

FCCCC President's Address  
CCC Board of Trustee's Meeting  
Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Chairman Cabrera, Chancellor Hyman, members of the Board, Officers of the District, faculty, staff and all others present, good morning.

For this board report, I want to focus on the process by which information is communicated among the faculty and the role that the various committees, including FC4, contribute to shared governance.

Let me first outline some of the various committees. Each college has a curriculum committee, made up of faculty and administrators, who review curriculum initiatives including changes to syllabi and the introduction of new courses and new programs. Most recently, some colleges have reconstituted other committees, which focus on shared governance and institutional integrity. The recommendations from these committees then funnel into the local faculty council, which oversees all issues either deemed academic or with some impact on the academic life of the college. I'm purposely vague here, because sometimes we discuss issues that are not strictly speaking "academic," but we want to encourage a robust discussion with our colleagues on these issues or point faculty to the appropriate place for help.

Curriculum issues that have been vetted, discussed, and approved then go to the district-wide curriculum committee, and, in turn, are vetted, discussed and approved by the members of all of the colleges. As with the local subcommittees, the FC4 has also recently reconstituted a number of other district-wide committees, including one on tenure policies, another on shared governance, a third on procurements, and a fourth on administrative oversight. All of these committee recommendations and concerns are presented to the district-wide faculty council, of which I am the president.

One of the most important aspects of these committees isn't what we do or don't do (though that is important) but what we communicate to each other. We do not have any role in contractual issues such as the size of the class or faculty load, but we may point people toward the appropriate person for answers to contractual questions. Each committee is, in essence, a monthly faculty development meeting in which we are upholding the institutional integrity and integrating the faculty into that process.

Who are the faculty who comprise these faculty councils, both local and district-wide? Full-time faculty vote at each college on full-time faculty colleagues to represent them on the various committees, and each committee then votes on its leadership.

And this is an important point. The full-time faculty decide on who their representatives should be, whom they feel they can trust to present their positions, whom they allow to vote on their behalf. But the committees do not always include adult educators and adjunct faculty as voting members; indeed, their inclusion as voting members has been a topic of heated discussion. (These are open meetings, so anyone is invited to attend and to contribute, but only the members may vote on the issues.) Moreover, faculty members are not univocal; these committee meetings can be lively events with faculty clearly disagreeing with each other. And the debate can slow down the implementation of recommendations.

This may seem like an unwieldy system, and we get complaints from administrators and faculty about the slowness of the process. Yet, although it may be imperfect, it does work to facilitate communication among faculty and to allow robust debate about policy issues that have profound impact on our students.

But one of the weaknesses of this system, which we are addressing, is the lack of engagement with the administration on these policy issues. We began in the summer with monthly meetings with the acting provost, Mike Davis, and we will continue with the new provost, Kojo Quartey. These meetings include our expanded executive committee and are extremely important to the institutional effectiveness of the City Colleges. Institutional effectiveness is really the driving force behind faculty participation on the committees.

Another positive collaboration between faculty (full-time, part-time, and adult educators) and administrators is the work on the performance funding review committees. As vice chancellor Antonio Gutierrez pointed out in his introduction to the committees, this is the first time in his twenty-three years at City Colleges that faculty and administrators have sat down together and addressed an issue to produce a document that affects us all, students, administrators, faculty and staff. We need more collaboration on this model.

Finally, all of this is predicated on trust and knowledge among and between faculty, staff and administration. The faculty is exhausted by trying to implement policies about which faculty and staff have had little or no input or which make little sense for our respective colleges. We need *local control and oversight*, not general edicts that work well for no one. This includes policies about tenure decisions, the questions about hiring and credentials, and the elimination or changing of programs without faculty input. Faculty have a process by which we discuss, vet and communicate policies and that process should be respected and not ignored. We may not be univocal on all things, but we absolutely agree on one thing: we are professionals, we know what we are doing, we need to be trusted.

Respectfully submitted,

Polly Hoover

President of FC4