Resolution 2012.04.04.02 March 12 Memo to ACCJC/WASC Visiting Team

Regarding the 2012 Accreditation Self-Study Report Resolution approved by Council on November 9, 2011, and the follow-up memo presented by Academic Senate Officers to the ACCJC/WASC visiting team on March 12, 2012:

Whereas, the follow-up memo presented to the ACCJC/WASC visiting team during the week of March 12 and distributed to the Academic Senate Executive Council during the March 14 Executive Council meeting fulfills the expectations of the Academic Senate Executive Council referenced in Resolution 2011.1109.04; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Academic Senate Executive Council endorse the March 12, 2012 follow-up ACCJC/WASC memo and supporting reference materials, and be it finally;

Resolved, that the Academic Senate Executive Council commend the President for delivering the memo to the ACCJC/WASC visiting team.

Moved: Brown; Seconded: Podenski; MCU Appendix B
TO: Sandra Serrano, Chair, Accreditation Visiting Team to CCSF

CC: Members of the Accreditation Visiting Team to CCSF

FROM: Karen Saginor, Academic Senate President

DATE: March 12, 2012

SUBJECT: Significant issues omitted from the Institutional Self Study Report for City College of San Francisco and from the February 1, 2012 Update in regards to Standard IV.B.1.

In Fall, 2011, the CCSF Academic Senate reviewed the draft Self Study report and requested modifications to improve its accuracy. The administration accepted changes to most parts of the Self Study, but declined modifications suggested for Standard IV.B. [Ref-1, Ref-2, Ref-3]. It was the opinion of the Academic Senate’s Executive Council that without the requested modifications, the College’s response to Standard IV.B.1 omitted significant evaluative perspectives on how well the College meets the Standards for Accreditation. In its resolution to authorize the Academic Senate President to sign the Self Study report, “the CCSF Academic Senate reserve[d] the right to share with the WASC/ACCJC visiting team opinions that might vary from those expressed in the report as approved by the Board.” [Ref-4]

Events and developments subsequent to the December 8th, 2011 certification of the Institutional Self Study Report have increased doubt that it is accurate in asserting that the College fully meets Standards IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.g., and especially IV.B.j. This document provides information, articulates perspectives, and adduces evidence that the officers of the Academic Senate consider essential to an accurate assessment of the College.
Update to IV.B.1.a ….The governing board ... advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.

One member of the Board of Trustees appears to have taken deliberate action that has damaged the reputation of the College by providing a reporter with a report on the attendance of trustees with inaccurate information about College policy. Trustee Ngo had been disturbed by trustee absences, commenting on them at committee meetings (not recorded). His concerns about ailing trustees, absences, and legal ramifications could have been addressed and resolved with his colleagues, college legal counsel, or the Chancellor. It appears that he chose to publicize his concerns via a newspaper reporter before verifying his (mis)interpretations of attendance requirements. In choosing that path, he was not advocating for nor defending the College. The College legal counsel has since provided the reporter and the newspaper with accurate information and requested a retraction. [Ref-5, Ref-6, Ref-7, Ref-8]

Significant Omission from IV.B.1.e ….The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws.

In 2009, Milton Marks, as President of the Board of Trustees, created Board committees to deliberate on matters of importance to the College. These are chaired either by the President or another trustee. Each committee chair schedules meetings and sets the agenda. Currently, there are seven Board committees, of which five meet frequently. [Ref-9]. There were 28 Board committee meetings held in 2009, 40 held in 2010, and more than 40 in 2011. The agendas for these meetings are available online, but no minutes are created for these meetings [Ref-10, Ref-11]. This is not consistent with BP 2360 which specifies that minutes are to be recorded for all meetings, including “work sessions or committee meetings, open sessions, closed sessions, special meetings, and retreats,” and that the “minutes shall state the time the meeting was called to order, the names of the members attending the meeting, the roll call vote on each matter considered at the meeting, the time the board or committee began and ended any closed session, the names of the members and the names, and titles where applicable, of any other persons attending any closed session, a list of those members of the public who spoke on each matter if the speakers identified themselves, whether such speakers supported or opposed the matter, for each agenda item, and the time the meeting was adjourned.” [Ref-12]

