

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
GOVERNING BOARD  
UNADOPTED MINUTES  
May 18, 2011

**APPENDIX A**

6. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Ms. Debbie Luttrell-Williams**, CSEA President, who requested to comment on Item 14.(b), Public Hearing and Adoption of the District's Initial Proposal to California School Employees Association, Chapter #211. Ms Luttrell-Williams, Chapter President of CSEA, stated the members understand that the fiscal difficulties the state of California is facing directly affect Solano Community College; therefore, their openers will cost the District no money. CSEA understands the District's need to look at ways to cut expenditures and balance the budget, but sincerely requests that the District start at the top and ALL members contribute to the cost-saving measures equally. Ms. Luttrell-Williams asked the Board to consider that where concessions and reductions are possible that they take them also. CSEA asks the District to take the stance of "a fair share, NOT the FULL share" from its CSEA bargaining unit members.

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Ms. Debbie Luttrell-Williams**, CSEA President, who requested to comment on Classified Employees Week. Ms. Luttrell-Williams stated that the classified employees were recognized today with a BBQ provided by the District. Staff was very honored by the presence of Vice President A. Marie Young and Trustee Rosemary Thurston. Our members truly enjoyed the event. Ms. Luttrell-Williams expressed appreciation to the District for this recognition. Ms. Sabrina Drake was announced as the 2010-2011 Classified Employee of the year and truly deserves this recognition.

Board President recognized **Ms. Charlene Snow**, SCFA President, who requested to comment on Item 14.(d), Public Hearing and Adoption of District's Request to Open Articles 2, 20, 21, and 23 to the Solano College Faculty Association (SCFA), CCA/CTA/NEA. Ms. Snow, President of SCFA, and Math Professor, commented as follows:

"The District's agenda for Wednesday, May 18, 2011, includes Item 14.(d), Public Hearing and Adoption of District's Request to Open Articles 2, 20, 21, and 23 to the Solano College Faculty Association (SCFA), CCA/CTA/NEA calling for you to have public input on the articles of our collective bargaining agreement that it seems you are proposing to open. According to our recently ratified MOU that extended our contract until June 30, 2012, articles are only supposed to be opened for negotiation, or 'sunshined', upon the parties' mutual agreement. The District should note that according to Webster's New Dictionary and Thesaurus copyright 2002, the word mutual means 'shared in common—enjoying their *mutual* hobby, joint, belonging equally to each.' In no way could the district's action be construed to fit this definition. Therefore, the District's unilateral presentation of initial openers on May 4 and again on May 18 is a flagrant violation of our MOU.

Additionally, we are not persuaded by any suggestion that the District was under some legal obligation to sunshine initial proposals in order to begin discussions with the Association about negotiable items of mutual interest, or that it was the only way the District could initiate a

discussion regarding bargaining. If the District wanted to discuss the possibility of opening articles, then a letter from the Superintendent-President and/or Director of Human Resources sent to SCFA Chief Negotiator Darryl Allen and me would have easily sufficed. Even an e-mail message to both of us stating clearly and directly that the district wanted to meet to discuss the possibility of mutual openers would have likewise served the purpose. We could have then set a time to meet with the District and decide together if we had articles that we both wanted to open.

However, the District has chosen unilateral action, rather than mutual agreement, which is an ill-considered and counter-productive course of action that, ultimately, will not serve the District's interests.

Moreover, as it turns out, it is now too late for us to accomplish anything before the end of the spring semester. The District should be aware that in accordance with the Educational Employment Relations Act, we, the Solano College Faculty Association, are obligated to survey our constituency before moving forward with negotiating agreements with the District. This process requires us to allow time for the faculty to respond to our inquiries, and for the SCFA Executive Board to assess the results and give direction to our negotiating team. We do not act in a vacuum, and as the exclusive representative of the faculty, SCFA will not abrogate or ignore its legal obligations to the members it represents.

Finally, at this time, SCFA is not interested in opening any articles of the collective bargaining agreement. The District has assured us that it has no intention of making any unilateral changes to the contract, which is good news, because, as I am sure you are well aware, such actions on the District's part would constitute an unfair labor practice."

