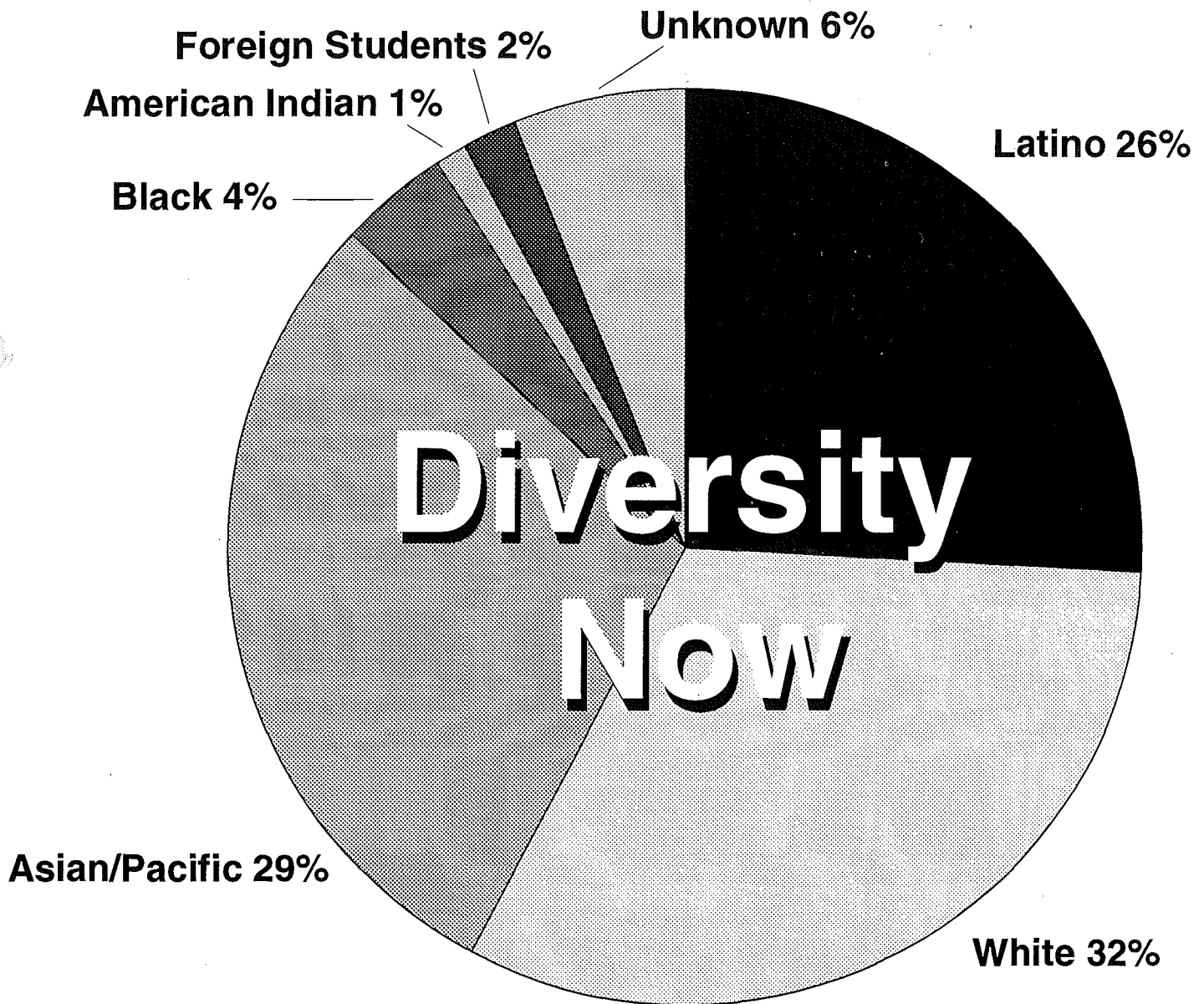


# SENATE FORUM

WINTER, 1993-94

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 2

## Entering Freshmen Fall 1993



# Diversity Is Here

by Dolores Vura  
Analytical Studies

In terms of many other demographic characteristics (heterogeneous mix by gender, age, transfer vs native freshman, full- vs part-time students, day/night studies, time to degree given need to work) we have had the student body of the 21st century since at least 1980. Ethnic heterogeneity, on the other hand, has only become fully established in more recent years. Even with the decline in grand total of students, from 25,602 in Fall, 1990 to 25,486 in Fall, 1991 (-0.5%), to 24,411 in Fall, 1992 (-4.2%), to 22,565 in Fall, 1993 (-7.6%), and overall, -11.9% in three years necessitated by severely declining budgets, ethnic diversity in our student population thrives. In part a reflection of the changing demographics of Orange County, we can now say wholeheartedly that we have the student body of the 21st century.

We now have an ethnic diversity that is gradually rendering the term "minority" quite inappropriate for us. Of total students, American Indians comprise 1%, Black/African Americans 3%, Hispanics/Latinos 15%, Asians 19%, Whites 50%, unknown ethnicity 9%, and International/Visa students 4%. Historically under represented minorities have increased from 10% to 19%, and total minorities have increased from 16% to 38% from Fall, 1980 to the current semester.

The Fall, 1993 undergraduates are slightly more diversified than the total student body. Whereas undergraduate stu-

dents were 17% minority in Fall, 1980, they were 41% minority in Fall, 1993. Most dramatic of all is the first-time freshman class. Last semester, first-time freshmen were 1% American Indian, 4% Black/African American, 26% Hispanic/Latino, 29% Asian, 32% White, 6% of unknown ethnicity, and 2% International/Visa students. While 22% of the Fall, 1980 freshman class were minorities, 60% of this year's class are members of "minority" ethnic groups. Hispanic/Latino and Asian groups are each approaching equal shares of space with Whites.

In recent years including Fall, 1993, new undergraduate transfer cohorts have

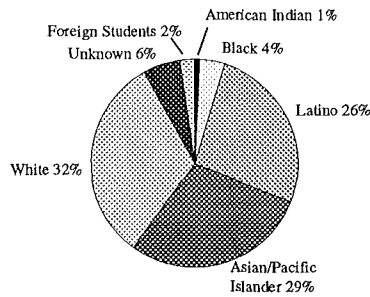
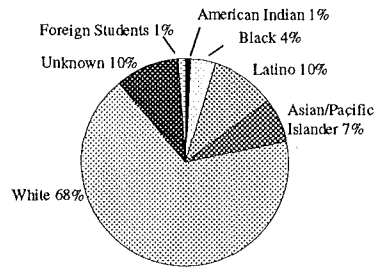
closely resembled the ethnic distribution of total undergraduates. For example, the Fall, 1993, new undergraduate transfer students are only 37% minority, but they are also 5% International/Visa students who make a special contribution to our diversity. Thus, the total student population is diversified by the entrance of new freshman cohorts at a faster rate than by new undergraduate transfer cohorts. The first-time freshman profile is the profile of where we are going through the

rest of the 1990's and on into the 21st century.

From Fall, 1992, to Fall, 1993, Hispanics/Latinos and Asians each increased their representation by 1% in the total student body. Amongst undergraduates, Asians increased by 2%, and Hispanics/Latinos by 1%. First-time freshman Hispanics/Latinos increased by 3%, and Asians increased by 2%. Blacks/African Americans held steady across the two years as 3% of total students and of undergraduates, but declined from 6% to 4% of first-time freshmen. Given the downsizing of the total student body by 7.6%, it is good news that most groups held steady or increased from last year to the current year.

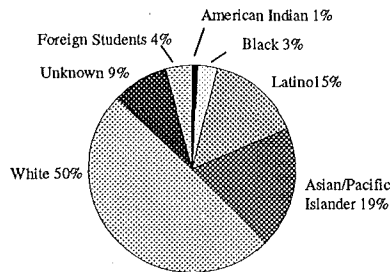
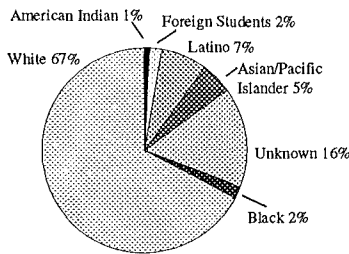
How does our ethnic profile compare with our region's population at large? The Orange County 1990 census shows the population distribution to be 1.6% Black, 23.4% Latino, 10.4% Asian, and 64.6% White. This distribution is projected to change by the year 2000 primarily by an increase in Hispanics to 27.7% and a decrease in Whites to 60.0%, while the proportion of Blacks and Asians will remain virtually unchanged. We are ahead of the County in representation of Blacks/African Americans and Asians, while we lag behind with Hispanic/Latinos. Part of the lag is explained by the different age structures of Orange County ethnic groups; a greater portion of Orange County Hispanics/Latinos are under 18.

Fall 1980 First Time Freshmen



Fall 1993 First Time Freshmen

Fall 1980 All Students



Fall 1993 All Students

Hispanics / Latinos are not as well represented among high school graduates as other groups. For example, the 1989 CBEDS data for our outreach area (the last year for which we currently have results) showed Hispanics/Latinos being 20.9% of public high school graduates, and 9.6% of public high school graduates who completed the A-F requirements. A-F requirements are those high school courses which count for admission to the University of California or the California State University. In other words, our 16% Hispanic /Latino of current undergraduate students fits right in between our outreach area's percent graduating from high school and the percent completing A-F. Since it is altogether likely that Hispanic/ Latino high school performance has improved since 1989, our most important access effort should be the successful enrollment of more Hispanics/Latinos at CSUF. Further, since it has become axiomatic nationally that ethnic minorities are more likely than whites to attend two-year colleges, we need to revisit transfer processes with our primary feeder community colleges to ensure that the ethnic distribution of our undergraduate transfers is keeping pace with the ethnic distribution at their schools of origin.