This lack of adherence to Board Policy interferes with transparency in Board governance and is one of the factors enabling members of the Board to involve themselves inappropriately in the administration and operation of the College. Two current examples of this deleterious impact:

- On January 12, 2012, the Board of Trustees Facilities, Infrastructure & Technology Committee heard a Report on CCSF Computer Network Security. This was a very significant meeting because false allegations of serious security breaches in the College’s network made at the meeting were reported widely in newspapers and other media. (See further discussion under IV.B.1.g.). There are no minutes for that committee meeting, and a PowerPoint presentation made at the meeting has yet to be made available to College constituency leaders. [Ref-13]

- Resolution S6, approved by the Board of Trustees on February 23, 2012, cites as background for the resolution “hearings regarding faculty diversity in the 2010-2011 academic year” [Ref-14]. One of those hearings was a meeting of the Audit Committee on December 1, 2010, a meeting that did not achieve quorum, and at which there was no discussion of seven of the items listed on its agenda that would have been of relevance to Resolution S6 [Ref-15, Ref-16].

The Board of Trustees is aware that is not in compliance with its policy on this regard. Members of the Board participated in a discussion about the lack of minutes for committee meetings on August 27, 2009, but no action was taken to follow up on this issue [Ref-17, pp. 14-20]. Included in that discussion was the recognition that sound recordings made of every open meeting (including every committee meeting) in accordance with Board Policy 2365, are not a substitute for minutes [Ref-18]. Although the sound recordings of committee meetings may be inspected without charge, they are not publicly posted, nor is information about how to obtain access to them publicly posted.

Minutes of open sessions of the full board conform to the provisions of BP 2360. For closed sessions of the full board, information about roll call votes is announced at open sessions and recorded in the minutes of the open session at which it is announced. The rest of the required information is not supplied for closed sessions [Ref-19,
Significant Omission from IV.B.1.g ….The governing board’s self evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.

As is stated in the Institutional Self Study Report (p. 422), the most recent self-evaluation of the Board of Trustees was commenced in Fall, 2010 and the survey outputs were presented in a public meeting of the Board on January 21, 2011. However, the self-evaluation process was not completely implemented. The Board Self Evaluation policy that was in force at the time of that evaluation stated that the purpose of the Board’s self-evaluation was “to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning” and the policy called for “the results of the process … be used to summarize accomplishments from the past year and to develop Board goals and tasks for the coming year.” [Ref-21]. The January 21, 2011 discussion of the Fall, 2010 survey was confined almost entirely to the form and process of the self-evaluation and to speculation about the numbers of participants from the constituent groups. The Board of Trustees did not complete the evaluation process by using the results to identify strengths and areas for improvement nor to develop goals and tasks for the coming year [Ref-22]. Although the Board’s policy states that self evaluations are to be conducted annually, it has been more than a year since that last self-evaluation effort commenced and ceased and the Board of Trustees has not begun on its next effort.

Significant Omission from IV.B.1.j ….The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator…. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively.

Some members of the Governing Board do not adhere consistently to their role as a policy making body and seek involvement in the administration and operation of the College. Unfortunately, there are many instances of Trustees, either as individuals or acting as a Board (often on a 4-3 split vote), interfering in operational matters or intruding into operational decision making processes. These intrusions have been deleterious in many areas, but have had the worst impact on College finances.

