Academic Senate March Board Report

The Academic Senate wants to first congratulate all board members, employees at each constituent level and student representatives of the district for the successful removal from all sanctions and full affirmation of accreditation status. The accomplishments over the past two years since “show cause” have been significant and have come through a commitment to collegiality, determination to meet & sustain all standards and great sacrifice. We wish to especially recognize the faculty who stepped up to take on additional duties required during these challenging times. We are encouraged that all constituents are committed to continuing the efforts of working in a collegial and collaborative way despite the inevitable differences in interpretation or opinions we will encounter in the ever changing standards of education.

During this past month, the Senate discussed and approved AP 4105 on Distance Education. It has been forwarded to College Council and is currently out for constituent review. This work done by the Academic Standards Policy Committee and subsequent work currently taking place within the Distance Education task force and the Distance Education advisory committee are critical to the substantive change proposal that is scheduled to be submitted this spring to the ACCJC. The Senate recognizes the importance of completing this work in a short timeline in order to build our course offerings in programs that teach online. We believe it will go a long way in assisting with the initiatives to stabilize and build enrollment.

The Senate recognizes and thanks members of the board and administration for holding a special public forum for members of the Mendocino coast community. It continues to be in the Senate’s interest to have the district explore all feasible options for operations and support of faculty & staff and never losing sight of the support necessary to all current students at the Mendocino campus.

The Senate thanks the administration for the open budget forums held this past month explaining the continual budget restrictions and concerns along with the in depth report that was provided to the Senate by faculty co-chair of the Budget Planning Committee Michael Dennis. The news continues to be sobering, but we are confident that work being done currently in outreach programs, community and adult education, educational pathways & matriculation task forces and distance education will help to stabilize and build enrollment while improving persistence and success rates. We encourage the Budget Planning Committee to continue their review and research of revenue generating ideas to assist in the resolution of current budget projections. Despite a potential necessity of further re-organization within structure and reallocation of resources, we continue to support the need to stabilize and build our full time faculty numbers in the programs that we currently have and ones that we may look to strategically develop in the future as the most effective way to ensure the necessary enrollment growth.