

CORRECTIONS TO THE SMC INSTITUTIONAL SELF STUDY

Overview

While the entire campus was notified and invited to participate in the Accreditation Self-Study itself, membership on the Accreditation Steering Committee was by invitation only. The Accreditation Steering Committee seems to have purposefully excluded CSEA by not advising us of the committee's existence until the self-study was well under way. Additionally, the classified representatives who are on the Steering Committee are from the Classified Senate. The Classified Senate does not bring the same perspective as CSEA does. It would seem that if the Accreditation co-chairs had actually wanted a constituency balance on the Steering Committee, they would have formed the committee under the auspices of the Coordinating Council, which has representatives from all constituency groups, and to which both co-chairs belong. They also would have informed all constituencies that there was an over-arching committee that would ultimately decide what would be included, and excluded, in the final version of the Self-Study. CSEA did not have that information. In fact, we were assured that except for spelling, capitalization, and paragraph formatting, the findings of the Standard committees would go to the Accreditation Team unchanged. With this promise of committee autonomy, CSEA participated in the Standard committees fully and in good faith. After months of working with and within the committees it was disappointing, but unfortunately not surprising, to be blind-sided and find that the individual Standard committees, which were representationally balanced, had some of their findings reworked and reformatted, thereby eliminating or mutating essential elements of the study, ostensibly for purposes of clarity. With that "clarity" came a perspective not necessarily intended by, nor shared by, the Standard's original committee members.

Additionally, there are supporting documents that the committees were assured would be included as PDF files along with the Accreditation Self-Study but were omitted from the CD-Rom and hard copy package given to the Accreditation Team. Those documents that specifically pertain to CSEA are attached. Other documents, for instance the individual Constituency Group surveys, should be available directly from the constituency groups. Our packet includes:

- A. CSEA's Respect and Professionalism Report
- B. The Joint Respect and Professionalism Task Force (JRPTF) Initiative
- C. Phase One Focus Group Sessions (10 sessions)
- D. Phase One Focus Group Summary
- E. JRPTF Consultant Recommendations.
- F. JRPTF Agreed-Upon Recommendations
- G. CSEA's Response to Standard IV-B's Constituency Group Survey

Because our perspective was diluted in the final version of the Accreditation Self-Study, we will submit a separate report on the nature of life for classified employees at SMC. While many sections of the study warrant significant response and modification, below we have listed several of the most significant ones. CSEA's primary concerns have centered on the Human Resources Department, the College Board of Trustees, and the district's non-compliance with shared governance principles, particularly its failure to comply with SB 235, which is now part of the Education Code, section 70901.2.

- 1) Page 48, top of page, line two: “. . . and many classified employees were present . . .”: Though the statement suggests that the presence of classified employees at the Facility Master Plan presentation implies acceptance and support of the Comprehensive Facility Master Plan, that is not the case. CSEA/Classified staff had little input into this process and have significant reservations about its practicality and priorities.
- 2) Page 101, paragraph one, line four: “No such code yet. . . .”: CSEA values ethical behavior and has first-hand understanding of the difference between a piece of paper and, given the very high level of complaints against the administration and management that rise out of unethical behavior, the day-to-day realities of applied ethics. Additionally, since the district often uses their written policies for selective and punitive purposes, it is unrealistic for the district to expect that we would agree to codify additional policies that have potential for misuse. CSEA always operates ethically and, although we believe that written standards are unnecessary, we are willing to discuss those that do not create the potential for disciplinary misuse.
- 3) Page 150, last paragraph, line one: “Historically, the process for”: The statement is vague and misleading and is a continuation of the district’s resistance to the Personnel Commission’s authority. The district’s own taped interviews of human resource managers at several non-Merit districts show the hiring timelines are the same as those without Merit Systems. Additionally, on examination, the cause for delay between the time the Board approves a position and the position is filled has virtually always been due to the failure of the district’s Human Resource Department to request that the position be filled.
- 4) Page 151, first paragraph, line one: “A consultant was hired. . . .”: It was actually the Personnel Commission, and not the Human Resources Department, that hired the consultant group to complete the College’s first classification study in twenty years.
- 5) Page 154, second full paragraph, line two: “Faculty and classified staff”: While both CSEA and classified focus groups have requested 360° evaluations, the administration has rejected any possibility of this, characterizing it as unworkable and impractical and that the President would never accept it.
- 6) Page 155, last paragraph, line three: “There is concern that”: This is a restatement of Item #2 above and refers to written policies. As stated before, the district selectively applies its policies and therefore CSEA has concerns about the expansion of written policies.
- 7) Page 155, last paragraph, line five: “In addition, the proposed”: It is a mischaracterization of CSEA’s view to call this a “volatile issue” but CSEA does have concerns given that e-mail is used by the union to communicate to the members and that the district routinely ignores the existing guidelines and issues reprimands selectively. If the campus climate were less punitive, CSEA may be willing to discuss a policy that does not create more ways to selectively discipline classified employees.
- 8) Page 156, second full paragraph, line one: “A hiring freeze and”: While the number of administrators/managers has been reduced to a level that is still an 80% increase over its 1995 level, classified staffing has been reduced to a level that is only a 10% increase over its 1995 levels. The abolishment of some administration/management

