



Message to the Divisional Chairs on Enrollment Management for 2009

"At its best, enrollment management creates a highly interactive team of committed staff and faculty that uses established principles of planning, implementation, evaluation, and revision to ensure the institution's constant and consistent success in meeting its educational commitments to students while remaining accountable to its many publics."

"Enrollment Management for the 21st Century: Institutional Goals, Accountability, and Fiscal Responsibility." Garlene Penn ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Volume 26, No. 7. The George Washington University.

West Los Angeles College
Culver City, CA 90230

December 2, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

I had expected to join you for your meeting today to deliver this message in person, but I was called away for a meeting with Congresswoman Watson to discuss the progress of our entertainment industry jobs program.

When we began this academic year none of us expected that I would have to report that yesterday Governor Schwarzenegger invoked a Prop 58 special session of the legislature, stating that without action the state of California would run entirely out of cash by March. The current fiscal year budget shortfall is projected to be \$11.2 billion. Over the next 18 months, preliminary estimates from the Legislative Analyst's Office show the budget deficit reaching a staggering \$28 billion. As a member of Chancellor Drummond's Emergency Response Task Group and as Co-Chair of the District Budget Committee, I receive a daily briefing from Sacramento on the community college budget. While we await the details, it is clear to me that our stewardship of our college will soon require us to prepare to take decisive action.

We will of course continue to work together through our approved Budget Omnibus act of last June to identify every opportunity for revenue enhancements and budget savings without layoffs. This will be our challenge and together we will meet this challenge successfully.

The opportunity of the current crisis is that it is even more necessary that we make continuing and expedited progress on our goal of enrollment management to support the college mission. Over the past three years we have pursued together an enrollment strategy that is comprised of these key tenets:

1. *Enrollment growth is the key to obtaining the resources necessary to pursue academic excellence.* The college will grow to its master plan level of about 10,000 FTES. Bear in mind that under SB361 there is a big difference between unpaid growth and deferred

paid growth. While we may not be fully paid for growth in a given year like this one, SB361 eventually does fully pay growth by rebasing the college budget upward to its new FTES base if growth over base has been achieved in three consecutive years.

2. *Academic excellence and student success is measured by our growing number of awards of degrees, certificates and certified CSU/UC transfers.*
3. *As a comprehensive community college, we also reach out to the “best and brightest” in our service high schools and grow the number of students who are ready for college-level courses and honors programs.*
4. *Students who are enrolled to programs persist and complete at much higher rates than students who are just “taking available courses to fulfill requirements.” Therefore we will continue our progress toward a student-friendly class schedule.*

Our strategy has worked and it will continue to work, in large measure due to the extraordinary leadership, commitment and hard work of Vice President Bob Sprague, Dean Judith-Ann Friedman, Dean Linda Clowers and now Dean Rebecca Tillberg. This is the best Academic Affairs team I have ever had the good fortune of working with—and we work together closely. In moving forward decisively, I support them 100%.

Today, I am asking Bob and his team and each of you to continue your great work as enrollment managers. There are five specific areas that I ask you all today to move forward with:

1. **Large Size Classes.**
 - a. You are of course by now fully aware of the revised Article 40 that permits instructors to increase online course limits to 80 with department approval. I am asking each chair to approve any request that comes to you from any instructor who is good standing. Doing so will insure that more students will be served and will significantly reduce burdens and thus costs to A&R. I am grateful and our students are grateful to those chairs who are granting such requests.
 - b. I am instructing Bob to propose a formal agreement for large size “bricks and mortar” courses that follows the current MOU at Pierce.
2. **Low enrolled classes.** My instructions to Academic Affairs are to eliminate any low enrolled class, per Article 12, for the Winter Session by December 30, and to eliminate any low enrolled class for the Spring semester by Friday, February 6, with no exceptions.
3. **Definition of “advanced class”.** I have asked Bob to share with you a proposed definition that will soon come before the Senate. It seems quite reasonable to me and so, until I have a further recommendation from the Senate, I will ask Academic Affairs to employ this definition effective immediately.
4. **Time of day starts for classes.** I have asked Bob and the deans to eliminate the many overlaps in the times that classes currently start and to adhere to a time grid that formerly governed class scheduling here at West.
5. **MWF time blocks for Math, Science, Foreign Language.** I am asking on a voluntary basis that these departments, and perhaps others, consider moving classes to a MWF schedule. This seems to serve 5-unit and lecture-lab courses better and will free up significant prime time blocks for other courses.
6. **Revision of Summer Session Calendar.** I am asking Academic Affairs to move to two back-to-back 5 week summer sessions that begin on June 22. This would finally norm our summer sessions with all other LACCD colleges and SMCC. This action will complete the academic calendar normalization project we began last year. While I hope all departments will participate, I will understand if some choose not to. This move will also enable us to run full summers for our students while saving significant expense in the current fiscal year.

Surely these actions will increase or efficiency and budget savings, but the primary goal of these actions is to continue to improve our college through progressive enrollment management that serves the needs of all students. By now we can all trust that we will move forward with transparency and collegial collaboration, another West hallmark.

I believe this moment has come to us as our destiny, to serve together as stewards of the college at this particular time. I have an abiding faith that ours will be the generation that steered the college through this time toward the bright future that is ours.

With thanks,

Mark

Mark W. Rocha, Ph.D.
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