# The SENATE Forum

## Notes from the Academic Senate

### by Albert Flores

*Albert Flores is the second-term chair of the Academic Senate. A professor of Philosophy, he joined the faculty in 1982. He has previously served as chair of the Philosophy Department.*
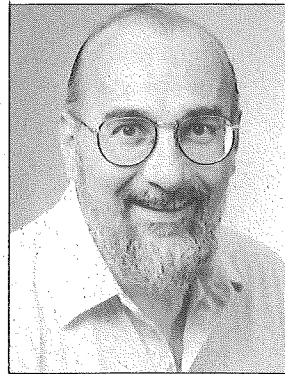
**A**S WE BEGIN ANOTHER ACADEMIC YEAR, I want to add our note of appreciation to that of President Gordon and Vice-President Mary Kay Tetreault for the faculty's dedicated efforts in helping the University to meet enrollment targets. As of this date, we are within 1.8% of our Fall FTES targets. This is due in no small measure to your willingness to add students to your already overflowing classes. Your outstanding efforts *are* appreciated.

In light of this heavy workload and the "Statement of Opinion" results of spring that showed a significant number of faculty who described their morale as lower than it was five years ago, the Academic Senate will undertake a comprehensive survey aimed at assessing the overall state of the faculty's morale. In addition, we have begun efforts to convert L–117A, the Senate's meeting chamber, into a "Faculty/Staff Center" where we can meet informally to discuss shared concerns and take advantage of the intellectual resources we possess by initiating an on-going lecture series. We will also be a part of a project aimed at converting Commons II into a "Faculty/Staff Center" with offices for Emeriti, IATL, CFA, and the Senate which, if approved, will commence operations in about two years.

**T**HE SENATE HAS ALSO BEEN RESPONDING TO THE OUTPOURing of faculty voices regarding the Titan Shops quality of services and pricing policies that have been the center of controversy this semester. We have had excellent cooperation from Bill Dickerson and Jerry Olson who have committed themselves to making good on a series of promises aimed at rectifying problems that have arisen this semester. An ad hoc committee will be asked to monitor the situation to assure progress towards mutually agreed upon goals.

## In this Issue

This semester the University Planning Committee (UPC) will conclude its principal task of formulating a missions and goals statement that will provide a framework for meeting the challenges of the future. We have been genuinely gratified at the University community's involvement in the development of an "actionable" document that will inform decision-making. The Senate will soon have the opportunity to formally consider the UPC plan and we look forward to full participation in its implementation. We congratulate the UPC for its openness to a wealth of suggestions and ideas that we can effectively use in setting the agenda for the University's future.

Finally, as you can see, the SENATE FORUM has changed its format and editor. We offer Curtis Swanson our sincere best wishes for a successful tenure as editor and look forward to a continuation of the excellent high standards set by Julian Foster who created the SENATE FORUM and was its editor for eight years. □

# Strategic Plan for Instructional Technology

■ *How can instructional technology be harnessed to free instructors for more—not less—direct contact with students? Vice-President Tetreault outlines her plan for rethinking the role of technology in teaching and learning.*

## by Mary Kay Tetreault

*Mary Kay Tetreault is the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. She is the former Dean of the School of Human Development and Community Service.*

A S SOME OF YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN THINKING AND WRITING about college teaching for the past nine years. A surprising outcome of that work has been the development of an interest in instructional technology, an interest which sprang not from observing creative and skilled professors using technology in their classrooms but from an incident reported by a professor at the University of Arizona.

In her essay "Political Correctness as a Resistance to Diversity," sociologist Patricia MacCorquodale reported analyzing course evaluations in her introductory classes, with typical enrollments of 500. One day, following a short video presentation on the relationships among population growth, land distribution, and hunger, using El Salvador as an example, she found a note on the projector: "Why should we care if people are hungry in Central America," a student had written. "Just tell me what will be on the exam."

She decided that before students could understand issues like those in the video, teachers must pay attention to the unconscious and emotional factors in learning, such as students' projections of their own values, positions, and rights upon the rest of the world. MacCorquodale believes that students have to see their opinions and positions as partial perspectives, develop a wariness of simple categories, and become aware that knowledge is socially constructed and contextual.

However, 500 students in a class is the antithesis of one that nurtures student critiques of sociological knowledge or of their developing perspectives as learners. What is needed, MacCorquodale believes, is "a small group characterized by intense discussion and introspective analysis."

Her essay concludes with her remarking on the irony "that this small-group context is urgently needed at the same time that the budget pressures and enrollment pattern are creating demands for larger and larger classes."

Her observation that large lectures are not conducive to meeting this student's needs led me to consider how we might use instructional technology to free teachers to engage with students in the manner she envisioned. I wondered whether some of her teaching in a large lecture format could be presented differently so that she, or some other professor, could have more direct contact with students.

My interest in technology has also been fueled by those same budgetary pressures we have felt over the past four years. Our larger enrollment target for this fall, with its attendant increases in faculty work load, leads me to ask if instructional technology can somehow help us get out ahead of the already heavy demands of teaching, scholarship, and service that faculty members face.

As I hear of innovative uses of instructional technology on our campus, some of which are featured in this issue of the SENATE FORUM, I wonder if we might find ways to disseminate and build upon the good ideas of our colleagues.

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*"We need a strategic plan for instructional technology which is far broader than computers and could include video, audio, and digital communications."*

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This fall, I asked Gene Dippel, Associate Vice President for Information and Telecommunication Services, to meet with the deans to assess how the decentralization of our computer services has had an impact upon a whole host of areas: support for faculty research, student computing, and the quality of our computer facilities. Out of those conversations grew the idea, initiated by Gene, that we need a strategic plan for instructional technology which is far broader than computers and could include video, audio, and digital communications.

At this writing, Gene, Dean Harry Norman of Extended Education, Dean Ephraim Smith of the School of Business Administration and Economics, Dean Andy Bazar of the School of Engineering and Computer Science, and Ed Trotter of the TV and Media Support Center are drafting a proposal as to how to develop the strategic plan. After consulting with appropriate groups, including the Academic Senate Executive Committee, we will begin the process of creating a substantive plan for the use of instructional technology.

At that time substantive issues will be addressed by various committees, study groups, focus groups, and teams of experts. Our preliminary goals for the process are to ask how instructional technology can help us rethink teaching and learning, provide faculty with greater control over their learning environments, and deliver quality education in the face of decreasing budgets. Clearly, other issues will be taken up as the process goes forward.

As Mike Parker, Acting Dean of the School of Human Development and Community Service, observed at a recent Deans' Council meeting, we must articulate and critique specific ways that various technologies enable learning, instruction, access, and inexpensive delivery. We need to have broad discussions about the nature of knowledge in the 21st Century, about how knowledge is organized, and about trends in technology as we develop a long-range plan.

The time seems to have come for us to think in imaginative, yet realistic ways about this important area of education. The need is great and our university-wide planning activities have identified this as a critical area.

I welcome your ideas and look forward to working with all of you so that we can look back in ten years and see this as an important step toward being active participants in the communications age. ☐

# Continuing the Ride on the Road to the 21st Century

■ *Within two years, CSUF will be traveling in the fast lane of the "Information Superhighway." Planning must begin now to insure that the human drivers of the new technologies will be "up to speed."*

**by Gene Dippel**

*Gene Dippel, Associate Vice-President for Information and Telecommunication Services, has been at CSUF for 23 years. He has worked on numerous special assignments and projects.*
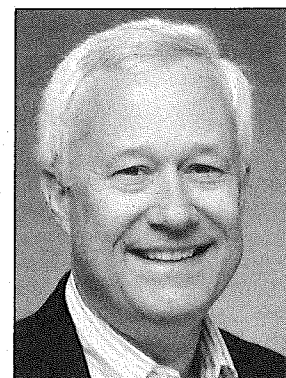
Gene, this document will change the culture of CSUF!" exclaimed the former Chair of the Academic Senate, Joyce Flocken, as she read a copy of the recently approved *Strategic Plan: New Directions in Information Technologies for CSUF*. For someone who still held on to her rotary dial telephone, this acknowledgment reflected a deep insight into the content of the document she held in her hand.

Now, slightly more than two years later, the campus is proceeding steadily and deliberately toward

those objectives. During October, over 350 users switched their desktop work stations from the student information system SIMS to a new database management system called SIS+/DB2.

Testimony to the wisdom of conversion to this new data processing platform will be evident as the campus installs student information kiosks at strategic locations throughout the campus; offers telephone registration, grade reporting, and other voice response services; and implements a new on-line student advising system. The theme of the *Strategic Plan* has been "to empower the faculty, students, and administrative staff to gain control over their destiny."

Another unceremonious event occurring in October was the ground-breaking for the new *Electrical / Telecommunications Infrastructure project*. When completed 18 months from now, the campus will be fully wired—including a fiber optic network—providing office-to-office high-speed voice, video, and data communications throughout the campus.

> *"The theme of the Strategic Plan has been to empower the 'faculty, students, and administrative staff to gain control over their destiny.'"*

Representing a true convergence of the various information technology functions, the administrative offices of the computing center, the media center, and the library will be located on the second floor of the library. The library will continue to serve as the "portal of knowledge" for students and faculty of this campus.

With all of these changes coming to the campus and with the advent of national information infrastructures, our institution finds itself at a crucial turning point in its history. Perhaps as at no other time since its founding, the institution has the opportunity to redefine in such significant ways the manner in which it conducts its most important activity—classroom instruction.

Every classroom, laboratory, studio, conference room, and office on our campus will have the capability of tapping into the burgeoning electronic reservoir, euphemistically referred to as the "information superhighway." It will be populated by all manner of information, from the routine to forms that are inconceivable today. CSUF will be at the forefront of American universities upon completion of the project.

Additionally, there looms on the horizon the distinct possibility of a great infusion of resources that

would be used to improve the electronic delivery of instruction. What remains to be done is to develop a comprehensive plan to take full advantage of this remarkable improvement in our means of communications.