Multicultural community does not automatically result from statistical diversity. While our students come from many different neighborhoods and schools that are often monocultural and relatively segregated, Cal State Fullerton is a neighborhood. The second challenge for us is to pay attention to the quality of campus climate, fostering increased opportunities for multicultural interaction that in turn lead to understanding, knowledge and the building of a true community of learners.

As we celebrate the diversity of our students, we should examine degrees

awarded and graduation rates to assess whether there is equity in student progress toward their degrees. First, the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded by year and ethnicity, from 1980-81 through 1992-93 highlight the influence of increased ethnic diversity of enrolled students on the ethnic distribution of degrees awarded. Whereas 11% of degrees in 1980-81 went to minorities, 28% of last year's degrees were awarded to them.

Hispanics/Latinos were awarded 6% of the baccalaureate degrees in 1980-81, increasing to 11% in 1992-93. Asians received 3% of the degrees in 1980-81, and 15% of them in 1992-93. The May 20, 1993 issue of *Black Issues in Higher Education* cited us as 16th in the nation in conferring baccalaureate degrees to all minorities, 12th in degrees to Asians, and 15th in degrees to Hispanics/Latinos. As the current students move up through their programs to graduation, the number of degrees awarded to minorities will increase.

Most of our students take more than four years to graduate. Another way of measuring our success with different ethnic groups is to track individual students to see how many persist to graduation. Four cohorts combined,

Only 9% made it through in four years. However, the "success rate," or the combination of those who either graduated by the end of six years or were continuing their enrollment in a seventh year of study is 57% and does not vary much by ethnicity.

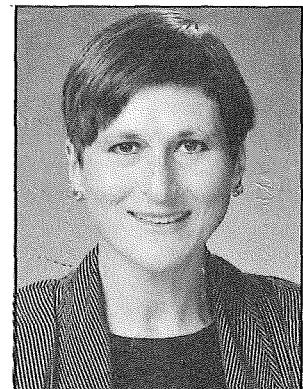
Fall, 1983 through Fall, 1986, first-time freshmen (excluding special admits) who took 12 or more units in their first semester were studied. Only 9% made it through in four years. However, the "success rate," or the combination of those

who either graduated by the end of six years or were continuing their enrollment in a seventh year of study is 57% and does not vary much by ethnicity. Highest success rates are by Asians and those of unknown ethnicity (60-

61%), followed by Whites, Hispanics/Latinos and American Indians (55-57%), nonresidents (International/Visa students) (53%), and Blacks/African Americans (51%). Since those who persist in a seventh year are going to graduate, it makes sense to "level the playing field" by combining the percent already graduated with the percent who will graduate eventually, whereupon the differences among ethnic groups narrow.

Graduation, continuation, and total success rates for students specially admitted, on the other hand, display a wider range at a lower level of success than regularly admitted students. Indeed, the results illustrate how seriously at-risk specially admitted students are. Compared with the 57.2% overall success of regularly admitted students, only 29.3% of specially admitted students succeed.

What should we do next? Two recommendations. First, we should pay special attention to the slight lag in success rates of regularly admitted Black/African American students: is our institution doing all it can to ensure their success? Secondly, we should consider additional booster programs for specially admitted students, beyond the two remedial courses we already have. §



Dolores Vura

# Diversity: What Next?

by Julian Foster  
Political Science

Elderly liberals like myself may sometimes find themselves hankering after the "good old days" of the sixties. Not, of course, that those days were very good for those who suffered prejudice and discrimination — many of the injustices of society were only too obvious, and it was that obviousness which gave liberalism its straightforward, crusading character. It was so clear that Southern Blacks should not be deprived of their voting rights, that facilities should not be segregated, that women should not be denied promotion because of their gender and so on. Liberal values could be supported uncompromisingly and without any need to balance one against another.

The kind of liberalism which focused on civil rights and against discrimination has scored great victories in the past decades. It has been nowhere more triumphant than on university campuses. A reluctance to promote women and persons of color has virtually disappeared — certainly it has at Fullerton — as a survey of administrative appointments over the past few years will confirm. Whites no longer constitute a majority of the student body; the numbers of Asians and Chicanos have grown very rapidly in the late 80s and early 90s. The liberals have won.

Victory celebrations are in order. But what comes after? Habits, whether personal or institutional, die hard, and it is tempting to carry on as before, even if the rationale has withered. We developed special programs to recruit underrepresented minorities; we can maintain them when those minorities are no longer underrepre-

sented. We have taken pride in attaining diversity — but how do we translate that into action when we find that, statistically speaking, our most underrepresented minority is the whites? What should be our posture towards Asian students, who are both an ethnic minority and vastly overrepresented in statistical terms?

Until a very few years ago, these questions were less pressing, because the supply of student places in the CSU expanded to meet the demand. The more the merrier, so long as state resources were available. One did not have to feel that admitting Student X implicitly barred some unknown Student Y

who, in the absence of X, would have been admitted.

What was the aim of our diversity policies? To ensure that each group gets its proportionate share of college places? Something like that has been attained. To go beyond that kind of statistically based representation, so that by giving previously disadvantaged groups more than their share, we move toward equity in terms of minority shares of college-trained professions? To get a fair number of minority lawyers, doctors or corporate executives we need more than a 'fair share' of places for minorities entering the educational channels which lead to those professions.

"Quotas" — the forbidden word in affirmative action programs. In former times it was possible to deny the existence of quotas, precise mathematically stated targets; better to say that one was merely trying to eradicate discrimination and its effects. Quotas can be positive or negative — a minimum number of some ethnic or gender group which one ought to have, or a maximum number which will be admitted. UC Berkeley reportedly

experimented with an "Asian quota" — not, one can be sure, an expression of racial prejudice, but rather part of an effort to maintain some sort of ethnic balance. It didn't work. It's not too clear what will 'work' — or even what constitutes 'working.'

One option would be to decide that the era of manipulated diversity has ended, that we can let students self-select and accept whatever mix results. Perhaps we could even start to stress other factors — ability, or quality of preparation, for example. Too radical a change, probably. It is more likely that we shall rethink our diversity policies. At least we should clarify them and should be able to state our goals. In the hope of furthering such an enterprise, the next issue of the Senate Forum will take a look at diversity from a number of perspectives. §

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## SENATE FORUM

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The Senate Forum is a publication of the Academic Senate at California State University Fullerton. It is designed to stimulate discussion, debate, and understanding of a variety of important issues which the Senate addresses. Individuals are encouraged to respond to the materials contained in the Forum or to submit their own contributions.

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**Production Artist:** Dori Beeler §

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# Fear and Loathing In The CSU

by Alan Saltzstein  
Political Science

A casual reading of newspapers and news magazines over the past five years suggests the impending demise of the California State University System. Massive layoffs, including the dismemberment of entire disciplines, have been reported. Legislative politics have been dominated by yearly budget battles, threatened shut downs and the issuance of IOU's. Budget declines of 7, 8 and even 15 percent have been publicly reported. Most news magazines have run cover stories depicting the decline of the "Golden State," blaming, (in no order) defense cuts, immigration, foreign investment, crime, regulatory zeal and general angst for a seemingly endless cycle of misery. Education has not escaped this list, and most assume that higher education is suffering hard times.

## The Demise of the CSU Has Been Seriously Exaggerated.

Respected authors and prominent University officials have talked of massive budget cuts. The reality, however, has always been much less severe. The table charts the actual dollars spent over the past five years (courtesy of the Chancellor's office). The total General Fund has risen and fallen marginally during that time period. The overall budget growth is 3 percent.

The cost of living in California has increased an estimated fifteen percent during that period. Since salaries have not increased, however, a major component of the budget has been effectively controlled. The system also has experienced a ten percent decline in full time equivalent students (FTE). The amount of the general fund per

FTE has actually increased by 14 percent.

Given aggregate funding levels, it is difficult to make a case for severe resource decline. Other factors may have driven the cost of educating students up during this period. Inflation has hit certain services,

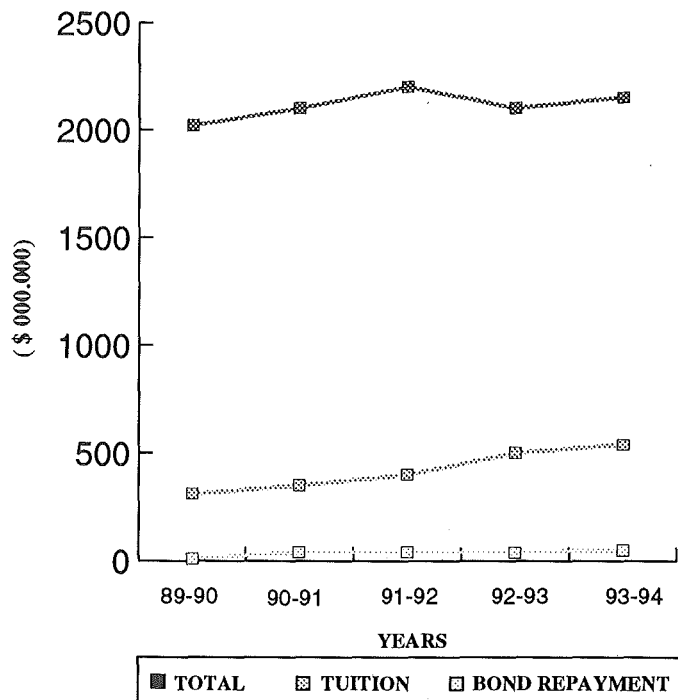
uncertainty. The budget itself begins with the Board of Trustees who negotiate with employee unions and the Chancellor's Office and develop a budget which then goes to the Governor. He alters this and includes it in his budget proposal, which then goes to the legislature.