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Professor Tom Warren**, Philosophy, who requested to comment on the Reorganization, The 99, and the Graphics Department.

Professor Warren began by commenting, "Reorganization – You were right in choosing 'schools' over divisions. However, some of your discipline locations just don't make academic sense. Why, for example, do you include sociology, psychology, social science, ethnic studies, 'human services' and learning communities and MESA under the School of Sciences? These subjects are not either traditionally, nor logically divisions of natural or physical science. Surely these disciplines bear kinship with political science, humanities, international relations, history and education and ought, therefore, to be subsumed in the School of Liberal Arts. Additionally, why persist in setting Early Childhood Education apart from the general discipline of education in the School of Liberal Arts (and locating it over in the School of Human Performance and Development)? Isn't this just plain silly? By doing so, divorcing Early Childhood Education from its parent discipline of Education, we run the risk of marginalizing—if not infantilizing—the subject altogether. Lastly, locating Economics in the Business domain is a big mistake. Economics is a Social Science, albeit a 'dismal science' and is no more kindred to business education than is Marxism or Keynesianism. If you doubt this, contact Berkeley or Stanford.

I realize that were you to add seven more disciplines to the School of Liberal Arts, this would make its administration completely unwieldy. Why not then separate out the first existing seven disciplines under the School of Liberal Arts (Art, Cinema, Music, Photography, Interior Design, Theatre Arts, and T.V.), and relocate them under a new School, namely the School of Fine Arts (and include Dance under this new School, and in its place put Nursing.)

Now these modifications make sense to me. True, my scheme adds a 5<sup>th</sup> School (Fine Arts), but I think this is academically justified. My solution to your cost benefit dilemma here is to simply scratch the plan to hire another Administrator, say the 'Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment' (another bureaucrat that Solano College needs, in my view, like a moose needs a hat rack, and use that salary to buy the Dean of Fine Arts. The academic integrity of the

College really needs five Schools. To spread all the disciplines over just four Schools is to be maybe penny wise, but pound foolish.

What are your plans to revert to Department Chairs? Are they integral to your reorganization? Given the sheer number of disciplines in each School, don't you think Chairs are a necessity? I have heard no faculty, in my division at least, opposed to Chairs. What's more, I suspect you could save money by rotating Department Chairs; thus, eliminating the need for 'coordinators.' Also, don't you think that now is the time for the District to strike for Peer Review (I mean genuine peer review)? Such a reform would take a huge load off your Deans, and the small stipends paid to faculty for their evaluation services would take a huge load off your Deans, and the small stipends paid to faculty for their evaluation services could simply be offset by lowering the Deans' salaries accordingly.

The 99 exhibit in the school parking lot is, according to my research, a Tulsa Oklahoma-based Christian ministry road show production designed to depict the 'hellish' consequences of various youthful sinfulness in their drinking, speeding, sexting, gang violence, etc., and to offer the conversion to Christianity as the only salvation.

Dr. Laguerre. How did such a production get the apparent sponsorship of Solano College? Were you along with other College administrators and the Board simply duped? Surely you are not prepared to defend such an appalling spectacle? My outrage will not be quieted until someone in authority at the College immediately, and however ironically, 'drives the money changer from the temple!' You need to make a statement to the Board and the Press explaining this sorry affair.

Lastly, there are rumors buzzing that the Graphics Department in the Library building is about to go on the chopping block. Please do not cut these services. I am not alone in seriously depending on Graphics for supplying me with the necessary publications for the conduct of my classes. To be honest, there is no other function of the College that I can think of that directly, efficiently, and courteously helps me with my daily teaching responsibilities as much as does the Graphics crew under the excellent leadership of Marge Trolinder."

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Professor Annette Dambrosio**, Reading, who requested to comment on the Reorganization and The 99

"I am concerned that our College is in danger of losing its academic mind...its academic identity. This past year we have been increasingly absorbed with 'process' and 'method' and 'organization' of our College. We have given scant attention to debate and dialogue that centers on our academic core values.