Assertions of the authority of the Board

Both individual Trustees and the Board on majority vote of the body have asserted authority of the Board to run the college and to intervene directly in College operations. This perspective manifests frequently. For example, Board President John Rizzo in his May, 2011 commencement address spoke of himself as “running City College.” [Ref-23]. Trustee Ngo, addressing the Board’s Planning and Budgeting Committee on February 15, 2012 stated, “The Board has jurisdiction to take up any issue concerning the College…. There is no other way to hold this institution accountable but through us and our elections.” [Ref-24]. Board Policy BP 1.07, adopted on October 27, 2011 states in part, “It will be the purpose and practice of the Board… [to] Determine and control the District’s operations and capital outlay budgets.” [Ref-25].

Trustee involvement in controlling budget and expenditures – 2011-12 Budget

From February 22 – June 30, 2011, the Board of Trustee’s Planning and Budgeting Committee, chaired by Trustee Ngo, held a series of eight meetings and hearings that examined data and made recommendations in parallel to the College’s Planning and Budgeting Council [Ref-10].

The Institutional Self Study Report (p. 424) describes the Board’s involvement as follows:

In regard to the 2011-12 budget, the Board’s Planning and Budgeting Committee required and
received numerous reports on the draft 2011-12 budget. The Board provided guidance to the Chancellor in the allocation of resources for: the Grace Child Development Program at the Southeast Campus, as well as child development programs at other instructional sites throughout the city; funding for class sections; the salary schedule for administrators; the establishment of a fund for innovation; and the adequate provision of funding for the Second Chance Program.

The Grace Child Development Center is located at 1551 Newcomb Street, San Francisco, CA 94124, near the Southeast campus. It offers low cost preschool for children aged 3-5. It serves up to 90 children with no preference given to the children of City College students. The cost to the College for operating the center is about $500,000 per year. In February, 2011, the Administration suggested the closure of the center as one of several possible expenditure solutions for the expected shortfalls for 2011-12 [Ref-26, line 30]. On February 15, 2011, the College’s Planning and Budgeting Council approved a motion that the College take steps towards that closure [Ref-27]. At the April Board of Trustees meeting, in response to a plea for the center from a City College alumna, the Chancellor explained that the center would be closing as an administrative process [Ref-28]. Subsequent to that meeting, the closure of Grace was removed from the draft 2011-12 budget. Although it is unquestionable that the Grace Child Development Center serves an important need, the provision of child care to city residents is not within the mission of the College.

Additional Board of Trustee modifications to the budget were itemized in a special section of the Annual Budget, approved by the Board on September 22, 2011 [Ref-29, pp. 4-6].

- $1.9 million increased allocation for faculty instructional assignments.
- Provision of a cost-effective salary schedule for administrators – no dollar amount attached.
- Establishing an Innovation Fund for instruction to be included in the $1.9 million.
- ($1.5 million) reduction for certain types of faculty assignments categorized as “non-instructional” under California Education Code, and meeting additional criteria set by the Board.
- $150,000 allocation for the Second Chance program.
- $200,000 allocation for stipends and scholarships, to be drawn from sales tax and anticipated trust fund revenues, with the direction that the stipends and scholarships be administered through the Office of Mentoring and Service Learning, which is not the unit that usually handles scholarships and stipends.

The involvement of Trustees in the budget at an administrative level had unfortunate consequences on the 2011-2012 budget. The impact of the change to the Board’s decision concerning Grace and the Board’s modifications to the College budget may be summarized as follows:

- $0.5 mil continuing cost for Grace Child Development Center.
- $1.9 mil increased allocation for instruction, including innovation funding.
- ($?) very little reduction actually made in this area. The expectation of achieving substantial savings is this area was not based on credible research and was not realistic.
- $0.15 mil for the Second Chance Program.
- $0.2 mil for Mentoring and Service Learning from sales tax funds that would otherwise have gone into the unrestricted accounts.

Total: $2.75 million in increased expenditures/decreased funding for 2011-12.