The final budget must be approved by a two-thirds vote of House and Senate. In recent years, budget sessions have been very protracted, often lasting well into the next fiscal year. The final days of each budget session are times of extreme conflict and much uncertainty. The campus budget usually is not known for several weeks after the budget is approved. Uncoupled in this process are the two most important revenue decisions that must be made; the level of state support and the amount of tuition. These decisions are reached usually by separate legislative committees and come together in the midst of the marathon session. There have been significant increases in tuition and decreases in general state support over the

past five years. Bond requirements, which are created by referenda, also have increased.

University officials therefore often don't know what the budget will look like until it has been adopted (if then). All groups assume the worst; that the general fund total will be lower and the tuition increase will be less. Putting those two factors together usually results in projected budget declines in the 10 to 15 percent range.

Interest groups on all sides, in an effort to lobby support, usually dramatize the "worst case" scenario. Thus the Chancellor's Office, the unions and individual campuses are prone to emphasize the sorry state of higher education should the budget proposal with the lowest mentioned amount of tuition and/or state sup-



such as the libraries, significantly. The resources needed to provide quality education to an increasingly diverse clientele may have increased. Resources to retain a professional faculty, particularly in an expensive housing market, may drive up proposed salaries for new faculty. There is nothing, however, in state budget totals that leads one to the state of panic that has driven budget discussions.

## The CSU Budgeting Process Encourages only Uncertainty, Exaggeration, Premature Decisions and Paranoia.

No public finance specialist has seen a simple budget process, but few can match the CSU in complexity and

## UNIVERSITY PLANNING

port pass. Student groups dramatize the dual effect of high tuition and fewer classes.

Campuses also act on the assumption that a "worst case scenario" will become law. Thus positions where vacancies occur are "swept up." Most "lost" positions are a consequence of deaths or retirements. At the same time other decisions are made or proposed in response to faculty and staff anxiety. Generally the administration indicates that it will make every attempt to avoid layoffs of tenure track faculty. To compensate for the effect of this on programs, administrative and staff positions are cut, released time decreases, faculty are moved to other departments and class sizes are increased. Some suggest that there is a need to seem to be "doing something" while the budget is being considered. Hence long range planning committees recommend significant actions, some re-organizations are proposed, and some such proposals actually are implemented.

While some of these cuts and alterations may be restored after the budget finally comes down to the campus level, often they are not because a

"cushion" is thought to be needed for the next wave of cuts. The budget arrives often after classes have resumed so many of the cuts are already implemented.

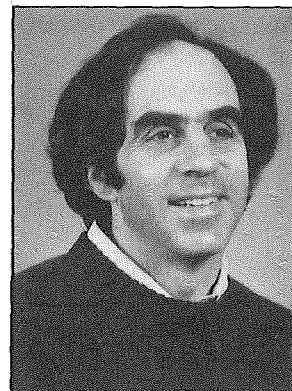
### Conclusions

The recession remains in California with unemployment hovering over 9 percent. Defense cuts and immigration continue to increase, the prison population is growing rapidly. And earthquakes, fires and other natural disasters place additional pressure on our scarce resources. Thus, budget growth in the CSU system is unlikely in the near future.

However, severe negative impacts on programs are unlikely. We therefore should be aware of the stability of the system and enter into changes based on budgeted projections with great care.

We can expect similar problems in the years ahead as the State wrestles with a declining economy and increasing public demands for services. Fundamentally, though, all of us are alive and well and doing our best to produce a quality product.

We should resist proposals for radical change unless we mean to make them for programmatic reasons. The alleged or possible decline in state support for higher education should not influence us too much. Better to wait for or see whether these dire prophecies are justified — which so far, they have not been. §



*Alan Saltzstein has been a member of the CSUF faculty since 1975. He served six years as chair of the Political Science department, and was a member of the Academic Senate. Currently, he is the coordinator and developer of the master's program in Public Administration. §*

# The "Q" Word

by John Lawrence  
Management Science

*Did you ever notice that when class sizes increase dramatically that the quality of instruction decreases?*

*And did you ever notice that when resources for departments and faculty are cut that the quality of instruction decreases?*

Read each of the above with the inflection of Jerry Seinfeld. Then read them again in the deadpan style of Andy Rooney. Choose any other popular figure from Walter Cronkite to Charlie Brown, or even Rush Limbaugh, and imagine these words being uttered in any context you wish. I have, and no matter who I pic-

ture delivering these interrogatories, I hear a tone in the speaker's voice that makes it clear that these questions need not be asked of people with any common sense.

Surely it should be axiomatic that there is negative correlation between class size and quality and a positive correlation between resources and quality. Yet in the most recent statewide elections, some proponents of the school voucher initiative seemed to be arguing that if we reduced resources to schools, increased competition for these limited resources would necessarily improve the quali-

ty of the competing programs. I even heard one individual suggest that larger class sizes would increase student competition, presumably producing a higher overall quality of student performance.

I don't know — the logic of such arguments simply escapes me. So rather than call such correlations "axioms", let me instead call them "postulates" or even something weaker such as "conjectures" or "hypotheses."

If you accept my conjectures, since our class sizes are getting larger and our resources are shrinking, the conclusion must be that "quality" is

adversely affected. Ah yes, "quality"—the politically correct word that we use (and misuse) to advocate changes in programs or ideas, and to justify our expenditures and modus operandi. Those with different agendas use the same "Q" word in their arguments.

Quality is linked with every phase of campus life from the quality of the academic preparation of our entering students to the quality of our instruction, the quality of our faculty, staff, and administrators, and the quality of our programs. The word "quality" can be linked with "cost"—the School of Business provides a low cost quality program; the Department of Physics is a high cost quality program.

Frequently "quality" is contrasted with "quantity" — Professor X has fewer publications than Professor Y, but they are in higher quality journals; we have few students in this program, but it is a quality program. Both of my conjectures imply this quality/quantity trade-off.

So what then is "quality"? I don't mean to engage in a philosophical debate over semantics, but we all should be on the same wave length. My unabridged dictionary gives numerous definitions for the word. They all refer to "a grade of excellence" or "superiority."

All right, but by whose standards? Is quality something like pornography — "I can't define it, but I know it when I see it." We have seen too many instances where two people or groups look at the same picture, book or play, and one finds it beautiful or thought provoking, while the other sees it as obscure or obscene.

Alas, we are not going to be able to be precise or even perhaps consistent in some general definition of quality between we as faculty and the administration, or even among ourselves as faculty. To cite just one instance, in the Fall 1993 issue of the *Senate Forum*, my col-

league (and very good friend), Barry Pasternack, uses the "Q" word five times in his summation to his article, "The Faculty and the Cuts"

Barry takes issue with the way the administration handled the budget process last year, stating "It does not appear that quality was an important element in assigning the budget cuts." He draws this conclusion by observing that the administration did not follow

If you accept my conjectures, since our class sizes are getting larger and our resources are shrinking, the conclusion must be that "quality" is adversely affected.

recommendations from the Long Range Planning and Priorities Committee (LRPPC) and Senate concerning the possible merger and/or discontinuance of certain programs which it felt ranked "low in respect to planning and priorities cri-

teria for academic programs utilized by the LRPPC."

Barry's commitment to excellence at this university is second to none. But consider those programs that would have been affected. Did any of these have representatives on the LRPPC? And I am sure that anyone within these departments would use the "Q" word in their defense.

While it could have been interpreted as a bold decisive step to take the action Barry advocates, perhaps the administration felt that "quality" might better be preserved and advanced by minimizing the panic and uncertainty over careers that "quality" faculty have spent a lifetime to develop. It's a tough call.

So even in academia, quality is something that is hard to define, easily recognizable, but interpreted differently by different individuals. As dedicated faculty, we are always trying to increase or maintain quality, our own version of quality, the perception of which can lead to lively debate, innovative directions, or a redefinition of priorities which can have momen-

tous employment consequences.

There's the other key word, "priorities", or what I guess George Bush would call "that vision thing." The last time we were faced with potential layoffs in the late 70's, then President Don Shields prepared a clear direction for how he planned to handle the crisis. It became known as the "Wave Plan" as it had a Wave I, Wave II, Wave III, and Wave IV — phases to handle deepening degrees of our fiscal crisis.

I wish I had saved a copy of this plan because my memory fails me now. But I do remember this. President Shields had set for us a lofty, if not unattainable goal, of being the "Harvard of the West" at the undergraduate level. His vision for our campus was to achieve the highest possible degree of quality in every program that we undertook. Behind his "Wave Plan" always sat this principle of quality. So while we held our breath to see how many waves we would have to endure, we always knew the direction we would be left traveling.

I am not implying we are adrift in a rudderless ship in 1993. A lot has changed in 15 years. The campus has had a significant increase in enrollment, we have more programs, a more diverse student population, more tenured faculty members, more entrenched programs, more buildings, more books, more equipment, and unions!

Necessarily, the problems are more complex. But a reaffirmation to and a personal definition of quality as seen by our administrators (deans, vice presidents, and the president) would be welcome right about now.

You see, I am really not sure where our current priorities lie. I find from talking with my colleagues that many of them are just as uncertain. And I am not talking about the faculty who are campus "leaders" whose articles you

I am not implying we are adrift in a rudderless ship in 1994. A lot has changed in 15 years. The campus has had a significant increase in enrollment, we have more programs, a more diverse student population, more tenured faculty members...

## DECLINE IN QUALITY?

see on a regular basis in this publication and in other forms of communication, but the vast (silent?) majority of us with 12-unit teaching loads who are facing increasing numbers of underprepared students, with fewer and fewer resources. Here are just a few examples of what we common folks discuss.

- "When I came here, class sizes were 25-30, frequently less, in small classrooms. This was one of the attractions of CSUF, and it made 12-unit loads palatable. I used to know virtually all my students' names, and when one was doing poorly I'd invite him to my office to discuss problems. I can't do that with classes of 45-60."

- "I used to give two or three lengthy projects in a semester so that my students had the opportunity to analyze problems, do computer work, and write reports. With class sizes what they are now, and with the other work and the exams I give, it is all I can manage to assign one. I am considering dropping this requirement altogether next semester."

