

# The SENATE Forum

Volume XI, Winter 1997

❖ A Publication of the Academic Senate, California State University, Fullerton ❖

## What Exactly is General Education? Issues & Models

Susan Parman

Much of the discussion about General Education that has flourished during the past two years has emphasized specific skills (reading, writing, math, technology) and specific experiences (e.g., service learning) and has affirmed general pedagogical goals (e.g., coherence, clarity of goals, systematic assessment--See *Report to the Academic Senate*, December 12, 1996); but I have yet to see a clear, focused statement of *what GE is that is different from other aspects of a university education*. I agree that we should all strive to achieve the "attributes of quality undergraduate education" described in *Rethinking General Education* (May 31, 1996, No 3, pg 6), but such statements do not define the essence of GE.

The discussion that comes closest to zeroing in on "essence of GE" concerns the issue of breadth vs. depth. Section 40405 of Title 5 defines GE as serving breadth as opposed to depth requirements and clearly states that "breadth" courses (GE) are considered necessary to producing "truly educated persons." This is a remarkable statement in light of the criticism, currently in vogue on this campus, that GE courses interfere with education--that is, that GE courses stand in the way of "depth" education that provide students with specialized skills and the pro-



Susan Parman is a professor of anthropology and is also the chair of the department. She recently served as the director of the London Semester and has chaired the President's Scholars Screening Committee.

gressive advancement of knowledge (or submersion) in a particular discipline. The campus-wide discussion promoted by the Ad Hoc Committee on General Education appears to endorse this attitude when it supports the idea of making GE courses relevant to and supportive of the major.

What is the current conception of "breadth" courses at CSUF? A review of the weaknesses of the GE program at CSUF (*Rethinking General Education*, No 2, March 14, 1996, p. 3) stated that "We have lots of GE courses, but no clear philosophical integration or structure to the GE program as a whole." GE courses are perceived cynically to be watered-down versions of courses for majors that bring in the FTES needed to support the

### In This Issue:

- Susan Parman on *Reforming General Education*.....1
- Rick Pullen & Soraya Coley on *Being a Dean*..... 4 & 6
- Michael Parker on *Digital Technologies & Learning* ...9
- S. Reisman & C. Swanson on *a New Tech Center*..... 14
- Vince Buck on *Technology Training & Support*.....18
- M. K. Tetreault & V. Buck on *Cornerstones Project*..20

“real” business of a department, educating its majors. As discussed at the Academic Senate meeting on December 12, GE courses are thought of as majors informing other majors; and the future of GE at CSUF is perceived to be a case of politics as usual--departments lobbying other departments for mutual support (“I’ll send you my students and you send me yours”). If this is what happens to GE at this University then we will have failed dismally in addressing the heart and soul of the GE concept.

Why does Title 5 define GE as essential to creating “truly educated persons”? In this conception lies the difference between vocational training schools and universities. I suggest that what is essential in developing an effective GE program at CSUF is the development of a coherent, philosophically focused university culture, at the heart of which is an appreciation of the unique quality of “general education.” When students at CSUF ask, as they frequently do, why they have to learn so much stuff that appears to them to be irrelevant to earning a job in the “real” world (e.g., why they have to debate the nature of reality or rehash events of a long-dead past), this is indicative of their lack of enculturation in university culture. University faculty should be able to respond, without hesitation or guilt, that the university creates a sacrosanct space for challenging community values, for engaging in discussions and research that do not have to meet criteria of practicality. A university is by definition a GE experience in the sense that its purpose is to teach students to speak from more than one point of view, to transcend the boundaries of particular cultural or disciplinary perspectives, as they seek to understand who they are in a complex universe. Unlike the classical academies (e.g., Plato’s Academy) that taught only one point of view, universities were founded during the medieval period on the principle that at least two conflicting points of view should be taught. Out of disputation and concordance students developed the critical thinking skills that came to characterize the great humanists and scientists of the Western intellectual tradition. It is because of this tradition of skeptical objectivity and tolerance of multiple perspectives that explains why we currently embrace cultural diversity.

GE is not achieved or defined by skill competency, service learning, or taking a package of courses that enhance the major. Skills such as writing, communicating, quantitative analysis, and computer use do not in themselves constitute the heart of GE; they may be necessary, but they are not sufficient. GE is a perspective. *The heart of GE is to produce a reflective, consciousness-expanded, relativistic, multiple-perspectival, moral human being who can reflect intelligently on human existence in a complex universe.* Far from being a “money-making” device for the University that “slows students down” in their march along a practical path of becoming prepared for a certain career through a specific major, GE is the defining core of a university experience. Without it we are simply an enriched vocational school with a sports complex.

It may be cogently argued that very few existing “GE courses” at CSUF fulfill the above definition of GE. The history of GE at CSUF has tended to be one of departmental opportunism rather than genuine discussion of what “general education” should be. Rather than designing courses that are a thoughtful response to the challenge of GE, departments have taken existing courses and attempted to shove them into existing slots (“life-long learning,” etc.) in an effort to increase student enrollment. The following model attempts to fulfill the goals of GE without radically changing the existing structure.

The ideas presented below were developed in an H&SS subcommittee (the members of which were Keith Boyum, Bill Lloyd, and myself) that had been asked to address GE category *III.C.1 Introduction to the Social Sciences*. We concluded that the essential learning objectives of a student taking a GE in the social sciences were that the student should develop an objective, methodologically systematic understanding of

### The SENATE Forum

*The Senate Forum* is a publication of the Academic Senate, California State University, Fullerton. It is designed to stimulate discussion, debate, and understanding of a variety of important issues which the Academic Senate addresses. Individuals are encouraged to submit essays or other contributions to the editor at [aflores@fullerton.edu](mailto:aflores@fullerton.edu)



Editor & Layout: Albert Flores (Philosophy)

Editorial Board: Vince Buck (Political Science), Ben Hubbard (Religious Studies) Sandra Sutphen (Political Science), and Curtis Swanson (Foreign Languages and Literatures).

human life as *social*, that is, as embedded in and made possible by society or social relationships. The intent of a GE Social Science course was to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on the implications of human life as social.

The committee brainstormed extensively about how to achieve the criterion of "breadth" dictated by the spirit of GE. None of us were attracted by the idea of a "Social Science 101" course that was a watered-down pastiche of social science concepts and methods. We wanted to draw on the strengths of discipline-based courses while at the same time encouraging an expansion of thought beyond the specific disciplines. In our proposed model, students would register in a discipline-based course as at present (for example, Anthropology 102, Geography 100, or Political Science 200). These courses would also be designated as "Social Science GE" courses because the faculty teaching these courses would have agreed to collaborate in preparing their syllabi and changing their course content to encourage comparison of multiple perspectives. Because we defined the learning objective of Social Science General Education as the development of an objective, methodologically systematic understanding of human life as social, we needed a device that also encouraged students to develop a more "general" understanding of how human life is embedded in social relationships. The key device in this model is the use of a "core problem" that all participating courses would agree to use as a common focus for comparison--for example, the core problem of the patterned expression of suicide.

Students signing up for Anthropology 102/Social Science GE would see in their syllabus that their assignments included a series of activities during the last third of the course (to be determined by participating faculty) that involved comparing an anthropological perspective on a core problem with other social science perspectives on the same core problem. The committee explored a variety of methods that could be used to promote awareness of multiple social science perspectives--for example, rotating faculty; rotating teams of students; joint symposia; panel debates; preparation of compound

documents on the Internet. We envisaged panels of students presenting their different approaches to each other; or interacting in cyberspace--not only in chat rooms but in constructing collaborative documents such as portfolios or hypothetical collaborative research proposals (faculty could pose this question to their students: if you were going to write a collaborative research proposal on the topic of suicide, what would each of you contribute?).

How would students' accomplishment of the learning objectives of Social Science GE be assessed? Students might be assigned tasks that require them to assemble a multidisciplinary portfolio and to reflect on the results of this task on their understanding of human life as social. They might keep a journal that tracks their experience. They would be expected to apply their chosen discipline effectively in understanding the core problem; but they would also be expected to compare and contrast this discipline with at least one other discipline, and demonstrate that this experience has enhanced their understanding of human life as social.