On October 18th, less than a month after the Board of Trustees adoption of the 2011-12 Budget on September 22, the Finance and Administration Division reported to the College Planning and Budgeting Council that there was a serious gap between projected revenues and projected expenditures for 2011-12 [Ref-30]. The administration has been making efforts to close that gap since October, but the Board of Trustees’ adoption of a budget rendered unrealistic by their modifications has been a significant drain on the College’s financial resources.
Trustee involvement in controlling budget and expenditures – 2012-13 Budget

Trustee Ngo, chair of the Board of Trustee’s Planning and Budgeting Committee, is again scheduling a series of meetings or hearings on budget issues. Although the meetings have been planned some time in advance, the agendas for the first two meetings, on February 7th and 15th, were posted only 24 hours before each meeting, skirting Brown Act requirements by marking them as special meetings [Ref-31, Ref-32]. The topics agendized and discussed at these meetings are not confined to matters of budget policy or broad financial concern. The February 7th meeting agenda included three inappropriate items listed under 4.c. Discuss proposals for deficit reduction:

- Projected savings from elimination of Government Relations Office. The administration has not proposed eliminating the Governmental Relations Office. This item appears to be an attempt to pressure the administration to restructure based on Trustee Ngo’s apparent dislike for the person who currently holds the position of Vice Chancellor of Governmental Relations.

- Projected savings from accelerated/condensed courses in English and math. The English and mathematics departments are continuing curriculum work towards shorter course sequences. Monetary savings from curriculum changes, if any, will be very small.

- Projected savings from changes in placement testing system. Although there have been conversations at the College about changes to placement testing policies and procedures, formal proposals have not been advanced by the administration for review through Shared Governance as required under Title 5, Section 53200 and CCSF Board Policy 2.07. Significant savings have not been projected for any of the potential proposals.

[Ref-31, Ref-33].

At the February 15, 2012 meeting of the Board of Trustee’s Planning and Budgeting Committee, about an hour of the meeting was devoted to the testing policies and matters related to English and math curriculum. An email from Trustee Ngo before the meeting confirmed that he intended to include a discussion of the policies for testing [Ref-34]. At the meeting, both Trustee Jackson and the Academic Senate President suggested that other forums would be more appropriate for the policy discussion before the Planning and Budget Committee reviewed potential savings from changes in policy, but Trustee Ngo as chair of the committee declined to refer the matter to a different forum. The presentation he had arranged given by Katie Hern concerned neither expenditures nor the possibility of ceasing to provide placement tests. Katie Hern, instructor at Chabot College and Director of California Acceleration Project, spoke about the benefits of shorter course sequences, English curriculum design, and giving a choice between a two semester sequence of courses or a one semester accelerated course to students whose placement test results are below the cut score for college level English. She distributed copies of reports on her research [Ref-35, Ref-36]. The Planning and Budgeting Committee listened to extensive public comment on whether incoming students should be required to take placement tests before enrolling in English classes and similar topics [Ref-24].

The combination of inadequate state funding and Board misdirection for the 2011-12 Budget has placed the College in serious financial jeopardy. The unfolding trajectory of some Board members taking the same approach for the 2012-13 budget in another lean year for state funding raises grave concerns for the financial future of the College.

Trustee involvement in operational and academic/professional matters

Examples are given here to illustrate the types of circumstances in which individual Trustees, Board Committees, or the Board acting as a body (often on a 4-3 split vote) have taken direct action or applied inappropriate pressure to intervene in College operations.

In mid November, when the College was cancelling class sections, especially in noncredit, Trustees Jackson and Ngo were instrumental in expanding the VESL program to add new class sections: two at the Visitation Valley Community Center and two at the Southeast Campus [Ref-37]. Several of those sections have since been cancelled because they could not attract sufficient enrollment.