- "We used to have at least minimal teaching assistant/grader support. With class sizes what they are, no grader support, and increased emphasis on research, I have given up grading or even collecting homework."

- "The average SAT score for Juniors in our school is around 830. Since you get 400 points for writing your name, our students are getting almost as many points for writing their names as answering the questions."

- "I have gone completely to SCANTRON tests. With the pressures of research, I cannot take the time to grade upwards of 200-250 lengthy tests with analytical questions three to four times a semester. Anyway, our past dean advocated SCANTRON tests, saying that you could just as easily determine grades from SCANTRON tests as from problem, subjective or essay exams.

While I feel he missed the point about tests, if this is the attitude of the administration, I'll play that game."

- "Students just don't seem as prepared as they were in the recent past. I look at tests I gave 10 years ago. If I gave the same tests today, few people would pass my courses."

- "The dean wants us to take even more students in our classes. He says he knows that more students means less quality. But the sentence ended right there. The implication is, 'but so what? That's just the way it is right now.' If that's what is wanted..."

- "I can't tell what the dean wants. Lip service is paid to quality, but really what is wanted is for us to deliver students down the pipeline."

- "They want us to do more with less."

- "I haven't had a pay raise in years."

- "What about my MSA?"

I don't care whose definition or interpretation of quality you use, these comments only amplify the feeling that some have that quality is not just suffering, but is taking a beating. Now a certain amount of this is "cop out" to be sure, but most of these comments come from truly outstanding teachers, many of whom have been honored for their teaching in the past.

You should hear the resignation in the voices of those making these comments. Many who have resisted "watering down" their courses for years are tempted to succumb to the real or imagined pressures of the day and a perceived indifference or lack of support from their colleagues and the administration.

These professionals are not "dead wood," but many plan to channel their energies into more "me" related activities such as consulting and book writing. Other high profile "me" activities such as grant writing and publications may or may not be greatly affected. But

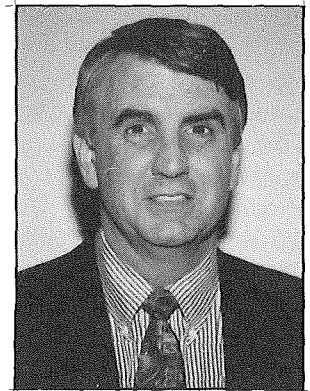
most assuredly, teaching quality, the backbone of the Cal State system, has the most to lose.

The problems alluded to in the opening interrogatories are real. The concerns of many faculty are real. We need a rebirth of sorts that can be facilitated by a clear enunciation of the vision of where we are and where we want to be. This vision must include a clear concise definition of the commitment to quality beyond "goals and objectives," beyond "long range planning," something simple in scope that the faculty know will be the driving force behind all decisions.

Of course the ultimate commitment to quality lies within each of us. The "quality professor" always will do the best with the cards he or she is dealt. I guess this is my definition of a quality professor. What is "the best"?§

*When he asked them how much should he give..., they only answered, "more, more, more."*

*--From Fortunate Son, song by the Credence Clearwater Revival circa 1969.*



*John Lawrence is a professor of Management Science in the School of Business Administration and Economics. He has been a faculty member at CSUF since 1973 and served as Chair of the department from 1978-1984. He has served on numerous Senate committees and is currently serving as a member of the Long Range Planning and Priorities Committee and the University Planning Committee. §*



# Parking Place for Surplus Teenagers ?

by Karl H. Kahrs  
Political Science

For almost twenty-five years now, I have been watching them arrive every fall, wholesome, cheerful, tanned, and vitamin-enhanced. Reeboks have replaced sandals, Vichy water and Perrier the reefer, and they get better looking every year. (Or have my aging eyes become more forgiving?) Oh, the promises of youth!

You can't help but be envious.

But something is seriously wrong with too many of them, something that can't be dismissed with a jovial wisecrack about youth having gone to hell, in the eyes of their elders, ever since antiquity. A great

number of our incoming freshmen are simply ill-prepared, and it is not getting any better.

This is not just a personal impression, based on anecdotal evidence; the declining trend of SAT scores for incoming freshmen testifies to that.

## SATMATH SATVERB TOTAL

F 86	488	425	914
F 87	493	423	916
F 88	482	413	895
F 89	482	407	889
F 90	478	404	882
F 91	476	401	878
F 92	483	403	886
F 93	478	396	873

Where else in the world do university students have to take remedial language instruction in their mother tongue and in elementary algebra (figuring percentages may not be a bad

idea either)? Some of our students are unable to express a simple idea in plain English ("...you know wadda mean?"). There is no common basic knowledge of history or geography that one can safely allude to. The blank stares in your audience give away the depressing truth.

What the heck did these kids do during twelve long years of primary and secondary education? This is the time when students in other countries

According to the Department of Education the average college graduate can expect to earn 30% more than a high school graduate. This promise makes parents willing to support their offsprings' education, and it motivates students to get by through part-time employment in menial positions. It's perfect. What worries me, though, is that we may not be able to deliver on that promise.

have to learn two foreign languages, calculus, and a good deal of hard science. Okay, our students are well adjusted to their peer group, for better or for worse; they feel good about themselves, and they are totally relaxed and uninhibited (notice the bubble-gum in the classroom).

There are obviously good students, fun to work with. Unfortunately, they are often bored to tears, while their professor is bending over backwards trying to make mental contact with the lower end of the class, which would otherwise be totally left out. The range of proficiency in a typical classroom is remarkable. One end of the scale or the other is bound to be unhappy.

What do you tell a Junior or Senior who can't write a solid sentence? They get irritated with you, because nobody has told them before ("I am a good student. How dare you...?").

Do I spend time in an upper division political science class explaining that a complete sentence should have a verb somewhere; that "their" and "they're" are really not interchangeable; when to capitalize a

word and when not? After all, I need the time to make sure that my students do not confuse Napoleon with de Gaulle, or the welfare state with communism. Our remedial efforts are not likely to lead to success anyhow. Don't forget, we are dealing here with students who successfully resisted from kindergarten to twelfth grade all efforts to teach them how to read, write, or do arithmetic.

So, what are we going to do? A rigorously administered Junior level Examination in Writing Proficiency (EWP) would be almost unfair. If students got by that far, we can hardly change the rules on them at the tail end! I suspect that the EWP is probably administered in this spirit, because I have seen them graduating. But how about tougher entrance requirements, examinations not graded "on a curve" but evaluated by some cognitive standards? If our high schools - "the American equivalent to Soviet agriculture" - can't do it, we should. But we can't be both, high school and university, lest we do a bad job in both categories.

We are hearing a lot about our budget crisis in higher education, but woe to the person who suggests that this may be an opportune time to tighten admissions standards! Now, I am all for equal access to education, but unless we want to sell something

other than education, we must discriminate between those who are prepared for academic training and those who are not. The latter may, of course, remove their deficiencies and reapply. We do

So, what are we going to do? A rigorously administered Junior level Examination in Writing Proficiency (EWP) would be almost unfair. If students got by that far, we can hardly change the rules on them at the tail end!

have, after all, our community colleges for that.

Such a change in admissions policy might also be an awakening "shock therapy" for our high schools.

## DECLINE IN QUALITY?

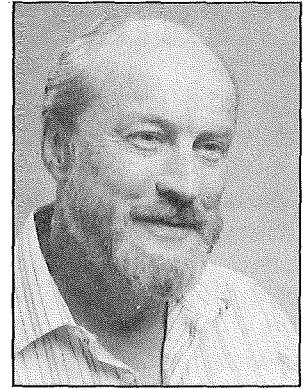
But there is plenty of blame to share. Who, after all, is graduating those teachers who are obviously unable to prepare our youngsters for college? The kind of professor with a soft heart who lets students get by is launching the career of another incompetent who will teach our children and grandchildren.

The gates of education should open up only to those who are willing to pay the price in terms of preparation, desire and a little self-discipline. We should not promise something for nothing, because that would make us nothing but a diploma mill. Education is about knowledge, understanding, achieving some competence - not about passing out degrees. (I sometimes wish we could hand our freshmen that prized piece of paper, mortar board and all, on their first day of classes and invite them back for the next day, in case they should also want an education.)

But I am a realist; nothing much is going to change. Our state universi-

ties are huge bureaucracies with all kinds of vested interests attached. The system perpetuates itself, guided by FTE and student evaluations of instructors and by fulfilling at least one important function in our society, no matter what: helping to deal with youth unemployment.

Half of all high school graduates in America now go on to college. The youngsters who plod through five or more years of higher education are to a large extent surplus labor. But they don't draw unemployment. According to the Department of Education the average college graduate can expect to earn 30% more than a high school graduate. This promise makes parents willing to support their offsprings' education, and it motivates students to get by through part-time employment in menial positions. It's perfect. What worries me, though, is that we may not be able to deliver on that promise. §



*Dr. Karl H. Kahrs was born and educated in Germany. After coming to the United States in 1959, teaching German at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey (1960-65), and receiving his Ph.D. from U.C. Santa Barbara, he joined CSUF in 1969 as a professor of political science, specializing in comparative politics and international relations. He also has taught at academic institutions in Germany and England. §*

# The Problem of Quality

by Ed Trotter  
Director, Television & Media Services

By the time this issue of the *Senate Forum* is published, the University will be headlong into yet another planning effort. Inevitably, the "Q" word will come up. Much hand-wrenching and soul-searching will take place when the issue of, shall I say it?, quality is addressed.

Universities, like most organizations, have great difficulty dealing with quality. The basic reason, I suspect, derives from constantly changing thresholds of what constitutes quality. Additionally, there is the natural concern everyone has with keeping up with their equivalent of the Joneses. "Oh, if only I could be somewhere else."