The institution must have mechanisms in place to tap the rich human resources which are present today or might be developed in the interim. Consequently, the challenge before us is to prepare a sophisticated, workable program of development for our entire infrastructure—both physical and human—to carry us forward into the next century. □
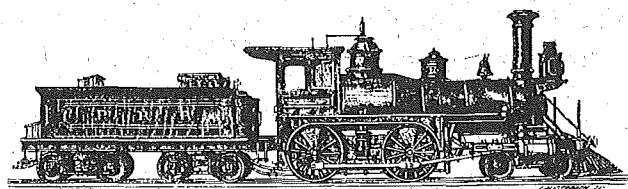


## Riding the Information Choo-Choo:
## It takes more than an engine, club car, and caboose

■ *Putting together the technological puzzle is the subject of this article. How will technology affect teaching and the curriculum, research, communication, and access to information?*
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### by Paul Lester

*Paul Martin Lester is an associate professor in the Department of Communications. His recently published book,* **Visual Communication: Images with Messages,** *published by Wadsworth, is available in the Titan Bookstore.*
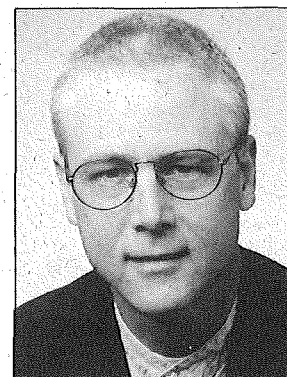


MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER (we called her Grandmama) was the second woman lawyer from the state of Kentucky, a life-long educator who lived to be 100

years old. Several years ago, while sitting in matching white rocking chairs on the porch of her Houston home, she laughed after I asked her to tell me the time she first heard about the automobile. When I asked her what was so funny, she immediately stopped rocking, grabbed my knee, looked me right in the eyes, and said in her deep, southern drawl: "Now, Paul. Think about it. How could everyone drive their own train?"

I like to tell that little story when beginning a discussion about new media opportunities because I often get the same reaction from folks when I describe the challenges offered by the information superhighway (or to play with Grandmama's metaphor, the information supersubway). "How can everyone," I sometimes hear, "have their own newspaper, movie production company or television station?"

But that is precisely the promise of a future when the world is connected with fiber optic cable. In fact, science fiction is now science *non*fiction. If you're not at least thinking about how new technologies will soon alter interpersonal and mass communications formats to inform, educate, entertain, and persuade, you might be compared to late-15th century scribes who were unaware or unconcerned that soon their world would drastically change while they argued about new stylus techniques, paper costs, and whether to copy works other than for religious purposes.

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*"The digital convergence of words and pictures means that one machine—the computer—can be used for all the tasks necessary for communications."*

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Regardless of your department, the personal desktop computer loaded with software programs and connected to a laser printer has revolutionized the way many of us work. Today's communicators cannot afford to know simply how to write or how to take pictures. It is a new requirement that you know how to produce, use, and create designs with words and pictures that can be used for both print and screen media.

There has been an explosion in the number of outlets for words and pictures brought about by computers. Words (both written and spoken) and pictures (both still and moving) can be created, obtained, combined, and distributed in ways previously not imagined. The digital convergence of words and pictures means that one machine—the computer—can be used for all the tasks necessary for communications.

You have heard, no doubt, of a coming revolution in information technology when each computer on our campus will be linked via fiber optic lines to worldwide information sources by 1996. The fundamentals of writing and taking pictures are the same as they have always been. What will radically change is how

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we will read text and images. Computer technology will offer communication formats that will one day make paper presentations seem as quaint as 8mm home movie projectors or LP records.

Having the equipment is only a small piece of the technology puzzle. There are at least six other challenges that must be faced when considering technology: funding concerns, communication links, curriculum changes, faculty and staff training, maintenance costs, and access for all.

***Funding Concerns.*** Where is the fun in funding? Well, it's terrific when your dean or chair calls you up and asks you to submit an equipment list *and the stuff is actually ordered.* What is not fun, are the years of work required for such an event to take place. Regardless of how knowledgeable they are, your administrators (and fellow faculty members) must be convinced that equipment purchases are a priority. Since it is their job to make decisions, when money goes for one item, it is subtracted from the others. For myself, it took a four-year memo-writing campaign to get the equipment I needed. (I think I just wore them down.)

Grants and development activities sometimes pan out, but I've learned not to expect free gold-plated circuit boards. Instead of a several thousand dollar commitment, you can spend far less in the interim making what you have now work. An extra hard-drive, a few more megs of RAM, and a high speed modem can make a world of difference in your personal production. One of the best kept secrets on campus is the faculty development lab and the fine folks who work in the basement of McCarthy Hall. Many of the most current hardware and software versions are available there for your use.

There are many departments on campus much more technologically advanced than others. Get to know the good people at these future-thinking sites to learn of the latest developments and collaborative

possibilities.

Corporate interactions may also be fruitful. For example, I'm writing a computer workbook for the Wadsworth Publishing Company and have so far received about $10,000 in free software. That's money the school or department does not have to spend.

Through the Center of Applied Communications and its $25,000 development workstation it is planned that CD-ROMs and other applications will be created that will be offered for sale to the general public. But faculty and staff members will not work long hours on a project without some sort of compensation. If release time is not an option, at least draw up a just contract between all involved so that the monetary benefits of a successful product can be shared by all.

**Communication Links.** All faculty and staff members should have a computer sitting on their desk that is connected to the computer center through a modem or a direct link. Each person should have a VAX account and be *regularly* sending and receiving E-mail. I have no patience (my wife calls me a "doctor with no patients") for anyone hesitant about using this computer-mediated form of communication. Yes, E-mail replaces some face-to-face contact, but so does the telephone. What E-mail allows is asynchronous communication between individuals (as with an answering machine). A message sent this second can be read and a carefully composed response can be typed at some other time. My students have E-mail accounts and regularly send me messages filled with questions, comments, and concerns I probably would never hear in a classroom or even in my office.

Having a computer account also gives you an entrance ramp to the Internet superhighway. (I'm tempted, but I will restrain myself from using too many highway metaphors.) If you think *Gophers, Badgers, Lynx* and *Banana Slugs* belong in a zoo, that *FTP* is something you put in your car to make the engine run more smoothly, that *UseNet* is a command for a trapeze artist, that a *listserver* is a person who hands out food in a cafeteria line, that *Veronica* and *Archie* are comic book characters better left to your childhood, and that *Mosaic* is an upscale bathroom tile option, you are missing the point of E-mail. Sending messages to friends in the next office or throughout the world is a tiny component of the computer system compared to a world of databases available on the Internet.

**Curriculum changes.** The digital convergence of words, pictures, and design formats not only will change the content of courses but will also change the way courses are taught. Interactive multimedia

software applications such as *AuthorWare, HyperCard* and *Director* allow users to learn from presentations that offer color, still and moving images, and text in the form of words and audio within an interactive format. Regardless of the department, these products can also be used to create electronic textbooks. Since I am a part of a Department of Communications, my students must be taught how to create such programs. Consequently, adjustments of existing courses and new courses are being planned.

> *"We must all prepare ourselves for the day when students can take courses offered anywhere in the world through their home computers. The way we become prepared is by offering courses students will want to take."*

With a software program known as *Mosaic*, features of an interactive presentation can be linked with a seemingly unlimited number of databases worldwide. Students in my classes and from the *Daily Titan* newspaper are busy working on an electronic version of the student newspaper using *Mosaic*. This technology, for once, allows educators to be ahead of most corporate entities since there are only a handful of *Mosaic*-based newspapers in the world. *Mosaic* has been called the "killer app (or application)" for the Internet. It turns the dull world of Internet text into a bright, picture-filled playground similar to bulletin boards such as *CompuServe* and *America Online*. By all means, go to the basement of McCarthy Hall and ask for a *Mosaic* "test drive" (sorry). I am currently experimenting with a professor at the University of Nevada at Reno, Travis Linn, in team-teaching a graphics course using E-mail and *Mosaic*.

We must all prepare ourselves for the day when students can take courses offered anywhere in the world through their home computers. The way we become prepared is by offering courses students will want to take. That is the driving force (oops) in my discussions of curriculum changes.

Another aspect of classroom teaching and technology is the expanded use of presentation graphics software within classrooms. As more and more of us are forced to teach in larger and larger classrooms, software products such as *PowerPoint* and *Persuasion* replace outdated acetate overhead sheets. It is vital to know how to produce overhead projection frames that aid the learning process rather than distract from it.

**Faculty and Staff Training.** It takes an enormous

amount of time and energy to learn to use a new software product. Learning E-mail, a relatively simple operation, can be a daunting task even for the most computer literate. In addition, staff personnel cannot be expected to happily accept an addition to their job description—training lost faculty members—when new equipment and software ordered must be set up and maintained. Release time, workshop and conference funding must be a part of any equipment budget. There can be no worse folly than to have a computer system that few use because of inadequate training.

*Maintenance costs.* No one wants to think about a newly purchased computer breaking. For the first year, while the warranty is still in effect, who cares? But a system in place for a longer period of time will start to fail. A monitor, a disk drive, or a keyboard will need to be replaced. Make sure that there are contingency plans in a budget for this eventuality. Perhaps worse than having a computer without offering proper training is training individuals to use a computer that is broken.

*Access for all.* Regardless of the type of computer purchase you are considering (and you should think of them all: computers for individual faculty and staff members and within development and student labs), physically disabled and daytime working students must be included. A specially designed workstation should be equipped with audio, large screen, and touch screen capabilities as well as be wheelchair accessible.

Computer lab hours must reasonably accommodate students who work during the day. A university applies to all and can't afford to be exclusive for whatever reason.

*Back to basics.* When the wheel was invented, the automobile (or train) didn't immediately follow. Likewise, with the first computer, researchers didn't immediately think of the information superhighway. The use of technology throughout history has been a long, yet steady process occasionally marked by spurts of enormous consequence. I believe we are currently living through a technological spurt, particularly with regard to the field of communications.

