University, Academic Senate Report

Assuring quality in education

By Peter Buzanski (ERFA Academic Senator)

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As an example, one of our campuses was sued by plaintiffs who accused the campus of not obeying the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. When that university lost its case, the entire system responded with a policy that is now in effect on all campuses. Every university employee, whether staff, faculty or those working for facilities management, was given a “Red Folder” which promotes the slogan: “See something, Say something, Do something.” This document deals with a situation wherein a campus employee may observe a student who might be a danger to self or others. If so, there is a simple requirement for the observer to call 911 or the campus police. If the observer is not sure but the student shows signs of distress, the employee should call the Behavioral & Crisis Intervention Team, for which a campus telephone number is provided. If, finally, the observer

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In addition, our nominating committee will recommend to the Board appointments to the following ex officio positions: Membership, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster, Consolations, Activities Committee, Archivist, and CSU-ERFA Representative.

If you would like to be considered a candidate for any of these positions, please email Joan Merdinger at jjmerdinger@yahoo.com. The deadline is April 10, 2016.

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University and Academic Senate Report

SJU and the CSU: Seeking ways to assure quality education

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concludes that the student’s immediate safety is not at risk but the student has significant academic and/or personal issues that might require additional support, the student should be referred to an appropriate campus resource. In addition to those on campus, the Red Folder provides a lengthy list of community resources. It should be emphasized that every university employee is responsible for heeding these situations. Another very recent event forced all 23 campuses to react, with an unreasonable time constraint. The State of California enacted a five-year pilot program that permits 15 community colleges (CCs) to offer BA and BS degrees in programs not offered by the CSUs, beginning in the fall of this year, 2015. Quickly, 15 community colleges all over the state brought forth a variety of baccalaureate programs they wished to implement. The CSU was asked for its response, and all 23 campuses did so. Each campus was forced to submit its report by the deadline, February 12, consisting of two documents: one provided by the Administration and the other by its Academic Senate. We submitted both reports on time. However, it should be noted that these completed CSU’s responses are not binding on the Community Colleges. While we of the Curriculum and Research Committee struggled to comprehend how the CCs are able to quickly and readily to offer a four year degree major, we learned that the CCs do not have the same accrediting agency as the CSU. We then wondered whether the CC accrediting agency will adhere to Title Five of the legislative higher education degree requirements. Also worrisome is the fear that under one degree objective the CCs may introduce other courses, or under one degree objective that conflict with similar or identical courses offered by the CSU. The general assumption under the existing law is that this situation should not take place, but who knows what the future might bring. While another current problem at SJU seems local, it also appears to have a system-wide impact. I refer to recent changes in administrative personnel on our campus. Several deans have retired, departed to other positions, or returned to teaching assignments that may have been imposed. With respect to the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Vice President for Advancement it is clear that their resignations were less than voluntary. In addition, the White Vice President for Financial Operations has resigned and will retire in March, 2015. Since that individual is only fifty-five years old and has but twenty-seven

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In my mind I see the plain gray platform of the old Danville Station, the upperclassmen busting into meeting their friends, their profiles sharp, present, defined. But Memory stands among them taking notes, watching me soft-faced, luggage in hand, come down the train steps. He looks me over, maybe with a nod of approval which, if I could have seen, would have meant a lot.

For my freshman year at Central College, the general fee covered meals seven days a week except for vacations. So, occasionally on Sundays, some of us guys would treat ourselves to something special for lunch. There would be no supper at the cafeteria. Sunday “dinner” was the last meal over for a late supper and then into the dormitory and pretty much broke the next day on Tuesday.

College, the general fee covered the costs of textbooks, tuition, clothing, the accoutrements of college life, and all but a few of the necessaries of daily living. It was a trade-off. I always believed that we could not have the one without the other. That was hardly true.

But we all lived, but lasted long enough for me to have some wonder about whether I was smart enough to leave the town people and farmers from my life. I might have sold something or something about the fact that I was as if I had stayed, and was there, and watched Tom hit the farmer on the back of the head with a pool cue. I want to tell the story behind that story.

There is also another complication. In literary terms, Dave was not the most informed of narrators. What he told me might have happened, and yet it might not have happened. He was a teller of tall tales. But even if it didn’t happen, my memory and my storyteller have so joined that in some universe it did happen, and I was there to see it.

PS. After I wrote the introducing sentences to this remembrance, I looked through my 1951 yearbook, and there at its beginning was a picture of my moment of arrival. I’ve just gotten off the train, suitcase in hand. I had forgotten what the picture. So, was memory, my co-author, remembering the picture that I didn’t remember, or had it too?Certainly not. That was simply because the romantic relationship was short-lived, but lasted long enough for her to become pregnant. Now she was living in San Jose, receiving welfare, and raising five year old twins who were doing well. She wanted nothing more than to fulfill the promise of being a nurse who was able to support her children and herself.

Listening to her was sympathetic—and more. In those early days of developing nursing programs in a college rather than a hospital I had the attitude of a reformer, and was easily critical of hospital school practices. Those feelings influenced my reaction to Priscilla’s having been expelled for reasons having nothing to do with her academic performance.

Letters to the new first-class were sent out in early summer, Priscilla’s acceptance letter among them. But before classes began in September a new crisis emerged.

Somewhere in the upper reaches of welfare policy and practice in Santa Clara County a new decision was made that summer. They decided that welfare recipients who chose to enroll in school could just as well use that time working and supporting themselves. Therefore a decision to attend school would mean no more welfare. Priscilla was devastated. So was I. And angry. I decided to protest on her behalf.

