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BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 508
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FCCCC President's Address

CCC Board of Trustee's Meeting

Thursday, September 13, 2012

Chairman Wolf, Chancellor Hyman, members of the board, officers of the district, faculty, staff, and all others present, good morning.

I'd like to begin by providing a brief update on the Data Governance and Institutional Review Board project.

It's important to mention first that the team is comprised of representatives from the Office of Academic Affairs, faculty, the research department, and reinvention. From an FC4 stand point, we are pleased that this project, like the KPI project, has included faculty, and, I should add, we will seek to include more faculty as the project continues this academic year.

As to our current status, the team is engaged in the necessary background work to get this project off the ground. Time has been spent defining terms, researching state and federal privacy regulations, researching current IRB models being used at other community college districts, analyzing potential costs, discussing possible processes and procedures for external agencies and researchers as well as internal staff and faculty who will want to conduct research at City Colleges of Chicago. All of this activity will, obviously, inform the project charters currently being written for these projects.

There are quite a few community college districts with IRBs--Maricopa and Valencia to name two. I have a call into the Director of Institutional Assessment, Laura Blasi, at Valencia College and hope to speak with her this afternoon. After a preliminary review of Valencia's web site , <http://valenciacollege.edu/irb/> , I feel confident Valencia will provide excellent advice as we proceed in establishing our own IRB.

To quote from Valencia's web site, "Following Valencia's current collaborative approach to operations . . . [Valencia's IRB is comprised of] representatives from institutional research, professional staff, Academic faculty, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Career/Technical faculty, and a community representative." I am eager to learn more about their IRB's operations and procedures, and, of course, will report out to the team.

Currently CCC has three projects that need an IRB: the STEM Minority Student grant, in which we are partnering with UIC and will be using their IRB; the Malcolm X H2P

Health Careers project, and the Educational Testing Services project on holistic placement. As the Provost has stated, we will be able to participate in these projects despite not having an IRB. We will partner with UIC and the health career consortium's IRBs, and we may have to secure a commercial IRB for the ETS project. However, as the Provost states, for the long term, having our own IRB will make research operations much easier.

Moreover, faculty would like to conduct their own research and would feel more confident if their research projects could receive sound peer review through an internal IRB. I, myself, hope to conduct research on a project which will get underway in the Fall of 2013. I will be partnering with my colleague, Dr. Raymond Torralba to create a student learning community at Truman College. I will be teaching English 101 and Dr. Torralba will be teaching Physical Science. We hope to include in our curriculum project-based learning, student field research, and integrated reading and writing assignments. Dr. Torralba and I would love to do research on the impact of our curriculum and pedagogy on student success and would feel much more comfortable doing so with an IRB in place to assure we have not violated student privacy, we are proceeding ethically, and we have not made ourselves liable for any violations of state or federal law.

Liability is a serious concern, and to quote from a Powerpoint Presentation created by one of our team members and presented at one of our team meetings, Dr. Brian Dille (political science in the social science dept?) at Maricopa states: "Within the past four years, the Office of Human Research Protections has widened its oversight scope and is giving closer scrutiny to smaller liberal arts colleges and community colleges. Another factor is that the National Science Foundation is now requiring grant applicants to report an IRB review of their application. The OHRP is giving community colleges time to become compliant, but will soon begin to aggressively pressure noncompliant institutions to enact adequate procedures." Given this coming trend, it's good we are taking sound action now instead of waiting.

It is totally appropriate for an academic institution to encourage sound ethical research, for it benefits greatly from the research findings and data, but if we are truly headed down a path of research and data, *we must create a professional, ethical, and legal research and data culture*, one which will be respected and trusted by our internal institutional members and the external agencies and researchers wanting to conduct research at CCC. Establishing an IRB will help achieve this in all the obvious practical ways, but the presence of an IRB also helps set a tone of professionalism throughout our educational institution, and this tone will impact current and future discussions on data governance in general.

The "democratization of data"--a phrase I hear from time to time--is a nice idea, and with the tools available today, seemingly it's possible to achieve all this phrase implies, but in a democracy there must be rules that govern behavior and protect its people, and the data governance team will continue to discuss answers to all the relevant questions related to this project---that is, how do we responsibly collect data? How do we responsibly secure and store data? Who will have access to this data, and how will access be gained? How do we balance data, context, and judgment? Will we commit to

the transparency of data? And finally, how do we encourage research, yet at the same time keep from being slaves to data?

The data governance project is a long term project, and my hope is that in the coming months, the data governance team will be able to provide best practice responses to all of these questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Aguila, Assistant Professor
FC4 President