

Merritt Academic Senate President's Report #1, Spring 2019

Submitted by Mario Rivas, PhD, MCAS President

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This report is an attempt to communicate to Merritt Faculty important issues, task, etc. that are being addressed by the Merritt Academic Senate. The communication includes similar work of the District Academic Senate, which is made up of Senator from all of PCCD's Academic Senates.

Merritt College Academic Senate (MCAS)

- MCAS Confidence/No Confidence Procedures. The Senate has had three meetings to finalize the MCAS Confidence/No Confidence Procedures, which structure how Merritt faculty can challenge college administrators who are perceived as not being effective in their work. This procedure is meant to be part of a process of collegial relationship-building between faculty and administrators where the initial steps of challenges between faculty and administrators is built on dialogue and collaborative efforts to work together for the benefit of the college. The MCAS Confidence/No Confidence Procedures are seen as a final step when constructive discussion and actions do not lead to improvement in the perceived ineffective performance of administrators;
- College Policies and Procedures Manual. In the fall of 2018, MCAS passed a Resolution calling for administration to work with faculty and staff to develop a comprehensive college Policies and Procedures Manual, which both the Academic Senate and Classified Senates perceive is necessary in order to improve poor-existing procedures of the college that are not effective. The Senate continue to work with administration to enact the called-for Resolution;
- Open Educational Resources. The Senate continues to work with the Senate-sponsored OER Committee, which is intended to work toward lowering textbook costs for students. For 2017-18 various faculty members implemented the use of no-cost or low-cost on-line textbooks in their classes to the tune of saving Merritt student \$130, 000. More faculty involvement is encouraged in this endeavor, which is perceived as an equity-related issue in support of student learning and success. Contact Tim Hackett if you are interested in using OER textbooks;
- Program Review and connection to resource allocation. MCAS will be working on recommendation to IEC regarding how to make Program Review more connected to resource allocation, especially as resource allocation relates to improved student learning and success;
- The Senate will be participating in the planning process for this spring's College Strategic Planning Summit. This is an important endeavor to which all faculty should be aware and involved. The Summit is tentatively planned for April 26th. Plan to attend and make your voice heard with respect to planning for how Merritt should best serve our students and external community;

- Non-credit Plan for Merritt College. The Senate will be reviewing PCCD's Draft Non-Credit Plan, and addressing how faculty should be involve in the development of non-credit programming at Merritt College. Faculty input is vital as we develop non-credit offerings in support of student success and access.
- Possible Confidence/No Confidence vote by the District Academic Senate toward Chancellor. During February the Senate will be deliberating what suggestion to make to the District Academic Senate regarding a possible vote of Confidence/No Confidence toward the Chancellor Laguerre. Look for a survey to faculty detailing perceived concerns on the part of the DAS toward Chancellor Laguerre's administration. All 4 college Senates will be asked to input in this process.
- Response to ACCJC letter challenging PCCD's poor fiscal viability status. PCCD Participatory Governance groups are in the process of responding to ACCJC's challenge to the poor fiscal status of PCCD, specifically developing a 5-year plan for improvement. There are two committee, both having faculty input, addressing the ACCJC 8 concerns: Finance and Enrollment Management/Student Success. MCAS will be reviewing the work of these groups to ensure the voice of Merritt faculty is included. The MCAS Enrollment Management Task Force is already meeting to address the ACCJC concern. If you are interested in participating in this process speak to one of Merritt's Academic Senators, whose names can be found on the MCAS website (see attached notes).
- Financial Crisis Management and Assistance Team (FCMAT). The Peralta Board of Trustees requested the support of FCMAT to address the many challenges that PCCD is facing related to managing its affairs. The work of the team, with a price tag of more than \$200,000, is being paid for by the California State Chancellor's Office. This past Monday, February 5, there was a FCMAT Orientation at the District. It was shared that FCMAT will focus on "7 scope items" in their review of the district: risk analysis; training, staffing analysis and recommendation re best organization; communication- how to communicate better; audit findings, with recommendations for corrective actions; OPEB, specifically does the amount seem like its going to work; look at New Student-Centered funding formula to see how we can best maximize funding. The work of FCMAT will continue throughout spring 2019, with a report to the District planned for at the beginning of summer 2019. This process will be very "intrusive" according to FCMAT, again focusing on the PCCD District office (see attached notes). A part of this process is to interview specific individuals in the district office and colleges, starting next week with a visit to the 4 colleges. Individuals wishing to be interviewed can contact the FCMAT group.

District Academic Senate

- The DAS is working to include the faculty's voice in the following areas, man related to items mentioned above: Confidence/No Confidence vote of Chancellor; Response to ACCJC regarding fiscal viability; DAS will be interviewed on March 4 by FCMAT;

implementation of the District's Distance Education Plan; the Districts draft of PCCD Non-Credit Plan;

- ONE Peralta. The DAS met with new VCIT Mihn Lam to discuss the status of ONE Peralta, which was put on hold at the end of fall 2018. The VCIT Lam will be visiting the 4 PCCD colleges with updates to this work. At the DAS and at the District Technology Committee, MCAS President Rivas asked of VCT Lam to develop and share a concrete plan for completion of the ONE Peralta project, and to share this plan with the four PCCD colleges. The One Peralta Plan includes 3 major components: Finance, Personnel, Students. Rivas asked for specific information regarding specific work to be completed, cost, district's ability to handle costs, and timeline. This issue is also being addressed by the Merritt Technology Comiittee.