Concerning the Closure Report 2013–10–03

Informal notes from Fred Teti and Karen Saginor

This information about the Closure Report comes from several sources.

- Participatory Governance Council Meeting, 2013 – 09 – 19
- Accreditation Committee Meeting, 2013 – 10 – 01
- Special meeting concerning Closure Report, 2013 – 10 – 01
- Email correspondence with Chuen Chan.

The Closure Report will be submitted to ACCJC on October 14. It will be made public that same day. It is a more detailed version of the Closure Report that CCSF submitted on March 15, 2013. The administration has been in contact with ACCJC about the report. The Closure Report is a contingency plans that will be used only in the event that ACCJC’s final decision is to terminate the college’s accreditation. Like the earlier version submitted last Spring, this report includes seven elements required by the ACCJC Policy on Closing an Institution. (See page 33-36 of http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Accreditation_Reference_Handbook.pdf ) The drafting of the Closure Report is led by Interim Chancellor Scott-Skillman and Chuen Chan, Director of Research, with the assistance of Mandy Liang, Counselor, and with input and advice from administrators and others -- including Sally Montemayor-Lenz, from the State Chancellor’s office. As was stated in the college-wide email from Interim Chancellor Scott-Skillman on September 30:

The Closure Report serves as a contingency plan and outlines activities such as how City College will:

- Assist students to continue their educational pathways,
- Provide a plan for employees,
- Dispose of assets, and
- Storage of student records.

- 21 local community colleges from the Student Senate’s Regions 3 and 4 have either signed or agreed to sign “Letters of Intent” to enter into MOUs to accommodate our students. (The MOUs themselves aren’t required until actual closure.) However, we must first scan students’ records and transcripts (going back to 1935). Current and continuing students will receive two official transcripts free of charge.

- Disposition of records: Both SFSU has agreed to be the official repository of our students’ records. CSU East Bay has agreed to store personnel files. All records must be digitized before they are sent. An estimate of $470,000 has been received for digitizing the student records.

- Many student records and other essential records are currently held only in paper, microfiche or microfilm, some in deteriorating condition. Interim Chancellor Scott-Skillman examined them and has photographs of the poor condition of some records.

- Sunny Clark pointed out that student health records will also need to be preserved for some period of time (in accordance with legal requirements).

- Teach-out: Chuen and Mandy are compiling the list of "highly specialized" credit programs (there is no provision for noncredit but see below) and the students who are at least 75% through these credit programs. (The Banner CAPP program for doing so ran for 3.5 days just for a small subset of certificate programs. It is estimated to run the larger degree program will take 6 weeks. Doug Re says he could try to optimize the runs.) (We are told that some of these highly specialized programs have no students at 75% completion.) Portions of the College would remain open and accredited for these students to complete their programs. There may be as many as 124 CTE programs almost all of which are unduplicated at any nearby public college.

- Disposition of assets: The team recommends that we not sell anything. The District (SFCCD) would still exist and legally owns the assets, even if the College(CCSF) closes. [No information has been offered about how the San Francisco Community College District could meet its purpose of providing education if CCSF were to close.]

- The Closure Report will acknowledge a continuing financial obligation by the district for OPEB? (other post employment benefits)
The appendices of the report published on October 14 will include:
- The letters of intent from area community colleges (described above).
- Sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that another college might sign with CCSF.
- Drafts of letters that would be sent to students and to employees.

For non-credit students, a list of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that offer classes or training would be provided in the case of closure. We were told that the governor plans to release some Adult Ed money. Some organization in the Bay Area will receive part of it. Maybe that organization could take some of our noncredit students.

In response to questions about various contingencies, Interim Chancellor Scott-Skillman said that the Closure Report will not include all details; it is “one step short of what would actually be needed if the decision to terminate accreditation is upheld.”

Neither the Accreditation Committee nor constituency leaders will see the Closure Report before it is submitted to the ACCJC and becomes public.

A student leader asked if the Commission is interested in having included in the report information about the impact that closing CCSF would have on San Francisco. The answer was No.

The Administration stressed the importance of messaging. The report should be presented as contingency only, part of our due diligence to retain accreditation. Messaging starts now so that it won’t be a surprise on October 14th. The Special Trustee will be sending out a message later this week.

No other college has been asked by ACCJC to provide a Closure Report with this level of detail, because other colleges that wrote a Closure Report when put on Show Cause were upgraded after one year on Show Cause.

A pair of questions and their answers about data collected for the report.
(1) For the calculation on whether a student is 75% through a program, on what is that percentage based? Semesters enrolled (e.g., 3 out of a 4-semester program), sections completed (e.g., 6 classes out of an 8-class program), credits earned, or something else entirely?
(2) Even though there are programs with 0 students at 75% and hence won’t be part of the teach-out, the students in the teach-out will need access to GE courses to qualify for associate degrees. Does that not mean keeping enough courses available in all the GE areas (plus other graduation requirement areas)?

Chuen’s responses:
In our data-mining and in writing the report, we attempt to follow as closely as we can to the policies given by ACCJC. In this case, the guidelines read ‘When a student has completed 75% of an academic degree and educational program.” For our data analysis, we use the CAPP program which is part of Banner. We look at students attempting degrees and certificate programs separately. As not all certificate programs have the same unit requirements, we had to do each run separately base on their unit requirements. We look at the entire database and see what classes each student took and successfully completed their requirements. We did the same for the degree requirements except this time it is based on 60 units requirements.
To answer question (1) that percentage is based on the student’s entire career at CCSF. As to question (2) you are correct. We did discussed and take that into our planning consideration.

Personal comment by Karen Saginor: I am expecting that the contents of the Closure Report (for example draft letters to be sent to students and employees) will be intensely demoralizing. I think that the messaging about its being only a contingency needed for due diligence, etc. will do little to mitigate the effects that this document and media accounts about it are likely to have on us and on our students. This will hit us hard on Monday, October 14th. I recommend that we brace ourselves and prepare our students for this depressing news, and that we remember to encourage and support each other in coping with this next blow.