

Consultation Council
April 2015
Notes by Rita M. Mize, Ph.D.

State Budget – Vice Chancellor Dan Troy reported that the Department of Finance’s March fiscal report indicated that tax receipts were \$1.3 billion above the January estimate for 2014-15. Significant additional revenue is expected in April and May, which will mean further revenue increases for community colleges.

He also noted that the Chancellor’s Office has reached agreement with the Department of Finance regarding the alternative growth formula which was to be developed by May 1. In general, this new formula contains measures of “need” (based on within-district boundaries data) and “demand” (based on the number of students served) and weighs “need” slightly higher (50.1%) than demand (49.9%) to meet legislative requirements.

The local measures of need include each district’s share (i.e., percentage) of unemployed persons, households under the poverty line, and number of adults with “some college” or less – all within district boundaries – as a percentage of the total numbers of each within the state. Then there is a computation of the number of community college students in the district divided by the number of cc students statewide to measure demand.

There is full recognition that, while it is not a perfect model, this is the best formula that can be developed, given the requirements of the Legislature for the weighting and due date. The Chancellor sees this as Phase 1; Phase 2, which will re-evaluate the formula, will begin in fall within the Chancellor’s Fiscal Affairs Workgroup.

Troy reported that the Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2 hearing was positive; he urged the committee to retain base allocation flexibility for the \$125 million proposed in the budget. In apportioning those funds, the Chancellor’s Office will distribute the funds using base rates, while doubling the base for rural colleges: the reason for doubling the base is the lack of economies of scale for these colleges.

Members of the council urged all groups to be positive and support the Governor’s proposal.

State and Federal Legislative Update

Vice Chancellor Vince Stewart discussed the following bills:

- 1) AB 288 (Holden) on concurrent enrollment. The Chancellor’s Office and the League continue to work with CTA and CFT to fashion language which will support additional concurrent enrollment and gain their support.
- 2) AB 770 on basic skills innovation program grants. The Chancellor’s Office has questions about the funding source and language which appears to be inconsistent

with our basic skills initiative. The ASCCC seeks a requirement for sign-off by local academic senates when districts apply for these grants.

- 3) AB 798 re: an (unspecified) fund to provide professional development for instructors to learn use of open education resources (OER).
- 4) SB 634 re: creation of a higher education structure for regulating and providing reciprocity for online instruction. There is concern regarding the potential lack of oversight of for-profit and out-of-state institutions.
- 5) AB 626 would require that any district with between 67% and 75% of its hours of credit instruction taught by full-time faculty (FTF) must use 33% of its SSSP funds to hire FTF or have that amount deducted from its allocation; and require that those whose faculty teach fewer than 67% of the hours of credit instruction use 40% of their allocation to increase the 75/25 ratio or have that amount deducted from their allocation. In addition, in years in which SSSP funds are provided and no local district match is required, districts must expend 50% of their SSSP allocation for improving their FTF/PTF ratio, unless funds are specified for use in improving the FTF/PTF ratio. (These requirements mirror those of AB 1725/1988 for use of Program Improvement Funds that were provided only for two years; when those funds were no longer appropriated, the community college system voluntarily established the full-time faculty obligation number [FON] through regulation; presumably, the FON would remain in place if the provisions of AB 626 were adopted and districts would have to meet both obligations.) These requirements only take effect in years in which no portion of the SSSP funds are specifically allocated for faculty-related categories.

While faculty groups indicated that AB 626 would provide a much-needed boost in the number of full-time faculty, administrators expressed concern about reducing the flexibility of the SSSP to respond to local districts' needs. There is also likelihood that funding for full-time faculty will be included when the May Revise is released.

Stewart also noted HR 937, the Fast Track to College Act of 2015, which would authorize the Secretary of Education to award matching six-year grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that partner with institutions of higher education to establish or support dual enrollment programs, such as early college high schools, and allow secondary school students to earn credit simultaneously toward a secondary school diploma and a postsecondary degree or certificate.

Tuition for Veterans

Federal law requires that higher education institutions charge certain veterans in-state tuition or lose access to federal financial aid. Last year the California legislature approved conforming legislation but further legislation is necessary to allow community colleges to claim veterans as residents for apportionment purposes. This may be included either in a policy or trailer bill and will also impact the admissions and records offices of the colleges. There was a question about

whether this would address MIS coding as a resident student; Chancellor Harris indicated that it is unclear at this time.

Accreditation Task Force

Chancellor Harris reminded the council that this task force, originally convened by former Chancellor Jack Scott, made recommendations regarding the operation of ACCJC. Chancellor Harris reconvened the task force in November 2012; they subsequently made a second report to him. These recommendations were held in abeyance due to the status of CCSF; at the April meeting, Chancellor Harris reactivated the task force to review the report of the State Auditor, the earlier recommendations of the task force, and any additional general recommendations. The group met once and will meet in May and June with recommendations to the Chancellor for either June or July consultation.

BOG Fee Waiver

The Academic Senate (ASCCC) requested discussion of their recent resolution which proposes to exempt students in at-risk groups (including EOPS/CARE, CalWorks, DSPS, and veterans) from the BOG fee waiver minimum academic and progress requirements. Currently, only foster youth have a “blanket” exemption; those in the remaining at-risk categories can appeal on a case-by-case basis.

The general consensus (although not agreed by all representatives) was to retain the current regulations in place and continue to monitor the outcomes. This position was explicitly supported by the CSSO representative who noted that members of his group are split on this question.

Other

Chancellor Harris reported that he had held his annual spring press conference for student newspaper editors the previous day.

The chancellor also expressed concern about the likelihood that the Heald/Corinthian colleges may slip into bankruptcy and urged the local colleges to assist students from these colleges. The US Department of Education is unable to waive student debt for those who attended these colleges until/unless they declare bankruptcy. Meanwhile, if a student transfers to a community college before the bankruptcy, current law charges responsibility for the debt to the community college.