This model could easily be applied to "humanities," "natural science," and other disciplinary arenas at both lower-division and upper-division levels. Because the key aspect of GE is to stimulate reflective, integrated, cosmopolitan discourse, the method of using a "core problem" to stimulate comparison and contrast may be a useful device at all levels of GE experience--and could constitute the distinguishing feature of a CSUF general education.

In conclusion, this article suggests that two actions that could go far toward resolving the GE debate at CSUF: 1) *Develop a critical definition of GE that distinguishes it from other aspects of a university education;* and 2) *Develop a university culture--among both faculty and students--that recognizes and supports the significance of GE.* Without clarity of definition, and without a shared sense of participating in an educationally sound discourse about what the purpose of a university education is all about, all discussion of GE is hollow and ultimately divisive. □

---

## High-Tech Environment Creates Challenges for the School of Communications

---

### Rick Pullen

Serving as Dean of the School of Communications at Cal State Fullerton during the current communications revolution is a bit like serving as pilot of the Atlantis Space Shuttle: the ride has many thrills, challenges are inevitable, and time is necessary for us to reach our destination. Simply stated, as we move closer to the 21st Century, the task at hand is wonderfully exciting and challenging.

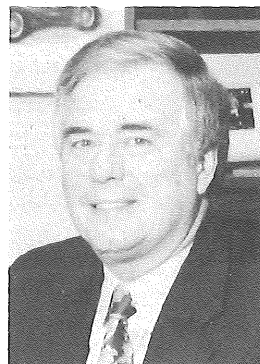
---

*"New ways of teaching and learning are being explored using the technologies currently available, and we must watch for new opportunities as they develop."*

---

Thrills result from opportunities provided by the environment in which faculty, staff and students in the School of Communications live, work and study. Southern California is second only to New York as a communication center in the world. Los Angeles has the nation's second largest concentration of advertising agencies, with many of the leading firms having established offices in Orange County. Motion pictures and television are strongest in this region, and the greater Los Angeles area is the nation's leader in the number of radio stations. In addition, Southern California has become a leader in the publication of magazines, and ten daily and countless weekly newspapers are published within one hour of campus.

Because so many corporations have their headquarters or major regional offices in this area, the emphasis on public relations and organizational communication has grown in recent years. Opportunities abound in this highly populated area for the application of communica-



*Rick Pullen is professor of communications and newly appointed dean of the School of Communications. A specialist in media law and ethics, with several books to his name, he has served on the California Freedom of Information Committee.*

tions principles from television to speech therapy. Furthermore, there is no comparable program in the California State University nor the University of California systems. The School of Communications is in the right place at the right time. Great opportunities lie ahead as relationships are built between the School and its external public.

An inevitable challenge facing the School is keeping pace with technological developments in these fast-moving times. The purchase of appropriate equipment to support instruction and research objectives is integral to the fundamental mission of the School. Labs with sophisticated computer programs dominate the learning environment. New ways of teaching and learning are being explored using the technologies currently available, and we must watch for new opportunities as they develop.

Learning to live and work in this high-tech world has expanded our outreach for global-wide contacts and has provided access to more information than any one person can hope to assimilate. Technology has provided the means by which to reach goals that we, at one time, never dreamed possible. Such technology does not come cheap; thus, the increased demand for meeting financial needs. The costs associated with purchasing, upgrading, and maintaining up-to-date technology, not to mention the need for faculty development, are enormous and fall heavily on the School.

Another challenge that must be overcome to strengthen School programs is finding and/or creating needed space. Some 600 television-film

majors share a small studio and limited editing facilities, more than 100 communicative disorders students compete for space in clinical settings and faculty research centers, and computer labs are scheduled around the clock. School faculty and administrators must carefully analyze and evaluate use of present space in order to determine whether it can be put to more effective use. Costs associated with the reconfiguration of space are enormous and will fall heavily on the School. A long term goal is to raise financial support for a building specifically designed for the School of Communications.

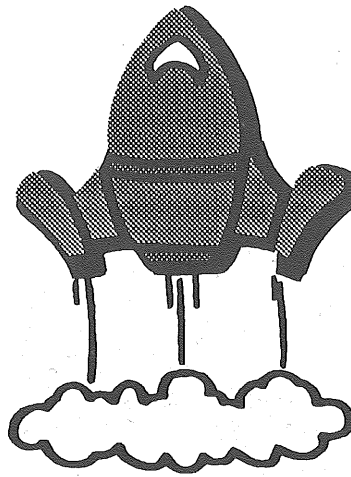
A third challenge for School faculty and Administrators is to determine whether the present structural organization of the School is the ideal structure. Some have said that the current structure gives the impression that the school is simply two departments brought together for purposes of organizational efficiency. It may be in the best interests of the School to increase the number of departmental units as determined by curricular needs and numbers of majors. Reorganization will take time and will increase costs, although costs can be kept to a minimum during the transition period.

With an emphasis on enhancing the School's learning environment by incorporating up-to-date technology and creating and utilizing space to the maximum, there have been and will be increased financial needs. As a result, we have launched a two-part aggressive development program. Part one concerns the development of funds to supplement state assistance. The goal is to build gift marketing systems which, when mature, will predictably build a pool of current and deferred major gifts sufficient to achieve a substantial endowment by decade's end. This plan has been implemented in conjunction with Advancement and involves an emphasis on strategic planned giving.

The second part of the plan is being implemented through the School and has been tabbed "Partners

with Communications." The "Partners" program involves the development of relationships with alumni, corporate entities that support our outstanding internship programs, media entities and others that have an interest in specific areas of communications. As departments in the School celebrate more than 30 years of existence, alumni are older and are well placed throughout Orange County, the state and the nation. Connecting with and gaining support from alumni and their work centers strengthens the School in a variety of ways.

Such relationships lead to financial support but also are valuable in other ways: internships and job placement for students, speakers and participants for classes and Communications Week, and support for advisory boards in various areas.



Exciting things are happening in the learning environment itself. It is likely that most of our students may change careers several times over their lives, and the change may be necessary because of societal and workplace advances. Our responsibility is to develop a solid base upon which students can continue to grow and learn, being flexible in their work lives. Though we are continually working on curriculum both with modification and additions, we realize that we cannot reliably predict the demands and opportunities which await us in the 21st century. This means that we strive to create, in the largest number of people, the capacity to live lives of intellectual resilience.

The School can and will reach its destination. Ties with the professional community and alumni are strong and will be strengthened so that the School will benefit in ways that it never has in the past. Students will continue to gain hands-on experiences with state-of-the art technology and will enter the workplace prepared to start meaningful careers. And committed faculty will continue to meet the challenge of providing students with a meaningful learning environment enhanced by the faculty's own research interests and the study and application of communication principles.

Students in the School of Communications will continue to emphasize the liberal arts in their course work which will lead to intellectual integrity so they will develop an understanding of values, ethics and an appreciation of environmental and global issues. Our students will be living in a more ethnically, culturally and racially diverse and interdependent world than we have ever known. We must work to encourage all to know a variety of cultures rather than a single one, to stretch beyond the limitations of the traditions around them. Although the School of Communications is looked upon as a professionally oriented School, we are

---

*"Although the School of Communications is looked upon as a professionally oriented school, we are concerned with educating the whole person, not just for a job, but for a lifetime of living and serving and to provide leadership for the 21st century."*

---

concerned with educating the whole person, not just for a job, but for a lifetime of living and serving and to provide leadership for the 21st century.

The School of Communications at Cal State Fullerton can become one of the premier schools in the nation. The ride may be rough at times, but we must not lose sight of our destination. Many positives exist: an exciting and professional community that enhances opportunities for growth and impact, an excellent faculty with recognized research records and a commitment to excellence; well-placed alumni who are willing to support the School; and a learning environment that provides meaningful curricula and training on appropriate technology. With proper planning, fund raising and attention to the learning environment, the School of Communications will continue to strengthen its reputation and position in the academic and professional communities. □

---

## The Dynamic Environment of HDCS: Discoveries of a New Dean

---

Soraya Coley

I was asked to write a brief article about my vision as the new dean of the School of Human Development and Community Service (HDCS). I thought that rather than write about my vision for the school, I would prefer to take this opportunity to talk about what I discovered (and in some cases what was confirmed, since I have been on the faculty for sixteen years) upon assuming the position. The discoveries I made certainly reinforce my hopes and aspirations for our School.