President Rizzo, as chair of the Board of Trustees Facilities, Infrastructure & Technology Committee, invited Chief Information Technology Officer David Hotchkiss to make a presentation at a meeting of the Committee on
January 12, 2012. The presentation was listed as a report, not connected to a policy item [Ref-13]. At the meeting the report was read, accompanied by PowerPoint slides. It alleged serious security breaches in the College’s network. [Ref-38] The allegations had not been shared before the meeting with administrators, with members of the faculty nor with any of the classified staff working in Information Technology Services. The San Francisco Chronicle posted an article about the report the evening of the meeting, accompanied by a photograph taken before the meeting [Ref-39]. The newspaper story was picked up widely around the web. President Rizzo has said in conversation that he sent the Chronicle story to other media because he thought that people would feel sorry for the College. The report and the PowerPoint presented at the January 12th meeting have still not been made available to members of the College community. The allegations of major security breaches have since been evaluated and have not been substantiated. The suitable response to a report of a security breach is first to evaluate its reliability and then to take corrective action – both operational activities. The Board’s Facilities, Infrastructure & Technology Committee was not the appropriate forum for such a report. The presentation of unevaluated, inaccurate allegations at a public meeting of a Board committee did not support an appropriate response, instead causing widespread alarm among both employees and students, taking time and effort away from other issues, and leading to unnecessary public embarrassment [Ref-40].

In August, 2011, The manager of the bookstore was directed by the administration to form a workgroup to develop an RFP for a contract for cold beverage vending machines for City College facilities and to review and make recommendations about responses to the RFP. After the work of the RFP group was underway, the issue was discussed at a meeting of the Board of Trustees Facilities, Infrastructure & Technology Committee [Ref-41, Ref-42]. The President of the Board had concerns about sustainability and health that he felt were not being appropriately addressed in the criteria under consideration by the RFP group. Instead of sending these issues to appropriate shared governance committees, or requesting that the RFP group seek expertise to address his concerns, the President of the Board debated with various faculty and students in email discussions and then wrote a resolution, approved by the Governing Board, that dictated many details for the terms of the RFP, including a list of ingredients to be excluded from the beverages offered in the vending machines [Ref-43, Ref-44].

In the Annual 2011-2012 Budget (Final Budget), the Board of Trustees Budget Modifications section directed that a specific sum of money be set aside for scholarships and stipends and that it “be reserved for and or otherwise administered by the Office of Mentoring and Service Learning” [Ref-29, p.5]. The Board resolution specified administration through that particular office, even though the Office of Mentoring and Service Learning is not an administrative unit and should not handle scholarships and stipends.

There are inappropriate resolutions that are drafted by some Trustees, but not approved. Although such drafts may not ultimately result in inappropriate Board actions, they waste the time and energy of the Trustees and of shared governance bodies. Inappropriate draft resolutions create conflict, foster distrust, and deter cooperative work for the goals of the College. The Institutional Self Study Report (p. 400) refers to a draft Board resolution concerning academic and professional matters that members of the some members of the Board of Trustees proposed before obtaining adequate input from the Academic Senate. [Ref-45]. Unfortunately, Trustees have continued to initiate resolutions that include directives inappropriate for the role of the Board. A resolution directing the manner of posting of pdf files for Board agendas that would have been more appropriate for administrative action was considered but not approved at the May 26, 2011 meeting of the Board [Ref-46]. A resolution on the Police Academy program establishing residency requirements and preferential admission for applicants holding a prior degree – both in conflict with Title 5 regulations – was put on the agenda for September 22, 2011, but withdrawn three days prior to the meeting [Ref-47].

Unfortunately, there is every reason to expect that some members of the Board of Trustees will continue to misunderstand their role as Trustees. From comments made at two recent Board of Trustees Planning and Budget Committee meetings, it appears highly likely that certain Board members intend to abolish placement testing for San Francisco High School students entering City College next fall, without regard for the Board’s Shared Governance Policy requiring primary reliance on recommendations from the Academic Senate for academic and professional matters. At the end of the February 23rd Board of Trustees meeting, Trustee Steve Ngo reported his intention to introduce a policy resolution concerning the way administrative reappointments are presented to the Board. He stated that he will seek a policy that prohibits the administration from presenting an omnibus resolution
that includes multiple administrators and makes it difficult for him to raise issues about individual administrators and their performance and whether or not they should be reappointed. On other occasions, he has made it clear that he would use such a policy to vote against the reappointment of the Vice Chancellor of Governmental Relations, regardless of how she has been evaluated, a clear intrusion into the authority of the Chancellor and the administration. That draft policy has been prepared for the March 2012 Board meeting [Ref-48]