This past semester, faculty and staff have been frazzled by the business of our College. An enormous amount of our time has been devoted to the struggle to keep up with the electronic onslaught. We seem to be continually 'clicking' on emails, a multitude of groups, ever-changing posts, blogs.....all electronic 'business' and precious little dialogue on academic issues. And just as we seem to have recovered from the bad press of Accreditation, we have lately endured more bad press, namely, hosting The 99 on this campus, a project that has nothing to do with academics. In fact, my research shows me that The 99 represents the antithesis of reason...and reason, as we know, is at the heart of education.

Tonight I urge all of you to stop and reflect on our academic purpose and consider the following:

1. Slow down the reorganization. While we have been included in shaping the reorganization, we have not had the time to carefully craft a new model. In this current plan, our academic identity is at risk of being blurred as many critical academic issues must be addressed as we proceed with the reorganization.

2. Do not confuse the mission of a College with other agendas. With regard to The 99, I urge you to issue a press release explaining to the public that we were misinformed and misled by the organization (we must restore the public trust).
3. Remind ourselves that our purpose at Solano College is to strengthen the life of the mind. Again, let's slow down, reflect, and focus again on developing our academic self. Also, please do not cut Graphics."

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Mr. John Cooney**, a former SCC student, who requested to comment on The 99. Mr. Cooney began by commenting in its advertising, this group represents itself as helping teenagers who make bad choices. Articles from *The Tempest* and the *Daily Republic* report scenes of the devil leading someone to hell. Mr. Cooney asked why this organization lies about their presentation? The SCC Mission says we are a diverse campus and that SCC doesn't discriminate based on sexual orientation. The Catalog states immediate dismissal for homosexuality. Mr. Cooney asked the Board to review this decision and to kick this group off campus.

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Ms. Barbara Schmidt**, SCC student, who requested to comment on The 99. Ms. Schmidt stated that she is deeply concerned and disturbed by the presence of The 99 on campus. Putting aside the inconvenience with parking being taken away, she expressed her concern of it being the Victory World Mission Training Center, which contradicts the mission of SCC. She believes the mission of The 99 is to convert young people to their version of Christianity. She quoted the Editor from *The Tempest* who shared some personal experiences that were based on scare tactics by The 99. Ms. Schmidt asked why The 99 is on campus, who is responsible for bringing them to campus, how does SCC benefit from their presence, and why are they being allowed to stay.

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Ms. Tracy Williams**, a student and a parent of students who attend SCC, who requested to comment on The 99. Ms. Williams commented that she had three concerns: legality, the ethical nature, and personal concerns of The 99. Having an evangelical production on campus sets a precedence. Can the College legally rent property to religious organizations? The 99 states they have had a two-year tour, but Ms. Williams stated she can't find out where they have been nor was she able to identify that counselor training exists. Ms. Williams commented, in her opinion, that it is deceptive for them to promote themselves as a public service. Ms. Williams encouraged the Board to be more careful how these events are represented and to do more research on them before they are allowed to be on campus.

Ms. Williams stated her ethical concern is when young people are subjected to overwhelming images that create high level fear that it can be a traumatizing experience for children. The 99 uses emotional terrorism to target kids, and Ms. Williams stated how she felt this is ethically wrong.

Ms. Williams' personal concern was surrounded by spending ten years to get out of an abusive situation. She still experiences flashbacks and has trouble with rational thinking and it all starts with religious indoctrination. Ms. Williams state the Board needs to act responsibly to get The 99 off campus to protect our young adults.

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Ms. Lisa Gurlin** and company, Cover Concept/Design, Book Design, and Typography, who requested to comment on the *Suisun Valley Review*, a magazine published annually every spring by Solano Community College. *SVR* is edited by the students of English 58, a course in the contemporary literary magazine, which includes requesting and reviewing submissions, arranging contents and determining format. Students who accompanied Ms. Gurlin thanked Dr. Laguerre for being at their meeting that was held in the Library earlier in the day. Professor Wyly expressed how he is overwhelmed everyday with the abilities and capabilities and desire of his students who create this amazing magazine. The magazine is in its 30<sup>th</sup> year of publication. Professor Wyly added further, “without the assistance of the Graphics Department, there would be no magazine.”

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Professor Melissa Reeve**, English/ESL, who requested to comment on the Reorganization.