For the campus community that is unfamiliar with HDCS, I want to first introduce the school.

---

*"We provide students with an education that contributes to their intellectual, personal, and professional development and promotes a sense of civic and social responsibility."*

---

We provide students with an education that contributes to their intellectual, personal, and professional development and promotes a sense of civic and social responsibility. Our programs prepare students for graduate study and for the professional fields that are focused on the education and development of children, youth and adults, and the physical and mental health and social well-being of our community.

The School offers five undergraduate majors: Child Development, Health Science, Human Services, Kinesiology, and Nursing; three master's programs: Counseling, Kinesiology, and Education; and three post-baccalaureate





Soraya Coley is a professor of human services and new Dean of HDCS. She recently served in the VPAA's office as an administrative fellow and participates in a variety of worthwhile community activities.

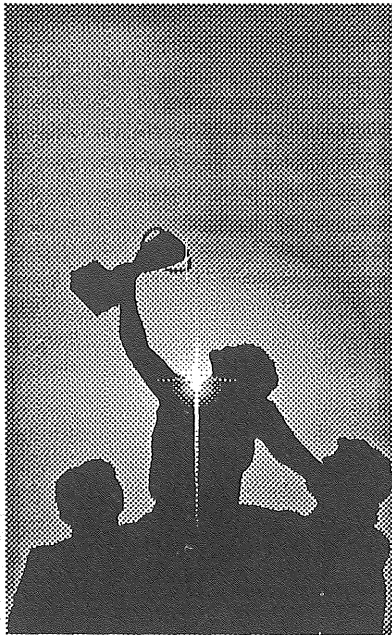
teaching credential programs: Multiple Subject (elementary), Single Subject (secondary), and Special Education; and a Military Science minor. In addition, we have the Center for Collaboration for Children, the Lifespan Wellness Clinic (through the cooperation of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and housed in the Ruby Gerontology Center), the California Physical Education and Health Project, and in collaboration with the School of Natural Science and Mathematics, the Center for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education. We also offer several certificate programs in cooperation with University Extended Education Services.

Our purpose is "to educate in ways which unite thought and action, theory and practice, and to develop new knowledge and abilities" which contribute to preparing our students for HDCS-related professions. In his reconception of faculty scholarship Ernest Boyer, the former President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, attempts to "define the work of faculty in ways that reflect more realistically the full range of academic and civic mandates." This resonates well with our own view of the scope of our work and our contribution within the academy.

Boyer writes:

Surely, scholarship means engaging in original research. But the work of the scholar also means stepping back from one's investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one's knowledge effectively to students....The work of the professoriate might be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping, functions. They are *the scholarship of discovery* (the commitment to the advancement of knowledge and to following a disciplined investigation); *the scholarship of integration* (serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, and integrate one's own research and that of others into larger multidisciplinary intellectual patterns), *the scholarship of application* (applying knowledge in a disciplined and rigorous fashion that addresses consequential problems or needs and gaining new intel-

lectual understandings as a result of the application); and *the scholarship of teaching* (teaching that not only transmits knowledge, but transforms and extends it as well; teaching that builds bridges between the teacher's understanding and the student's learning). (italics added)



Here, then, are some of my discoveries: I discovered that we recognize that given the nature of many of our disciplines and the missions of our programs, we can ill-afford to insulate ourselves or our students from societal changes; furthermore, our talents can be used to help create solutions that address the varied and multiple needs within our community. We understand that

many of the challenges and concerns faced within our schools, within our neighborhoods, by individuals, families, and groups deserve the best possible theoretical or conceptual analysis, problem-solving and assessment abilities from those within the academy, and the best possible

preparation of students entering the professions and graduate study.

I discovered that we are working collaboratively within and across divisions, across other schools, and with an array of community institutions, whether they be with public and non-profit agencies, senior citizen centers, worksites, health and fitness organizations, or the public schools.

I discovered that we are attempting to create classroom communities where learning is interactive and active, and where we value students' voices and experiences as part of enriching the learning process. We are using our reading clinic, our computerized physical performance, movement analysis, and lifespan wellness laboratories to enhance instruction, scholarship, and to promote "hands-on experiences" for our students.

I discovered that we are committed to expanding student learning beyond the classroom, through field-based learning opportunities and internships in every major, to broader social and institutional contexts where our students will engage in their practice.

I discovered through our faculty's scholarship that they are providing our richly diverse student body with an education that is theoretically sound and reflects current knowledge and professional methods. Faculty are helping students to understand how differences and similarities related to culture, ethnicity, race, gender, age, language, ableness, and economic status have implications for their work, while working hard to help them to become leaders in shaping more inclusive and accountable institutions.

I also discovered that we are obtaining grants and contracts to expand our scholarship, to support partnerships with community institutions, and to extend educational access to underrepresented groups within the professions.

At the same time, I discovered that we are cognizant of the dynamic environment in which we find ourselves and are challenged to assess and respond effectively to the internal and external forces that give impetus, direction, and restraint to our academic programs. My vision is realized through navigating these forces, and building on and expanding

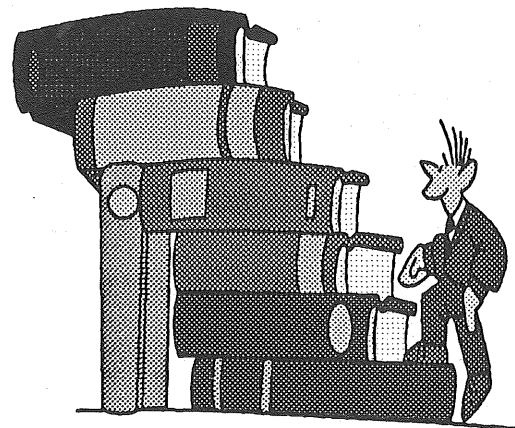
upon what I have discovered in order to enhance student success and faculty vitality, promote community involvement and partnerships, and contribute towards achieving CSUF's Mission and Goals.

Finally, I discovered that we are seeking to work in cross-disciplinary and integrative ways as a school that is focused on: *Human Development and Community Service.* □

---

*"...we are working collaboratively within and across divisions, across other schools, and with an array of community institutions..."*

---





---

## Using Digital Technologies to Mediate Learning in New Ways

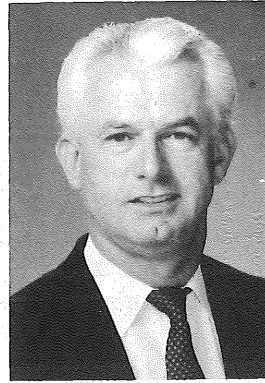
---

Michael Parker

When *learning* is preeminent the relationship and responsibilities of professor and student require a partnership and not such a clear division of labor. Professors use student feedback to modify the instructional environment so that they can assure outcomes to a much greater degree. Faculty find that they must understand *students' ways of making sense* of the class material so that they can help students come to distinguish the disciplinary representation of knowledge from their preconceptions and more critically contrast the two views. Faculty must come to understand differences in the ways students learn, and how to promote greater learning. Instead of focusing mainly upon changing instruction when learning is low, faculty must focus more upon the learning processes that were ineffective with a given topic.

Traditionally, teaching is seen as knowledge transmission, and learning is seen as knowledge acquisition. Teaching places demands on faculty to analyze the discipline's knowledge, break it into simpler components, and organize these into a sequence of points to be made. When instruction is conceived of as imparting knowledge, the lecture has typically been considered the most efficient form, both logistically and economically. By bringing students to the expert, a one-to-many relationship occurs that keeps costs lower. To the extent that space, acoustic, and assessment limitations are low, the larger the class, the more economical the instruction.

Winter 1997



Michael Parker is an associate professor of counseling and associate dean of HDCS. He is the acting academic technology officer responsible for coordinating technology transfers to the classroom.