Hostility of a trustee to Shared Governance

The Board of Trustees Institutional Effectiveness Committee met on March 8, 2012 [Ref-49]. (Although the agenda was posted with less than three days notice, it was not identified as a special meeting.) On the topic of Progress Report on the Shared Governance Evaluation, Trustee Ngo made the following remarks:

I understand there is policy that governs the shared governance system in the Board Manual that I think that we should change. In fact, I think we should completely wholesale revise it. I think there are too many committees. I think there is not enough guarantee of student input which I think explains why you have only one student responding to your survey, because they have no idea what the hell this thing is. So, I think it's biased towards faculty. I think there's a confusion about what shared governance means. Title 5 does not give these entities, whatever you want to call them, shared governance, it's consulting in a participatory process. It's not a shared responsibility. These people, the people who do this work, and I understand it's very important work, but there's no way to hold these people publicly accountable. If you are looking over budgets, if you're making decisions about where classes should go or classes should not go, if you're allocating money, decisions on academic policy, there's no way anyone in the Southeast or on the Mission knows who the Academic Senate is, or any of these Shared Governance bodies, who they are. They can't go to them and say my kid's not getting through the placement testing system the right way, my kid's not getting through the sequencing system the right way, who do they call? You can't get the responsibility and then avoid the scrutiny. And I think there's some confusion about what this process is...

When you actually go out to the community and hear what students want, I think you have a full fledged, vibrant, equitable, fully functional and just shared governance system. But until then, I have some serious concerns about its legitimacy. I don't take it very seriously. and I don't know how many of these people live in the city. These are decisions that affect communities in the city...

Here's my proposal and maybe I should issue it as a policy. I think that these meetings should essentially subsume into the AS [Associated Students] council meetings. AS councils should be the shared governance bodies. And they should have representatives who are faculty, administrators and staff. ... You really want student input you want to give them a say in their educational program. Let AS run shared governance, and have them appoint or have them work with administration, classified, faculty and staff about sending their own delegates to AS. It's centered in a completely different way right now. It's not student centered.

[Ref-50]

We expect to see a resolution brought to the Board of Trustees in accordance with Trustee Ngo's views.
Lack of trustee responsiveness concerning planning

Although the Board of Trustees Planning and Budgeting Committee has devoted considerable time to various specific operational and academic policy issues, it has not connected well with planning. The College Strategic Plan for 2011-2016 was endorsed by the College Advisory Council, the College’s Planning and Budgeting Council and the Academic Senate by October 6, 2011, but not approved by the Board of Trustees until December 15, 2011 [Ref-51]. The Annual Plan for 2011-12 was endorsed by College Advisory Council on September 1, 2011 and by the Planning and Budgeting Council on September 20, 2011, but not discussed or approved by the Board of Trustees until February, 23, 2012 [Ref-52].

List of References


Ref-34. Emails between Karen Saginor and Steve Ngo, February 15, 2012. not available online


Ref-42. Regular Meeting of the Facilities, Infrastructure, and Technology Committee of the Board of Trustees of the San Francisco Community College District. September 8, 2011. Sound Recording. Not available online.

Ref-43. Chronology and Email Evidence concerning cold beverage vending RFP. not available online.


Ref-46. Board Resolution. Board of Trustees meeting agendas shall be posted on the website as separate files. (Resolution No. 110526-S1). http://www.ccsf.edu/BOT/PDF%27s%202011/PDF_may_26_2011/S1.pdf


Ref-49. Notice of Meeting of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee of the Board of Trustees of the San Francisco Community College District. March 8, 2012.
   http://www.ccsf.edu/BOT/SPECIAL_PDF%27S/2012/march_2012/Mar%208%202012%20IE.pdf