All the technology obtained through all the funding opportunities available will never be a substitute for the wonderfully magical interaction between a student and a teacher. It is our challenge to use computers in such a way that both students and teachers turn into grateful and life-long learners. The first step in that process is to gladly accept driving your own train the next chance you get. ☐

# Interview with Donald Castro, Dean of H&SS

■ *Donald Castro started his tenure as dean of Humanities and Social Sciences in August 1993. In this interview he shares his views of the challenges the university and the school face in the coming years.*

## by Don Castro & Curtis Swanson

*Before coming to CSUF Donald Castro served as Chair of the History Department and University Dean of Instruction at Cal Poly Pomona. He also served at CSU Northridge as Associate Vice President for Graduate Programs, Research, and International Programs.*
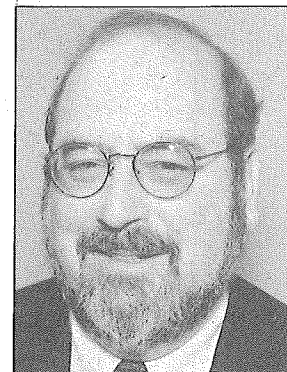
*Q: You are well into your second year as Dean of H&SS. What has given you the greatest satisfaction in your first year?*

**A:** I think the greatest satisfaction I've received from my association with CSUF is the opportunity to meet and work with a very fine group of people. I am very pleased with the level of participation, enthusiasm, and dedication of the chairs of H&SS. I've also been very pleased with the level of dedication and quality of the faculty within H&SS. This is translated into the exceptional quality of the programs we have. I'm very proud to be affiliated with the school.

*Q: Given the continuing budget cuts, pressures to increase FTES, and continued retirements without replacement, how have you managed to stay so cheerful and upbeat?*

**A:** Well, I'm glad to see that someone thinks I'm cheerful and upbeat. Maybe it's a sign of blissful ignorance of the reality around us. I think in large part it's been because of the conditions that I'm involved in and the people I'm working with. The doom-and-gloom and nay-sayers are few and far between. I think we have a very positive and upbeat school notwithstanding all these terrible pressures that we're under: budget, FTES, etc.

*Q: How do you think faculty morale is holding up under the circumstances?*

A: I think the faculty is doing a remarkable job under the level of suffering that they are experiencing with on-going budget cuts, increased teaching loads, more and more students in their classes, more papers to grade, higher and higher expectations of their involvement, their own personal research, professional involvement, committee work, etc. I sympathize and empathize with them. As you know, I teach as well every semester. That gives me a sense of what the conditions are in the classroom. Whatever I can do—given the limited resources that I have—to lessen the pressures that the faculty are experiencing, I am willing to do. In some part I think we have done this by ensuring that whatever monies existed in the dean's office have been turned over to the departments to allow for the greatest amount of release time or travel support or whatever might be possible out of our very limited budgets. We've also done our best—in concert with the departments—to hire as many people to teach as many sections as we have money for. The faculty is hanging in there remarkably well.

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*Q: High on your agenda last year was the development of an H&SS Mission and Goals Statement that is now in place. Why did you ascribe so much importance to it?*

A: I think it helped me as well as the faculty and staff within the school to come to some sort of sense of who and what we are, what our role, function and mission, and ambitions are relative to the university, to our colleagues, and to ourselves within the school. We need to have some sense of direction and I think a Mission and Goals statement can provide that.

*Q: Has your service on the University Planning Committee changed your view of CSUF and its future?*

A: I have been involved on planning committees on three different campuses. I've been involved in strategic plans, plans for the future, the year 2000, etc. Most of those plans have been experiments in

frustration. You come to the conclusion that once you write the plan it gets filed someplace and that's the end of it. I have to say that when I first became involved in the planning effort here, I thought: "Oh no, here we go again." But it has proved not to be true. I have a real
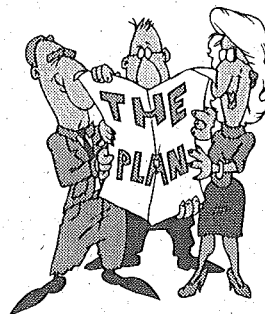


sense of optimism and a strong dedication on this campus to try to come to grips with who and what we are as an institution, what our role within the general community and society is, and what function we have. We are making a very sincere effort to recognize that planning is critical to our future. We can't continue on an ad hoc day-by-day basis without some clear sense of who and what we are. This planning effort seems to avoid all the pitfalls that I experienced at those other campuses as well as some of the pitfalls that evidently existed on this campus in some of its prior efforts.

What I also find very reassuring about this effort is a very sincere commitment to involve the entire community in the planning effort. This is not an effort of the few; it is not an effort of a particular group with a particular point of view. This has a university-wide perspective. Ultimately, it has as its ambition to serve the university as a totality.

*Q: After a year on the job, what do you see as the strengths and the weaknesses of H&SS?*

A: There are changing values that are occurring in society, in parents' and students' minds as to what the purpose and function of education are. Unfortunately, many people view a particularly public institution like this as a vehicle for their future employment. They think that we should be providing them with job training. The attitude seems to be that we need to shift what we are doing and become far more vocational. That I see as a threat. That I see as a weakness in terms of what is happening in the broader community. I think our great strength is that we are not a vocational program. All the programs within H&SS are, in fact, professional programs. At some point we are providing the necessary tools for a person to function in a career or in a professional capacity. But we may not be specifically training them. For example, we do not train people for law school, but we provide people with a background sufficient to assure success in law school, or in graduate school within a discipline base,

or to go into teaching, or to go into management positions in business. We provide a broad, people-oriented curriculum that gives our students the skills to deal with changing, dynamic circumstances. We don't train them to make a widget so that when widgets are no longer needed they are jobless. We provide them with a set of tools that they can use in their evolving lives. I think that that is a great strength that we have.

Our weakness is that I don't think we've done a very good job of publicizing what our strengths are to our potential students. We need to work more closely with the public schools, with the community colleges, to get the message across to those people who are so career-focused that they would not consider becoming a foreign language major, but choose instead a business major. I don't want to discount the value of a business major, but often they don't see the potential in international trade and commerce that a foreign language major might provide, especially combined with courses in business. Unfortunately, students don't seem to think in those terms and we need to carry on an education mission and provide a message that clearly states that.
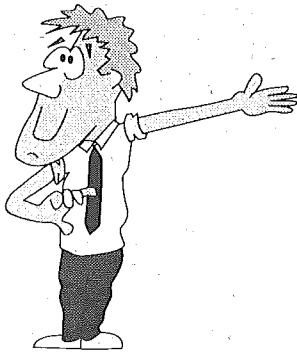
We also have to work with the high school counselors. When they advise students and parents, they talk about private schools, they talk about the UC and then, somewhere down the line, there's the California State *College* System. Even their terminology is outdated. We are very much presented as a second- or third-choice when—in terms of the value of the education that we can provide—we probably should be the first choice. After all, we combine the best of a research university and a teaching university. We have a very good faculty that are active in their professions, that are actively engaged in intellectual pursuits and involve their students in those pursuits and are also good teachers.

*Q: Do you think that General Education needs to be reformed soon? What general principles would you like to see implemented in any reform?*

A: I recognize any discussion of General Education is like walking through a mine field. There are so many different interests that are represented in how General Education gets formulated.

Should GE become the driving force of a department? Is this the place where you generate all the FTES that then allows you to maintain the major? I think that may be a short-sighted view, particularly given our mix of students. There has been a decline in the numbers of incoming freshmen and sophomore students. If you have a department that is very dependent on GE, that decline can be devastating. We are seeing a drop in GE enrollment in a number of schools, not just in ours. There may be impacts in our own school if students suddenly decide it's cheaper to take GE at a community college. Why come here and

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pay the fees, particularly as the fees keep going up for those courses? But we have a commitment to be a four-year institution and part of that commitment is providing a coherent General Education program. I know you can go through the whole debate on whether there should be a uniform core GE program, how it should be organized, or whether it should have twenty courses from each department offered in an array—cafeteria-style.

I would much prefer seeing a more focused GE program where there's a coherence from one section to another, where the students can clearly understand what the function and purpose of GE are, how that relates to their major, and how that relates to their education. Most students consider GE to be a chore. "Why do I have to take these courses; I'd much rather be taking my courses in widget building which are meaningful and important because they are going to get me a job." I would like to see GE far more coherently organized, with a greatly reduced number of courses. Courses should go into GE for coherent, rational, academic reasons.

Each GE course should have a major component in writing as a minimum requirement for acceptance as part of GE. I'm very much an advocate of writing across the disciplines. I would also like to see multicultural, cross-cultural issues incorporated appropriately into that course material.

But I'm a realist and I recognize the politics involved in GE and I recognize the historic arguments that have gone on in the past. I think the first step is to create a group of faculty that sits down and talks to each other, across departments, that tries to come up

with some sort of basic, overriding principles as they relate to the school. I think out of that we can develop something that may be a little more coherent.

*Q: Has the budget crisis bottomed out or is it going to get worse before it gets better?*

A: I don't think the budget crisis has bottomed out. They are saying that probably next year there's going to be a budget cut representing a magnitude of perhaps ten percent. When is the economy for the state going to turn around? I don't know, but it may very well be that the attitude towards funding of public education has changed to the point that even if the "budget crisis" resolves itself that doesn't necessarily guarantee that the amount of money that's put into public higher education will be restored to levels that it was at some years back. We're talking about no longer being a public, state-financed institution but rather a public, state-assisted institution. Assisted means that the state does not provide 100% of the funding. The budget resolution is not going to represent the restoration of past funds.