positions does not seriously address the disproportionate increase and ratio of administrators/managers to classified staff.

- 9) Page 156, last paragraph, line six: "Another consequence of reduced": The district has always selectively granted release time that encourages Classified Senate participation and discourages CSEA participation in campus governance and events. These actions are not in compliance with SB 235, which is now part of the Education Code, section 70901.2 and is a prime example of the district's double standard.
- 10) Page 161, fourth full paragraph, line one: "Although the Professional Development": This is untrue. In fact CSEA did have members who were active on the committee and were willing to serve, but they were laid off. Layoffs of CSEA activists has had a chilling effect and many who would otherwise be interested in serving feel threatened and discouraged. Additionally, CSEA members concerned about layoffs feel that leaving their work assignments could jeopardize their jobs.
- 11) Page 163, paragraph two, line one: "When recent reductions were": The statement that "no formal institutional plans were in place" for evaluating classified staffing needs underscores the administration's lack of planning and foresight which, beyond mere perception, actually forced unnecessary staff layoffs.
- 12) Page 191, bottom of page, line one: "The Academic Senate Joint": This is a restatement of Item #6 above and refers to written policies. As stated before, the district selectively applies its policies and therefore CSEA has concerns about the expansion of written policies that have the potential for disciplinary misuse.
- 13) Page 198, second full paragraph, last sentence: "To keep pace with": This is a restatement of Item #6 above and refers to written policies. As stated before, the district selectively applies its policies and therefore CSEA has concerns about the expansion of written policies that have the potential for disciplinary misuse.
- 14) Page 213, second full paragraph, through page 214: "On one hand, the": On the issue of the campus community's lack of "clear understanding" of the budget process, the report fails to consider that the concerns have less to do with the level of understanding, than in the quality and accuracy of the budget presentations themselves. When CSEA has requested explanations of what appear to be distortions in expense projections, and we are met with silence or obfuscation, the conclusion is inescapable. The resulting protests, letters to editors, lawsuits and campus demonstrations are a measure of the district's inability to substantiate their purported financial condition.
- 15) Page 229, first responsive paragraph, entire page: "The timing of this": The 83% no confidence vote by classified employees, together with the 86% no confidence vote by the faculty belie the statement in the last paragraph, "It is simply not possible at this time for the college community to speak with one voice about issues of leadership and governance." It is no wonder, with this view, that the district proceeded, against the vocal consensus of staff, students, faculty, and community to eliminate programs and lay off faculty and staff. Clearly, the college community did unite to speak with "one voice." The administration and Board of Trustees just wasn't listening.
- 16) Page 237; third full paragraph, line five: "Until recently, college constituencies": It is a gross overstatement that "Most college constituents approve of the purchase of the

10.4 acre Bundy Site" There have been concerns from the outset by many that the district has been overly aggressive and premature in its land acquisition program and has neglected other critical campus needs. It is further believed that the failure to provide for an operational budget of the Bundy and other sites is shortsighted and is a burden to the college.

