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The Senate Forum

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Where Do We Hope to Be in 2010?

"A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step."

The Way of Lao-tzu 64

Jane V. Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate

At the start of this academic year, President Gordon challenged the campus community to strive toward the goal of becoming, over the next decade or so, "the best public comprehensive university in the country." After the first wave of skepticism dissipated, conversations have turned toward how we might begin to tackle this ambitious effort.

Perhaps we have worked so hard to maintain quality and just to survive over much of the last decade that our sights are not set as high as they were in earlier years. No one sets out toward the goal of mediocrity. But over time, with resource challenges and growing student needs, it is easy to forget that the best is what we all set out to be at the start of our academic careers, and "good" (or even "good enough") begins to look attractive. Across the campus there is now increasing recognition that seeking to become the best is in itself worthwhile, independent of whether in the year 2010 *U.S. News and World Report* ranks us as number one. If each unit, program, or individual simply tries to be the best at what they do, the entire institution moves ahead. Viewed from the grassroots level the task then seems less daunting, more exciting, and more possible. Viewed from the top, centers of excellence emerge, become more visible, and attract more resources.

How do we as a faculty rise to this challenge? Over the past year we have set in place new ways of doing business that were designed to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning, scholarship, and creative activities. Perhaps our first collective tasks are to ensure that we



implement the GE Learning Goals and UPS 210 (Faculty Personnel Policy and Procedures) revisions with an eye to excellence, rather than compliance, and that we make full use of the new Faculty Development Center.

As individuals, we might engage in some introspection (not often a top priority in the fray of teaching, scholarship, committee work, and other professional obligations) and think about where we are, where we set out to be, and where we would now like to be. If our joint and several preference is to be best, each of us could begin by considering what we could do better. That might mean undertaking a different combination of obligations, allowing us to focus effort where we can each make the greatest contribution. It might mean seeking support to develop a new program or degree, to integrate students into research programs, to explore a new path in scholarship or creative endeavors, or to advise or evaluate students in a new way. It might lead to a re-envisioning of entire course sequences, the exploration of new fields, or who knows what? The end result could also be satisfaction with where we are.

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Are we satisfied? I don't think so. What I hear suggests a complex itchiness - the desire to shake off a long era of hanging on, working harder and feeling worn out, the allure of innovation in curricula and new faculty opportunities, and an undercurrent of concern that, in the end, we will not have the autonomy to determine and pursue what we can do best. So, perhaps we are enticed by the prospect of pursuing "bestness", but also wary that forging new paths might feel a lot like bushwhacking (through a mosquito-infested bog) and divert resources from already under-supported efforts.

If we are not satisfied, then what? We can immediately do a better job of spotlighting what we do exceptionally well - those things at which we are already best, or nearly so. We can focus implementation of the GE Learning Goals and the new RTP process (including Faculty Development Plans) toward excellence. We can make good use of the resources of the Faculty Development Center to efficiently learn how to make effective use of new learning tools. Finally, we can all think seriously about where we want to go together and how we might each contribute to getting there.

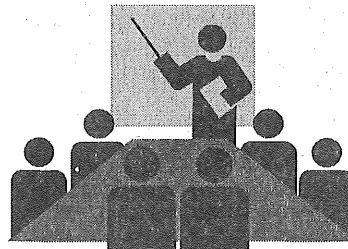
In some ways this is not an ideal time to accept the challenge. A new contract that is fair to faculty is woefully overdue (and as of this writing, we do not have one). The CSU is asking us to undertake new efforts with no clear commitment from the state of the resources necessary to carry them out. Enrollment is at a record high on our campus and rising. At the same time, if we do not take up this challenge, where will we be in ten years, and how will we have gotten there? As a faculty, this is the question we face. If we want to decide where to go and how to get there, accepting the challenge of seeking to become the "best public comprehensive university in the country" is a pretty good starting point. ■

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 and other contributions to the Academic Senate Office, MH-143

**Oh, no! Not another committee request.
Or, get thee behind me Satan.**

Jane Hall, Academic Senate Chair



There are the usual reasons - many given in the "testimonials" below - why serving on a Senate committee is worthwhile. There is the more fundamental fact that in this era of changing public perceptions and expectations of higher education in general, and especially state-funded universities, the work of the Academic Senate and its committees is critical to the quality of education, and also to the very nature of faculty roles and the quality of faculty life.

Consider that faculty (by state law and CSU policy) have an explicit right and responsibility to engage in a collegial way in the determination of professional and educational policy in the university. Everything from course content to standards and procedures for faculty retention, tenure and promotion (and now, merit pay) is considered by one or more Senate committees before our Academic Senate forwards recommendations to President Gordon for his approval.

As we address Cornerstones implementation, the revision and reinvigoration of teacher education (and teacher "retro-fit"), possible year-round state-funded classes, the expansion of distance learning, and higher expectations for "accountability", not to mention a rapidly growing and diverse student body, what will our lives be like - and what will the quality of education be - absent our continued serious and committed engagement in these issues?