Therefore, that means we have to enter into an aggressive mode of seeking extramural funding, whether we like it or not. Most of us (at least people who have gray in their hair or their beards) grew up in a tradition where there was a very strong public support for education. If you were a public institution you had a hundred percent of your funding (or close to it) coming from public monies versus a private institution that was privately funded. The two have merged in a sense: private institutions appear to be publicly assisted, and publicly assisted institutions appear to be privately supported. Which seems to say that education is no longer viewed as it was under Pat Brown, that it was a right to have access to education. It's progressively presented as a privilege. Students are supposed to pay at least a certain percentage, I think it's a third of what their actual costs are. Since costs will be going up, student fees will always be going up. That's a totally different philosophy than what I grew up with and I have problems with that.

Corollary to that is that I have real problems getting myself to think that as an employee of a public institution I need to go out beating the bushes for private money. I'm sure there are many faculty who say, "I didn't go to graduate school, I didn't do the kind of research that I'm involved in to go become a fundraiser." Unfortunately the burden of fundraising is now on all of our shoulders and that's something that I

think many people are very uncomfortable with. But I think we have to start thinking more and more along those lines. If we care about what we are doing, and if we care about the well-being of our programs and our students, we have to become—each of us—fundraisers.

*Q: What do you see as the role of research in this university and in this school?*

A: My own personal feeling: I do not think you can be an effective teacher without being actively engaged in your discipline, in your profession. We in essence made a commitment to intellectual endeavor. In our profession that's defined as being actively engaged in research and creative activity. That's part of our job. I think that you cannot be an effective teacher without being so engaged. I believe in research; I believe in teaching. Throughout my entire career, whether it was in administration or not, I have always taught and I have always been actively engaged in my profession.

*Q: How do you find the time?*

A: I don't play golf. I assume that if I did play golf I'd probably do a very poor job at it, so it's just as well that I don't. Research, teaching—that's my relaxation. That's my R 'n' R. I really enjoy getting into the classroom. I really enjoy writing and doing the research.

*Q: Would you care to share with our readers the topic of your last paper?*

A: The last paper that I sent off is on the Argentine popular theater in the 1930s and its reaction to the military takeover of 1930 in which the democratically elected government had been set aside. I'm finishing a book-length manuscript on the cultural role of the Afro-Argentine. A chapter in a book on the role of women in Latin America was just recently published. In it I discussed gender roles as expressed in the Argentine tango. Soon an inaugural essay in a new journal on puppetry will be coming out where I discuss the origins of the Argentine Creole puppet theater. So, I'm a dilettante, I guess, dealing with a whole variety of issues, some of which may not be defined as what a historian classically does.

*Q: Many of the areas that you outlined have to do with language and culture. I noticed also in the Mission Statement that language figures rather prominently. Do you think that the students of this university should study a foreign language and become proficient in it before they graduate?*

A: Maybe I come from an old-fashioned philosophy that says you are not truly educated unless you can speak at least two languages. I think our students should be educated. I would be an advocate that students should be able to function reasonably well in at least two languages—one being different from their native tongue.

Q: *What do you see as the role of the Academic Senate in these difficult times?*

A: Having served as an Academic Senator at Cal Poly Pomona and at Cal State Northridge, I consider the Senate to be very important in terms of governance in the institution. I think the Senate plays a very primary role in terms of curricular decisions and in a whole other series of decisions that impact the faculty and the role of the faculty in the institution.

I have to say that the one and only time I went to a Senate meeting, I must have been a jinx because it was canceled. So I'm fearful to go to further Senate meetings for fear that they'll be canceled. But I promise I will show up again soon. □

# A YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY!! Insuring a Successful Planning Exercise: UPC's Strategic Choices

■ *The thought and preparation that went into the first year of the University Planning Committee has been unprecedented.*

### by Albert Flores, Member of the University Planning Committee

YEAR AGO PRESIDENT GORDON PROPOSED that the University undertake as its "first priority" a planning exercise that would set the agenda for the University's future. As he noted then, he hoped "that we would each keep the central question: 'What is in the best interest of the University?' uppermost in our deliberations."

Implied here was a real concern that such an undertaking might raise issues that could be more divisive than helpful in preparing us to meet the challenges of the future. Moreover, many saw this new effort as just another "exercise" that institutions periodically take on, resulting in a nicely bound report that would be filed on some shelf and soon forgotten, without any real impact on the decision-making process or the University's practices. As we near the conclusion of this first iteration of CSUF's planning process, it is worthwhile to review the University Planning Committee's (UPC) activities to see how far we have come since then in getting beyond these initial concerns.

> *"As Aristotle so rightly noted, the only good reason for doing theory is that it helps us solve practical problems."*

**A Successful Plan is a Useful Plan.** Without pretending to be comprehensive, there were several critical decisions which I believe have substantially helped to make this year's planning activity successful. Here, "success" implies several distinct standards of evaluation. In its most salient sense, a "successful" planning effort results in a useful plan that enables the institution to deal effectively with those contingencies that may prevent it from realizing its mission. It is everyone's sincere hope that the current effort succeed in this sense, although obviously we shall have to wait and see. But we shall do more than wait, because the UPC will be responsible for monitoring the implementation practices the University employs to insure that the plan works. The results of this monitoring will provide the basis for the UPC's undertaking a second iteration of the planning cycle within a few years which will be aimed at refining "the plan" to insure its usefulness.

Indeed, "making the plan useful" (or as one of our members routinely asks: "Is it actionable?") has been from the beginning the principal consideration that has informed our discussions on developing a mission and goals statement. It is precisely this kind of strategic choice that best exemplifies the sense of "success" upon which I wish to focus attention. In addition to keeping the plan's usefulness foremost in all our deliberations, the UPC has made several other strategic choices that have helped pave the way to a successful undertaking. I found the following to be the most salient factors in what has turned out to be a productive and energizing planning activity with a real chance of success.

**Committee Selection.** The first critical decision involved naming the committee members. The committee had to represent important constituencies that served the University community and it had to be

committed to pursuing the best interests of the institution. As discussions proceeded, it became apparent that putting together a truly "representative" committee meant creating a somewhat larger committee than seemed reasonable or desirable. While a smaller committee might have had greater potential for success, it soon became apparent that restricting the committee's size would necessarily exclude segments of the University community whose voices could not be ignored. As concern about the future increased with each ominous report of the State's fiscal problems, and after widespread consultations with students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and community representatives, a

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*"Instead of being an impediment to success, our size has turned out to be a dynamic and invaluable resource."*

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committee of thirty-three members was named by the President. It included two students; thirteen faculty (including one emeritus professor), the entire Long Range Planning and Priorities Committee (LRPPC); the chairs of the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) and the Academic Senate; six staff members; nine administrators (including all four vice-presidents, two deans and the President, who served as the UPC chair); two alumni; and three community representatives, including the chair of the President's Advisory Board. (Some individuals represented two constituencies.)

Instead of being an impediment to success, our size has turned out to be a dynamic and invaluable resource. Since a committee this large could only function in smaller units, we routinely broke from plenary sessions into four or five groups, averaging six members each. As we progressed, new groups formed. With each successive task, another permutation in small group membership led to fresh insights and unexplored or novel perspectives, deepening our understanding of the issues. By the time we had finished the SWOT analysis—an internal scan of our strengths and weaknesses and an external review of opportunities and threats—we had learned to trust each other in spite of of our differences. Employing such techniques fostered mutual respect and a real sense of belonging to a team.

**The Charge.** Another equally strategic choice was the manner in which our task was defined. As detailed in the first UPC *Bulletin* (Feb. 8, 1994), the UPC "will not create or implement specific plans; nor make specific proposals that determine resource allocation." "Planning," in the sense of making a plan and carrying

it out, was properly understood as the responsibility of duly elected committees and line managers—not the UPC. We quickly realized that creating and implementing a plan was indeed the proper task of those with the resources, expertise, and accountability prescribed by their roles. And despite the UPC's breadth of experience and understanding, it was clear that for it to impose a specific "plan" upon the University would only instigate fear and opposition, resulting in the very polarizations that so often paralyze institutions.

**Creating a Vision.** Instead, the UPC decided to create a meta-plan or evaluative framework with which to assess individual planning proposals and upon which principled decisions could be made. Conceived in this way, a mission statement would articulate the role the University should play, while the goals would define what it expected to accomplish. In other words, a mission and goals statement would function as overarching evaluative criteria that guided decision-making and by which planning proposals would be assessed. By insisting on making the mission and goals statement useful, in this sense, we hoped to help make better informed decisions about resource allocation and priority setting, thereby insuring that our actions are based upon a well-recognized community consensus.

Given such a "vision" we could more rationally manage our affairs and respond appropriately to changes in our environment. In the process we would avoid the unsound and ineffective practice of repeatedly responding episodically to each new crisis without any idea whether we are making progress towards our goals or fulfilling our purpose. Indeed, a good plan, in the sense defined here, expresses a vision that if properly fashioned can mobilize and harmonize the talents and efforts of the entire University community to face the future more effectively and efficiently. As our excellent facilitator, Ray Haas (a nationally recognized expert on planning) noted, perhaps the best one can expect from the systematic use of planning "is simply that the many parts of an organization move in roughly the same direction and at roughly the same speed."

**Open Communication.** Another critical strategic choice we made was to maintain open lines of communication with the University community throughout our deliberations. Charged with the important task of designing a plan that sets the agenda for the future and informs decision-making, the UPC recognized immediately that such a task—while daunting—could only succeed to the extent that we broadened our conversation to include the wealth of critical talents, ideas, and perspectives dispersed throughout our community.

Indeed, we relied quite heavily on critical feedback from the entire cross-section of University constituencies to reflect the strengths, weaknesses, and mistakes of early drafts of the SWOT analysis and the missions and goals statement.

Such feedback deepened our understanding and opened new avenues worth exploring. One such area we found stimulating was the extent to which the community-centered activities of our students, faculty and staff reflected an important area of discourse not well-recognized as part of the University's mission. By this method we were able to make refinements and to reconceptualize issues that enhanced our chances for success.

UPC members undertook a series of outreach efforts to keep the campus community informed and involved by issuing periodic *Bulletins* and by acting as "ambassadors" committed to informing stakeholders. We established an E-mail address and a "library" of background materials which were located across the campus. These efforts further enhanced opportunities for communication. In November we have scheduled a series of open forums aimed not only at furthering open dialogue but also at enlisting the active participation and trust of the campus in a process that has the potential to mobilize our efforts and enable more active control of our destiny.

