. If we do, the book would likely be distributed at WOW.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS PRESENTATION

Dr. Penny Bennett, Associate Professor, Graphic Communication

Dr. Penny Bennett provided an overview of the undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered by the College of Liberal Arts (CLA). CLA is one of Cal Poly's largest colleges in terms of numbers of students and majors. It has accomplished faculty, bright students and competitive programs; and, it is responsible for providing the many of the general education and support courses all Cal Poly students are required to take during their college career.

In her new role as Special Assistant to the Dean for Student Success, Dr. Bennett has been assigned several initiatives. She is responsible for interacting with students in various capacities in the College of Liberal Arts to help ensure their success. She works with first-time freshman students who are on academic probation and advises students at all levels about ways they can achieve success and gain the most from their academic experience.

Dr. Bennett is also working with the Dean to strengthen CLA's identity. She is participating in CLA's strategic planning process, supporting assessment efforts that measure student learning outcomes and is working to re-establish student ambassador groups and enhance the CLA Student Council. She is also involved in promoting opportunities for International Education.

Dr. Bennett talked about efforts to collaborate with other colleges. Liberal Arts & Engineering Studies is a new interdisciplinary degree program which is a joint effort between the College of Engineering and the College of Liberal Arts. It is not an engineering degree, but, rather a hybrid of engineering and technology combined with the study of culture, arts and the humanities. The program encourages students to view engineering, the sciences and humanities as interconnected and equally valid methods of asking the same essential questions about the world.

Karen Jernigan: Karen asked what learning outcomes are and how they are measured. Dr. Bennett indicated that learning outcomes are those concepts, lessons or skills that we want students to learn from a particular curriculum. For instance, the faculty in the English department might set specific objectives for a writing course. Each objective has a learning outcome (i.e. Students will be able to demonstrate that can properly apply the rules of grammar in their writing.) Faculty may use a number of assessment methods to measure this – rubrics are an example.

Nancy Gragnani: Nancy indicated that nowadays, much of the funding in elementary, middle and high schools is based the achievement levels of students – hence the increase in testing for learning outcomes during the past 15-20 years. Assessment has essentially changed the way students are educated, at least at the school-age level.

ROBERT E. KENNEDY LIBRARY - VIRTUAL TOUR

Navjit Brar, Coordinator of Reference and Instructional Services

Navjit provided an overview of the services the Robert E. Kennedy Library provides. With the exception of some holidays, the library is open daily. Hours extend until 2 am daily, except Fridays and Saturdays, when it closes at 5 pm. A study room on the first floor is open 24 hours per day. Individual and group study areas are located on every floor. Graduate students may use a room designated specifically for them on the third floor. Computer labs are located on the first and second floors. The library is also home to the Academic Skills Center and the Honors Program.

Students may borrow materials through the circulation desk, by way of course reserves (materials for specific classes faculty place on hold), or by way of an interlibrary loan program. Librarians and student staff are available at the front desk and in the reference room.

In addition to their standard services, the library offers an extensive array of online resources. Navjit presented a virtual tour of the online databases and tools students can access through the Robert E. Kennedy Library Web site. Students can locate information from newspapers and government documents, Web sites approved for research, encyclopedias, books, and scholarly journals. Navjit demonstrated how to access resources that help students apply the proper rules of citation to papers and projects.

The library is staffed with nine college librarians who have degrees in both library science and the subject matter of the college they represent. Librarians with this level of expertise and literacy in a specific field are very well prepared to assist students with their research and collaborate with faculty whose course requirements involve research.

Navjit also mentioned that Cal Poly students can access the library from anywhere by way of the Cal Poly Portal to conduct research, request materials or chat live with a librarian 24/7.

Nicky thanked Navjit for the presentation and suggested her Virtual Tour handout be provided to students as it is a very clear and concise guide to online resources the library offers.

CLOSING REMARKS AND AJOURNMENT

Nancy adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Cal Poly Admitted Students Day is Friday, April 18

The Spring Council meeting is Saturday, April 19 – a group photo will be taken

The Summer Council meeting will be July 12 or July 19.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Nona Nickelsen and Jessica Todd