When yet another piece of paper lands in your mailbox (or in a heap, unsorted on a table in your department's mailroom) asking on what committee(s) you might want to serve, please bear in mind that the faculty's voice is heard in no small measure through the routine activities of the stand-

ing and general committees of the Academic Senate and on search committees (and other special purpose committees) assembled with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Does committee service take time? Indisputably. Does it take time away from other worthwhile endeavors (scholarship, your kids, your significant other, a deep breath)? Of course. But how else will you get to really know colleagues outside of your department and school, or engage in the (admittedly) hard work of shaping the nature of learning into the next century? When you consider the not inconsiderable time cost of service, also consider its pay-offs, to you and to institution and learning environments we all hope to improve.

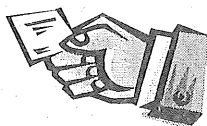
Not all committees are represented below. Give a shout if you are unsure what might be your bet "fit", or if you just want more information about the committees that you think interest you. (jhall@fullerton.edu)

Sandy Sutphen, Professor of Political Science and Executive Committee Liaison to the Elections and Faculty Affairs Committees

As a member of the Senate's Executive Committee, this year I am the liaison to two committees that could not be more different from one another: the Elections Committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee. I recommend both of them for new (or seasoned) faculty looking for an opportunity to engage in university service.

The Elections Committee

I love serving on the Elections Committee for two reasons: it doesn't meet very often and when it does, it engages in undisputedly important work. Unlike many Senate committees, the Elections Committee rarely tackles important philosophical questions, and therefore it almost never sits around a table for hours on end in mind-numbing discussions of issues that have no consensual solution. We do sit around a table for hours but we are engaged in good, honest, physical labor, stuffing ballots and small envelopes into large and then larger envelopes, color-coding as we go. These are lovely times. We meet colleagues whom we may or may not have met before. Given the intellectually undemanding task before us, we share stories and insights and speculations. We learn things about our sister departments we never knew. We bond. It's



fun. When we meet again to count the ballots, we share the edge-of-our-seats thrill of watching the election results unfold. Yeah, I know; most of the elections are uncontested. But, sometimes. . .

This is not to say that the elections committee never addresses important issues. We advise on the composition of the Senate electorate, and we are almost the only committee with a documented history of scandal. (Ask one of the old timers!)

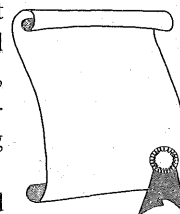
The Faculty Affairs Committee

Practically the polar opposite of the Elections Committee, the Faculty Affairs Committee is one of the "big" committees of the Senate. Like Members of Congress who vie for seats on the more significant legislative committees, such as Appropriations, or Foreign Relations, or Budget or Finance, faculty who serve on the Faculty Affairs Committee must be prepared to confront major issues. Revisions of the personnel document and retention, promotion and tenure procedures; creation of rules for awarding (so-called) merit pay; the nature of self-governance; disciplinary procedures--all are areas that come under the auspices of this committee. Our union president in an *ex officio* member, as is the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. This year the committee has been meeting twice a month for an hour or an hour and a half, so membership involves a significant commitment of time. But the issues are frequently those that concern the very heart of our academic existence, and the opportunity to participate in significant policy making is rewarding. For newer faculty members, this committee will be instructive and the committee of course will benefit from hearing from those most affected by our personnel procedures.

John Olmsted, Chair of the Chemistry Department, and Executive Committee Liaison to the Honors Board and the Graduate Education Committee

University Honors Board

These are exciting times for the University Honors Board, which oversees the University Honors Program. President Gordon has requested an expanded honors program to attract larger numbers of highly talented students to Fullerton. In response, this year's Honors Board is re-designing the program and revising the policy statement accordingly. The new program "is designed uniquely for students who are more



motivated, socially aware, and academically experienced than the average CSUF undergraduate." While still under development, the expanded program is proposed to include Honor Seminars and co-curricular activities especially designed for Honors Students. A cohort of Freshman Honors Students is expected to enter the new program in the fall, and the Honors Board will have the responsibility for developing, overseeing and modifying the expanded program. This will include interacting with the students, designing and approving Honors seminars, and recommending administrative procedures to the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

What the Graduate Education Committee Does

The Graduate Education Committee is responsible for overseeing the various graduate programs offered by the campus. The agenda for Spring 1999 provides an excellent overview of the scope of this responsibility. The agenda contains curricular requests, policy reviews, and student-related items. In the curricular realm, there are eight new course proposals for 500-level courses in departments that already offer masters' programs; proposals for a new MS degree, a new option for an existing MA degree, an international agreement for a largely off-campus MBA degree, and a change of an MA degree to an MS degree; and a proposal from a student to do an interdisciplinary MA degree. Policies to be reviewed include \pm grading for graduate students, curriculum guidelines and procedures, and policies concerning probation/disqualification, amount of 500-level coursework required, and the graduate writing requirement. Student-centered agenda items address the role of graduate students as classroom teachers, student responses to exit questionnaires about the administration of graduate programs, and graduate advisers' perspectives about the policies and procedures that cause the most problems. Looking ahead, we can anticipate that the Graduate Education committee will be heavily involved in the implementation of the Cornerstones recommendation for development of joint doctoral programs.

