



**Council of Representatives
Approved Meeting Minutes**

January 29, 2009, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Room # 5402 Cuesta College

Attendance according to the sign-in page:

Academic Skills/DSPS

(None)

Biological Sciences

Mike Holmes
Ron Ruppert

Business Education

Marilyne Cleeves

Counseling

Julie Smith

**Engineering and
Technology**

None

English

June Beck

**English as a Second
Language**

None

Fine Arts

Doug Highland

Health Center

(None)

Human Development

None

**Languages and
Communication**

John Arno
Beth-Ann Dumas
Tony Rector-Cavagnaro

Library Services

Kevin Bontenbal

Mathematics

Denise Chellsen
Julie Hoffman
Barbara McGee

Nursing / Allied Health

Cathy Cyr

Mary Ann Ambrose (NCC)

Performing Arts

(none)

Physical Education

(none)

Physical Sciences

Debra Stakes

Social Sciences

Peter Dill
Kathryn Logan
Mark Weber

**Student Life and
Leadership & Health
Center**

(None)

Workforce Development

(None)

CCFT Executive Board

Allison Merzon – President
Peet Cocks – Vice-President
Mark Tomes – Sec.-Treas.
Peggy Wright –
Co-Grievance Officer
Andrea Devitt – COPE Chair

Visitors

None



Merzon opened the meeting at 3:22 p.m. after a quorum was reached. “Budget Crisis” was added to the agenda and the order of items was re-arranged.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made (Holmes/Stakes) to approve the draft minutes from the December 11, 2008 Council of Representatives meeting. It was approved unanimously.

2. **Budget Crisis**

Merzon reported that a joint Shared Governance/Planning and Budget Committee meeting held last Tuesday, January 27, 2009 was supposed to be a meeting to brainstorm and prioritize cost reduction strategies for the entire district. Instead, Cathleen Greiner, Vice-President of Student Learning, offered only one item for discussion: reduction and/or elimination of the Summer 2009 session, including the ideas that all campus buildings would be closed except for the High Tech Center Building and that administrators and office personnel would move there for the summer. This item was accompanied by very little budget data: only that it would save \$350,000.

Only 15 minutes were allowed at the end of the joint meeting for the scheduled brainstorming session, and the sessions were by individual constituent groups rather than by the joint committees as a whole. The consequent list of budget reduction ideas, deemed incomplete by most of the committees’ members, was later published on yellow paper (hence, its moniker, the Yellow List). Another joint meeting was scheduled for one week later for a vote on prioritizing the Yellow List, despite having no data to accompany the listed items for most of the week before the vote. (The Yellow List was distributed to Council members.)

In addition, despite many previous statements to the contrary by administrators, Dave Pelham, President of Cuesta College, stated at the joint meeting that the reduction of course for the Spring 2009 semester was a response to the state and local budget crisis.

Administrators were told at the joint meeting that complete elimination of the summer session and the closing of buildings would not be possible for a variety of reasons, e.g., there are chemistry labs that need refrigeration all year round and there are year-round academic and vocational programs.

Faculty members and classified employees on the committees later were upset that the agenda and shared governance process were not followed.

Council and EB members discussed the summer session reduction proposal and the lack of shared governance process that occurred at the joint committee meeting. The following points and issues were raised:

- The co-chairs of the joint meeting were not able to conduct the meeting.
- Cuesta College, for the first time in eight years, is over its FTES cap. If this is a fluke, that could be a detriment to Cuesta College, as the new FTES number

becomes the base that must be reached in subsequent years or must be repaid in dollars by the district.

- The over-FTES issue needs to be separated from the income reduction (budget crisis) issue.
- We need the Spring 2009 census data before making decisions based on FTES.
- The Planning and Budget Committee had already decided that no classes would be cut.
- What has the administration done in its own offices to reduce costs?
- Instruction is taking the brunt of the cuts and should not take any more cuts.
- Cuts to classes are a back door way of laying off employees, particularly part-time faculty members.
- Cutting the summer session would get the community's attention that Cuesta College is in a serious financial situation.
- Cutting the summer session would have a detrimental effect on Cal Poly and other students that rely on summer courses to reach their academic and timeline goals and would be a renegeing of Cuesta's commitment to the community.
- Part-time faculty members who have regularly taught summer school can receive unemployment benefits if they do not teach this upcoming summer.
- Cuesta has a projected income shortfall of about \$1,000,000 for 2009, and it is expected to be worse in 2010.
- The shared governance process is being undermined; Cuesta employees have a right to a meaningful voice at the table.
- Many items on the Yellow List need to be negotiated, and hence, should be removed from the list. (Many such items were identified by the Council.)
- The urgency for the joint committees to vote at next Tuesday's meeting is a result of the need to make a decision soon regarding summer session.
- The Yellow List is very incomplete and will likely have incomplete data at next Tuesday's joint meeting.
- Why is the district just deciding on reductions now? Why wasn't this being discussed months ago when we knew we would be having to make major cost reductions? What happened to the ideas from the forums last semester?
- The shared governance process is not being followed by the administration. Pelham told a part-time faculty member that the administration can do whatever it wants.
- Buy-in by all employees is important in a time of crisis.
- Why didn't the co-chairs take charge of the joint meeting? It is a matter of being firm.
- Managing FTES is a tricky balance because we have a cap that we get paid for (and only that amount) but we still need growth for growth dollars.
- Are we here for students or are the students here for us?
- There are cascading effects when cutting courses, including summer session.
- Cutting summer session courses means less course cuts needed in the subsequent fall and spring semesters.
- * We should refer to our mission statement for guidance in times like these.
- Voting on the Yellow List is premature.
- The union and Senate leaders should send an email to their constituents outlining the problems regarding the lack of shared governance and what to do about it.
- Despite a feeling of wanting to not attend next Tuesday's joint meeting or to walk out of it, the faculty should use the opportunity to show their reasonableness, professionalism, and commitment to shared governance.

There was general agreement by the Council to reject the Yellow List and use the original, agreed-upon process to continue the discussion of the district's cost-reduction strategies.

3. Schedule of Spring 2009 Council of Representatives Meetings

After a short discussion, there was a motion (Bontenbal/Hoffman) to schedule upcoming Council meetings for every second and fourth Thursday of the month until a subsequent discussion of the topic. It was approved by a majority vote (all members present vote aye, except McGee, who voted nay.)

4. Nominations for Part-Time Faculty Committee Chairperson

Merzon noted that the Part-Time Faculty Committee Chair position is still open. She encouraged Council members to nominate interested faculty members for the position.

5. CCFT Constitution/Bylaws Revision

Council members were reminded to send their copies of the draft Constitution and Bylaws to the CCFT faculty members in their division for feedback. Tomes noted that the drafts and suggestions forms are posted on the CCFT website. The Council will discuss changes to the drafts at its February 12 meeting. The Council's February 26 meeting will be its last chance to discuss them as a group because a vote on the drafts will be going to the membership in March 2009.

6. Negotiations Update

Merzon asked Council members to review the handout available to Council members at the beginning of the meeting that shows salary comparison data for California community colleges (the "AFA 2008 Salary Study") and to give input on it to the Negotiations Team.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Tomes, Secretary-Treasurer.