- 17) Page 237; third full paragraph, line eight: "Until recently, college constituencies": While we regret that conditions were such that we had to resort to legal recourse and other actions that the district views as hostile, we do not regret the acts. We are committed to the mission of the college. We would have been remiss if we had failed to act on the college's behalf.
- 18) Page 240, first full paragraph, line 11: "Since the last self-study": The classified staff survey referred to was developed, distributed and analyzed by CSEA. Beyond receiving our report the district had nothing to do with it.
- 19) Page 240, first full paragraph, last sentence: "Since the last self-study": After much discussion, and opposition from the district, the specific Joint Respect and Professionalism Task Force's recommendations were rejected by Coordinating Council in favor of an non-specific objective to implementing "action plans to foster a more supportive working environment for all employees."
- 20) Page 240, second full paragraph, entire text: "The issue of classified": Excluding CSEA from participating in college-wide presentations, such as Opening Day ceremonies, denying us a seat on the College Board's advisory dais, and discouraging CSEA representatives from serving on college-wide committees has continued after the passage of SB 235, which is now part of the Education Code, section 70901.2.
- 21) Page 241, fourth paragraph, line five: "Faculty leaders from the": CSEA bargained with the district for months offering several combinations of a 10% work sharing program (10% reduction in hours with concomitant reduction in pay) which, at minimum, would have saved the district \$1 million dollars while still retaining the flexibility and experience of a full workforce. CSEA offered work share in exchange for a promise of no classified layoffs for a six-month period. The offer included a program termination trigger providing for classified staff layoffs if the district's finances further deteriorated.
- 22) Page 243, first full paragraph, entire text: "The May 14, 2003 Collegewide": The district's and Board's combined failure to plan appropriately and innovatively led to their inability to creatively address the issues and to take advantage of possibilities that could well have saved the eliminated programs and avoided the classified layoffs.
- 23) Page 243, second full paragraph, first sentence: "The administration supports efforts": The lack of equitable release-time granted to CSEA to serve on committees, while release-time is granted to others, cannot be attributed to the employee's "job responsibilities."
- 24) Page 243, second full paragraph, last sentence: "The administration supports efforts": CSEA sees no reason to bargain for participatory governance rights already delineated in the Education Code. CSEA expects the district to comply with Education Code 70901.2.

- 25) Page 243, second paragraph from bottom, line four: “Decision-making relies upon”: Instead of “For many faculty and classified staff . . .,” the sentence should more accurately state “For 85% of faculty and classified staff, trust will be restored only with new leadership at the college.”
- 26) Page 243, second paragraph from bottom, last sentence: “Decision-making relies upon”: Instead of “Others look for signs . . .,” the sentence should more accurately state “Fifteen percent look for signs that the administration and the Board of Trustees seek a new compact with the campus groups.” With almost nine years of increasingly predictable behavior by the Board and the administration, as recently demonstrated by a unanimous vote of confidence in the President, and the renewal of a four-year contract, just two weeks after a campus-wide no confidence vote, a change in behavior would indeed be remarkable.
- 27) Page 249, bottom paragraph, line seven: “The College’s Mission, Vision”: In Board Policy 1600, by recognizing only the Classified Senate for purposes of college governance, the College Board is not in compliance with SB 235, which is now part of the Education Code, section 70901.2. The law requires that the Board recognize CSEA as representing classified employees as part of shared governance.
- 28) Page 251; first full paragraph near the bottom, line six: “All Board policies are”: By only referring to the Classified Senate in development and revision of Board policies that directly affect classified employees the Board is out of compliance with SB 235, which is now part of the Education Code, section 70901.2.
- 29) Page 260, last paragraph, last sentence: “Faculty and staff members”: We are aware of no discussion between the district and the Chancellor's office regarding SB 235, which is now part of the Education Code, section 70901.2 and maintain that the district is not in compliance with the law.