James Woodward, Professor of History and Chair of the Planning, Resource and Budget Committee

CSUF has had a committee tasked to examine priorities and the use of resources for its entire history. Having been a member of these committees



from time to time over the past twenty-five years, I have seen them work with varying levels of effectiveness. In the past, the chief problem faced by these committees has been access to information of sufficient completeness and detail to make informed advice possible. Only when times were tough – and the decisions needed likewise – was much information forthcoming. When times were good (as they once were long ago), however, some of those spending the money were less enthusiastic about sharing information. Concerns about the possibility of parochialism on the part of some Committee members seem to have been the chief motivation for the reticence in information sharing. Since how resources are allocated is the tangible implementation of the policies and priorities of any institution, this was a serious matter in the business of collegial governance.

I am pleased to say that in the past several years the effectiveness of this committee has improved dramatically, largely as a result of two things: First, owing to wise administrative decisions, access to complete appropriate information is now provided to members of the Committee as a matter of course. Parochialism has not emerged as a serious problem. And second, the unfortunate division of the Priorities Committee of many years ago into separate Budget and Long Range Planning Committees has been rectified. Now a single committee looks at planning, priorities, and budget issues for the entire University.

The activities of the PRC in the past few years have jelled. In the fall the Committee engages in discussions with the President and Vice Presidents that center on how the Committee resource recommendations of the previous year were actually implemented, and where planning and resource issues may arise in the next several years. In the spring, as budget materials become available, the Committee reviews the detailed divisional budget proposals and formulates its recommendations to the President and the Academic Senate. Since proposed spending always exceeds the funds available, this task consists chiefly of examining and paring down the requests from each division and suggesting priorities for unfunded projects, should new money become available. The openness and collegiality of conversations attendant to this process in the last year or two has made it especially effective and worthwhile.

The PRC has other assigned tasks, notably, the review of resource issues related to degree and program change and creation proposals. Usually, these are fairly thoroughly thought through before they reach the Committee, and they can be dealt with as they arise without much ado. When difficult or complicated proposals come forward, subcommittees are formed to investigate potential problems before they are taken up by the full Committee.

Should you volunteer to serve on the PRC? The time commitment entailed by membership is substantial. Friday noons seem to be the only time the many members of this Committee can agree to meet, and much of the year meetings occur weekly. But this is the committee that has the greatest and most direct influence on how resources are actually allocated. So your contributions are likely to have a real and often immediate impact.

Kathleen Koser, Professor of Kinesiology and Health and Chair of the Extended Education Committee.

Extended Education is charged with offering a wide variety of programs meeting educational goals of individuals who work and reside in Orange County. These goals include professional development, upgrading of skills, and fulfillment of requirements for licensure and certification as well as those for renewal, personal enrichment, preparation for career changes, and acceleration of progress toward completion of degree requirements. Extended Education responds to new and different needs within a changing society by promoting and utilizing the diverse expertise of the academic community to provide programs compatible with the educational and professional needs of our service area. Through self-support programs Extended Education provides a highly diversified set of educational experiences in response to unique regional needs. In doing so, Extended Education assists the University to fulfill its mission.

The specific functions of the Extended Education Committee are as follows:

- a. to formulate, review, and recommend policies and criteria regarding Extended Education programs, activities, and noncredit offerings;
- b. to review and evaluate all proposals for Extended Education programs, activities, and noncredit offerings based upon criteria and procedures as specified by University policies;

- c. To act as an advisory board to the Dean of University Extended Education.

This year the Extended Education Committee will review all 1998-99 Extended Education proposals for credit and noncredit offerings and certificate programs. In addition a primary goal for the 1998-99 committee will be to finish reviewing and proposing revisions to all Extended Education related UPS documents and forwarding them the Senate for consideration.

Lee Gilbert, Professor of Foreign Languages - International Education Committee

The Academic Senate's International Education Committee works in collaboration with the university community to encourage the internationalization of the curriculum and to nurture the development of a variety of international activities of both an academic as well as a cultural nature. Specifically, the Committee serves as an advisory body to the university community on matters relating to international education in that it reviews and recommends policies, procedures and guidelines relating to the international activities of the university, including, but not limited to, proposals for linkage agreements with foreign universities (the Fudan exchange is one example), the selection of students applying to participate in the CSU system-wide International Programs, faculty development activities involving participation in international activities, travel-study courses proposed by individual faculty or departments, and the organization and administration of international education at the university, e.g. the oversight of foreign visa students matriculated at the University.