**Pragmatism.** Finally, we opted for a strategic choice that seemed directly contrary to our nature and training as academics, that is, to avoid a natural proclivity to try to be comprehensive. We decided quite consciously at the outset to err on the side of speed and momentum and to avoid the temptation to get too caught up in details. For example, it soon became apparent that distinguishing between a goal and a strategy was conceptually problematic. It could also become the source of unnecessary contention that would forestall open communication and mutual trust. We thus made sure to place a moratorium on debating sticky points related to such theoretical matters and focused instead on the usefulness of our conceptualizations. As Aristotle so rightly noted, the only good reason for doing theory is that it helps us solve practical problems.

By moving deliberately and in a structured manner we have avoided wasting time, and at this point have progressed much further with greater buy-in than it might be reasonable to expect. Such an approach has also helped us avoid becoming embroiled in debates about how best to move the University forward. By leaving such detailed decisions such as whether to enhance or cut program "X" to those with the expertise who are specifically charged with this responsibility, we made it clear that we had no unarticulated or hidden agendas. Rather, we have tried to clarify the University's purpose in order to give direction regarding what we want to accomplish in the next decade.

In the end, our success in this endeavor will depend on how well the missions and goals statement helps to structure these discussions in a constructive way that builds on our strengths and mobilizes our energies to tackle the problems of the future. If we have done our job well, then this version of the University's mission and goals will become an actionable framework that empowers and stimulates creative solutions. It will give us greater control over our destiny, enabling us to weather more effectively the winds of change that have too often diverted us from our ambitions as an institution of higher education committed to excellence in scholarship and learning. □
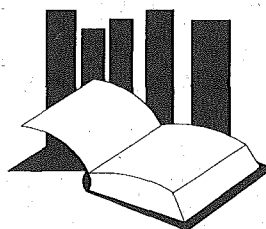
# The Subject is Textbooks, of Course!

■ *The "Textbook Fiasco" of fall semester 1994. Why students and faculty are demanding changes at the bookstore. How the Titan Shops are responding.*

**by Curtis Swanson, Editor**

THE AGENDA OF ACADEMIC SENATE meeting scheduled for September 22nd promised nothing unusual or exciting. Some fairly innocuous changes to the Faculty Constitution were planned as well as some routine elections and a couple of commendations to departing administrators. However, as part of the announcements, the textbook issue was raised by the Academic Senate Chair, Al Flores. Soon, senators from all over the room were eagerly seeking recognition. Almost everyone, it seemed, had complaints about the Titan Shops and their handling of textbooks and course packets. When discussion ended, it was clear that there was general and profound dissatisfaction. Both faculty and students wanted assurances that changes would be rapid and far-reaching.

Questions about the bookstore's practices had been brewing since the summer. There had been scattered reports of books not arriving because they had been ordered unseasonably late and grumblings about

the bookstore's pricing policy. As the first day of in-struction approached, instructors lodged more and more complaints with the staff of the bookstore. When they felt that these expressions of dissatisfactions were not being addressed forthrightly or seemingly went unheeded, academic department chairs and deans were drawn into the muddle and memos began to crisscross the campus. The beginning of classes saw many classes without textbooks and course packets. Chaos reigned. The Daily Titan published several articles (September 13, 22, 23, 29; October 3) and more memos were writ-ten.

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*"Almost everyone, it seemed, had complaints about the Titan Shops and their handling of textbooks and course packets."*

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This article is an attempt to review the major causes of dissatisfaction and then to report the steps that Titan Shops are promising to make. It is based on the discussion on the Academic Senate floor and is supplemented by interviews and memoranda.

The issues raised fall into three main categories: The price of course packets, the pricing of textbooks, and the supply of books on the first day of classes.

***Pricing of course packets.*** Course packets are an integral part of many CSUF courses. They may contain matter produced by the instructor as well as reprints of book chapters and journal articles. The selection and organization of the materials is the responsibility of the instructor. It is the bookstore's policy to secure permis-sions to reprint copyrighted materials (for which a royalty is usually charged) and to copy and bind the materials. The price to the students is calculated by adding a mark-up to production costs including royalties—principally the cost of xerography.

This semester, both faculty and students noted substantial increases in the prices for course packets. Apparently, a new pricing policy had been introduced since last semester that resulted in dramatically higher cost to the end-user—the students. Course packets that cost students two- to three-times what was charged last year were not uncommon.

Wayne Hobson, chair of American Studies, reports several examples from his department. He calls them "horror stories." In one case, a booklet that once cost only "slightly more than $10" was re-priced at $19 this semester. In another case, the reprint of an out-of-print book cost about $18 to produce (including royalties) but was offered for sale at $38. Since this book was

required reading for 200 students, the bookstore would have garnered a profit of very nearly $4000 on this one item alone. The resourceful instructor, however, nego-tiated the price with the bookstore on behalf of her students and convinced them to reduce it from $38 to $30, to $21.50, and finally to $16.45. Still not satisfied, she called the publisher and requested that the royalty be reduced to further lower the price. The publisher agreed to a lesser royalty but when he learned of the bookstore's price he withdrew his offer, declaring: "That charge [$16.45] for a photocopy of our book is price-gouging and I will not be a party to it."

Vince Buck, Political Science, reports that one of his course packets that cost about $14 two years ago was priced at $102 this semester (later reduced to $79). He admits that production costs and royalty fees are probably higher today than a couple of years ago but that the bookstore's pricing strategy is "gouging" the students at the same time that student fees are increas-ing. He calls the bookstore policy "self-destructive" and "a disaster".

These examples are not unique. I can cite similar stories from the files of other departments. In the Aca-demic Senate meeting, the Vice President for Aca-demic Affairs, Mary Kay Tetreault, stated that the quality of our students' education depends on having "timely and current articles in the course packs." But when the system inhibits the faculty's ability to pro-vide such materials the students' education is "eroded." Thus, she said, in the long run it is more of an "educa-tional issue" than an economic one. Vince Buck's decision to remove 200 pages from his course packet for Political Science 511 to reduce the costs to his students leads to a similar conclusion.

***Pricing of textbooks.*** The cost of textbooks has been a perennial issue, one to which students are par-ticularly sensitive. Victor Valencia, the Associated Students Vice President, stated at the Academic Senate meeting that both faculty and students have a stake in seeing textbook costs reduced. In some quarters it is felt that the bookstore has a virtual "monopoly" and is thus able to "charge what the traffic will bear" (Wayne Hobson).

Academic Senate Chair Al Flores said that the campus is among the 10-15% of the universities na-tionwide that add a 30% gross profit margin. For used books, the profit margin is even greater. In some cases, the mark-up may be more than 30%. The Chemistry Department reports that one of its introductory texts has a suggested retail price from the publisher of $64.95, which equates to a 25% mark-up over

wholesale. Our bookstore, however, priced the book at $74.25—a 43% mark-up.

*Supply of books on the first day of classes.* Although textbook pricing continues to be an issue and one that both faculty and students believe must be closely monitored, other concerns are sensed as being equally important: timely processing of book orders, ordering of sufficient copies to meet expected demand, ordering the latest editions.

Recent personnel changes at the bookstore may be in part responsible for some of these problems. Whatever the reason, many classes began the semester without textbooks or with insufficient quantities. When worried faculty inquired about their texts, they were sometimes told that the order had been lost, misplaced or even never received. At other times, faculty were fobbed off with vague promises. Several faculty have complained that they have been intentionally deceived and even lied to.

Many departments reported that texts were not on the shelves on the first day of classes. Often it was weeks before texts appeared. Other departments reported that fewer textbooks were ordered than requested. Although the bookstore has always had the (generally sound) policy of ordering texts based on prior offerings of a course, even this policy was not adhered to and many courses came up short. When texts did not arrive on time or when there were inadequate copies, the bookstore was generally willing to copy the first part of texts for distribution to students; however, there were many delays and much misinformation. Some faculty were not even aware that this was an option.

The Executive Committee of the Academic Senate met and recommended the formation of an ad hoc committee to look into the textbook issue. The first official response from the Titan Shops came on September 27 in the form of a memorandum to the "Campus Community" from Jerry Olson, Director of Titan Shops, and Bill Dickerson, Executive Director of the CSUF Foundation. The memo was a "sincere apology" and contained a promise that "these problems will not be repeated next Spring!" The reasons given for the admitted "textbook fiasco" were staff turnover, lack of sufficient staff training, a "system software glitch" that randomly failed to produce textbook orders, and miscellaneous delivery problems. Some of the problems, the memo maintained, were not the fault of the bookstore: late textbook adoptions, overenrolled sections, added sections, inaccurate orders, publisher shortages. As for the high prices on the course packets, the bookstore accepted full responsibility: "No two ways about it—we blew it." They promised to "adjust prices downward—in some cases significantly." Textbook prices, too, have a "high probability" of being adjusted downward although it will depend on the completion of a full textbook inventory at the end of October. The memo confirmed that until fall 1993 the mark-up on textbooks had been 25% but has since been increased to 30%. The writers of the memo state that if measures to control costs (including an enhanced security system) are successful, this will "definitely lead to a decision to lower Textbook prices for the Spring Semester."