I don’t remember the steps and conversations I had that led to a meeting, but the meeting was a bright light in my memory. It was held in a scruffy basement room in one of the off-campus buildings. That summer day was scorchingly hot and the room seemed airless. Somewhere around six or seven people figured to be present. I seemed to me to stare in an unfriendly way. The image in my memory museum is distorted I am sure. But the image of Priscilla’s face, pinched and distorted, overweight women intending to make this meeting short and sweet.

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Chat Room...

Special news from and about our members.Edited by Gene Bernardini

• Jennifer McDowell Loventhal
  (Library, '92) has updated the brochure of her Women’s Basketball Songbook, Featuring Basketball’s Biggest Controversy, published in 2013. The Songbook contains poems from 17 different poets and over 50 songs celebrating women in sports. The work, she says, is well suited for courses in Women’s Studies. (The controversy is about Don Imus’ notorious slur on the Rutgers University Women’s Basketball Team.) The Songbook comes recommended by former Congresswoman Patsy Mink, Conductor Barbara Day Turner (SJSU), former Mayor Janet Gray Hayes, and Mayor of Mt. View, Rosemary Stasek. Jennifer’s work can be found at www.abbeyanddolleyrecords.com.

• Eilyn Kaschak (Psychology, '09) is currently living in Costa Rica, where she has joined the faculty of the United Nations University for Peace in the Gender and Peace Program.

• Irene Lewis (Nursing, '12) took an Alaskan cruise last June with her sister and four other relatives. “Traveling is more enjoyable now that I’m retired,” she says. “I can see the places I visit without being a part of the travel.”

• C. Ralph Morse (Library, '83) moved into the Heritage Retirement Home in San Francisco in 2001. “We’ve been wonderfully happy here for all this time,” he says.

• Ada Loewer (widow of Robert Loewer, Marketing, '86) took a trip to Yosemite last July with her son, daughter-in-law and nine-year-old grandson who came out from Indiana. They were to meet up with friends from Moraga at the same time in the Park.

• Caryl Hinckley (widow of Ted Hinckley, History, '90) continues to travel a lot to visit one daughter in Juneau, AK, and another in Georgia. She also has two great-grandchildren in Juneau and Birmingham, AL. The boys are the first males in her family in four generations!

• George Grant (English, ’01) once again undertook the annual 400-mile bicycle trip from SF to LA to support AIDS research. He says he did the entire ride, hills and all, without stopping. But, “I am slowing down,” he confesses. They raised 15 million dollars this past year, the largest amount ever.

• John Canario (English, ’83) and his wife Penny continue to travel every year. In 2013 they visited Holland, Hawaii (Maui and Molokai) and Washington State. In 2014 their summer plans were still tentative, but underway.


• William Sidwell (Biology, ’89) has been teaching adults how to read. “They do exist,” he says, “and are so pleased when they do learn! A very different kind of teaching.”

• Bill Venuiti (Civil/Environmental Engineering, ’97) recently visited the WWII battleship, USS North Carolina, with some of his family. He served on that ship during WW II. It took part in every major naval offensive in the Pacific Theatre and became the most highly decorated battleship of the war, accumulating 15 battle stars. It’s now a national monument, berthed at the port of Wilmington, N.C.

• Beverly Waller-Wharton (Undergrad Studies, ’95) attended her grandson’s graduation from Boston University’s College of Fine Arts (he aspires to be an actor). They took a Charles River cruise, attended the 100th anniversary of the “Boston U Night of the Pops,” and visited the Museum of Art. Their accommodations at a residential hotel/hostel cost only $27.00 per night (including breakfast, in a four-bed room), allowing them to stay 5-days and 6 nights enjoying the sights.

• J. Benton White (Religious Studies, ’92) and wife, Mary Lou, continue to enjoy good health, though mourning the loss of more and more friends. They remain active at The Villages and still travel, with a recent trip to Washington DC for the first time in 30 years and a regular visit to remaining family in Alabama.

• Ruth Yaffe (Chemistry, ’90) is still traveling: the previous year, across Canada by train, this past year, Hawaii by cruise ship. She still has a Great Dane; this one is her tenth. And she lives in the same house she has for the past 56 years, along with a rose bush on the fence.

• Jean Beard (Biology, ’05) has moved to the Rancho San Antonio Retirement Community in Cupertino. “Still down-sizing,” she says.

• Paul Betten (Elementary Ed, ’84) says, “Our traveling has been limited to two or three trips a year. This past year it’s been to visit relatives in Portland and Seattle.”
“THE BEST THING I EVER DID!”

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I felt uncertain and insecure, the sweat of anxiety adding to that generated by the temperature in the basement room.

I can’t remember the details of my plea for continuing support of Priscilla but I know that I decided to emphasize money rather than humaneness. Using data about job availability and salaries, I emphasized the fact that the county would save money in the long run by helping Priscilla become a Registered Nurse. It worked. Priscilla received an exemption letter in a few days, and welfare support continued until she graduated. I believe the policy itself was changed as well. Priscilla completed the program, earned high grades, and passed the state licensing exam with a high score. She was employed immediately and moved to a more comfortable apartment still within the school district where her son and daughter were prospering. Her own talents were realized when she became an emergency room supervisor. She was recognized for her abilities and leadership during forty years of growth and change in hospital services. And she loved being a nurse. Her success brought me great pleasure.

Members!

We Need Your Stories!

We are eager to receive and share your reminiscences. We’re now of an age when storytelling comes naturally and is most welcome. We’ve had a lifetime of experiences to draw from and we’d like to hear about your memories—from childhood to your current “maturity.” About 500-750 words should do it (we edit to fit). Send them to the editor at geebernard@comcast.net, or 775 Seawood Way, San Jose, 95120.