Often, this concern is focused upon our students. If only we had better quality students, we would be a higher quality institution, the argument goes, as if input equals output. And, of

course, there is ample evidence brought forward to support this notion. Somewhere in the pages of this issue you'll find a table showing the decline in the SAT scores of our incoming freshmen. These data purport to show that we have more poorly prepared students now than in the recent past, at least with respect to verbal scores on the nationally administered entrance examination.

Let me, as an aside, warn readers of the SAT table that those lower scores on the verbal tests could ironically be a measure of our success—success in attracting students who did not speak English when they learned their first language. One must be very careful in interpreting a measurement. Sometimes what is not measured is just as important, if not more so, than what is. For example, would any of us suggest that the quality of the faculty in the Santa Ana school district is inferior to that of, say, the Irvine school district

because the SAT scores differ so radically between the two?

Further, anecdotal evidence about quality is often brought out about the good old days when resources were more abundant, classes were smaller, and life was just better, a la Lake Wobegone. (See "The Rise of Decline" in an earlier edition of the *Forum*.)

What if we were to consider for a moment that we are just one sector of the service industry, not significantly different from transportation, telecommunications, or the bar? Would any of us say that UPS is of poorer quality than Federal Express because the freight they ship is somehow different? Is television poorer than magazines because of the nature of the content? There is awful television and there are awful magazines. How would you react if you went to your attorney, and she said that you are not fit for representation since you

haven't fully prepared for the visit? Or, rather, would you evaluate the quality of legal services based upon whatever value added the attorney provides?

The quality of an institution has little to do with student input. It has much more to do with faculty output, and not just in the laboratories, studios, etc. This campus's reputation has been built on one thing and one thing only—classroom performance by full-time faculty. It is not a function of the number of grants (frankly, rather small for a campus of this size), the number of wins in our athletic programs, the beauty of our campus, or our student-faculty ratio at a given time.

What matters is the commitment to changing of students' knowledge and ability to reason by our faculty through their performance as classroom instructors. That interaction accounts for the vast majority of public contact with this campus and forms the basis of the quality we so fervently cherish. Let me be clear that this does not mean a wholesale run on lowering the criteria for scholarly and creative activity in our retention, tenure and promotion process. Quite the contrary. It simply means that unless there's a strong commitment to transmitting the knowledge gained from those endeavors to our students, we are failing.

Teaching is communication. And the primary responsibility for making sure that communication is successful lies with the sender, not the receiver. Faculty must make the information understandable to their students. It's as simple as that.

As to poorly prepared students, the concerns of one generation about those which follow have been raised across the millennia. It is interesting to speculate about what causes this. We assume that each subsequent generation is supposed to know, feel, understand what we do, but ours somehow has no complementary obligation to know and understand its juniors.

What does this generation of students know that mine didn't? I sus-

pect that CSUF undergraduates know more languages, on average, than did my cohorts. In fact, it's virtually inarguable. Where is that measured? Most of today's students can operate computers in more sophisticated ways than my cohorts could. In fact, a high proportion can operate them better than the faculty here can. Where is that measured? What about their understanding of diverse cultures? Certainly it's better than my generation's.

But, it's far easier to identify what we know that they don't than the other way around. And, I'm not talking about information without substance such as popular culture, etc., although some might argue that has substance as well.

And, this endless (Might I say mindless?) diatribe about the young has an inherent flaw. Senior faculty have been making many of these same arguments so long that the students they were describing have now become their junior colleagues. How many of us would say that our junior colleagues are less prepared than we were? One might argue that they are better equipped today to teach than we were when we started.

Today, we're in the middle of the most significant transformation in our lives and we seem to be worrying about the service at the country club. There is such a change going on in all aspects of the larger society that this University must consider what it is to be and how it can get there. We have enormous upheavals in the demographics of our region, state and nation. Students bring great diversity of knowledge. But, we still insist on measuring only that base which is rooted in the Anglo-American experience. I have no problem with using that as one of the bases for evaluation of what our students should master. But let's not use that as our sole measure of student preparedness. Carping about a bunch of students who we perceive as unprepared is foolishness at worst, ill-conceived at best.

Let's ask ourselves some hard questions:

- What have I done lately to make myself a better classroom instructor?

- What technologies have I explored to make better contact, both in class and out of class, with all of my students?

- What has my department done to address improvement of faculty quality?

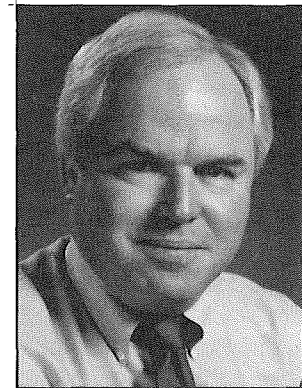
- What investment have I made in my own professional development, monetary or otherwise?

- How do I measure my own performance, independent of University-mandated requirements?

- Do I have colleagues who are not pulling their weight, a condition that I ignore out of professional courtesy?

One can quickly recognize that it's far easier to see students as lacking than to deal with many of the real problems.

I guess the bottom line is this: Like charity, quality begins at home. §



*Edgar P. Trotter III (Communications) chaired the Faculty Council in 1982-83, and moved from that to chairing his department. He was an editor of the Senate Forum from 1986-93, and since 1993 he has been Director of Television and Media Services. §*

# Learning vs. Grades

by Helen Yanko  
English

Lately I've been hearing more complaints from my colleagues about the number of students who have approached them with demands for a higher grade. They see this as a growing trend and wonder how to account for it. I suppose we may point to a number of things, ranging from added pressure on students to a more narcissistic culture. But there is probably a simpler explanation; and while the phenomenon may not be a regional one, it is fair to say that there are more factors

which contribute to it within the CSU system (particularly in Southern California) than elsewhere.

Since most CSUF students have grown up within a 150-mile radius of the consumer capital of the world, it should come as no surprise that they have become used to thinking of almost everything in terms of consumption. And that includes their education. Consider the scene at the beginning of each semester, when the university turns into a giant mall of comparison shoppers who go from class to class looking for those they think will give them the most for their money (those that promise the most "education" with the least amount of work and the highest grades).

Much of the frustration students feel at being unable to get into a class arises not so much from a disappointed desire for a particular course as from a sense of outrage at not being able to pay their money and take their choice. As a recent article in the *Daily Titan* put it, students feel that they are getting "less for more." We expect this in the

marketplace; yet for most students, the university has become a part of the marketplace (an impression not lessened by the emphasis placed on the need to prepare them for the job market). While we may still see ourselves in the idealized role of conveyers of learning, students, for the most part, have come to regard us as little more than purveyors of a product or service they need to get a lucrative job.

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The consumer-student goes into class much as he goes into Circuit City. He figures that if he pays his money, he should come out of the education store with what he wants, and that means, among other things, the grade he has 'paid for.' If he does not, he feels perfectly justified in demanding it.

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The consumer-student goes into class much as he goes into Circuit City. He figures that if he pays his money, he should come out of the education store with what he wants, and that means, among other things, the

grade he has 'paid for.' If he does not, he feels perfectly justified in demanding it. He tends to regard education as a commercial transaction — and professors who do not give good grades are not keeping their end of the bargain. After all, if he buys a stereo set he's not happy with, he can complain

to the store manager and get his money back, or at least ask for a better set. Actually, in the business of supply and demand we fare worse than the merchant. A student who buys a NordicTrack skier,

for example, and then fails to put the necessary work into getting fit would hardly complain that NordicTrack doesn't deliver. Yet he would have no compunction in expecting to "get" an education without a corresponding expenditure of time and effort. If he doesn't get it, simply by virtue of paying his fees and putting in an appear-

ance three hours a week, it stands to reason (the grade hunter thinks) that the teacher is not delivering.

But education is more than a product. We occupy a unique position in the so-called "helping" professions — somewhere between Cal Worthington and the family doctor. We not only sell a product, but also provide a service. And if we compare the professor and the physician (quite apart from status and salary), we find that we don't fare much better than we do in the marketplace. Would an eighteen-year-old who had suffered from malnutrition since childhood, with the resulting rickets and attendant maladies, come into a doctor's office and expect to be made right — and in four months no less? Yet that is pretty much what a student who has never learned how to structure a sentence, let alone how to think, expects and demands when he comes into a writing class. Even if it were possible to do what he wants — correct overnight the intellectual maladies of a lifetime — he is not likely to willingly undergo the agony involved in breaking a few mental bones in order to do so (pain that he would consider quite reasonable at the surgeon's hands).

Again, most patients are willing to admit the need to take an active role in regaining their health, not expecting a unilateral effort on the doctor's part. If a patient does get well, he heaps praise and gratitude on his benefactor. If not, he rarely blames the

physician; either he has failed to follow the prescribed regimen, or it is the disease that is the culprit, against which doctor and patient are leagued in a mutual antagonism.

Pan over to the university. It is a gratifying, albeit increasingly rare, experience to see a student expend long, hard hours trying to improve his

intellectual skills. More typically — at least in the case of the student-consumer — he sees no reason why he cannot be filled with instant knowledge, and this by the efforts of the teacher alone. If he does learn something valuable, and manages to get a good grade (a clean bill of health in his CAT scan and MRI), chances are he will take sole credit for the accomplishment. If he doesn't learn much and gets a bad grade, it is invariably the teacher who is at fault. Teacher and student can hardly agree to blame the latter's "illness" — his lack of discipline or ignorance — since the threat to ego would be intolerable. I have long envied doctors. Their clients want only to know what is wrong with them so they can get well; ours are more interested in hearing what is right about their work, so they can feel good. In any event, for the student-consumer, grades are negotiable, and he doesn't hesitate to use all his bargaining chips (and a week's worth of office hours) to cajole, persuade and, if necessary, bully his professor into giving him the A he wants (or "needs").