In the meantime, Titan Shops promises to take immediate steps to alleviate the problems experienced this semester. They include:

➤ Improved training procedures

➤ Meetings with academic departments

➤ Improved textbook control system

➤ Monitoring of pricing practices at levels that are "reasonable and justifiable"

➤ Guarantee of textbook availability for orders received by October 15th

➤ Free photocopying should a textbook not arrive in time

Bill Dickerson made additional assurances in meeting with the Academic Senate Executive Committee on September 27th:

➤ There will be a revised pricing structure for course packs in spring semester

➤ By the second week in November the textbook pricing structure (both new and used) for spring 1995 will be known

➤ Consideration will be given to lowering textbook prices

➤ The bookstore will share with faculty the pricing breakdown

How should the faculty feel about the bookstore's apology and the promises that "It will never happen again!!!"? Certainly, the bookstore's willingness to admit its culpability with such unequivocal language is refreshing. Yet is it mere carping to wonder why the Titan Shops memo did not appear until we were already a month into the semester? Finally, despite the bookstore's self-flagellation, the memo is full of

vague language when it comes to the concrete steps that will be taken. We read of "extensive efforts" and "meetings...to develop a plan." Further: Titan Shops "will continue to monitor its pricing practices" so that prices are at a level that is "reasonable and justifiable." Such hedging is no substitute for direct assurances that faculty and student concerns will be addressed immediately and forthrightly. There seems to be too much latitude for interpretation of pricing based on business practices that may not be in the best interests of our students and our curriculum. Just what is the profit margin of Titan Shops? What part of it is generated by textbooks and course packets? How is the profit utilized and who benefits from it?

Therefore, the faculty continues to be justly concerned about effects of the "textbook fiasco" on our educational mission. Instructors are glad that their often long-standing concerns about textbook policies have finally gotten the attention they deserve. They are looking both to Titan Shops and to the Academic Senate's ad hoc committee—working in tandem—for relief. However, the radical problems experienced this semester will not soon be forgotten or, in some cases, forgiven.

Some faculty members are beginning to question the "monopoly" of Titan Shops. One respondent mentions another local bookstore whose "solicitousness, knowledge, and attention to detail" is superior. He continues: "[I] anticipate many faculty will vote with their feet next semester and abandon the Bookstore entirely. [They] will have to go much further than they have to regain the business of many faculty I have talked to." □

# The Almanac Issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education

■ *Where do CSUF and other public universities in California stand in comparison to the nation? What do freshmen really think about individual and social issues?*

## by Curtis Swanson

EVERY SEPTEMBER SINCE 1988 THE *Chronicle of Higher Education* has published an *Almanac Issue* on institutions, students, and faculty nationwide. Although a whole issue of statistics may sound boring, it is

actually a fascinating way of spending a couple of hours. What emerges is a sense of where we stand in higher education.

Nationally, there are over 3,600 public and private two- and four-year institutions with a total of 14.5 million students. (About two million of these students attend 322 institutions in California.)

Student demographics differ widely in California from the nation as a whole. For example, 14.5% of California students are Asian whereas the figure nationwide is only 4.8%. The situation is similar for Hispanic students. In California, 15.9% of students are Hispanic; nationwide, only 6.5%. Whereas for the nation as a whole, 75% of students are white, in California only 56.4% of the student body is white.

At public 4-year institutions nationwide the average annual cost (for commuter students) is $6,809. At private institutions the average is $15,200.

Nationally, tuition and fees at public 4-year institutions averages $2,352. In California in 1993-94 it was $1,975 (and rising). (In the CSU system the annual student fees for 1994-95 are $1,584.)

Nationwide, the average faculty salary at public institutions was $49,906 in 1992-93. (In California the average was $66,047 for CSU and UC combined.)

Last year, the state spent almost $13 billion on public higher education, a decrease of 25% over two years.

If we focus in more sharply on the CSU System and CSUF, we discover the following. CSUF had an enrollment of 24,402 in Fall 1992 making it the 81st largest institution in the U.S. Larger CSU campuses are San Diego (30th place with 30,887 students), Long Beach, San Jose, Northridge, San Franciso, and Sacramento (80th place with 24,466 students).

Unfortunately, CSUF does not figure prominently in some of the other lists such as "endowments" or "largest library holdings."

As interesting and enlightening as some of these statistics are, I am drawn each year to the page of the *Almanac* that describes the "Attitudes and Characteristics of Freshmen."

Half of today's freshmen describe themselves as politically "middle of the road." About equal numbers see themselves as "liberal" (24.7%) or "conservative" (21.4%)

Students' reasons for going to college are a

wonderful balance of practicality and idealism:

- √ "to be able to get a better job" (82%)
- √ "to learn more about things that interest me" (75.2%)
- √ "to be able to make more money" (75.1%)
- √ "to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas" (65%)
- √ "to improve reading and study skills" (42.6%)

About half expect to attain a B average and to be "satisfied"with college.

Four out of ten expect to get a job to pay for college expenses. Nationwide, 5.6% will work full-time.

More than three-quarters of the students believed...

- √ that the government does too little to control environmental pollution and the sale of handguns,
- √ that employers should have the right to require drug testing,
- √ that a national healthcare plan is needed,
- √ that just because a man believes a woman has "led him on"does not entitle him to have sex with her.

More than half of the students believed...

- √ that the courts are too concerned with the rights of criminals,
- √ that abortion should be legal,
- √ that the best way to control AIDS is through mandatory testing,
- √ that colleges should prohibit racist and sexist speech on campus

Less than half thought...

- √ that the federal government should raise taxes to reduce the deficit,
- √ that the death penalty should be abolished (22.1%) or marijuana legalized (28.2%)
- √ that homosexual relations ought to be prohibited (36.2%)

Only 14% of freshmen believed that racial discrimination is a major problem in America.

Two out of three students believed that an individual can do little to bring about change in our society.

Life objectives in order of importance were...

- √ being well-off financially (74.5%)
- √ raising a family (70.6%)
- √ becoming an authority in one's field (67.5%)

I found these statistics on today's freshmen to be so interesting that I decided to go back to the earliest *Almanac,* printed in 1989, to see what opinions, if any, had changed significantly. I was surprised to find that opinions had often shifted in unpredictable ways.

The number of freshmen students who think that abortion should be legal has risen 6 percentage points to 62.4% in 1993 while support for mandatory AIDS testing has declined 6 points to 61.7%. Support for employer drug testing has risen 10 points to 79.6%.

In 1988 more than half (59.7%) believed that homosexual relations should be prohibited. In the most recent survey, only 36.2% felt this way.

However, in 1988, a majority of 65.1% of freshmen thought "it is all right for two people who like each other to have sex even if they've known each other for a very short time." When asked the same question in 1993, only 44.8% of freshmen agreed.

In 1988 the Cold War was not yet a distant memory. One-third of the freshmen believed that military spending should be increased. By the latest poll, that figure had declined to 23.4%—a drop of 10 percentage points.

Regarding ultimate objectives in life, it seems that today's freshmen are slightly less interested in being "very well-off financially" (-3%) or in becoming "an authority in one's field" (-6%). On the other hand, raising a family (+4%), "influencing social values" (+9.5%), "helping others who are in difficulty" (+17%), and "participating in a community-action program"(+6.8%) seem more important today than in 1988. There is plenty of reason to be optimistic about today's college youth, I feel.

There are many unique qualities about CSUF that are reflected in the statistics that are gathered locally. I will leave the presentation of those findings to my colleague in Analytical Studies, Dolores Vura, in the following article. □
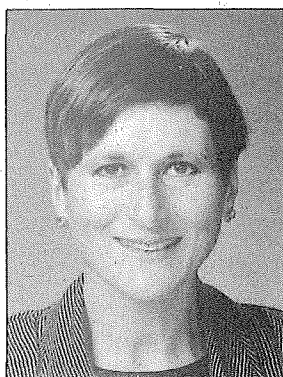
# SNAPS 1994—Student Needs and Profiles Survey

◘ *This up-to-the-minute analysis of students' employment status, knowledge of languages, commute times, general satisfaction, time to graduation, and perceptions of significant factors that help or hinder their education is a "must read" for all faculty and administrators.*

## By Dolores Vura

*Dolores Vura has been the Director of Analytical Studies for the past eight years. Her main areas of interest are assessment, student learning, and academic planning.*

THE *STUDENT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES SURVEY* (SNAPS) was administered on our campus in March, 1994. An omnibus survey covering a wide variety of issues and behaviors, it was last administered five years ago. Our sample of CSUF students totaled 1,034. SNAPS provides useful information of student opinion, evaluation, and behavior that we cannot get in any other way. What follows are some early results from SNAPS.

The **employment status** of CSUF students is of great importance since it is the pivotal characteristic that distinguishes our students from the traditional college student.

| CSUF Students' Employment Status | |
|---|---|
| Not employed, not looking | 14% |
| Not employed, looking on campus | 3% |
| Not employed, looking off campus | 7% |
| Not employed, given up | 1% |
| Employed, on-campus job | 7% |
| Employed, off-campus job | 55% |
| Employed, 2+ jobs | 12% |

While 75% currently employed is lower than the 80-88% employed in 1989, the fact that the "not employed" group includes an additional 10% who *want* a job may be the result of greater difficulty in finding a job in 1994. Some students may have lost the jobs they had. A surprising 12% of CSUF students work at two or more jobs, suggesting that it is difficult to find a single good job to support oneself adequately.

Employment status varies significantly by student level, although upper and graduate division students are similar. Of the lower division students, 65% are employed, 13% are looking for a job, and 22% are not employed. Seventy-nine percent of upper division students are employed, 9% are looking for a job, and 12% are not employed. Graduate students break down as follows: 76% employed, 6% looking, and 18% not employed. The detailed employment categories by gender show that men are more likely than women to hold an on-campus job, and to hold two or more jobs. The gender difference in working on-campus may be an equity issue.

CSUF students' time is literally filled with work and school:

| Average hours worked per week, along with average units per student | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Hours Worked | Units per Student |
| Lower division students | 20.5 | 12.4 |
| Upper division students | 30.7 | 10.5 |
| Graduate students | 34.5 | 6.7 |
| Hold on-campus job | 19.9 | 10.7 |
| Hold off-campus job | 29.6 | 10.2 |
| Hold 2+ jobs | 30.6 | 11.1 |

| | % Working 1-29 hrs | % Working 30+ hrs |
|---|---|---|
| Lower division | 50% | 15% |
| Upper division | 36% | 43% |
| Graduate | 25% | 51% |

With the sheer volume of employment hours of CSUF students, one wonders whether students define their role primarily as "student," or primarily as an employee. Nearly all those who are not currently employed, including those who are looking for a job, coded themselves as "student." Interestingly, 46% of employed students also coded themselves as "student." Thus, for nearly half of working students at CSUF, the

traditional sense of being a student as one's primary occupation while in school still obtains.