Keith Boyum, Chair of the Division of Political Science and Criminal Justice and Chair of the GE Committee

The General Education Committee is to the G.E. program as a department faculty is to its major. The Committee oversees the program, reviews proposed modifications, and recommends needed changes to the Senate and the President. Specifically, the Committee judges courses newly proposed for G.E. for their suitability and conformance to the program's learning goals, and each year reviews roughly 20% of the courses already approved for the G.E. program. The campus also looks to the G.E. Committee, working with the Associate Vice Presi-

dent, Academic Programs, to continue momentum for innovation and reform by such happy duties as awarding grants to faculty for innovative work on G.E. curriculum.

Curtis Swanson, Associate Dean of H&SS and Chair of the Information Technology Committee

The Information Technology Committee (ITC) was called the Computing Affairs Committee until 1997. The name change also reflects a fundamental change in emphasis. The mandate of the new committee focuses attention on how information in the broadest sense impacts student learning, instruction and research, as well as campus administrative operations. Technical hardware and networking questions are less important to the ITC than issues such as using technology to enhance student learning and access to information, to facilitate electronic communication among students and instructors, and to integrate the information revolution as embodied by the Worldwide Web into the curriculum in innovative ways. Recently the ITC has been involved in formulating a new Web policy for the campus and in developing a new information competency standard for incoming students.

Loydene Keith, Dean of Student Services and Chair of the Student Academic Life Committee

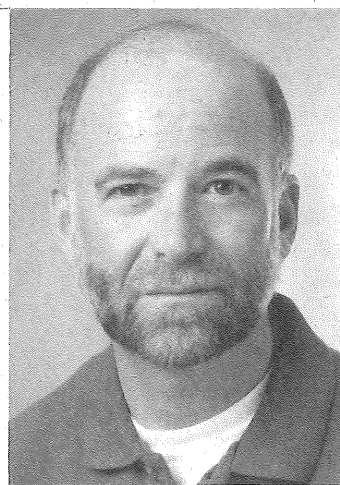
The Student Academic Life Committee is generally interested in the areas of policies, procedures and practices that contribute to and affect the development of students beyond the classroom experience. The committee is composed of faculty, staff and administrators who work with students, and several student representatives. The committee's agenda is made up of items referred by Academic Senate or the Executive Committee, and items brought by committee members. Sometimes we are asked to review and comment on a document or proposed policy on some campus issue.

Agenda items are wide-ranging at our monthly meetings. For example we have been asked to develop criteria for determining a scholarship winner, have looked at the university's implementation of the student privacy regulations, endorsed mandatory academic advisement, and reviewed some concerns about posting on campus. We concentrate on the university environment from a student's perspective and try to highlight areas that are identified as problematic for students and recommend solutions that are pro-active. ■

**For Everything, There is a Season, or,
Reaching Points of No Re-Tern**
(Or the never-ending Perils of Harriet)

Sorel Reisman, Professor of Management Science and Information Systems and Denizen of the Faculty Development Center

Do you remember Harriet? So many people have asked me, what ever happened to her. After all, she was sturdy enough to survive her dreadful fall to the deck of that boat, having endured so many hardships achieving tenure at CSUF. And then there was that terrible



episode in the Galapagos where she completely embarrassed her tour guide by unstoning those terns. And in the rockslide that ensued, in which she fell bleeding to the earth, she was fortunately saved by the expeditious application of a co-expeditionist's well-placed tourniquet. But despite all that, after years of therapy, our friend Professor Harriet landed soundly on her feet, turning her tern debacle into an enormously successful academic and public success. Here's how it happened.

As part of her therapy, Harriet's paternalistic therapist advised her to write up her life-turning experience and apply for a summer position as a senior intern with the International Ornithological Association. After all, as an expert in the tern species, could there be a more suitable position? Harriet's summer internship turned into a life alternating experience. She was invited to speak to countless numbers of groups regarding her past and her knowledge of these arcane birds. Her public presentation skills improved so much that she began to give serious consideration to leaving academia and to turn herself into a tern consultant. But this was not a decision to be taken lightly. Once reaching that cornerstone, there would be no turning back.

At the end of the summer, driving a brand new Saturn, Harriet returned to CSUF, completely conflicted about the recent turn of events. As she prepared for her classes, the call of the non-

academic world was constantly on her mind. She attended department meetings with only a modicum of attention, all the time feeling like an academic turncoat. The meetings played out like academic tournaments. Her feelings of ambivalence about department activities were duly noted by many of her colleagues who were fed up with her idiosyncratic behavior. Fortunately for her state of mind, she in turn, responded to their obvious disdain for her outside activities by replying to a call for papers that really turned her on. The Orange County Tern Society was looking for people to participate in a public roundtable on the mating habits of terns. Certain that she could turn the tables on her colleagues' opinions about her, opinions that heretofore had prevented her from getting a decent merit pay increase, Harriet called the conference organizer and offered to host some of the sessions at CSUF. She was sure that by doing this, she could turn her tern debacle into a public relations turnaround that would return huge benefits to CSUF. In fact, she even offered to be the keynote speaker at the conference.

