

June 5, 2014

Dr. Scroggins:

I'm sure you are aware that Jason Chevalier has accepted a job at Chaffey College and will not be returning to Mt. SAC. While this is certainly good news for Jason, it is a devastating blow for both his department and our division. We, in the Arts Division, were counting on Jason to serve as the Arts Division Coordinator. As it stands, there is no one filling that critical and difficult role. However, this could be an opportunity to create a position that is sustainable and permanent. We hope you will guide us, and assist us, with creating an Associate Dean position for the Arts Division.

The current model of hiring a Division Coordinator to fill that need has always been awkward, only partially successful and, ultimately, it is unsustainable. It takes many months to train someone to function in that position; it takes years for someone to truly learn the job. Each time we lose a Division Coordinator, it has unfortunate consequences. The work that has to be done suffers while the new coordinator learns the ropes. Some of that workload gets pushed up to the Dean. Some of it falls onto the department chairs. Some of it goes unfulfilled. And, if that position is always in flux, we never arrive at a place where our division can operate smoothly. Beyond that, the limitations placed on the Division Coordinator make it so that, at best, he or she can only handle a portion of what needs to be done.

Although we are a small division, we are also a complicated division. Unlike most divisions, the needs of one class do not, in most ways, resemble the needs of the other classes. We have a very large range of both academic and vocational programs. Most of our classes have unique equipment needs and peculiar administrative demands. Most of our classrooms, which are spread across the campus, have proprietary configurations; each requires individual attention and maintenance. Every time there is a new campus wide policy, it can threaten our ability to survive; repeatability is only the most recent example of that. Additionally, our existence and educational goals depend on a large variety of complicated events such as performances, demonstrations, screenings and gallery openings. All these things place enormous demands on the division.

Regardless of the size, there are tasks that simply must be performed by all divisions. In our case, 100% of those tasks fall to the Dean. We have gotten by recently because of the exceptional efforts of Dr. Long and Don Sciore. But, in the long run, this model burns out the personnel who try to operate it. It has been clear to us, for many years, that we need a full-time Associate Dean. And, with the loss of Jason Chevalier, the need has become critical and urgent.

Can you help us?



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