

# Council of Representatives

## Approved Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2009, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.  
Room # 5402 Cuesta College

*Attendance according to the sign-in page (p = present, a = absent):*

### **Academic Skills/DSPS**

(No elected rep)

### **Biological Sciences**

Michael Holmes (*a*)  
Ron Ruppert, proxy for Nancy  
Mann (*p*)

### **Business Education**

Michele McAustin (*p*)  
Traci Robichaud (*a*)

### **Counseling**

Dana Gough (*a*)  
Julie Smith (*p*)

### **Engineering and Technology**

David Fernandez (*p*)

### **English**

(No elected rep)

### **English as a Second Language**

(No elected rep)

### **Fine Arts**

Douglas Highland (*p*)

### **Health Center**

(No elected rep)

### **Human Development**

Dawn Brown (*p*)  
Margie Perez-Sesser (*p*)

### **Languages and Communication**

John Arno (*p*)  
Beth-Ann Dumas (*a*)  
Tony Rector-Cavagnaro (*p*)

### **Library Services**

Kevin Bontenbal (*a*)

### **Mathematics**

Denise Chellsen (*p*)  
Julie Hoffman (*p*)  
Barbara McGee (*p*)  
Jodi Meyer (*p*)

### **Nursing / Allied Health**

Mary Ann Ambrose (*p*)  
Cathy Cyr (*p*)

### **Performing Arts**

bree valle (*p*)

### **Physical Education**

Brian Locher (*p*)

### **Physical Sciences**

Debra Stakes (*p*)

### **Social Sciences**

Peter Dill (*a*)  
Kathryn Logan (*p*)  
Mark Weber (*a*)

### **Student Life and Leadership & Health Center**

(No elected rep)

### **Workforce Development**

(No elected rep)

### **Executive Board (non- voting)**

Marilyne Cleeves, PT Fac. (*p*)  
Peet Cocke, VP (*p*)  
Victor Krulikowski, GO (*p*)  
Allison Merzon, Pres. (*p*)  
Mark Tomes, S-T (*p*)

Jim Araby, CFT Political  
Activist  
M Basti  
Andrea Devitt  
Laurie MCConnico

### Visitors



Bontenbal opened the meeting at 3:11 p.m. when a quorum was reached. The meeting was chaired by Rector-Cavagnaro.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made (Rector-Cavagnaro/Chellsen) to approve the October 22, 2009 Council of Representatives meeting minutes. It passed unanimously.

2. **CFT Political Activist**

Merzon introduced Jim Araby, the political activist from CFT. Jim was here to talk about the importance of political activism, how CFT can help CCFT in Board of Trustee elections, and how important it is to get a Committee on Political Education going. He has been with CFT since May 2009, and he was an SEIU activist before that. He said he was hired for three reasons: 1) AFT is interested in getting members active with their Congresspersons, 2) CFT has a lot of activism in Sacramento, but its locals do not have much activism, and 3) CFT wants to help particular locals establish political programs.

Araby noted that it is helpful to think in terms of power, not political parties. The faculty can help get someone elected to the Board of Trustees and then hold them accountable. Araby described the process of getting active in politics. He said that it usually costs \$100,000 – \$200,000 to run a trustee campaign. Araby also noted that members need to ask other members to get involved, and often members will get involved when asked. Waiting until the September before a November election is too late.

Merzon asked the Council members to ask union members in their division to volunteer for COPE, particularly to spearhead the COPE committee for an activist drive.

3. **Joint Senate/CCFT Distance Education Report**

M Basti gave a report on the final recommendations from the joint Distance Education (DE) Task Force regarding the on-going support for distance education courses. (The task force has already made recommendations regarding the issue of evaluations of the faculty teaching DE courses). Basti distributed the committees' recommendations and meeting minutes. She thanked committee members.

Basti reported that Cuesta College used to have more support for faculty members teaching distance education courses, but now that is almost zero. The committee has recommended that Cuesta provide a DE instructional course designer at 60% reassigned time who would sign off on curriculum documents. Also, the committee recommends that an on-going joint Senate/CCFT committee be formed to handle future DE course issues.

It was noted that the faculty had a few years ago contractual rights to a stipend and/or reassigned time when developing a DE course, and that was very helpful, but that contractual language is now gone. Merzon noted that she has been teaching a

DE version of one of her courses and that “it is a whole different mode,” especially the amount of time it takes to do it properly.

Some issues with DE courses include whether students will take tests on campus or not, whether new students should take DE courses, whether an online orientation course should be required, and that some universities are not transferring credits from DE courses that do not test students onsite (they are asking for verification of onsite testing for individual DE courses).

A motion was made (Hoffman/Chellsen) to support the DE Task Force’s recommendations. It was approved unanimously.

#### 4. **Academic Calendar**

Merzon reported that 158 faculty members had responded to the calendar survey; results were mixed. Math department reps reported that the division unanimously supported keeping the October flex days because it provides a break from instruction at a good time and it works well for professional development activities (unlike the Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving).

The Business Education full-time faculty favor keeping the October flex days (the part-time faculty did not respond). The Human Development division almost unanimously supported moving the flex days to before Thanksgiving; the Performing Arts division concurred. The Physical Science division said that Monday and Friday courses miss a lot of instructional days when holidays fall on those days. Most of the Counseling department want to keep the October flex days. It was noted that safety issues are addressed by taking off the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Merzon noted that spring break counts as an instructional week for late start courses, and they start a week late, anyway, resulting in 7-week courses instead of 9. There were suggestions to move spring break to the middle of the semester; others noted that faculty surveys repeatedly want spring break to be tied to the local K-12 school districts, which take spring break right after Easter.

