

Santa Barbara City College

CLUSTER LEADER COUNCIL

MINUTES

May 14, 1980

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Anderson, J. Edmondson, H. Dunn, P. Olsen, C. Solberg,
M. Taylor, J. Webber, P. Huglin (Chairperson)

MEMBERS ABSENT: R. Fairly, J. Morrisohn

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

PRESENT: S. Conklin, D. Emerson, R. Sanchez

GUESTS: Dr. Mertes, G. Gaston, B. Miller

I. TRENDS AFFECTING HIGHER EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA IN THE 1980's

The report identified in the title above became the first item of discussion. The report itself is a summary presented to Northern Community College Presidents by the Chairman of the UC Systemwide Task Force on Retention and Transfer. Although the report appeared in the May 9, 1980, issue of the College Memorandum, it is being repeated to ensure the widest dissemination possible. Following is the summary:

1. The overall reduction in high school graduates is being accompanied by a strong shift in the ethnic composition of high school graduating classes, especially in large urban areas. While overall enrollment is down, minority enrollments are up, and in some areas, minorities constitute about half the enrollment. In Southern California this minority population is mostly hispanics, who historically have gone to college in lesser numbers. (Both trends are evident at SBCC, but perhaps not as pronounced as elsewhere. The minority enrollment in twelfth grade is gradually approaching 30 percent.)
2. Students are more career oriented, less interested in college as a place to develop a philosophy of life. Transfer programs and especially humanities programs in community colleges have therefore suffered a decline. About six percent of community college students transfer to UC or CSUC. Balance of transfers is now in the opposite direction. A large number of BA/BS holders are enrolled in community colleges. Occasional on/off attendance at CC's is common. The usual number of courses taken in CC's is one. The curriculum has become more lateral rather than linear, i.e., less developed according to a logical progression toward a degree. (The number of UC/CSUC transfer students from SBCC in 1978 was about 6 percent of our Fall 1978 enrollment. One out of eight students at SBCC has a baccalaureate and the percentage is increasing.)
3. More eligible high school graduates, who aspire to gain a baccalaureate are opting to go directly to UC rather than CC's. In 1975, 23 percent of UC-eligible high school graduates went to community colleges, but now only 8 percent list CC attendance as a first choice. (This seems consistent with a Research Office survey in Spring 1978, when a third of all student respondents and 40 percent of transfer student respondents said they would have gone elsewhere if money were no object.

4. It is presumed that, as more high school seniors opt to go directly to 4-year campuses, it will be the "best" who do so, and this will have a deleterious effect on CC transfer program quality. This is supported by studies conducted at UC using Quality of Student Effort Scales to compare work of CC transfers at CC's with subsequent work at UC.
5. Attrition at UC is largely related to academic difficulty. Many students discover too late that they can't handle an outside job and maintain a full course load at UC. Transfer shock is as great for CC transfers as it is for students right out of high school. Fewer CC transfers relative to native UC students are graduating in 3 years. (If more UC-eligible high school graduates are going directly to UC, then it follows that relatively more CC transfers are students who had poorer high school academic records, and the probability that they will not do as well at UC is greater.)
6. A trend toward the disappearance of transfer programs at CC's is seen. This is consistent with the Master Plan, would change the nature of CC's, and would place an undesirable lower division burden on the 4-year segment. It would restrict options available to CC students who, for whatever reason, could not go directly to a 4-year campus.

Comments/Questions discussed by the Council related to the summary:

1. Expression of concern over the CSUC system's proposal relative to a change in GE requirements and the potential negative enrollment effect on the community colleges.
2. A question was posed as to how SBCC could recover the loss of high school students making the decision to enter UCSB initially as opposed to enrolling at SBCC for their first two years.
3. Marketing was also discussed, noting that needs existing within the community should be matched with strengths at the institution. It was also noted that numerous institutions are presently involved in actively recruiting students. Further discussion on the subject suggested an interest in the marketing concept and that we should strive for a systemized institutional approach.
4. Issues for the decade ahead were discussed next and the largest one appears to be the competition for students. Apparently, years ago the UC system had no interest in the undergraduate student; now, however, there appears to be an opposite view. Another concern expressed was the part-time student idea. If the UC system should decide to push for part-time students, it could seriously affect enrollments in the community colleges.
5. One of the reasons students prefer to go to a four year school appears to be the prestige involved. Although the community college is perceived well by the community, this does not seem to have an influence on a first year student's decision to initially enroll at a four year school. The report has created much concern and it is envisioned that the items stressed will remain as discussion topics for some time to come. The intent is to have the CLC discuss these issues in greater depth during the next college year.

II. ATTRITION

Dr. Mertes shared his views on attrition. He began by making reference to the information conveyed by Mr. Fox during the Fall Faculty Seminar. He indicated that a reduction in attrition is essential and that the college should strive for a 5% reduction. He also said that it was very important that the community know and understand what we have to offer and that three year plans should be used by departments as a planning tool to help offset attrition. He then stated that Burt Miller's study notes that attrition is not uniform campuswide. This is why three year plans can be of assistance since the best way to approach the problem appears to be by course and program. He discussed the use of questioning and interviewing techniques (for students dropping classes or from college) and noted that the questionnaire currently being used is generating much data that may be useful in the semesters ahead. Mr. Gaston then stated that much of the data generated thus far suggests that many causes of attrition could be ameliorated while others cannot. A total of 2,000 withdrawal petitions have been processed to date. Recent information emerging from a State-wide Study on Attrition shows that the reason most often reported for attrition is job conflict, followed by a change in work schedule and a change of residence. These reasons are similar to the ones received by counselors this semester. It was suggested that attrition is less in shorter course offerings and courses taught by regular contractual staff. An assumption is that attrition might also be reduced if we had a shorter semester.

The discussion was next focused on retention. There is consensus of opinion that personal contact between the faculty and student is the most important variable. There was agreement that more attention needs to focus on retention, particularly in view of the fact that competition for students will be so great during this decade. Discussion on this topic will resume this Fall.

III. UPDATE ON AD HOC COMMITTEE ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Mr. Huglin traced events associated with contingency planning and stated that he was personally pleased with the participation by faculty. He indicated that their involvement was optimal and their dedication to responsibility highly professional. He expressed his satisfaction to the Committee and indicated that the report will be available for review on Friday, May 16, 1980.

A question related to contingency planning was asked as to why there is such an emphasis on WSCH. The response was that it is highly conceivable that future funding will be based entirely on WSCH. This is why it is important for departments to understand WSCH and the implications associated with them. There is a strong belief that effective decisions cannot be made until concepts associated with WSCH are understood. As pointed out by one faculty member, the consequences of not understanding WSCH is that decision-making may have to be made totally by the administration and removed from departmental levels.

OVER

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Cluster Leader Council will be on September 24, 1980.

PH/mjb

cc: Dr. Mertes
Representative Council
Department Chairpersons
Administrative Deans
B. Miller