One might conclude from all this that the higher student fees go, the

worse the trend will get. Not necessarily. If we look closely enough, we can see a common denominator at work in the marketplace and the doctor's office. A student will work out on his NordicTrack and cooperate with his physician because he values his health, no matter what the cost. As for his intellectual fitness (we have, as Cardinal Newman pointed out, no word for this in English, no equivalent to health in physical matters, wealth in economics, or virtue in the moral sphere), that seems to be of relatively little concern to the consumer-oriented student. There is one thing left: money. If we can't address the physical needs of the student, we can at least speak to his pocket. We all know that the more we pay for a product, the more we value it; and every doctor knows better than to charge too little, for fear that his services will be devaluated. We might be selling ourselves too cheap. Students may not have education at the top of their shopping lists, but they understand what it means to the bottom line. The objection to higher fees is, of course, that they would deny an education to a great many students. But as things stand now, real education

has been compromised to an unprecedented degree by the "dumbing down" of courses to accommodate those who won't — or can't — do the work required. At the very least, higher fees may make them begin to take this business of education more seriously — and who knows, they may even rescue us from the bottom of the consumption heap.

In the meantime, we can expect more dissatisfied customers. §



*Helen Yanko (English) came to CSUF in 1969. She published an article on the subject of college students today in the LA Times November 6, 1989 issue. §*

## Grades and the Job Connection

by **Bobbe Browning**  
Career Development Center

I always have enjoyed telling students, particularly those with test anxiety, that no employer has ever asked for my G.P.A. Then I pause while I watch their eyes widen and their breath catch. (Of course I mention that there is a caveat of a minimum G.P.A. needed for professional and graduate schools.) And furthermore, I tell them that their grades are private information; neither family, friends, or employers will ever know their grades unless they so choose. Students need to realize that if grades are an influence, it is for entry-level positions only. Once they have a few years of work experience, that will supersede what they did in college.

These are tough times for job seekers. Have grades become more important to employers than they were in the recent past? The answer is "No." Employers

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We interviewed employers and colleagues to get a current reading. In addition to a completed degree, twenty-five employers from a variety of fields who interviewed students in our office this fall cited school activities demonstrating leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, and work experience as critical.

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have about the same level of interest in grades that they have always had. That interest is either quite low or equally

weighted with other factors. Accounting and some of the technical fields such as the sciences, engineering and computer science are an exception. In these latter areas a student's G.P.A. can be very important at the time of entry into the profession.

My career development and counseling colleagues at Fullerton and around the state generally agree that, even in this tough job market, several factors are more important than grades. We interviewed employers and colleagues to get a current reading. In addition to a completed degree, twenty-five employers from a variety of fields who interviewed students in our office this fall cited school activities demonstrating leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, and work experience as

## GRADES

critical. Employers also frequently tell us that they prefer Cal State Fullerton students over those at private schools because most of our students have worked and learned the work ethic. Indeed, many of us have witnessed, to our chagrin, that students often work at the expense of their study ethic!

It is mostly the 'Big Six' certified public accountant firms who require high G.P.A.'s and see them as a predictor of future job performance. These firms are in a unique position affording them an adequate number of applicants who possess not only high G.P.A.'s, but strong interpersonal skills and records of activities as well. There are also a few distinguished scholar programs for those with high grades which allow them easy entrance to government jobs.

Why aren't high grades more important in evaluating candidates? In a *Wall Street Journal* article last June titled "Getting an 'A' Should Get Kids a Job," Michael Heise wrote that:

Ever since the Supreme Court's *Griggs* decision in 1971, employers have avoided using measures of academic performance such as high-school diplomas or student grades because some of these measures yield results that differ by race or ethnic group, leaving the employer open to litigation. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 further solidified a requirement that employers who want to use transcripts or diploma's in the hiring process must show how these measures directly relate to the specific job tasks to be performed. The burden to establish a link between academic measures and job requirements is often too bothersome for most employers, particularly for entry-level jobs.

He went on to say that these laws have hurt the people they were intended to protect and that removing them would

reform education by providing a reason for more students to achieve.

A recent survey of 443 companies by the Olsten Corporation found "a large gap between employer needs and the skills employees bring to the workplace." Eighty percent of the respondents said employees need to have more strength in written communication skills, 78 percent said interpersonal skills need improvement, 77 percent cited organizational skills and 76 percent talked of a need for basic computer training. The Hudson Institute in *Workforce 2000* reports that:

For individuals, the good jobs of the future will belong to those who have skills that enable them to be productive in high-skill, service economy. For the nation, the success with which the workforce is prepared for high-skilled jobs will be an essential ingredient in maintaining a high-productivity, high-wage economy.

Even though grades have not become more important to employers, what students learn at the University certainly impacts their success as employees. Student Affairs professionals contribute to student learning in many ways. One outcome is helping a student with their grades and skills. For instance, in the CDC we have taught a career development process for many years. It often begins with clarifying a student's goals. Important components are exploring their values, interests, and skills. Studies show that this is a vital developmental task of the college-aged group. When students have worked through their choice of a major or a career, they enter their coursework with much higher motivation and interest, and are ready to apply themselves.

Another contribution involves the amount of testing which is inherent in college courses. The stress of grades and performance anxiety is widespread. Students tell us that the counseling we provide to reduce test anxiety frequently makes the difference of several grade levels for them. When we teach assertion skills and help stu-

dents become less shy and more proactive on their own behalf, they can then speak more readily to faculty about their academic development and/or difficulties. Certainly we contribute to student's grades when their problems interfere with their concentration and educational progress and we can help them overcome obstacles through personal counseling. Other offices in student affairs could offer examples of grade and skill assistance which they provide.

In summary, grades are not very critical to most employers. My experience leads me to believe that grades are not as important as most students think. Recent interviews with employers and colleagues confirmed this. Employers know that a college graduate has persisted and demonstrated the ability to learn. Their need is to predict how successful an applicant will be on the job. Although some may still see grades as a predictor of career success, most employers will be looking for effective skill levels in communicating, basic computer skills, organizational skills, and the ability to work with others. §



*Bobbe Browning came to Cal State Fullerton in 1970 and has been Director of Career Development and Counseling for the past ten years. Long ago, in 1975, she chaired the Senate's Educational Development and Innovation Committee. She is currently serving a third year as chair of the CSU Directors of Career Centers. §*

Smoke From a Few Fires

# Academic Appeals

**Ralph Bigelow**  
 Dean of Admissions and Records,  
 Emeritus

In the three years since I took over from Ernie Becker, I have tallied prospective appellants from throughout the university. Here is the percentage distribution by school of 225 prospective appellants:

Arts	9
Business/Econ	22
Communication	4
CompSci/Engineering	9
HumanDevel/CommServ	9
Humanities/SocSci	23
Natural Sci/Math	12
Not applicable	12

Myth 1: That the university has a great number of academic appeals each year.

**The Case of Counting Quizzes**

The class syllabus called for eight quizzes during the term and specified that the two lowest scores would be discarded before averaging the scores on the remaining six quizzes.

The student missed two quizzes owing to being hospitalized (documented) and alleged that it was arbitrary that he was denied the opportunity to take the full set of quizzes for reasons beyond his control. He sought as a remedy either to be take the two missing quizzes or be given extra weight for the final examination in calculating the final grade.

Members of the board dismissed the appeal, finding the policy well established, clearly announced, and not arbitrary.

The Registrar records each year over 200,000 final grades. In 1992-93, I had a case list of 113 students, 15 of whom carried over from the previous year. That is about one-half of one-tenth of one percent of all grades recorded. Of course, the number of students who feel aggrieved by final grades is unknown. Many stu-

dents reach understandings with professors informally. They either get grade corrections or accept the explanations of their evaluations without recourse to my office. And that is the way things should work.

Academic appeals at Fullerton are governed by the faculty-developed policy published as UPS 300.030. The policy is limited to two kinds of appeals about grading and does not cover any other dispute students may have with faculty. The first, seldom seen, results from allegations by professors of academic dishonesty; students may appeal such allegations. The second from allegations by students of arbitrary, capricious, or prejudicial treatment by faculty or administration in assigning grades. Students have the right to appeal final grades in such instances.

When dishonesty is alleged, the burden of proof is on the professor. When the charge is unfairness, it is on the student. If the student is not satisfied by consulting with the instructor, the department chair, and the dean, a formal appeal may be filed with the Coordinator of Academic Appeals — me. Most of the action with appeals involves student allegations of arbitrary treatment in grading.

The student's written allegations and the professor's written response are presented to the Academic Appeals Board: three members of the faculty and two students. The board at the first reading may dismiss the appeal or decide the evidence warrants further investigation. The board may then either dismiss the appeal or schedule a formal hearing, at which time the appellant and the respondent are invited to attend.

After the hearing the members of the board decide whether the allegations are sustained or not, and what remedy to recommend. Should the professor refuse to accept the recommendation, the matter is then referred to an ad hoc

committee established by the department involved. (I have summarized the procedure here; read UPS 300.030 if you wish to know the full details.)

Throughout the process efforts to

**The Case of the Horrible Hat**

The student appealed a final grade in an early evening class, alleging that his class participation score had been arbitrarily lowered because he occasionally wore a hat to class. The professor objected to anyone wearing a hat indoors and gave the student the option of removing the hat from his person or his person from the class.

The student worked during the day in a labor-intensive job where he wore a hat. Normally, he got off from work in time to shower and change in time to attend the class — hatless. But when held over at work, he came directly to class — hatted. He was asked to leave, and thus had reduced opportunities to participate in the class.

The professor elected not to attend the scheduled hearing. The student did attend, hat in hand.

Members of the board, noting nothing in the class syllabus about attire, and noting that the hat (a baseball-style cap) could not interfere with the vision of other students in the class, found the professor's treatment of the student arbitrary and recommended that the participation score be adjusted, raising the final grade one level.

mediate the disputes continue wherever possible.