Ms. Reeve thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak on the latest Reorganization Plan, “a plan with serious flaws as already observed by my colleagues Thom and Annette.” “I was very surprised when I heard that when this plan was presented to you at your meeting two weeks ago, it was described as a harmonious process to which all campus constituencies had gladly agreed. This is quite different from the process I witnessed. So I’m here tonight to share with you some less-than harmonious episodes in the weeks leading up to this reorganization, because I think these events should be a matter of public record.

I understand that it is within the right of the district to reorganize the college any way you see fit, and that faculty need not be consulted in this process. However, I think anyone intent on making a decision in the best interest of the college would draw on the college’s best resources, and clearly the faculty is one of those. Faculty have the best understanding of the academic disciplines and the affinities between them, as Thom Warren showed in his remarks tonight. A reorg process that ignores these insights leads to a contentious process and also to the flawed product you’ll vote on tonight.

In early March, when the first drafts of the reorg plan began to emerge, a group of faculty in the Humanities Division went to work crafting detailed letters to EVP Reyes and to our own Academic Senate, raising questions and concerns about both the process by which the reorganization was being designed, and the product as indicated in those early drafts. Midway through this effort, we learned suddenly that Dr. Laguerre would be attending one of our regularly-scheduled Division meetings. We believed, of course, that he was coming to speak with us about the reorg, since that was all that was on anyone’s mind at that time. Faculty came to the meeting organized and galvanized for spirited debate on this topic. However, to our astonishment, when Dr. Laguerre arrived at our meeting, he opened by stating that he was not there to speak on the reorg, that indeed he was in no position to speak about it because EVP Reyes had not yet delivered a draft to his desk. Any discussion about the reorg should be addressed to Reyes, Laguerre told us. But was there anything else we’d like to discuss? Faculty stared at Dr. Laguerre in hostile silence. It was not a harmonious meeting.

In the weeks that followed, I attended two forums where faculty did ask EVP Reyes pointed questions about the reorg, and openly critiqued both the process and the product. One of these was one of three forums the EVP held for the purpose of faculty and staff input on the evolving drafts, and another was a special session convened by the Academic Senate for similar purposes. No one could describe the mood at those meeting as harmonious. Faculty have had grave concerns about the implications of this reorg from the beginning—the unilateral and hasty nature of the process, and the product which clearly shifts power and influence away from academics.

Sometimes I think the faculty's arguments have been used against us. For example, the drafts of the plan showed faculty chairs or coordinators to support the Deans in the new mega-divisions, or 'schools', created by the reorganization. Faculty argued repeatedly that there was not time to define, negotiate, hire and train individuals for these positions for fall 2011. When the final version of the proposal came out, the faculty chair positions had been eliminated. Is this the answer to not having time to do it right? Just not do it at all? Will we ever see those positions back? In addition, the \$400,000+ cost savings now presented as an advantage of the reorganization comes in large part from the absence of these faculty coordinator positions. So I wonder, were the positions real in the first place? Were they ever truly part of the President's plan?

In late April, President Laguerre again made the rounds of the Divisions to present the final draft of the plan. Because he came to the Humanities Division the Friday before Spring Break at 2:30 in the afternoon, the meeting was not well attended. Yet those who were present again drilled the President with questions and critiques about both the process and product of the reorg. For example, seeing the elimination of the faculty chairs, we asked him about what we as faculty most fear—that the Dean positions created by the reorg are too large for anyone to do alone, successfully. He assured us he knew the job could be done because he had 'asked his people' and they had told him they could do the job as long as they had enough administrative assistance, so the plan was to increase the administrative support from the current one assistant per Dean to 1.5. This reply made little sense to us, and we pressed him further as to whom he'd asked—given that some of those he could have asked were fighting to keep their jobs, some of those he could have asked had already been issued March 15 notices, and one—now two—of those he might have asked have chosen to take early retirement rather than face the prospect of doing the very jobs he claims they said could be done. In the case of these last two, I think they voted with their feet. So, all four of the meetings I've described were contentious ones, characterized by aggressive questioning and challenges to the reorg plan—all but the first, Dr. Laguerre's first visit to the Humanities Division, when he forbade us from addressing this topic. In addition, it's hard to say the process of arriving at the reorg was a harmonious one when the small committee convened for this purpose was ordered to keep silent about their discussions. The two faculty who were appointed to the committee with EVP Reyes were, we're told, forbidden to speak with their colleagues about what went on in there, which only leads to suspicion and resentment.