---

*"It is hoped that applying digital technology to education can provide even more effective means of reducing costs."*

---

Faculty attempt to overcome the limitations of the large lecture in a variety of ways. Professors try to excite and inspire students to sustain attention and effort. They try to speak clearly and use repetition and summarization. They may provide group or even individualized assessment feedback. Professors also attempt to have a sense of the range of capabilities of

students and to use language and pacing that will allow at least the more ready students to keep up. Still, faculty often acutely feel the limitations of the lecture. Not only do they long for smaller classes and more

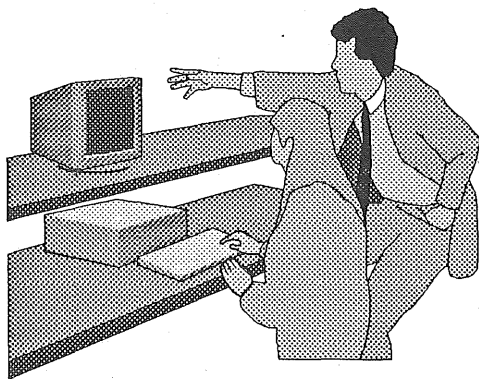
carefully sequenced curricular prerequisites, but also they try to overcome the lecture's shortcomings in other systematic ways.

Print media are a primary augmentation to the lecture. Syllabi with course objectives provide a framework that the student may use to understand the structure and goals of the course. Printed homework exercises and review questions allow the student to practice working with applying ideas and strategies and to reflect on the nature of the course material. Supplementary sources such as textbooks further elaborate the course content. Print media also allow the student control over the pacing of material.

Unfortunately attending class, taking notes and reading the course materials is often insufficient to produce more than superficial understanding. For example, the identification of singular features, traits, statements, facts, and examples does not integrate parts and wholes; discerning the structures implicit in a lecture topic or a text--categorical hierarchies, lawful relations, and relational arguments--often simply do not occur. Neither lectures nor print guarantee student attention and even when attention is given, reflection and integration need not occur. Other modes of instruction are generally used by faculty to augment the lecture so as to foster deeper learning; these include seminars, labs, and field experiences. Since the cost is much higher than large lectures, use of these modes of augmentation usually seems to cancel out any savings, however. Will digital technology help us any better?

### The Hope of Academic Technology

Considering the primitive state of academic technology, it is understandable that some are skeptical about this movement in higher education generally and in the CSU specifically. Although word processing and e-mail have been useful, it is hard to see how such things are *academically* revolutionary.



Most faculty remember the expected classroom revolution to be made possible by television. In 1949 there were one million TV sets in the US and within a year over 50 million sets were in use, with numbers growing through the coming

decades. In the sixties large numbers of TV sets were installed throughout CSU classrooms. TV studios were created to transmit videotaped lectures and films to classrooms. However, the cost of developing useful programs was underestimated as was the passivity, boredom and student isolation they induced. Within a few years the TV sets were rarely used and faculty resistance to further such adventures was growing. The successful creation of a market for this new communication commodity drove public expectations, but it did not make the technology nearly as academically useful as was hoped. It allowed for dynamic images to accompany language, but it did not allow for interaction, self-pacing, discussion, nor much feedback.

Unfortunately, most instructional technology models are based upon designs that are derived from the "knowledge transmission" and "technical rationality" approaches to education. For example, Gagne (1985, 1988) divides learning into five capabilities and what is learned into three types. For any instructional goal one can work backward by matching the type of capability and knowledge/skill to create instructional requirements and learning events.

Computer-based tutoring systems are created in a similar analytic manner. Anderson (1983), for example, assumes that the difference between how a novice and an expert proceed with a problem can be analyzed and the expertise codified into problem-solving algorithms. Then, by developing self-paced instructional experiences, the novice can acquire the heuristic as well as the information fund of the expert. Such programmed instructional models are the result of a kind of logical analysis of "what must be so."

Although such models are controversial and have little empirical support, they remain popular because they suggest that learning is simple enough to be *engineered*. With relatively unambiguous and simple skill development the process is often effective.

Relative instructional failure with more complex knowledge goals, however, seems to invite re-engineering rather than a reconceptualization of teaching and learning and this process goes on decade after decade.

The search for recipes for instruction is based upon the hope that low cost staff can replicate large numbers of course modules with automated systems. This creates in professors a profound value conflict, however. How can programmed instruction provide timely and context sensitive feedback, induce reflection, critical thinking and synthesis so that learning will not be superficial or distorted?

---

*"...as technologies develop they may aid in facilitating faculty reflection upon their teaching and in discovering ways to enhance the learning cycle."*

---

Is the digital revolution going to affect universities any differently than the video fiasco of the sixties? The large cohort of baby boomers made it necessary for economies of scale to bring down per student costs by shifting from small to large universities. It is hoped that applying digital technology to education can provide even more effective means of reducing costs. The difficulty of transcending the limitations of the technical rationality model of instruction and finding ways to apply digital technologies to mediate learning that is more than "knowledge transmission" requires a clear grasp of what we mean by learning.

In light of these difficulties, the notion of higher education instruction as imparting knowledge or as "knowledge transmission" must be inadequate; success requires that the professor engage in a dialogical relationship with the student that will set up conditions to make learning possible. Will the new digital technologies facilitate this dialogue thereby enhancing learning?

## Mediated Learning Technologies

It cannot be emphasized too often that learning technology is *not* primarily digital or electronic. Enhancing the quality of learning is achieved primarily through the application of instructional and assessment techniques and the application of "best instructional practices" to the goals of courses and programs of study. Electronic technologies can, however, play a variety of special roles in *mediating* instructional delivery.

Consider that the "information explosion" requires technological assistance. A generation with a sophisticated expectation of the media and impatient with traditional lectures requires new teaching approaches. Telecommuting opportunities and the ongoing retraining needs in the workplace require technological support. The rising cost of education, population growth, shifting demographic characteristics of students, and many other forces make it imperative that learning experiences become more efficient, effective and sensitive to the diverse needs of students. Technology, therefore, has an important role to play in addressing the challenges ahead.

In the 1980's "computer literacy" was the primary goal of curricula using this new technology. In the 1990's the focus has shifted to how to use technology to help formulate research problems, locate and retrieve relevant information, and then organize, analyze, synthesize, and communicate that information. This stage moves us from a focus on the technology itself to a focus on inquiry, collaboration, and discovery, in short, to a focus on learning.

As Diana G. Oblinger of the Higher Education Division of IBM North America has noted, long-standing education practices are being challenged. Practices such as passive learning through lectures and isolated, fact-centered subject matter taught almost solely through reading and writing, or training

students to work alone on expensive, insular campus sites are no longer seen as effective. The modern world of work and community life requires active and collaborative student effort, integrated subject matter with direct application to “real life” issues, and the use of a broad variety of learning resources. In addition learning opportunities must be distributed beyond the classroom and the campus; televised courseware, computer access to libraries, instructional Internet web pages and “chat rooms”, on-line course materials, multimedia simulations and lessons, and video conferencing are needed for higher education to continue to have the impact that it has previously enjoyed. Student work schedules, individual differences in learning approaches and preparedness, and intensive exposure to sophisticated media productions can be better met by augmenting direct instructor-student contact with electronically distributed learning opportunities. Valuable contact hours can be devoted less to routine classroom tasks and more to high quality engagement.

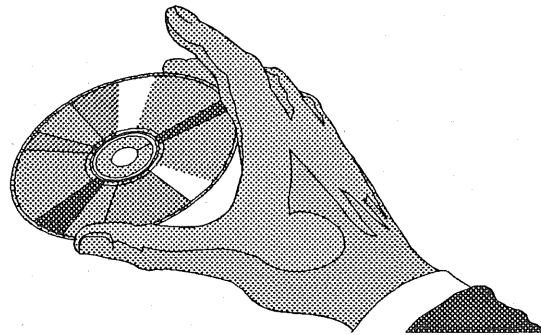
### The Promise of Digital Technology

In the coming years faculty can benefit from collaborating with colleagues and instructional design teams to improve the quality of learning through the use of digital technologies

Older technologies such as lectures, seminars, labs, fieldwork and aids like texts, audiovisual equipment, and so forth are designed to clarify, motivate, and provide redundancy. But the new digital technologies will allow for further mediation such as self-pacing, distributed learning, individualization, simulation, interaction with the course outside of class time, and collaboration at a distance. In early stages of development these technologies tend to be cumbersome and distract instructors away from the subject matter and toward the technology; as technologies develop they may aid in facilitating faculty reflection upon their teaching and in discovering ways to enhance the learning cycle.