Early in my tenure, I visited assistant deans and others to recommend that they encourage prospective appellants to see me early in the process. Chances to resolve disputes peaceably are next to nil unless they are dealt with early, before positions are solidified. Often, the strong feelings of the principals enormously complicate — if not preclude — mutually acceptable solutions.

In initial interviews with prospective appellants, I have three principal goals: to listen (let any anger that may

## APPEALS

principal goals: first to listen (let any anger that may spill out reach first the ears of an impartial person); second, to interpret the policy and procedure as they relate to the situation (many students say "I deserve better," but recognize, after talking it out, that they actually may not have been treated arbitrarily in grading); and third, to counsel on how to proceed in a courteous, nonaccusatory manner. The process begins with the professor; it is better not to open the conversation with an angry accusation.

What is arbitrary or capricious treatment? UPS 300.030 doesn't say; the terms are not defined. One appellant said, quite seriously and without rancor, "Arbitrary is what the board says is arbitrary." I use "arbitrary" and "capricious" as synonyms in my thinking about academic appeals: in the absence of discernible, justifiable explanations, actions taken in grading may be considered arbitrary. But then, someone else recently said, "That's not arbitrary—that's just the way it is."

Some students may have a misconception: that CSUF has a grade appeal procedure, with an office to administer it, which if followed will lead to a change of grade. In conversation with prospective appellants, the coordinator stresses the policy and procedures to assure full and fair consideration of appeals, but not the results. The coordinator is not an ombudsman nor an advocate for either side.

Does the process work? In the three years analyzed here only 23 appeals went to the academic appeals board; 17 were dismissed, and six were sustained. Sixty-eight were resolved in one way or another without referral to the board. Over one-half of all prospective appeals become inactive — after initial interviews no further word was heard from the students.

How can we reduce the number of disputes further — and risk putting me out of my part-time job? I have three suggestions that might help:

First, since the course syllabus contains the rules of the academic game,

### The Case of the Disputed Project

Two students worked together on a class project and during the semester submitted identical papers, one under one name, one under the other. The class syllabus specified individual projects but was not, however, explicit that the work on the projects was to be performed individually. Later in the term, the students realized from the instructor's comments in class the full meaning of the word "individual" in the syllabus. They then immediately informed the instructor of their action, asserting no intent to deceive. Though having possession of the papers for some time, the instructor apparently had missed the duplication. He promptly assigned zero points to both for the project. There are indications of angry interchanges. One student got a low, but passing, final grade; the other got an "F" and appealed it.

The student's consultations with the instructor, department chair, and dean's office proved fruitless. The student then filed a formal appeal, to which the instructor filed an extensive response, and both documents were presented to the board.

The members of the board informally suggested a remedy to the instructor, which was rejected. After a hearing, at which both the appellant and the instructor were present, the board confirmed the recommended remedy. The instructor again refused to accept the recommendation, so the matter was referred to an ad hoc committee of the department.

The instructor by certified mail demanded a copy of the appeal file (now almost one-inch thick), which was provided. After reviewing the file, the instructor (by this time, a former instructor) demanded a new hearing and included specific conditions in the demand.

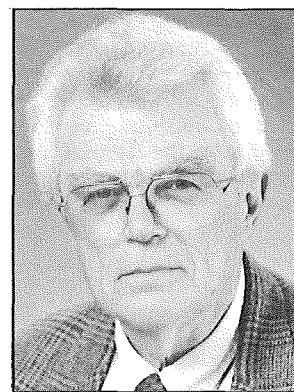
The board, confronted with a situation not covered by UPS 300.030, sought the advice of experts in the Chancellor's Office. Almost two years after the project was submitted, the student got a passing grade in the course. §

take great care in publishing it and any necessary changes that may occur. I have heard several times "But I wasn't there the day the prof said the course requirements changed." Complete and clearly stated rules are especially necessary for the students from other cultures, nations, and backgrounds. A diminishing proportion of Fullerton's

students are accustomed to U.S. academic traditions and practices.

Second, when point systems are used, they should be carefully explained. Are the grades on each exam averaged? Or are the points for all requirements totalled before determining the cuts for each final grade? And, believe it or not, your rounding rules could have bearing. State them.

Third, I believe a statement on each course syllabus something like the following would be helpful: "If in grading I make an arithmetic error, please bring it to my attention. On the other hand, when I make a professional judgment of your performance, and you disagree with the judgment, please accept that I take great care in exercising my responsibility to make professional judgments fairly." Many students would benefit from a better understanding of faculty responsibilities. §



*Ralph Bigelow has served as coordinator of academic appeals since February 1991. He held an appointment at CSUF from 1966 to 1983 as dean of admissions and records and as adjunct professor of education. From 1983 to 1989 he worked in the Office of the Chancellor for the California State University. Dr. Bigelow was named dean of admissions and records emeritus at Fullerton upon his retirement in 1989. §*



# The Evolving Foundation

by Don Crane  
Finance

The CSUF Foundation is an auxiliary non-profit public corporation with over 800 employees, formed for the purpose of promoting and assisting the educational program of the University by undertaking tasks which the state budget cannot support. It is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of three students, four faculty, five administrators and eight community leaders. The executive committee of the Board meets as necessary (usually monthly) to provide additional guidance to the Foundation's Executive Director, Bill Dickerson, between the bi-monthly Board meetings.

The operations of the Foundation include some undertaken purely to make money (e.g. the dining and vending services at CSU Dominguez Hills), some which combine profitability with service to the campus (e.g. the bookstore, food and vending services), and some which raise revenue, but not enough to support themselves (e.g. the Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary). These are under the Foundation's control. There is also a variety of administrative services provided to the University: faculty grants and contracts, student loans, scholarships, donations, conferences, workshops, institutes, agencies, trust accounts and endowments. Many of the Foundation's administrative services related to grants, contracts and a multitude of other activities are done on a fee basis to help defray the cost of providing the services.

The excess income generated by Foundation activities is either reserved for future needs or given to the University through "University Needs Assessment". University needs include faculty research grants as well as offices and positions that support faculty research and development.

Community outreach, scholarship programs and additional budgetary support for schools and departments are also a part of the funding.

Historically, the Foundation has provided for "University Needs" out of the modest surplus income from its operations. In fiscal 1992 and 1993, when the Foundation broke even, the prior funding level (at the discretion of the Board of Directors) was maintained through the use of reserves. Any use of reserves is a short-term approach to needs funding if the fiscal integrity of the Foundation is to be preserved.

Many faculty perceive the "University Needs" dollars returned to the University as discretionary funds turned over to the President. In reality, these funds (while technically discretionary) have been almost entirely committed to support existing programs historically deemed to be worthy of continuation, much like government entitlement programs. Any reallocation of these funds would obviously be considered a "take away" from the programs currently supported. In fact, President Gordon would like to have the funds be discretionary to a much greater extent, but is sensitive to the possibility of undermining present programs. Obviously, increases in money returned to the University (unlikely in the short run) may be used by the President on a discretionary basis.

Several interesting activities and situations are part of the Foundation's current agenda. These include:

1) Completing a major reorganization to respond to a decreasing student population and the loss of past profitability levels. As a result of changes

thus far, profitability has been restored at a somewhat lower level, with projections for increasing profitability in the future,

2) Responding to its shrinking market either by expanding into new areas or by downsizing itself. In 1992, such options as operating vending machines at UCI, bookstores at Saddleback and Irvine Valley Colleges, a computer store at CSULA or entering into partnership with Karl Karcher Enterprises were considered—and rejected. A more conservative strategy, declaring an 18 month moratorium on growth, was selected.

3) Modernizing the computer system to increase efficiency and improve accountability. Higher quality and more timely information should result.

4) Continuing support for the President's Affordable Housing Task Force. This includes raising money from an outside source to fund the ongoing consulting work of MPC Associates, the premier firm in the development of university housing projects. Current negotiations may result in a definitive agreement with a major landowner, Santa Fe Energy, a

developer and the appropriate city officials for building on 275 acres near Carbon Canyon very soon.

5) Relocating to suitable space based on the nature, size and needs of Foundation operations. The Foundation will be leaving the Mahr House for space in the

Hunt Wesson Building some time this year.

6) Improving the investment performance of funds under Foundation control. This is to be accomplished by better utilizing the Investment Committee of the Foundation to seek

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out money managers who will use sophisticated techniques to manage the Foundation's various portfolios. The goal is to improve the returns on the portfolios by moving from a portfolio of short term debt instruments to a more diverse portfolio of high quality, relatively low risk investments such as blue chip stocks, bonds and real estate investment trusts.

7) Involving the community to an even greater extent in providing operational guidance. A schedule of meetings for the current year has been adopted which includes an increased number of Board meetings. Also, sub-committees are meeting more often in an effort to increase the productivity of the Board of Directors. Community involvement in the sub-committees is widespread, enthusiastic and meaningful,

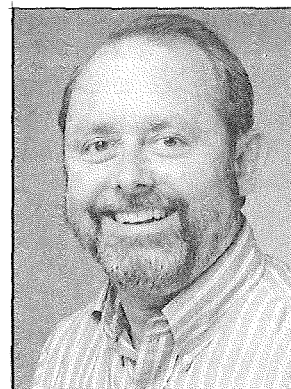
8) Establishing a "for profit" entity to meet impending IRS regulations. This has been put on hold until IRS regulations are more clear and until core

operations are believed to be operating at or near peak efficiency.

9) Solving the concessions problems at the sports complex. The first step has been undertaken by providing the financing for the purchase of moveable concession trailers which provide hot and cold food service at various venues. Ultimately, permanent facilities at the venues themselves may be constructed if economically feasible.

10) Evaluating the optimal use of a recently vacated office suite near the entrance to the Humanities Building. A satellite store is one possibility. A more intriguing option is a copying center linked directly to computers in faculty offices.