A rep wondered if there was a law to take the Veteran’s Day holiday on November 11. Someone else noted that local veterans groups made about \$7000 from the remembrance activities at Cuesta College.

#### 5. **Delta Dental Overlay**

The Math department was wondering if the overlay program was opt in or opt out, and Merzon explained that it is neither: an employee just tells their dentist (if they are in the PPO network) to bill them according to the PPO costs. Then the faculty member will get the increased benefit. Delta Dental says that premiums should be reduced next year if CCFT approves the overlay plan. A motion was made (Highland/Rector-Cavagnaro) to accept the overlay plan. It was approved unanimously. The plan needs to be approved at negotiations. Merzon will bring back information regarding whether faculty members who sign up for dental coverage can be required to stay in it if for a prescribed amount of time.

#### 6. **Sabbaticals**

The Academic Senate Council supported a resolution to endorse sabbatical funding for 2010-2011 as their number one unit plan item and to tell the district to use those funds (\$50,000) only for sabbaticals. The Senate Council wanted support for

their position. Some CCFT Council reps feared that giving it up would mean losing it permanently; others thought there might be some middle ground, that the economic situation has businesses giving up such programs, and that we can put language in to get the funds back. One rep noted that we are not a private business and we should keep it. Members of one division asked if we could call it a freeze or deferral and not an elimination. Ruppert made a motion (seconded by Valle) to support the Senate resolution to keep sabbatical funding. It was unanimously approved.

**7. Secretary-Treasurer's Report**

Tomes reported that there is \$6789.91 in the CCFT treasury, \$3194,19 in the COPE account, with \$740 of that allocated for the Board of Trustees election. He reviewed the proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws, including a possible dues increase (not yet discussed by the Executive Board). Many of the proposed amendments are to fix inadvertent errors from the major Constitution and Bylaws changes implemented last semester.

Some language changes to the original proposals were suggested. It was suggested to keep any discussion of a dues increase separate from the other proposals. A motion was made (Ruppert/Hoffman) to endorse the proposed amendments with the suggested changes and as separate from a dues increase. It passed unanimously. It was suggested to survey the members regarding a dues increase. Tomes will contact the Elections Committee for them to set up an elections calendar. Because union members must be notified at their home addresses at least 40 days before an election, the actual election probably will not be until the Spring 2010 semester.

**8. Communications Chair**

Merzon nominated June Beck to fill the vacancy of Communications Chair. Beck filled the position last year until she took time off to complete her book. This is a two-year position as a voting member on the Executive Board with a \$1000 per semester stipend. Rector-Cavagnaro made a motion (seconded by McAustin) to approve the nomination. The motion was approved unanimously.

**9. College Budget**

Merzon reported that DSPS is being asked to take some major budget cuts. Pat Schwab and Linda Fontanilla are putting together proposals to take to the December 2 Board of Trustees; Merzon asked for the reps to support DSPS at the BOT meeting. She noted it has been difficult getting budget numbers.

The 08-09 budget audit is due soon, and Merzon has asked for a copy.

**10. Negotiations**

Merzon reported CCFT declared impasse at its last negotiations session; the district had already agreed to impasse. Still, it is being suggested to try one more day of negotiations so that there are fewer items to mediate and because neither Toni Sommer nor the district attorney were at the last meeting. Merzon noted that CCFT comes prepared to every meeting. Also, negotiations were going fairly smoothly, albeit slowly, until we began discussing money. Then, "it went south."

The district has decided to unilaterally deduct taxes from the SISC refund, but it did it such a manner that union dues and fees were erroneously assessed. The district

staffperson responsible for the mistake has said that it will be corrected in the November 30, 2009 paycheck.

Merzon noted that she is constantly educating the Board of Trustees and the administration regarding the true purpose of COLA, the loss of faculty in higher education, part-time faculty pro-rate pay, and many other issues.

**11. Grievance(s) Update**

Krulikowski reported that a part-time faculty member has won a salary dispute, and in another case, the district wants to dock a faculty member's salary one year after the district made a mistake in the faculty member's paycheck. Other issues, including several others involving pay issues, are being discussed.

**12. COPE Chair**

See Jim Araby's report above.

**13. Financial Review Committee**

Tomes reported that AFT requires each local to complete an in-house annual financial review or an independent audit. The former is free (except for a stipend), while the latter costs between \$4000-\$5000. He encouraged the reps to find a chairperson for this important committee.

**14. Committee Reports**

*Part-Time Faculty Committee* – Cleeves reported that the committee met at her house. They have decided to complete a membership drive for part-time faculty members. Cleeves is requesting a channel for part-time faculty on myCuesta. Also, the CCFT Negotiation Team has proposed to the district MOU language for part-time faculty bumping rights, per the Part-Time Faculty Committee, Council, and division chair input.

**15. Course caps**

Merzon reported that course caps (size limits) are being changed by those outside the divisions. The Senate Council and CCFT are encouraging faculty members to discuss the pedagogical and workload issues of their courses and come up with caps for each course. The Senate will propose a process to keep course caps in place, and CCFT will negotiate it (since it is a workload issue) in order to keep the district from arbitrarily changing the caps.

One rep said that we should not use the word "efficiency" to discuss course fill rates; it is just used to stuff more students into the classroom without regard to pedagogical issues. Some reps wondered who has the actual control over changing the course caps.

**16. Division Concerns**

None at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Tomes, Secretary-Treasurer.

Next Council of Representatives meeting: Thursday, December 10, 2009.  
Next Executive Board meeting: Thursday, December 3, 2009.