The conference was a huge success. Harriet's fame had spread far and wide. With the opening of the conference, tern aficionados flocked through the turn-styles to hear her discourse on how terns were turning local lakes and rivers into irreversibly algae-filled cisterns, from which there could be no return. Her speech received widespread coverage on CSPAN and the Turner networks. CSUF was featured across the country as the host site for the conference. This had turned into a tremendous public relations success for CSUF. But there was huge consternation in Harriet's department. While a few of her colleagues were proud of her success and the accolades she had brought to CSUF, a majority turned against her, giving her annual Faculty Activity Report a very low rating, and demanding that she take a leave of absence until a state of quiescence returned to the campus. Harriet considered her alternatives and reached a point of no return.

She decided to return once again to the Faculty Development Center (did you think I would miss an opportunity to plug the FDC?) to find refuge in the In-tern-et! Fortunately, and not surprisingly, the FDC's turnkey World Wide Web-based instructional materials provided Harriet with the solution to her quandary. After a seemingly interminable time searching the Web, - after all, she was determined

that nothing would deter her - Harriet found what she had been searching for, - a group expedition to a remote area of the world. A place where few would know her, a place where she could start again, a place where she could discard the dropping those damned terns had left on her.

This time, Harriet's interest focussed on a group of anthropologists seeking to discover the lost secrets of the Speckled Indigenous - a group of natives with very strange patterns of dotted facial tattoos that were so intricate that they almost begged to be connected.

That night, Harriet pondered her (once again) alternatives, and over a dinner of turnip stew, apple turnovers, and a fantastic bottle of Sauterne, made up her mind. The very next morning she booked the next available expedition to the land of the Speckled Indigenous and within 3 months - just one week before her scheduled final exam (shame, shame) she was on her way.

Soon after arriving on the continent, Harriet found herself marching, with her fellow expedition members, through tropical rain forest, visiting numerous native villages, but none with inhabitants bearing those unusual dotted facial tattoos. After weeks of hiking deeper and deeper into the jungle, the expedition finally came upon a village of facially tattooed villagers, all of whom also had incredibly unusual eyes.

Whenever a member of the expedition approached a villager to learn more about their tattoos, the villager would stare at the questioner so ferociously that it seemed to the interrogator that the villager was in fact cross-eyed. This behavior so intrigued the expedition members that they lay awake at night wondering whether or not the villagers were aware of their strange behavior. After all, the expedition observed, none of the villagers exhibited any other behavior that indicated that they had visual or perceptual problems. In fact, considering the intricacy of their tattoos, it appeared that the natives had eyesight that was more acute than average.

Unable to resolve the conundrum, the expedition moved on deeper into the rain forest. One day, after a sudden downpour, the leader called an abrupt halt, having found herself standing on the



edge of a deep abyss. At the bottom of the crevasse, hidden in the shadows of the rain-induced fog, was an entrance to a cave. The group cautiously made its way down towards it. The leader called for a (sorry, but I have to say it) lantern, and carefully led the

expedition into the cave where, after a few minutes, they came upon a grisly scene, - a well-preserved village of mummified indigenous villagers. However, unlike the natives that the expedition had previously observed, these villagers' faces were not covered with the same intricate patterns of tattoos. Upon close observation, in fact, they discovered that the mummified villagers' *teeth* were covered with those same dotted tattoos. Not only that, but all their bodies had been preserved with their eyes open, and all the eyes were crossed, a definite connection with the villagers they had visited only a few days earlier.

The members of the expedition were fascinated. The links were obvious. Teeth with dots on them. Crossed eyes. Clearly related phenomena. But why were these people's teeth and not their faces tattooed with those intricate dots? In a moment of complete frustration, a moment that Harriet would clearly regret for the rest of her life, a moment that would bring her eternal shame and remorse, Harriet asked the question that was on the mind of every member of the expedition, a question that many would later argue might have been better left unasked, yet a question, without which this article would have no ending.

OK. Here's the question Harriet asked of the members of her expedition, there, in the dark of the cave. She asked, "Do you think those natives tried to put tattoos on their faces, but mistakenly dotted their teeth because they crossed their eyes?" ■

What Are Our Students Prepared for, and How Can We Prepare Them?

JoAnn Byrne, Lecturer in Business Writing

When I was a kid, folks would sit on the porch rocking, and fanning, and complaining: "Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody ever does anything about it." Today, across the country, folks sit everywhere, in all kinds of weather, and constantly complain: "Everybody talks about America's educational system, but nobody ever does anything about it."



Despite

- a nation filled with good intentions, piles of proposals from education pundits,
- passionate pleas from special interest groups,
- plenty of promises from intrepid politicians, and
- a barrage of baloney from bunches of assorted education fixer-uppers,

it's almost guaranteed that those worriers who are complaining about schoolin' today will still be fussin' a long, long time from now.

I'm Irish, so expecting the worst is in my genes. However, my pessimism about our schools is based on my own true-life experiences: I had a far different and infinitely more rewarding educational journey than the E-ticket rides many of our kids are being "taken for" now.