Another issue faculty have persistently questioned throughout this process has been the claim of cost savings. The President claims that this reorganization of Academic Affairs will save the college over \$400,000, which no one can deny sounds beneficial in these times. However, it's important to remember that this reorg is only the latest phase of a longer reorg process that has been going on almost since Dr. Laguerre's arrival at Solano College. So, I think we should look back a couple years to see the whole picture. Just last year, Dr. Laguerre created three new Dean Positions, by adding the Dean for Academic Success and elevating the Center Director positions to Deans. What were the costs associated with these positions? In creating three Dean positions one year and then eliminating three the next, has Dr. Laguerre's ongoing reorganization actually saved the college money overall, or has he just moved money from one place to another? I don't know the answers to these questions, but I think they need to be asked.

And finally, it's worth noting that the both the President and EVP have openly and publically stated that Dr. Laguerre had in mind reorganizing the College under 3-4 deans from the time he arrived here, so this concept preceded any sense of urgency about cost savings. Let me draw an analogy to my field, teaching developmental composition. Students entering the college directly from high school, where they've been drilled on the essay style expected in the High School Exit Exam, usually come to English class with the notion that every essay must have five paragraphs: introduction, three bodies, and conclusion. My colleagues and I

immediately set about disabusing them of this flawed concept. We tell them there is no set rule about how many body paragraphs an essay must have—you have to first figure out what you’re going to say. The number of body paragraphs will be determined by how many points you have to support your thesis. In other words, you have to look at your *content* to make logical decisions about organization. If you want effective results, you can’t begin by deciding to write five paragraphs and then decide what to put into them. Likewise, in organizing a college, it’s not effective to begin with a plan for four ‘schools’ and only then decide how to group disciplines within them.

This reorganization is a five-paragraph essay of a plan. When you come to a vote on it tonight, I urge you to reconsider.”

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Ms. Sarah Roncskevitz**, former SCC student, who requested to comment on the Academic Affairs proposed Reorganization Plan and the College Latin 2 and 3 classes. Ms. Roncskevitz stated how much it meant to her when she transferred to U.C. Berkeley that she would be majoring in Latin. These classes brought a whole new aspect to her writing and reading abilities. The new organization of the School of Liberal Arts indicates the Dean will be overseeing 23 disciplines. Ms. Roncskevitz stated that she is worried about her education suffering because of the prospect that many classes will be cut and jobs liquidated. She would like to see the Latin program continue to exist at Solano College. It is a unique program within the state. Only offering classes every so many semesters or at best once a year will kill the program. Ms. Roncskevitz, urged the Board to keep Latin classes at Solano College and to carefully weigh their options of classes that they decide to cut.

Board President Honeychurch recognized **Mr. Scott Dodson**, student at SCC, who requested to comment on his Latin 3 class. Mr. Dodson stated that he addressed the Board at their last meeting and asked the Board to save Latin 3 at that time. Mr. Dodson thanked for the Board for listening to his words and for doing what they can to save the program. This program is distinguished among other classes at other institutions and deserves to be saved. It is a beneficial program and enriches students’ lives.

Trustee Keith made a comment to the audience in response to The 99. She stated, “I failed you, and I apologize.” Ms. Keith indicated to those present that she did not fight hard enough to keep The 99 off campus, indicating she was against it from the beginning. She challenged Pastor Joan in open session in a past meeting relative to counselors that are not trained and are lay people in an evangelical Christian environment. She was particularly concerned about what gay and lesbian youth might be told about their sexual orientation. Trustee Keith promised to find out what happened, and reiterated that she is angry that the event was allowed to occur on campus. Trustee Keith concluded that she will do everything she can to see that it never happens again.

Vice President Young asked Dr. Laguerre to check legal counsel to see if the contract can be terminated.

Board President Honeychurch thanked each presenter for their comments to the Board.