**National Origin.** Twenty-eight percent of CSUF students originally came from other countries. This breaks down to: 13% who are permanent residents (holders of "green cards"), 4% who are international students (holders of student visas), and 11% who are naturalized citizens of the U.S. The percent of CSUF students who originally came from other countries has increased by 5% since 1989, when it was 23%. Permanent residents have increased by 2%, and naturalized citizens have increased by 3%.

**Knowledge of languages** in addition to English is another measure of the diversity of our students. For each of 12 language categories, students were asked to mark 1) whether they could "communicate at a minimum level"; and whether they could 2) "speak," 3) "read," or 4) "write" "fluently at a college level". If minimal ability is defined as marking *any* one or more items in each language, then CSUF students have the following distribution for *languages known at least minimally*:

| English only | 20% |
|---|---|
| English and Spanish, with or without other European languages | 33% |
| Asian language and English, with or without Spanish | 14% |
| English plus another, not Spanish or Asian | 13% |
| Other combinations, excluding English | 20% |

If proficiency is defined as having marked either all four items or at least speaks/reads/writes, then CSUF students have the following distribution for *languages known proficiently*:

| English only | 46% |
|---|---|
| English and one or more others | 15% |
| Other language(s) (not English) | 6% |
| None | 32% |

**First Generation.** Nineteen percent of CSUF students are first generation college students, that is, neither parent had any postsecondary education. This is a 5% decrease from 1989, when first generation college students comprised 24% of the total. First generation status varies by ethnicity, from a low of 14% of whites/Anglos, to a high of 49% of Chicano students. Forty-five percent of CSUF students come from families in which neither parent graduated from college. Here we see the tremendous potential for

upward mobility among CSUF students, half of whom may be in the first generation to graduate from college.

**Dependents.** Seventy-nine percent of CSUF students have no financial dependents; eleven percent have one; ten percent have two or more dependents. The marital status question was not asked in the recent survey.

**Commuting.** In terms of commute times from home or work to campus, CSUF students are most likely to spend 15 to 29 minutes (34%). Nine percent do not commute (i.e., live within walking distance); 20% spend less than fifteen minutes; 23% spend 30 to 44 minutes; 10% spend 45 to 59 minutes; and 4% spend one hour or longer.

**Time on Campus.** Hours spent on campus outside of class range from 10% with none, 22% with 1-2 hours, 21% with 3-5 hours, 19% with 6-10 hours, and 28% with more than 10 hours per week. Time spent on campus has increased since 1989. Perhaps the increase in computer use for coursework has contributed to this increased time spent. Average hours spent on campus outside of class is 9 hours. If students hold off-campus jobs or two-or-more jobs, that average declines to 7.5 hours, while it rises to 18 hours for those who have an on-campus job. Students who are not employed spend 12 hours on campus, on average.

**Reasons for Choosing CSUF.** For 72% of CSUF students, CSUF was their first choice. Following are the top eight reasons students cited as "very important" in their decision to attend CSUF (multiple answers possible):

| Low to moderate cost | 58% |
|---|---|
| Availability of their major | 49% |
| Being admitted | 43% |
| Reputation of students' major | 40% |
| Closeness to home | 36% |
| Opportunity to obtain a scholarship or financial aid | 35% |
| Opportunity to work while attending school | 32% |
| Safety factors (security, level of crime) | 27% |

In the five years since students were last surveyed, CSUF's affordability has gained substantially in importance to students. In the SNAPS of 1989, "low to moderate cost" tied for second, with 44% citing it as "very important," along with "the reputation of their major" (44%), after "the availability of

their major" (54%). "Campus academic reputation," which ranked fifth in 1989 at 27%, is now cited by 22% of CSUF students, in ninth place.

**Instructionally-Related Factors:** Of seventeen instructionally-related factors that help students achieve their educational goals, CSUF students cited the following as "Very Important:"

| | |
|---|---|
| Availability of necessary classes | 80% |
| Quality of instruction | 76% |
| Faculty ability to communicate subject matter | 68% |
| Fairness of testing and grading | 64% |
| Convenience of class scheduling | 64% |
| Courses in major required for graduation | 61% |
| Faculty enthusiasm for teaching | 60% |
| Relevance of coursework to major | 60% |

**Parking.** While "parking" was cited as "very important" by 57% of CSUF students in 1989, only 47% called it so in 1994.

**Academic and Student Services.** When asked to assess the importance of twenty-eight academic and/or student services in helping students achieve their educational goals, only five services/factors were cited by more than 30% of CSUF students as being "Very Important." They are:

| | |
|---|---|
| The catalog and the schedule of classes | 45% |
| Library materials | 44% |
| Bookstore | 41% |
| Admission services | 35% |
| Financial aid services | 32% |

Similarly, an assessment of the importance of ten academic advising services/factors yielded only five that were cited by more than 25% of CSUF students as being "Very Important."

| | |
|---|---|
| Faculty in major department | 49% |
| Major department advising center | 41% |
| Pre-college advising from high school | 33% |
| Fellow students | 27% |
| Campus catalog | 26% |

**Overall satisfaction** with experience at CSUF continues to be fairly high, although it has dropped since 1989:

| "I am pleased with my overall experience on this campus." | | |
|---|---|---|
| | 1994 | 1989 |
| Strongly agree | 13% | 15% |
| Agree | 50% | 56% |
| Neutral/Undecided | 26% | 19% |
| Disagree | 9% | 7% |
| Strongly disagree | 2% | 2% |

Overall satisfaction with CSUF does not vary significantly by gender, first generation status, or broad undergraduate/graduate categories. There are, however, significant differences along four dimensions.

*First,* CSUF students who are either employed or are looking for work are more satisfied than those who are not employed (and not looking). *Second,* lower division students are less satisfied than upper or graduate division students.

*Third,* students' responses varied by ethnicity. African-American and white/ Anglo students had the highest percentages agreed (76% and 70%, respectively). Latino students responded close to the total average. Asian and nonresident (international) students, in contrast, were less likely to agree that they were pleased with CSUF. Only 53% of Asians agreed, 33% were neutral, and 14% disagreed with the statement. Only 54% of nonresident students agreed, 42% were neutral, and 5% disagreed.

*Fourth,* responses varied significantly by school of major. ARTS and NSM majors were most likely to be pleased, with 83% and 85% agreeing with the statement, respectively. H&SS majors were slightly above the total average, with 71% agreeing. COMM, ECS, and HDCS majors had percents agreeing that were close to the total average. HDCS majors' neutral and negative response patterns were also close to the total average. COMM and ECS majors were less likely to respond "Neutral," and more likely to disagree with the statement (14% and 15% disagreed, respectively). BAE majors were less likely to agree, with only 52% agreeing, and more likely to respond "Neutral," with 39% so responding.

**Educational Goals.** Of 22 possible "things that the campus might do to help you reach your educational goals," the top six responses by CSUF students were:
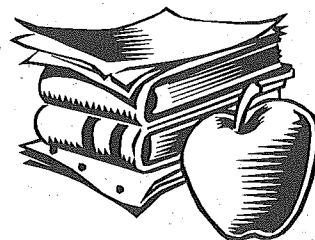
| | |
|---|---|
| Increase the number of sections for certain classes | 38% |
| Offer summer courses at regular fees | 38% |
| More/better academic advising | 33% |
| Improve the quality of instruction | 28% |
| More/better career counseling | 23% |
| Improve parking | 20% |

**Time to Graduation.** Although system-wide studies have found that CSU students tend to stop out for a semester here and there along the path to their degrees, making *enrolled* time to degree much lower than *elapsed* time to degree, 69% of CSUF juniors and seniors say they have not taken time off since first enrolling here. It could be that CSUF students are more likely to stay enrolled, only taking fewer units, than their counterparts system-wide.

Students were asked why they think it takes many CSU students five or six years to earn a baccalaureate degree, paying particular attention to reasons why they themselves might take 5-6 years. Most frequently cited reasons were:

| | |
|---|---|
| Desire to combine work and education | 62% |
| Required courses in major unavailable | 56% |
| GE courses unavailable | 33% |
| Change of major | 20% |
| Family/personal obligations | 19% |

**Student Finances.** How concerned are CSUF students about financing their college education? There is significant increase in the percent of those concerned compared to the 1989 SNAPS.

| | 1994 | 1989 |
|---|---|---|
| Not concerned | 23% | 34% |
| Somewhat concerned | 49% | 43% |
| Very concerned | 21% | 18% |
| Extremely concerned | 7% | 5% |

Because of the fee increases over the past several years, students were asked in the 1994 SNAPS: "What actions did you take in response to the fee increase in 1993-94?" CSUF students reported as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| No effect | 36% |
| Took more units to graduate sooner | 23% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Applied for financial aid | 22% |
| Increased work hours | 20% |
| Took fewer units to work more | 12% |
| Took 1-6 units to get the part-time fee | 11% |

Student reports of taking more units to graduate sooner are compatible with actual behavior. There have been record numbers of graduates and an increase in the average units per student in the past three years. This feedback suggests that we need to concentrate on enrolling large new student cohorts in the near-term to ensure that the large graduating classes are replaced and that the overall student body size remains stable.

From this report of early findings from the SNAPS 1994, a profile is emerging of CSUF students' heavy work and school schedules, their concerns about getting classes, affordability, and finances, and their practical, almost minimalist requirements and expectations of CSUF as their university. □

## Notable Quotables

Whatever people outside universities may think, professors are busy people, made even more busy by the fact that they are often unbusinesslike by nature and thus complicate small matters... They are daily asked for information they never had or have thrown away, and for reports on students they have not seen for five years and forgotten... They are required to be businesslike in a profession which is not a business, lacks the apparatus of a business, and deals in intangibles.