1. I earned an education, long before "getting a degree" became a business and students became customers (who are always right).
2. I grew up when students and parents expected school to be hard.
3. I knew teachers who were convinced students' performances reflected on their own professionalism; therefore, those teachers prepared for class; scrupulously (and honestly) graded papers; and they worked damned hard.
4. I had teachers who never questioned the truth that their task was to properly prepare and send young people into the adult world, confident they *could* make their way through life.

5. Those same teachers expected to be accountable to students, parents, the community (whose hard-earned taxes paid their salaries), and to the future employers of their graduates.
6. Back then, (in most neighborhoods) teachers weren't afraid of students; of parents; and certainly not of frivolous, mean-spirited, and school-budget-busting lawsuits.
7. I'm grateful that—when I was a kid—most of our families and teachers worked to help us develop self-respect, rather than encourage us to wallow in delusional self-esteem.
8. And, oh, how I still recall the joy of my self-respect when I *knew* I **deserved** the high grade that appeared on my assignments or report card!

I know. You're wondering what *my* idealized long-term memories of the state of education in the olden days have to do with my bleak, Celtic forecast for our system's future. Re-read my list. It's obvious. We must hurry and transform teachers to educators once again. They must help young people become true achievers, as they infuse students' fertile minds with meaningful informational riches—not with the nonsensical (but expedient) preposterous-pap-of-the-moment. Boy, do we have a lot of work to do!

Unfortunately, the leadership qualities required to get this most important job done are in very short supply in America today. For starters, it will take great **courage** to fix what's wrong with our schools. Which one of your colleagues, administrators, or elected officials can you commend for outstanding bravery in the arena of education, and then trust with the job of "fixing" it? The leaders and teachers of our educational renaissance must possess a daunting number of strengths:

- ✓ **Honesty;**
- ✓ **Common sense;**
- ✓ **Intellectual integrity;**
- ✓ **Industriousness;**
- ✓ **A burning desire to teach—with the ultimate goal and natural expectation that students will learn, and learning will be meaningful, material, intellectual, and of life-long value;**
- ✓ **A willingness to thumb their noses at special interest groups and uninformed bullies who push educators to accept programs, which are not in the best interest of our students;**
- ✓ **The guts to demand a major overhaul of the tenure system.**

While I'm no longer an expert on the K to 8 grades, I can use a recent controversy—along with my background in Linguistics and Child Develop-

ment—to illustrate and explain why teachers so often experience problems, instead of support.

As California fought the case for-and-against bilingual education, administrators and educators allowed special interest groups and a variety of media-hogs (who got their fifteen minutes of fame) to turn this crucial intellectual issue into political mayhem. No one had guts enough to elevate and move discussion and decision-making to the hallowed halls of informed pedagogy, where both belonged. Rather, the fight stayed in the streets. Did any of the language-development mavens actually believe that the protesting parents had the expertise, or enough facts, to make the final call?

Where were the linguists and child development specialists during the fight? What happened to their professional integrity? Intellectual honesty demanded that they step forward and clearly explain to confused and fearful parents that a child's brain is programmed, by nature, to learn many languages easily until puberty. And better yet, immersion in English at school, combined with reinforcement of their own language at home, can ensure their talented bilingual children of greater successes and rewards in life. That's so very good for kids; why didn't someone spread the truth?

Did the powers-that-be lose their focus in the fracas (as often happens), because they were misguided, trying to save the jobs of fellow teachers, instead of earnestly and honestly protecting the well-being of their young charges, which is what they are paid to do?

We—the diverse multitudes involved in education in the USA—must really do much better if we sincerely want positive changes in the quality of education and in the lives of America's future generations. *If* those changes ever do materialize at the lower grades, it will take many, many years for us to reap any rewards at our institutions of higher learning. In the interest of *our* students, their future employers, and the long-suffering taxpayer, we must make our own changes; and we must begin doing it **now**.

Have courage! *Set high standards and then expect your students to meet them;* refuse to accept completed assignments that exhibit no developing professionalism—or are not university caliber work. If they've gotten into the university the students are supposed to be able to learn and produce the expected course work: Neatly, according to directions, and *on time*. (No excuses.)

Don't rely on re-writes. Allow struggling students to re-write for no more than a "C." Give that re-write an even lower grade if the paper is not **improved** or, as is

often the case, contains even more errors. Students, and way too many instructors, seem to believe in some magical premise that when a failing student rewrites a paper—outside of class—that paper will get a high grade, no matter what. This is one source of grade inflation—and one of the reasons we have students in upper-division college classes who write at a fourth-grade level, but were awarded “A”s and “B”s in previous writing courses. Trust me; bosses don’t hand poor work back and sweetly explain: “Please work on this some more at home and see if you can do a little better, and then I’ll give you a raise.”