This is just a short list of the challenges and decisions facing the Foundation this year. The Foundation, with increasing Board involvement, is preparing itself to meet these challenges and continue its tradition of promoting and supporting University programs. §



*Don Crane is Professor of Finance in the School of Business Administration and Economics. He was elected to the Board of Directors of the Foundation two years ago and to its Executive Committee a year later. §*

## Letters to the Editor

### Non-Planning: An Update

by Albert Flores  
Philosophy

The University Planning Committee (UPC), just established by President Gordon, recently met for a weekend retreat to begin the task of preparing to meet the challenges of the future. We were fortunate to have as our facilitator Prof. Raymond Haas, of the University of Virginia, a well known planning expert, who helped to prepare us for the tasks we shall undertake in the coming year.

Ironically, the UPC's principle task will not be to plan; planning is and remains the responsibility of those administrators and committees who are charged with making the on-going decisions that affect the operation of this institution. Instead, the UPC will undertake to develop a framework for decision-making by articulating a useful set of statements regarding our mission and goals and the strategies that

will best aid in reaching these objectives, without specifying the content of the decisions that will need to be made or dictating the details of a plan by which we hope to achieve these goals.

Unlike last year's effort at planning, which resulted in widespread anxiety about the redistribution of resources that would result, the UPC should not be perceived as a threat to existing programs. Rather it will help to formulate mission and goals statements that are intended to focus decision-making so as to improve the quality of the resulting decisions. For far too long we have made *ad hoc* and episodic decisions without any idea as to how they impact our larger mission. By directing our energies toward the development of a useful set of statements regarding the University's mission and goals, the UPC will empower all elements of the institution and improve our communication and mutual understanding of why we exist.

In addition to re-drafting the University's mission and goals, the

UPC will undertake an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – known as SWOT analysis – facing the institution both internally and externally. We expect, too, to obtain greater clarity as to who and what our real competitors for resources are and what competitive advantages we have in securing greater access to such resources.

We have set December, 1994, for the issuing of our report to the University community. We expect to provide numerous opportunities for the entire University community to learn about the process through a variety of meetings and informational literature. In the end, the UPC will provide the needed criteria that should inform decision-making at every level so as to effectively mobilize the institution to meet the challenges of the future. §

\*Albert Flores is Chair of the Academic Senate and therefore, a member of the University Planning Committee.

## Real Planning

by Robert C. Belloli

Coordinator Undergraduate Studies

Under the administrations of both presidents Shields and Cobb, a great deal of time and energy, including my own, was expended on "plans for the future." In each case, we were assured that this would not be another attractively published report which would gather dust on our shelves but would really be used in planning. But in each case, dust gathering was in fact the end result of all this hard work. The big question, as I see it, is whether we can have a widely consultative process and still end up with a "plan" which is not just a collection of broad generalizations and platitudes designed so as not to offend or threaten any person or unit.

I am reminded of a document I reviewed on a visit to Colorado State University last June. This was the Strategic Plan of Colorado State. It was a remarkable and impressive document, especially when compared to the reports of the Commission on the Future, the Mission and Goals Task Force, and other such products on this campus. It had well defined and very specific, rather than abstract and broad, goals. More important, each goal was accompanied by its estimated cost in dollars, positions, etc. The costs were further delineated: what amounts would come from external fundraising sources? For each goal, one or more vice-presidents, deans, or other administrators were responsible. There is a yearly review to determine what progress the responsible administrators have made towards their goals. My recollection is that the document dealt with all aspects of the university, not just the academic programs. I would strongly encourage its examination. §

## Institutional Planning

Mary Kay Tetrault

Academic Affairs

I have found it surprisingly difficult to comment on our own institutional planning. I am a veteran of planning. While I was at Lewis and Clark, I served for two years on a college-wide Mission Planning Committee. As Dean of the School of Human Development and Community Service, I spent numerous hours with department chairs and faculty members crafting numerous plans: a five year plan for the school, including the founding of the Center for Collaboration for Children; a school-wide philosophy; and a plan for education that is multicultural.

Despite this first-hand experience, my earlier drafts of this piece slid into generalities and abstractions about planning that ranged from what I hope we will achieve in the process to the challenges that we face. There was even a draft in which I saw the "Before" and "After" pictures of the *Forum's* editor as a metaphor for planning: planning is about change, it is about achieving maturity, looking outward, and about being playful and thoughtful with ideas. Clearly this approach was leading me into the same pitfalls of abstract and a contextual writing.

I have found Eric Eisenberg's work on planning to be particularly \*insightful, and will attempt to convey how we as a community are beginning to engage in them. Eisenberg believes that humans operate using "narrative rationality" more than formal logic, and thus views planning as a an opportunity for developing dialogue in which participants are able to empathize with others' positions and perspectives. He holds that one of the most common obstacles to cooperation

\*see "A Communication Perspective on Interorganizational Cooperation and Inner-city Education" in L. Rigsby and M. Wang (Eds.), *School/Community Connections: Exploring Issues for Research and Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, forthcoming.

is "the individual's entrenched belief that their world view is the only, correct one." He believes that it is important for people to speak from their experience and to listen for the experiences of others. He writes:

The result is a varied collection of multiple "voices" that from a richly textured account of "how things really are" without forcing adherence to any one view point or perspective..In dialogue, what is fostered is not agreement but mutual understanding interestingly, it is this mutual understanding and respect that is most likely to lead to coordinated action. In dialogue, participants feel they have had their say, feel their voices have been heard, feel they have truly heard others, and despite apparent differences, are ready to work together.

Thus it is important to pay attention to the experience of both the clients, in our case our students and the people of Orange County, and the various professionals, which I take to mean faculty members, staff and administrators. This view stresses experience over ideas, tolerates sub-plots that run in different directions, and weaves experience together like a web without declaring any one individual or group's account superior.

There are two efforts presently underway in Academic Affairs that are consistent with this view of planning. One is a joint project between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs that will bring students' voices into our planning. The purpose of the project, supported by funding from President Gordon, is to build a composite picture of students' experiences at CSU and the factors that contribute to students' academic and personal successes. A first step in building the composite picture is a series of focus groups that gather students' perspectives on how we are facilitating their maximum intellectual growth and personal development.

We then intend to establish "learning communities" that are composed of

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faculty, Student Affairs professionals, Student Academic Services professionals and students. Their task will be to review the findings from the focus groups, elaborate on them, and articulate needs and challenges that face the Fullerton campus as we seek to provide an intellectually challenging, caring and inclusive learning environment. The final component is a Presidential "Town Hall" that will share the findings from the focus groups and the learning communities, discuss the issues embedded in those findings, and further articulate and refine our collective understandings of the needs and challenges involved in becoming a more inclusive university.

The second effort is a series of informal discussions with faculty members that I intend to inaugurate this semester. The purpose of these conversations is to learn what is on people's minds, to hear about individual's experiences in our university and to listen for good questions and ideas that can be brought to the University Planning Committee. §

### Planning for the Future

by S. Krishnamurthy  
Mechanical Engineering

Much has been written about the efforts of the Long Range Planning and Priorities Committee (LRPPC) during Spring 1993. Notwithstanding their seriousness, the process was flawed in concept. The basic premise of successful shared governance at this institution depends on the following assumptions:

- 1.) Primary responsibility for curricular issues rests with the faculty, with administration providing needed support.
- 2.) Primary responsibility for allocation and management of needed resources rests with the administration, with advisory support from the faculty.
- 3.) There are established procedures for assessment of quality,

whether for programs or for services provided by the faculty.

The integrated planning process was directed towards assessment of program quality based on criteria developed by the LRPPC. Recommendations for resource allocation were based on these evaluations. The process did not produce real planning for the future because the LRPPC focused on evaluations of programs as they are now. This did not allow for a discussion of structural changes needed to address the changes in technology, which can have a profound impact on university curricula and mechanisms for delivery of instruction.

There are mechanisms in place for program performance review which are far more comprehensive than what the LRPPC was able to do. Discussion on how this university will adapt to the new technologies is required. A comprehensive "bottom up" planning process is needed to identify the skills for 21st century citizens and professionals. Development of mechanisms to impart these skills is not only desirable but crucial if the University is to make its programs relevant to societal needs.

This process should start with the assumption that existing programs are capable of contributing to the current mission of the University and that assessment procedures to determine "quality", critical mass etc., are in place and are reliable. A "planning horizon" needs to be agreed upon. With the rapid changes in technology and the attendant hype that goes with them; a planning horizon of more than five years is not advisable. Organizations such as the Computer Center and the Institute for Teaching and Learning and Senate committees such as the Computing Affairs Committee and the Ad Hoc Work group on Instructional Development should be charged with the responsibility for providing reliable information on available technologies and anticipated trends.

The development of a plan should begin at the department level, and

department plans need to go through the normal approval process. It is important that the Senate committees be reconstituted to represent a "community of interests" from the existing schools. In parallel to this curriculum planning process the proposed "commission on the future" should be charged with identifying the needs and resources available from the larger community that this university serves. Change, rapid change in particular, has its costs and benefits. Changes in technology in recent years raise serious questions regarding the traditional transmissional model of learning. The technology for enriching the student skills in communication and information access is currently available. The basic skills needed by the contributing citizen of the 21st century include the ability to access, make decisions and communicate information using available technology.

Technology and an increased globalization of the economy are driving what happens in society. If this university is becoming a state supported one, then to identify future needs and resources requires representation from the community outside the university.

The faculty of the University must start planning for programs of the future. Short term decisions on reduced budgets are best left to those with responsibility for the management and allocation of resources. Using faculty time and expertise in this activity only detracts from real planning. With dollar based budgeting becoming the norm, department chairs and school deans need to evaluate carefully the mix of their course offerings. Planning for the future the faculty, through bodies such as the General Education Committee, must identify the needed skills and knowledge base for all students. If the faculty do not accept the changes in technology that require revisions of the programs and teaching methods in profound ways then this institution may yet become largely irrelevant. §