-- Robertson Davies:
The Rebel Angels

# Vision of an Ideal RTP Process: Reflections for the Reviewed and the Reviewer

■ *This article is, in part, a reaction to John Olmsted's article in the last issue about the RTP process. It contains the reflections of a faculty member who feels the personnel process needs considerable refinement.*

## By Pat Keig

*Pat Keig joined the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education in 1988. Her Ph.D. is from Penn State. She teaches science methods, learning theory, and gender issues in math and science education.*

APPRECIATED THE RECENT ARTICLE BY JOHN OLMSTED (SENATE FORUM, Vol. 8, Issue 3/4, pp. 14-15) on the personnel process for many reasons. Centrally, discussion of the process contributes to identification of needed changes, for example, the necessity for current, appropriate, and clear departmental standards for every department. Also, he admonishes us that to be intimidated or traumatized by the process, documents, or persons involved is "dead wrong." Well, maybe. Actually, I'd like to be convinced of this, as it is certainly counterproductive in preparing the file and surviving the process to feel otherwise.

The stance I have tried to take is to conduct myself within this university as if it were the university I want to work for. That is, treat it as if it were an ideal community of learners and scholars. Consider what the best case scenario is for the faculty member and the university in conducting this necessary business. Try to keep an eye on the ideal. It's a comfort in cases where the institution does not demonstrate its finest potential.

*An Ideal RTP Process.* I suggest that an ideal RTP process would have the following characteristics:

1. The preparation of the file stimulates self-evaluation, contributes to goal setting and to improved faculty performance;

2. The file itself provides the university with authentic assessment of the faculty member's value to the university;

3. The feedback provides faculty with balanced, fair, usable, and insightful guidance for growth and development;

4. The process takes time, but is worth the time it takes.

The shared task of the faculty member and reviewers is to seek the good while fulfilling obligations within the existing process. Where does the ideal break down in practice?

*Loosing a Grip on the Ideal.* Genuine critical reflection as required by RTP guidelines can be perilous. Readers of the file who come from departmental cultures where this is an unfamiliar practice may be led to conclude that a weakness is present when the file writer had intended only to be frank and objective. The file writer is tempted to present what is wanted rather than the truth about the personal struggle for growth. Inadequate evidence is available to faculty to determine whether honest reflection is an acceptable, growth-inducing process or a foolish risk. Facing that choice in a high-stakes context it is not surprising that critical self-evaluation is a perilous undertaking.

> *"Genuine critical reflection as required by RTP guidelines can be perilous."*

"Authentic assessment of faculty member's value to the university" is almost certainly the most difficult aspect of the process. We take student opinions, average the responses that have been bubbled in, then average the averages of the items. This implies that we are measuring a unitary construct, although we know that it is not. (Thanks to Darryl Katz for these points.) A tradition of interpreting the faculty member's teaching performance in terms of comparison to the mean will have the effect that a department with weak teaching can accept and retain weak teachers (though above average for the department) and a department with strong teaching may also reject very fine teachers (say, below an average of 3.74 on a 0-to-4 scale). Thus, in some cases a criterion-referenced interpretation is more reasonable (as stated in some department guidelines).

Reviewers devote a great deal of effort, commitment, and expertise to the RTP process. Because the ideal is so extremely difficult to achieve, the task requires constant attention to the goal of providing

authentic assessment and a willingness to examine assumptions. For instance, reviewers should be willing to examine the assumption that grades should always reflect a curve around some specified value. Let me cite an example from my own department—unusual, but illustrative of my point. In my department, essentially all the students who receive letter grades are practicing professionals, all have placed above the median grade point average in their major to even enter the profession, have remained in the field despite a 1–in–4 attrition rate, and have resolved to work toward a master's at CSUF rather than at a less demanding institution. The grades earned by these students may seem high by comparison to all undergraduates in the university but they are not inappropriately high.

The third ideal addresses feedback. Reviewers apparently do not have training of any kind. They apply different metrics to the data presented and are sometimes distinctly out of calibration with each other. The process of reviewing a file is closest to what would technically be considered "holistic analytical" evaluation. Yet our process falls short of the standards that are routinely established for holistic analytical evaluation. Our local authorities on holistic evaluation include all those who participate in scoring the English Writing Proficiency Test (EWPT). They are trained and their inter-rater reliability is examined. It seems likely that a similar training process for reviewers of WPAF files would increase the value of the feedback they provide.

The absence of a scoring guide in the RTP process presents problems. (Such a guide might include text describing how to evaluate files as well as anchor points that illustrate what is tenurable and what is not.) We have some difficulty agreeing on the quality of a given box of file materials, at least in part because the instrument has not been calibrated. Goulden comments:

> The problem with holistic tools is that although the global nature of the evaluation allows for inclusion of all possible traits and relationships, individual rater's choices of traits and the value given those traits may be highly idiosyncratic and, therefore, reduce reliability... Rater training, especially with samples of anchor products/performances, may be used to increase the consistency of holistic judgments. (N. P. Goulden. "Theory and vocabulary for communication

assessments." *Communication Education*, 41, 1992, p. 268)

Review at several levels is necessary in our system. But when it leads to conflicting messages to the faculty member, evaluator feedback should specifically address *why* conclusions contradict or seem to contradict other evaluations provided during the process. Resolving these difficulties would reduce the risk of intimidation and trauma in the RTP process.

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*"The time that goes into the preparation and evaluation of the document is far out of balance with the yield either to the individual or to the university."*

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In this context I cannot resist remarking on our peculiar system of four categories of review. In each of our categories (teaching, scholarly and creative, professional, and service) faculty members may be told that they are doing not enough (or not well enough) or alternately too much. This yields eight ways to fail. This seems unfair to me. If a faculty member is actually doing too much in a category, it is only too much if it is the primary cause of the faculty member's insufficiency in another category. In that case, the appropriate message is in that weak category. This simple change could increase agreement between levels of review.

The time that goes into the preparation and evaluation of the document is far out of balance with the yield either to the individual or to the university. My hope is that a "Shaker style" WPAF with the simple functional necessities could be demonstrated to be as acceptable as an ornate, "rococo" WPAF. It seems likely that such an abbreviated process would not undermine the accuracy of the findings, since at the present time 90% of submissions are successful, and requests for additional information would probably be infrequent. The overall savings of time in preparation and review could be enormous.

It has been argued that the present focus on the mechanics of the file may detract from the task of becoming the most valuable faculty member possible. In the time it takes to prepare the file with computer generated division labels, punching, binding, photocopying, and indexing, it would be possible to prepare an article for publication.

***Back to Reality.*** The feedback to the faculty member is clearly intended to guide growth and development but clarifying the criteria would provide even

more assistance in that effort. It would benefit our campus to address seriously the time demands of the process on both the reviewed and the reviewer.

I like to imagine preparing a file in accordance with my vision of an ideal RTP process. While I conform to the necessities of the day, I try to keep in mind what the process could ideally accomplish. It is my hope to yield as little as possible to the pressures that draw us away from those ideals. I appeal to all parties involved to bear in mind a vision of what is potentially good, healthy, and growth-inducing in the process and to minimize the necessary evils that have become a part of the process. There is a comfort to keeping our values before us. □
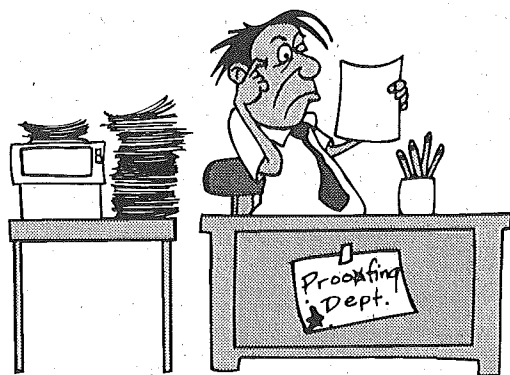


# From the Editor

*Curtis Swanson, the new* SENATE FORUM *editor, also chairs the Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures. He is a self-confessed computer nut. During the summer he is known to take long-distance bicycling trips through Europe.*
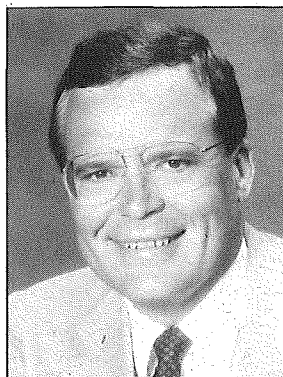
A S THE NEW EDITOR of the SENATE FORUM I hope you enjoy the articles in this issue. While putting it together and re-reading articles from prior issues, I learned to appreciate the great contribution that the founding editor of the FORUM—Julian Foster—has made to our university. For eight years, Julian furnished us with a public meeting place for the open discussion of ideas; he provided a rostrum to all who chose to mount it to debate academic issues; he

supplied a platform from which to disseminate information. Such a publication as the SENATE FORUM is rare at any university and rarer still at CSU campuses. Thank you, Julian. Well done!

The only thing that has really changed with this issue is the format and layout. The editorial principles established by Julian and the eight-year tradition of the FORUM have not changed.

The SENATE FORUM is intended to stimulate discussion, debate, and understanding of a variety of important issues. All members of the faculty and the administration are encouraged to respond to the materials contained in the FORUM or to submit their own contributions. The Editor and the Editorial Board are eager to receive submissions on any topic that is of interest to our readership. Articles in the range of 500 to 1500 words are preferred; however, longer articles are also acceptable if the added length is necessary for clarity and completeness. "Letters to the Editor" are especially welcome. □

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**Submission Information:**

Articles and letters for publication should be sent to the editor:

Curtis Swanson
Foreign Languages & Literatures
H-835C
☎ 2749, FAX 449-5944, also Quick-Mail

Please include a copy of the manuscript and, if possible, a diskette. The deadline for submissions to the next issue is **November 23**.

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*✍ Be warned in time, James, and remain, as I do, incomprehensible: to be great is to be misunderstood. ✍*

— OSCAR WILDE

♻ *Printed on recycled paper*