Don't ignore cheating. Have students do enough in-class work to actually discern whether or not they are producing those A+ done-at-home papers that they turn in. When a university student is questioned about a discrepancy between in- and out-of-class work, the Prof can be sure to hear the popular mantra: “Oh, I can do a much better job when I’m at home and have more time.” Oh, really? Will they tell that to a boss—during the workday when the office is facing a tight deadline? Besides, a failing student who does take more time might raise a grade slightly. But, we professors must have the courage and common sense to reject the argument that a “D/F” student produced an “A+” paper, just because s/he had more time out-of-class. (However, *somebody* produced it.)

Several years ago, during a demonstration on campus, I heard a young lady shout through her bullhorn, “Everybody in California is entitled to a college degree.” That young lady was wrong. Access, yes—guaranteed diploma, no. *Be brave, and honest, and sensible enough to fail students who don't belong at the university (at least not yet?).* When we allow unprepared graduates to go out into the world with a degree acquired by social promotion or some silly response to political correctness, we diminish the value of the degree, the institution—and we really stick-it to the students themselves (who have an unrealistic understanding of their capabilities), to taxpayers, to the grads’ future employers, and to the alumni, as well.

Finally, *have the guts to demand respect from your students*, including refusing classroom entrance to chronically latecomers. When students arrive late every session because they don’t get off

work until fifteen minutes after class begins, they’d better get another job, or take classes at a more appropriate time. In the real world, chronic tardiness and “attitudes” get an employee fired; preferential treatment in the workplace creates hostility and destroys morale. Guess what? Same thing happens in the classroom, too. Get your students ready for workplace reality now—it’s your job. And it’s possible your students just might wind up liking you a lot more than you might expect.

Be honest, maintain intellectual integrity! We have become a nation so afraid of getting sued, hurting someone’s feelings, or causing trouble, just about no one tells the truth anymore. Teachers who dissemble do their students—and other teachers—a terrible disservice. Along with a hard working, beleaguered, committed, but often frustrated group of friends and colleagues, I teach an advanced business writing course. We find ourselves, all too often, with students who have no idea of basic writing elements. How *do* these students advance to upper division? For years and years, they were given writing grades for “content,” but were not necessarily told they couldn’t spell or punctuate, and hadn’t the foggiest about grammar. (Lots of times, the content wasn’t so hot, either.) I well know that carefully grading and commenting on papers is time-consuming and discouraging; however, the State of California sends us monthly checks for doing just that.

In the workplace, managers will get a good guffaw (A *really* good, loud, roll-on-the floor guffaw!) when they turn back a project because it’s a writing nightmare, and the college-grad employee asks in amazement, “But what about content?” Every instructor who *ever* gives any kind of a writing assignment or test should have the integrity, at least, to comment on each student’s writing-skills level. If no instructor ever tells them there’s more to writing than “content,” students are in for a big shock at some point in their lives. Unfortunately, it usually comes during our advanced business writing class (and must also happen on other upper division writing courses)—but it will definitely hit when they enter the workplace.

Embrace industriousness! There’s no question that, if we want to start turning out scholars we can be proud of, instead of uneducated people who got a degree, *instructors are going to have to work much harder than some of us have in the past.* And we must insist that our students work hard, too. If we’re

not going to let the students slide anymore—we can't slide either. *If there's new technology to learn, we'd better learn it.* Ignoring technology is academically fraudulent; there is hardly a workplace in the nation, including ours, that does not require computer use, or where competency would not improve future opportunities. What excuse can you possibly give to your students, who are getting ready to go into the world of work, when they ask you why you can't (don't or won't) use a computer?

We should keep up with what's new in our fields, not recycling the same-ol', same-ol' material, semester-after-semester. (This, by the way, can make cheating a given, and creates more inflated grades.) Our lectures and assignments should be interesting, stimulating, timely, and relevant. In a perfect world of higher learning, professors would spend six months in the real world every five years, actively working in their discipline. And I don't mean as a glorious guru to the CEO of a company, either. We should work, in the trenches, doing the jobs we're teaching our students to do. Our goal would be to find out what's going on in the workplace **now**, and return to the university, knowing how to better prepare our students to achieve success.

Make a Commitment to exemplary teaching! After all, that's what we are hired and paid to do. If we're industrious, honest, true to intellectual integrity, brave, and we consider teaching a vocation (instead of a sinecure)—we could be the catalysts who will generate the start of change at lower levels.

If universities develop formidable and prestigious reputations, K-to-high schoolteachers and administrators might get the grit to initiate desperately needed changes in their districts and classrooms. If we can all support each other with courage, we can short-circuit special interest groups; reject absurd ideas that politicians (who are *not* educators) want to implement; and ease our fear of lawsuits. Perhaps it's time to add "legal" to our school district budgets, and fight, instead of caving in to—and getting taken by--nasty opportunists. You know what? With proper documentation, we can win cases. Let's have the nerve to experience the victories, then counter-sue for costs!

