Senate Update

The Academic Senate approved Faculty Development Committee recommendations for the 3rd round of “Calls for Proposals” resulting in allocating $8596 to Faculty Professional Development activities and leaving a balance of $76 in the fund.

Curriculum Committee Chair Peter Blakemore presented a proposal to the senate that was initiated by the Multicultural and Diversity Committee. The proposal is to include a “Multicultural Understanding” aspect into our general education requirements. There was a good discussion about how to best achieve this goal and how to mitigate the impact it may have on some of our degrees, programs, and sites. It was determined that further research and college wide discussion would be warranted on a decision of this magnitude. Since the academic year’s end was near the senate decided to make this a topic for the Fall Retreat planning session.

The senate reviewed Online Faculty Evaluation Guidelines as proposed by the Distance Education Ad Hoc Committee Chaired by Professor Mark Winter. A slightly modified version of that proposal was approved at the May 3 meeting and will be forwarded to CRFO and Administration for incorporation into the contract. The senate also discussed Online Faculty Qualifications Standards as proposed by the DE ad hoc group. Both of these proposals will be essential to our ACCJC Accreditation effort to demonstrate continuous improvement. Mark Winter also agreed to Co-Chair the newly formed district DE Committee along with Mary Grace McGovern and will continue to provide his valuable expertise in guiding our effort to fully comply with ACCJC and Chancellors Office standards for DE.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges recommends colleges review all prerequisites and corequisites in an effort to get ahead of new Student Success Task Force changes to Title 5. The Curriculum Committee formed an ad hoc group that is working on instituting these changes. Biology courses are among the first to go through this new process and IR will be tracking the impact on student success. We must exercise caution in our approach to avoid creating bottlenecks for popular prerequisite courses like English 150 or Math 120 as the intent is to improve student success and minimalize the impact on accessibility. The Curriculum Committee should be commended for their efforts to get ahead of this initiative.

Paul DeMark reported on the first meeting of the newly formed Marketing Task Force. He shared the long and short term goals for the task force and faculty were very excited to hear about the effort to get positive messages out to the public. There are so many positives at CR that seldom make the local news so this effort has great potential to sway negative public opinion and improve our standing in the community. Art Professor Cindy Hooper very enthusiastically immersed herself in the work of this task force along with numerous others. Cindy is compiling faculty profiles to be included in the web directory that will highlight the competency and passion of CR faculty. Good things will come out
of this group and soon too. The Academic Senate commends Paul DeMark for taking the lead on this important initiative.

Physics Professor Erik Kramer will be stepping down as Assessment Coordinator and we all owe Erik a debt of gratitude for the great leadership he provided in our efforts toward integrating ACCJC Proficiency Standards into all aspects of our planning cycle. Geology Professor Dave Bazard will be taking over this critical work and I’m confident Dave will serve the college well in the effort for continuous improvement in assessment.

The Academic Senate voted unanimously to elect Health and Physical Education Professor, Bob Brown to his second one year term as Senate Co-President and to elect CIS Geology Professor, Mark Renner from the Del Norte site to his first year as Senate Co-President. Congratulations to Co-Presidents Brown and Renner whom I’m certain will serve the college well and I wish them good luck in that endeavor.