More specifically, digital technologies provide:

- convenient and powerful ways to present an array of selected phenomena for students to analyze in ways that increase curiosity and allow the material to be recorded and re-examined as desired;
- easier methods to group data, search for references, develop “concept maps”, stipulate useful definitions, suggest alternative descriptions, constructions, interpretations, hypotheses and explanations;
- improved ways to place inquirential methods and theories in the context of the history of ideas.



In later stages of the learning cycle digital technologies may provide other advantages:

- allowing for practice, review, and skill development, obtaining instructor feedback, and helping students to articulate further implications of their discoveries; and
- making both formative assessment (reflection on class progress) and student performance assessment more efficient and effective.

In 1987 Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda Gamson, working with AAHE, produced “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education;” a decade later they published a companion article, “Implementing

the Seven Principles: Technology as a Lever," wherein they argue that:

- student motivation and involvement are enhanced by frequent student-faculty contact both in and out of class--communication technologies can augment face-to-face contact;
- learning is often enhanced when it is collaborative rather than isolated and competitive--communication technologies can facilitate virtual study groups and group problem-solving;
- active learning involving talking and writing reflectively about what is learned, relating it to past experience and to daily life is superior to passive learning--apprentice-like or "dry lab" simulation exercises can be created with computers;
- prompt feedback about performance and what is learned enhances learning ---communication technologies can facilitate this and the computer's ability to record, store and analyze data further augment the professor's ability to give feedback;
- high expectations can be set through challenging assignments--digital technologies can make learning more efficient outside of class time by creating realistic homework problems, easy access to important resources, and ways to "publish" finished work; and
- given students' diverse learning strengths and variations in instructional approaches-- these technologies can enhance opportunities for self-paced learning.

Of course to take advantage of the opportunities that technology offers will require time and experimentation. Technology

is not simply a new way to *transmit* knowledge. Since learning is essentially a conversational or dialogical activity, what role can technology play in enhancing this activity and in making it less expensive? Consider the following:

*Teleconferencing* is a discursive media that allows disciplined expertise and discussion to overcome geographic or distance constraints. However, its qualities as a presentation media tend to dominate and make it a one-to-many, one way technique. E-mail conferencing allows us to overcome time as well as space by allowing respondents to act at their convenience and after reflection. Conferencing media facilitates collaboration and argument (at least when instructors can avoid the opportunity to dominate the activity).

*Hypertext* offers nonsequential ways to access data and reconstruct it collaboratively. It may suggest material for reflection but it does not allow for interaction or for intrinsic feedback.

*Computer-based simulations* embody a simplified dynamic relationship extracted from some aspect of the world. They present a constrained type of intrinsic feedback and are partially experiential and controlled by the student. They do not allow for teacher student discussion, however.

*Tutorial programs* attempt to emulate a teacher, they allow for interaction and feedback. They severely constrain responses and allow no way for students and teachers to negotiate instructional goals nor can they insure reflection.

In summary each of these technologies can augment various aspects of the learning process which may increase the quality of learning and improve efficiency, though none are stand-alone substitutes. The promise of digital technologies should prompt us to ask, "how can we use the latest technology to create more effective learning environments and thereby mediate learning in new and exciting ways? □

---

## A Not-So-Modest Proposal for a Center for Instructional Technology

---

Sorel Reisman and Curt Swanson

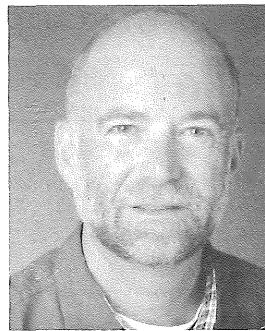
In May 1995, we published a proposal in the *Senate Forum* entitled "A Technology Action Plan for CSUF." The purpose of that proposal was to encourage people to prepare for the use of the fiber optic infrastructure that was then in its planning stages. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of many people and committees that have since come and gone, there has been some progress in the direction of implementing the use of the digital technologies that can be supported on this soon-to-be-available infrastructure. However, it is now time to consider what additional activities would be required to truly capitalize on this major campus investment.

---

*"It is proposed that the Center provide faculty members who wish to use or explore technology in their curricula with assistance in instructional design, evaluation/assessment and technology expertise, as well as the facilities required to realize their projects"*

---

Despite the fact that almost two years have passed since its publication, we invite you to reconsider, as we have done, the viability of our original proposal. When we revisited the proposal, we found that with some modification it is probably more viable today than it was when we first proposed it. We strongly urge the constituencies charged with the task of implementing technology initiatives to give strong consideration to this (revised) proposed model.



*Sorel Reisman is a professor of management science/information systems. He is the secretary of the Academic Senate and serves on the Strategic Plan for Instructional Technology Committee.*



*Curt Swanson is a professor of foreign languages & literatures and associate dean of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences. He is also a member of the Strategic Plan for Instructional Technology Committee.*

### The Model

The current (and original) proposal concerns the creation of a unit called *The Center for Instructional Technology (CIT)*. In this proposal, instructional technology (IT) encompasses instructional design, evaluation of learning/instruction (normative, formative, group, and individualized), assessment methodologies and practices, and the use of software and hardware technologies for instruction.

Among the objectives of the Center would be to provide instructional technology leadership to faculty, students, and staff at CSUF; to offer training to faculty wishing to learn about technology and instruction; to participate in the planning and operationalization of the President's technology initiatives; and to support the creation and ultimately the operation of an academic undergraduate program in Instructional Technology.



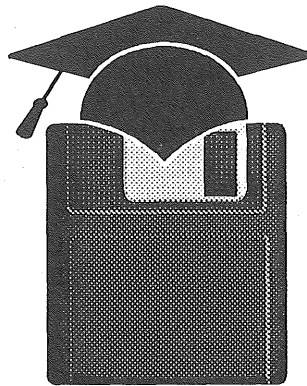
Examples of instructor-initiated questions that the Center would address are:

- What is the best way to use technology X in my course?
- What lessons have been learned by other institutions when they used technology Y for their classes?
- How should I begin to use this technology for my instruction?
- Can you help me prepare or organize my class so that I can use technology?
- Was my use of technology of benefit to my students?
- Can you help me prepare an assessment plan to evaluate my instructional activities?
- Are my students learning better now that I have changed my instructional strategy?
- Can you help me write a grant to explore the use of technology Z in my teaching/research?
- Can you help me learn about personal computers, application software, e-mail, the Internet...?
- What is the best way to use projectors in my teaching?
- How can I learn the new version of the new software everyone is talking about?
- Can someone present a seminar on technology Z that is supposed to revolutionize teaching?
- How can I use the Internet in my class? The World Wide Web? Distance Learning?

**Required Expertise.** It is proposed that the Center provide faculty members who wish to use or explore technology in their curricula with assistance in instructional design, evaluation/assessment, and technology expertise, as well as the facilities required to realize their projects. Media expertise, more commonly known as audio/video (A/V) production, would *not* be a function of the Center. When traditional A/V production would be required, it would be provided by some other CSUF function. However, if faculty should need to learn about new digital multimedia tools and techniques as an essential element of their

projects, that expertise would be available in the Center.

**Facilities.** The Center would house the digital and other resources necessary for Center staff to deliver instruction, provide training, and develop IT materials for faculty projects. This might include networked computer laboratories and equipment separate from other facilities on campus. The creation of this Center should not preclude the installation of other technology-based, instructional-support facilities in CSUF schools. In fact, faculty members who participate in Center projects will be better able to contribute to the IT plans and operations of their own schools as well as to the campus as a whole.



**Grants & Proposals.** In addition to support for full-time staff, the Center would require sufficient funding to allow it to offer three units of release time each semester for a predetermined number of faculty members from each school to become involved in an IT project

at the Center. Each semester or yearly the Center would issue a "call for proposals" to the whole University. Proposals would concern an IT project to be carried out in the IT Center using IT Center staff and facilities. A secondary hoped-for benefit would be that participating faculty members would take back and use their new expertise to assist other members of their schools in their own instructional activities.