Reform the tenure system! *The tenure system has been around a long time, maybe too long, and is potentially more abused than necessary.* The system can eradicate our incentive to increase and

nurture the very strengths so vital to good teaching and leadership. Tenure can actually hold students, parents, districts, and taxpayers captive--as it shields and retains teachers (including professors) who have absolutely no business remaining in a classroom. Tenure is frequently counter-productive to the positive advancements and improvements we are now obliged to generate in our nation's educational systems.

Most of our graduates will go on to jobs in which they will have to perform admirably, year after year, in order to stay with, and advance within, their fields of endeavor. Why should we be any different? Short-term tenure is fine; but all faculty should be required to periodically prove their worth. (Perhaps every five years, after they've spent six months in the workplace—returning with new ideas and innovative teaching tricks and tools?)

But speaking of short-term, it appears I've run long and amok on my computer. And that's also typical of my race—especially when we have a mind to tell you what's on our mind. And I have to tell you, my mind boggles.

I'm a good teacher (and no, I *don't* believe I'm the only one on the face of the earth. There are plenty of us). But, on campus, I'm well known by the students as a "hard" teacher: a definite negative assessment. Yet, in years and years of raising three male student-athletes, I never heard of a parent or a student who desired a team championship—or a college scholarship—ask the coach to lighten up and go easy. Matter of fact, throughout the sports world, a "hard" coach is usually considered a "good" coach. It certainly would be very rewarding to have students' respect and admire hard teachers. Perhaps, if we teachers- at all levels of education- toughen up and do a good job together, students will eventually see the wisdom and rewards in learning from the "hard" teachers.

Finally, with years of corporate work behind me, and a flourishing consulting practice that still keeps me in the workplace, I believe I have much to offer my students about the real world of work. Unfortunately, I'm slowed down

- by too many students who—in upper division classes—have little or no computer experience;
- by students who don't know the difference *between to, too; your, you're; their, they're, there; loose, lose; stationery, stationary; its, it's;*
- by students who have no problem-solving or critical

thinking skills (They ask, "Where's (sic) the examples/samples?") I tell my students that, when they have a crisis at work, the boss isn't going to hand out samples/examples that will conveniently and kindly map-out their trouble-shooting and problem solving path. Horror of horrors, the boss and I will want them to think!

We can't fix these students with more computers; more money; more of the latest ideas that look great on paper, but flop in the classroom; more classes designed for social or activist awareness. Fixing education in America is not about things; it's about people, especially teachers, including us. The renaissance is in our hands, along with the hands of leaders who have courage, virtues, ethics, integrity, and a working understanding of what a real education is. Right now, little by little, each of us can begin to do his or her part. Keep in mind the old adage: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

And while you're taking your new, brave, bold steps—keep your eye out for someone, with great courage, willing to boldly lead the education revolution across the nation. E-mail me, if any name comes to mind. ■

Annual 1999 Academic Affairs Forum: "Access to a Quality Education at CSUF"

**Ellen Junn, Director Faculty Development
Center**

Beginning about four years ago, Academic Affairs initiated an annual January Intersession forum designed to convene faculty, students, and others campus-wide in hearing from and engaging with a nationally or regionally recognized speaker to discuss broader issues in higher education and explore how these larger issues might have import for Cal State Fullerton.



If you can cast your mind back several years to the first series of the Academic Affairs Forum, you may recall hearing from speakers who discussed topics ranging from: the fundamental restructuring of higher education and faculty work; the potential nuances between teaching and learning; and the importance of diversity in the curriculum. These often times controversial events were designed to provide an opportunity for the campus community to take a half-day of the Intersession break to reflect and dialogue about important issues facing us an institution, but framed within the larger context—whether as a campus in a state system, or indeed as one of among thousands institutions of higher education across the nation.

This past January, Academic Affairs chose to highlight and discuss the importance of access to a quality education at California State University, Fullerton. This emphasis was made all the more salient in light of new leadership in the Chancellor's Office, the future implications of the Cornerstones Report, and the Statewide Senate Study of the State of the Baccalaureate. To this end, the campus invited Executive Vice Chancellor David Spence to come to campus to present and report on the Chancellor's most recent revision on the implementation of the Cornerstones Report. Following Vice Chancellor Spence's keynote address, faculty had the opportunity to select from a number of breakout sessions to discuss and brainstorm more specific ideas about how our campus might make further progress in this arena.

Eight breakout sessions were identified with our own faculty facilitating and recording comments from each group. The hope of the day's event was to provide a rich and interactive forum for faculty to dialogue and provide direction, suggestions, and commentary that might then be used to continue and further progress on our campus.

Let me close by saying that Academic Affairs and the Faculty Development Center welcome your ideas and suggestions for future topics that broach larger, national or regional issues in higher education. The FDC and the Advisory Board are always open to receiving your feedback on ideas, themes, and speakers that may be of interest to the campus at large. Please feel free to forward your suggestions to the FDC and/or to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. We encourage and welcome your suggestions and feedback as we strive to make the campus responsive and supportive to the many needs of faculty, students and staff. ■