**Training.** Each year, the Center would sponsor and organize a campus-wide conference at which faculty working on Center-sponsored projects would report on the status of their work. Additional kinds of activities related to training, seminars, colloquia, and other conferences would also be part of the Center's role.

**RTP Issues.** The Center would offer training courses for all new faculty involved in the RTP process. Such faculty members would attend courses and participate in at least one IT-related activity for their class(es) as part of "training" towards retention and promotion. The Center would work with faculty to produce instructional technology projects that they would utilize in their teaching. These projects would be documented and become part of the faculty member's personnel files.

**Related Technologies.** It is apparent from the general lack of widespread faculty participation that CSUF is currently not taking full advantage of existing instructional technologies such as distance learning or video conferencing. The Center would play an active role in promoting and providing training in instructional and research related activities in these and other technologies.

---

*The Center would work with faculty to produce instructional technology projects that faculty would utilize in their teaching.*

---

### Organization & Funding

We envision three possible organizational scenarios that would enable the creation and operation of a CIT. One scenario places the CIT under the auspices of a more broadly defined Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (IATL). The second alternative requires a redefinition of the responsibilities of the Learning Technology Center (LTC). The third calls simply for the establishment of an entirely new Center for Instructional Technology.

1. **IATL:** As all the constituencies of CSUF continue to address the practical implications of "making learning preeminent," the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (IATL) has been playing an increasingly significant role in promoting and supporting faculty development activities targeted to our

Mission and Goals. Examples include the IATL's leadership role in the Summer Academies, the CSU Technology Institutes, the Lilly Conference, etc. Furthermore, it is likely that in the future the IATL will also play a role in evaluating and awarding Junior/Senior Faculty Development grants.

Given the momentum that already exists in this regard, it is reasonable that the IATL be charged with the responsibility of preparing a plan to create an IT Center. The plan should more specifically address an expanded role for the IATL, its new and proposed relationships to other CSUF functions, its (re)organization, and the resources required to operate it as well as the CIT.

2. **LTC:** Presently, the Learning Technology Center has a variety of responsibilities, some of which include a few of the objectives and activities that we propose be delivered by a new Center for Instructional

Technology. It is reasonably clear, however, that the LTC has not provided faculty with the completeness of IT leadership that we propose for this new Center. In any case, the fact that the LTC already exists places it in a convenient position, one that would allow it to fulfill the objectives described above, provided that its mandate and objectives are reprioritized to address the IT needs of faculty.

In many ways, the LTC has already proven that it can address some of those needs. For example, the LTC actively participates in organizing the Summer Academies that are funded by Extended Education, to which the LTC reports. Also, the LTC's role in assisting full time faculty deliver distance learning classes, which has been admittedly less intense than the role envisioned for a CIT, has demonstrated the potential of the LTC to perform some of the proposed functions of the

new CIT. And finally, the LTC's reporting relationship to Extended Education is consistent with Extended Ed's role, responsibility, and interest in campus-wide IT. This is being recognized by IT's inclusion in the new Committee for Information Technology, the reconstituted Computing Affairs Committee currently under review by the Academic Senate.

Hence, simply as a matter of convenience, the LTC may be in the best position to act as the nucleus for a new CIT. As in the first scenario, for the LTC to take on the responsibilities of the new CIT, it should prepare a plan that describes how it would reengineer itself to meet the objectives for the new CIT described above. This plan might also focus on some of its other responsibilities and discuss how or why those responsibilities could perhaps interact with the plan for a new CIT.

3. CIT: While it may be argued that the two aforementioned functions could offer a reasonable home for a new CIT, it can also be argued that given the importance of the proposed CIT, CSUF might be better served to simply start afresh in creating a new center. A new facility would carry no "old baggage;" it could be positioned to address only faculty and instruction-related matters of current and future interest to the institution and would be better prepared to start delivering the products and services demanded by faculty keen to get on the current technology "bandwagon."

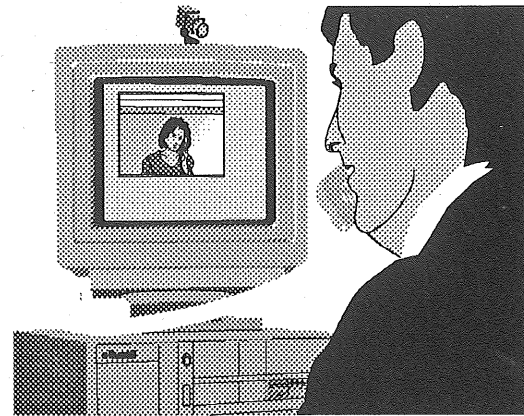
While we are not now prepared to address the detailed funding and organizational issues related to CIT, there are two possible scenarios for this alternative. One is "simply" to create a new center that would address the IT issues described above. A second and perhaps more complicated scenario might be the establishment of a new position of Dean of Instructional Technology, reporting to the VP of Academic Affairs. A position such as this, located within AA, would ensure that faculty needs regarding instructional technology would

be met in a timely and appropriate manner. This latter scenario should be seriously examined, especially in view of the fact that other universities have followed similar paths.

### Action Plan

The following items constitute a summary action plan for the creation of a new Center for Instructional Technology.

- Agree to create a Center for Instructional Technology.
- Determine where the Center will best fit into CSUF organizational structure.
- Prepare an implementation plan in Spring 1997.
- Submit a plan to Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate early Fall 1997.
- Revise and obtain plan approval in late Fall 1997.
- Develop the approved plan during Spring/Summer 1998
- Start up of Center in Fall 1998.



Although an action plan such as this may seem ambitious, faculty at CSUF are in dire need of assistance in capitalizing upon the major technology investments that have been made in our campus infrastructure. We should act sooner rather than later to encourage and provide faculty with every means possible to capitalize on this investment. The creation of a Center for Instructional Technology would go a long way in that direction. □

## THANKS FOR THE BOX. WHAT DOES IT DO?

Vince Buck

The technology report distributed last semester is useful in providing readers with a clearer picture than we had previously of where the campus is heading in the near future especially in terms of hardware. Many of the items in the plan are important in order to insure the quality of the learning experience on this campus into the next century. Some items are even farsighted. What is needed now is an equally detailed parallel plan that *deals with training and support*. In other words we need a plan that tells us how we are going to make it possible for the faculty and staff to be able to get the most out of the machines that are sitting on their desks and how we are going to prepare faculty to use new technology to facilitate learning.

At present, the availability of hardware outstrips the knowledge and ability of most faculty and staff to use it. Most faculty are self-taught which is time-consuming and inefficient, and which takes them away from their central substantive concerns. This is an artificial barrier that keeps many from learning and keeps most from learning more. As a result some faculty do not use computers (even when available), and others make only partial use of the most basic programs.

I have been told that it is common for private industry to budget one third of the cost of hardware and software for training and support. And training pays off. Motorola estimates that it earns \$30 for every dollar it invests in employee training (not just technology training). We do not have this level of support here, but imagine how efficient we might be if we did!



## CURRENT NEEDS

What are our current needs for training and support? First, training should be provided in a *timely* manner. It should be available for those who want to learn at the time when they are ready to learn. A workshop on the Internet is of little value to a faculty member whose immediate needs are in statistical packages. Further, training needs to be in a useful form for each individual. Not everyone can learn efficiently from on-screen tutorials.

Second, support needs to be available in a timely fashion. A quick answer to a problem should be just a phone call away (and it should be clear whom to call). Bigger problems should be resolved with minimal impedance to the work of faculty and staff, with emergency problems handled promptly.

Third, we must determine the needs and desires of the faculty and staff and offer appropriate training and support. Our resources are limited and not everything needs to be done. Training and support should be based on needs and needs cannot be determined without consulting users.

Fourth, we should actively try to anticipate how technology can facilitate the tasks faculty and staff must perform. For instance, providing class lists on disks and providing a grading program that could use these lists would be a great aid, as would having someone available to design templates for simple spreadsheet or data-base applications.

Fifth, we need to reach more faculty. To do so we must meet the needs of both those faculty who are currently motivated to use computers as well as those who are not. Although some faculty may never choose to use computers, I believe that the vast majority will, if useful technology is made accessible and if learning is not unnecessarily time-consuming. Faculty are hired to teach substantive matters and do not want to spend their time arduously learning marginal technical tasks. We should not be needlessly distracted from performing the functions for which we were hired.

To date, involvement in computer technology among faculty has been largely self-selective. We aficionados are not representative of the entire faculty and often do not understand the needs of the larger group. Training and support for the bulk of the faculty must be different from that needed by the self-selected few. It must be presented in a non-threatening manner and it must make using a computer nearly as easy as driving a car. It does not take a mechanic to drive a car and it should not take a technician to use a computer. Computers are a tool, not an end in itself. Some argue that computers are the key to a future where we will be asked (and be able) to do more with less. While I am skeptical, this will only happen with adequate training. And if this argument is valid it would be false economizing not to provide this training.

### SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

**Centralize the *planning* of training.** Several groups on campus provide training and much falls between the cracks. A centralized group would have the responsibility to see that all necessary training is provided. It could view the situation comprehensively, and systematically oversee training for all faculty and staff.

**Contract out for training.** Individuals will have different training needs at different times. We cannot expect our campus staff to be able to meet all of these needs. Contracts with training organizations will allow faculty to get the training they need, when they need it. Support (including release time) should be offered for faculty and staff to receive on or off-campus training (including extended ed, CompUSA and community college classes).

**Integrate training for faculty, staff and students.** Brief non-credit courses could be offered on campus for everyone. Courses could be taught by graduate or undergraduate students from appropriate majors.

**Centralize support.** Support is needed on a timely, even emergency basis. To take advantage of economies of scale and to more efficiently coordinate this effort, this function should be centralized. At the same time technicians might be

responsible for--and be familiar with--specific departments or subsets of machines.

**Make faculty aware of available technology.** Faculty cannot make use of new programs if they do not know that they exist. A continual effort should be made to keep faculty informed of new developments.

**Develop a strategy to reach all faculty.** If most of the faculty are to use computers for more than the simplest tasks a new approach must be developed that is not highly technical, threatening or time consuming. It must provide individuals who are technically inept with the necessary support so that they can use their equipment without taking excessive time from their primary tasks. Since technophiles often have difficulty understanding the needs of the less able, developing this strategy should involve other interested faculty.

**Develop software applications.** Many faculty have administrative duties (such as keeping track of students, alumni, or interns) that could be eased by simple software applications. A staff person could be assigned to determine what widely performed tasks could be handled by software applications, and provide these applications to ease faculty workloads. This would be much more useful than having faculty learn complex programs when they have only simple tasks to perform.

In short, I am suggesting that most faculty will make effective use of computers only when the technology is made accessible. It is in the University's best interest to provide that accessibility.

POSTSCRIPT: Since I first wrote this piece there have been some initial steps taken to address the concerns I have voiced. Vice-President Hagen has brought in a consultant to identify training needs. Vice-President Tetreault and President Gordon have each formed new groups to look into technology-related matters. A job description is being written for a new Chief Technology Information Officer. Mike Parker has broadened the consultation process. These are a promising start on a long journey into previously uncharted territory. No doubt more will have happened by the time this is published. □

---

## Cornerstones: A Wake Up Call

---

### Mary Kay Tetreault & Vince Buck

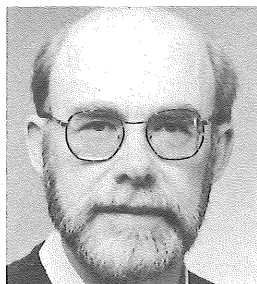
Those of us who are veterans in the CSU system know that numerous projects come and go and their impact on faculty life is often remote. But *the Cornerstones Project*, a long-range planning initiative aimed at guiding the CSU into the next century, is and will be different. The final product will certainly have an impact on faculty, the CSU, and the way we do our work in the next decade. Fortunately there will be opportunities for faculty input that will affect the final product.

The Cornerstones Project is a system-wide project that stems in part from an invitation to the CSU from the Association of Governing Boards and the Pew Foundation. As outlined by the CSU Board of Trustees, May 1996 agenda, Cornerstones, as the name implies, is organized around four key areas:

- *the meaning of the baccalaureate degree* in the CSU in the next century, in particular, what graduates of the institution will be expected to know;
- *an enrollment and financing plan* for the institution to allow it to meet its historic commitment to access and quality;
- the means by which the system will hold itself *accountable*, including performance oriented measures of goals and outcomes that will guide relations between campuses and the system, and the system and the state; and
- the shape and content of *post-baccalaureate education* in the CSU, both in academic and professional degree programs and in new areas of emerging need for high quality post-bac continuing education.



*May Kay Tetreault is a professor of secondary education and vice-president for academic affairs. She is a member of Task Force One of the Cornerstones Project.*



*Vince Buck is a professor of political science and the chair of the Academic Senate. He is a member of the CSU Statewide Academic Senate and serves on its Faculty Affairs Committee.*

One does not have to read between the lines to see that the potential impact of this can be far-reaching. And it will be. In the view of many on the Statewide Academic Senate, it seems clear that the Chancellor expects to have a major impact on higher education, not only in California but throughout the nation, and this is one of the major vehicles to

---

*“...the Cornerstones Project, a long-range planning initiative aimed at guiding the CSU into the next century...will certainly have an impact on faculty, the CSU and the way we do our work in the next decade.”*

---

accomplish that purpose. He has invested too much of the system's resources in this process not to expect important results.

The Cornerstones group is composed of twenty four individuals including trustees, faculty, presidents, Chancellor's Office senior management, and students. The work is divided between four work groups that correspond to the four areas noted above. The titles and chairs of each task force are:

- **Task Force 1, Learning for the 21st Century:** Jim Highsmith, Chair, CSU Academic Senate



- **Task Force 2, Meeting the Enrollment and Resource Challenge:** Molly Broad, Senior Vice Chancellor
- **Task Force 3, Institutional Integrity, Performance and Accountability:** Bernard Goldstein, Faculty Trustee
- **Task Force 4, The CSU and Economy: The need for Post-Baccalaureate and Continuing Education:** Stephen Weber, President, San Diego State University

These groups have been meeting since the summer. In addition, the CSU Senate has spent much of its time this fall discussing the "Future of the Baccalaureate" in order to have a major impact on Task Force 1.

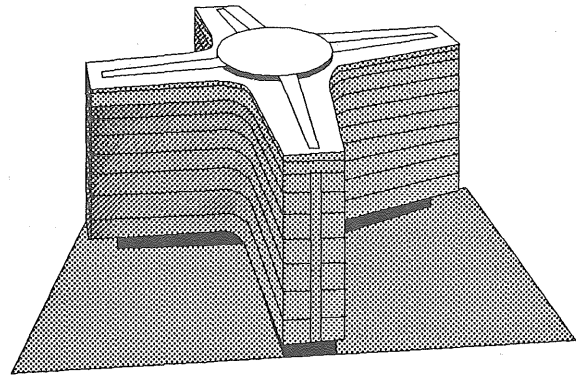
In February the CSU Academic Senate is holding an academic retreat in Monterey where draft reports from the task forces will be discussed. Twenty seven individuals from this campus will attend, including 20 faculty funded by the Chancellor's Office. By the end of March a draft report will be available for campus discussion. Shortly following that there will be regional meetings to solicit further input. The closest one will be at Cal State Long Beach on May 14. There will also be meetings at Northridge (April 28) and San Diego (April 9). A final report will be presented to the Trustees at their September meeting.

Much of the above is about procedure, but it is important to know what is happening, where it is happening, and how quickly. Without this information, faculty input will be difficult.

The range of substance is daunting. The following are just a few representative issues:

- What are the most relevant, effective, constructive and affordable forms of assessing learning? Are there better ways of calculating units of learning than the current system that links academic credit to hours of classroom attendance? (Task Force 1)

- How might the CSU set about defining and measuring learning productivity? Are there means by which CSU might seek to increase learning productivity without hurting either access to or the quality of its programs? How might learning productivity be increased and how might savings from such increases be distinguished from other forms of cost cutting? (Task Force 2)



- What measures of student learning outcomes and talent development are available, and how might they be used either to supplement or substitute for other measures of institutional effectiveness? (Task Force 3)
- What forms of professional development will enable faculty to be more responsive to new programmatic and organizational needs? (Task Force 4)

These are only some of the items up for discussion in the Cornerstones Project. Even the casual observer will recognize that these are part of a larger national conversation. The Chancellor does not expect the CSU to be left out of that conversation; indeed, he would like it to be in the forefront, not only of the conversation, but in action as well.

For example, Task Force One, Learning for the 21st Century, has proposed several principles that recognize that students are the center of the academic enterprise. Emerging principles include:

- being explicit about what a graduate is expected to know and assuring that graduates possess breadth and depth of knowledge and skills together with the development of sound personal values;
- awarding the baccalaureate primarily on the basis of demonstrated learning rather than on the mere accumulation of course credits;
- shaping the curriculum, student support services, and academic programs to serve better the diverse needs of our students without compromising the high standards of students' performance needed for success;
- expecting students to be active partners in the learning process and providing opportunities for active learning throughout the curriculum;
- meeting the needs for undergraduate education through increasing outreach efforts and transfer, retention, and graduation rates, and providing students a variety of pathways that may reduce the time needed to complete degrees.

Discussions are just beginning in Task Force One about possible changes in faculty roles and rewards. Several scenarios were developed to help us better think about how the quality of the work life of faculty could be improved by the proposed re-design of undergraduate education. One scenario has an associate professor of biochemistry teaching a popular biochemistry course by interactive video to 500 students, and meeting for three, one hour sessions a week with the group and spending time preparing her lectures, answering students' e-mail, and supervising those in her lab, which include M.S. candidates, undergraduates, and a high school "apprentice," which results in a number of joint student/faculty publications. With the exception of the interactive video course and the reduced number of teaching hours, this scenario sounds quite similar to what

many our colleagues in the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry are already doing. In fact, it can be claimed that they have gone beyond this scenario with the use of "post-docs" and in Pat Wegner's rethinking of his teaching of Introductory Chemistry.

Another scenario is a departmental one in which its members adopt a policy of calculating FTES based on an assessment of learning rather than by enrollment in courses. The major would still require 45 units and there are existing distribution requirements to be satisfied but students are now much more free to devise (in collaboration with their

learning team) efficient and effective ways to meet these requirements. With the retirement of several colleagues, the department's chair and his colleagues use some of the vacated

---

*"Several scenarios were developed to help us think about how the quality of the work life of faculty could be improved by the proposed re-design of undergraduate education."*

---

positions, plus some new money that comes with an increasing FTES target, to hire staff with expertise in curriculum design, assessment, and instructional technology. They also work closely with a librarian who is assigned on a half-time basis to assist them. These learning teams meet individually with new majors and assess each at the time of entry into the major to determine existing strengths and weaknesses. They then devise individualized work plans under which each student has a specified pathway through the major. These pathways include formal instruction in some instances, but the overarching emphasis is on creating learning outcomes that can reliably be assessed. The fundamental change is the department's formal recognition that students learn in various ways, only one of which involves direct faculty instruction.

The Chancellor has indicated that all decisions are yet to be made. Based on what we have observed, several areas are important for faculty consideration. One is the emphasis on preparing students for careers (something which students on the committee argue for) and the need to keep the

value of liberal learning, not just career preparation, as part of our vision. A second is the importance of keeping our dual mission of teaching and research as a central part of the discussion. A third is insuring that faculty members' perspectives on how to shape our work be heard so that any plans reflect our educational values and contribute to faculty vitality along the entire continuum of faculty professional life.

The Chancellor has indicated that he has certain expectations. He clearly wants some compact on student fees and aid and also expects goals on cost containment, including how we approach faculty workload. Sensitive to public sentiment he wants to be able to respond to those calling for more accountability and standards. The Cornerstones'

---

*"The Chancellor has indicated that he has certain expectations...he clearly wants some compact on student fees and aid. He also expects some goals on cost containment, including how we approach faculty workload...[and] he wants to be able to have a response for those who call for more accountability and standards."*

---

participants may develop the response, but he expects one that goes beyond words.

Important changes will come out of this effort. Most are open at least to some modification by faculty input so you need to be informed and ready to respond. Whenever you hear the "Cornerstone Project," pay attention. Your future professional well being may depend on it.

There are two ways to get more information at this point. There is a web page for those who have access to the Internet. The address is: <http://www.co.calstate.edu/aa/cornerstones>. In addition, or if you are not able to get information that way, the Academic Senate has a variety of background documents. Senators can also tell you

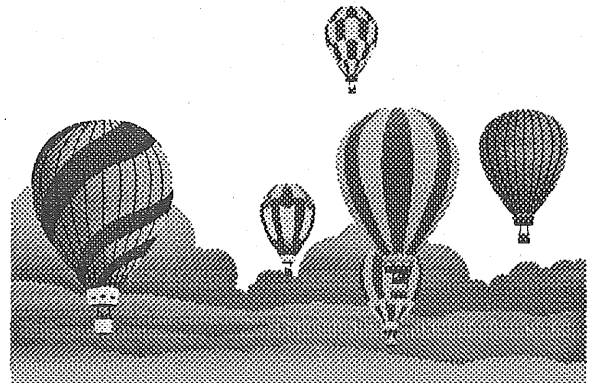
about the Monterey Conference, and after the conference there will be campus events to discuss the proposed draft. The Senate will get the information out and provide means to have an input. But the effectiveness of this depends on your participation.

National pressure for change in higher education will affect how we carry out our responsibilities in the future. We can channel those changes and have some say in how they are implemented in our system and on our campus, but only if we pay attention and are involved. We can do it for ourselves...or others will do it to us. □

---

**For More Information on  
Cornerstones contact:  
[http://www.co.calstate.edu  
/aa/cornerstones](http://www.co.calstate.edu/aa/cornerstones)**

---



❖ *Notes from the Senate Chair*

## The Joy of Committees

Vince Buck

I do not want to risk being accused of never seeing a committee that I did not like, but I want to make the unpopular case that committee work can be very rewarding, even fun. (I also think that taxes should be raised, that not all mothers are great people, and that apple pie is overrated.) In 1968, Hubert Humphry spoke of the joy of politics. He was laughed at (this was after all 1968) but there was a lot of truth in what he said (politics is about community and living together, and a lot of people go into it because they enjoy working with others for common goals). If I speak of the joy of committee service, not everyone will take me seriously, but I am.

My case for committees is that this is the best way to get to meet people outside your department, make friends and help improve your community. I grew up on the edge of a small village. I like to know who I work and live with. I like to join with others to achieve common goals. I like to feel that I can have some influence on my environment. I like to believe that I have helped make this University a better place. I feel an obligation to be involved, and I feel much better when I am.

Most faculty committees that I have served on (and some years I have been on more than a dozen) have done meaningful work and few have been overburdened. Certainly time spent on committees takes away from time that could be spent on other activities. But it is less isolated than teaching or research. It keeps you in touch with your local community and profession and provides a real sense of what our local enterprise is about. I would guess that faculty who are not involved in university-wide committees or task forces are considerably less satisfied with their job and work

environment than those that are. If you doubt this, find out for yourself. Volunteer for a committee.

Shortly the Senate will send out its annual survey asking who is interested in serving on committees. (You do not have to be tenured to serve. Indeed your socialization to the University will be much quicker if you are involved in activities outside your department.) Please respond to the survey. This survey is the principal tool--along with our firsthand knowledge--that we (the Senate Executive Committee) have in making assignments. If you have any questions about what a given committee does or how much it does, call me. We try to make sure that all committees have meaningful work to do, and not too much of it. □

❖❖ *The Senate Forum* ❖❖

Submit your 1000-2000 word essay in WordPerfect by March 7, 1997

Contact: Albert Flores, editor

Department of Philosophy, EC482

(714) 773-2459 or FAX (714) 773-3306

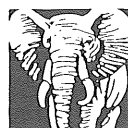
[aflores@fullerton.edu](mailto:aflores@fullerton.edu)

Next issue: April, 1997

Contact the Academic Senate Web page!

at

<http://senate.fullerton.edu/index.htm>



C A L S T A T E  
FULLERTON