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**Final Report of the Community College  
Chancellor and Presidential Seminar, June 30  
2000**

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## **Final Report of the Community College Chancellor and Presidential Seminar, June 30, 2000**

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As part of the Higher Education for a New Century Conference held at the University of Southern California, we convened an invited one-day seminar for community college presidents and chancellors. The invitation list included the chancellors from Los Angeles and Orange County as well as all of the campus presidents from Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Bernardino County. The purpose of the day was to discuss the future of community colleges in southern California and to share ideas, concerns, and best practices. The following provides the minutes and conclusions from the one-day seminar attended by 18 Southern California Community College leaders.

### **Speaker 1: California Assemblyman Jack Scott**

After a welcome from USC's Chair of the Community College Leadership Program, the first speaker was introduced. Assemblyman Jack Scott from California's 44<sup>th</sup> District opened up his talk with a listing of his extensive involvement with the California community colleges including serving as a Dean of Instruction at Orange Coast College in 1973 and President at both Cypress (1978) and Pasadena City Colleges (1987).

Scott's talk touched upon many topics pertinent to the audience. First, he addressed the needs of colleges and the implications of Tidal Wave II (the expected increase of more than ½ million students to the California Community Colleges within the present decade). He emphasized the growing needs for adult and community education, which will also impact space and facilities shortages. There is the need to investigate a joint use of facilities as well as institute year-round calendars. The use of distance education is also a possible reliever of the space problems destined for the near future.

Confidently, Dr. Scott explained that community colleges have maintained a positive image with the legislature, but there are just not enough resources to meet every need. Community colleges are promoted by both Democrats and Republicans. While Democrats appreciate the open door policies of the colleges and the thrust to educate the general citizenry of California, Republicans emphasize the economic advantages of community colleges in providing education in the least expensive mode. Scott urged all in attendance to invite their legislators to their campuses. In his words "nothing works better – keep telling the story and sell yourselves. If you want more money you are going to have to fight for it."

Scott predicted a growing need for accountability. He felt that the University of California system was operating at too rich a level, and that the campuses should be held more accountable for the use of their state funds.

Scott supports the work of community colleges that must operate on limited resources with a very diverse student body. “There is a dirty secret in California, and the community colleges know it,” announced Scott. “Over 50% of the people in California do not read at the high school grade level – we have basic skills deficits.” Further, the moves to eliminate or curtail remedial education will have serious impacts. According to Scott, the alternatives to remedial education are increases in unemployment and welfare. “There is a social cost to the elimination of these programs” and Scott wants the voters of California to acknowledge that remediation is a cheap alternative to the many problems that an uneducated populace will provide.

Scott closed with a reference to the U.S. Constitution’s “all men are created equal.” Although this statement will never be 100% true, the community colleges are working with individuals born in less than desirable circumstances and is moving them in the right directions.

### **Speaker 2: Christopher Cabaldon: Vice Chancellor of Policy Planning and External Affairs.**

Cabaldon’s spoke on three areas pertaining to community colleges. First he wanted to establish the psychological, economic, and political principles of performance based funding. Secondly he stated that he felt that the principles are absurd. Finally, he provided the reasons why he is so committed to the principles.

Cabaldon provided five reasons for the funding plan:

- ◆ Performance based funding emphasizes the importance of transfer, one of the first missions of the colleges. To increase transfer the state will only fund those campuses that are successful in this type of success.
- ◆ Performance based funding will increase the independence of the community colleges by substituting for tight controls. The structure is such that it clearly delineates what is expected of the colleges and gives them an autonomy that mimics that of the University of California and California State University systems.
- ◆ Performance based funding alongside statewide goals strengthens and builds the system of the California Community Colleges.
- ◆ Performance based funding provides a strategy that clearly reveals the underfunding of the system.
- ◆ Performance based funding provide a strategic and timely way to secure more money *now*.

According to Cabaldon, performance based funding (also called the Partnership for Excellence) is embraced by California’s Governor Davis and is “here to stay.” He also indicated that both the University of California and the California State University systems are being encouraged to adopt it as well. But Cabaldon believes that the investment in the colleges should be one that looks into the future rather than reward what *was* accomplished in the past. He promotes a system in which the state would invest first and then judge subsequent outcomes later. For many outcomes, it may take three years or longer to discover if success has occurred. For those campuses that have been financially punished for not meeting objectives, it becomes virtually impossible to catch up, let alone advance with an even further tightened budget. Rather than provide a means to succeed, reduced funding may induce a debilitating downward spiral mechanism that leaves the college bereft of the possibility of recovery.

Other problems cited by Cabaldon include:

- ◆ The present lack of knowledge on HOW to increase transfer, how quickly changes will be evident, and what will happen if transfer is drastically increased.
- ◆ Performance based funding does not blend well with the community colleges' tendency to specialize or tailor their services to the specific needs of their community. Rather than support customization, performance based funding promotes a "cookie cutter approach" to quality.
- ◆ Performance based funding promotes risk-taking that many perceive as psychologically threatening.
- ◆ Performance based funding promotes long-term rather than short-term outcomes but is rewarded short-termed.
- ◆ Performance based funding may not pass the "Emperor has no clothes" test. We still do not know if it is possible, or how to dramatically alter the effect of entrance factors. Can these desired outcomes be realized with the present community college students?

Despite the problems, Cabaldon believes that the Partnership of Excellence is a positive step for the state of California and it receives his support.

**Speaker 3: Dr. David B. Wolf – Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**

Dr. Wolf entitled his talk "Performance – A Look at Recent Accreditation Results. Through the examination of the pattern of performance since 1996, he outlined emerging issues of interest to the audience. Beginning the discussion, Dr. Wolf spoke of the Ten Standards for Accreditation, which describe good practice as established by research. For clarity, the ten standards are repeated here:

<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. INSTITUTIONAL MISSION	The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution, its educational purposes, its students, and its place in the higher education community.
2. INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY	The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates honesty and truthfulness in representations to its constituencies and the public; in pursuit of truth and the dissemination of knowledge; in its treatment of and respect for administration, faculty, staff, and students; in the management of its affairs and in relationships with its accreditation association and other external agencies
3. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	The institution, appropriate to its mission and purposes as a higher education institution, develops and implements a broad-based and integrated system of research, evaluation, and planning to assess institutional effectiveness and uses the results for institutional improvement. The institution identifies institutional outcomes, which can be validated by objective evidence.
4. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	The institution offers collegiate level programs in recognized fields of study that culminate in identified student

	competencies leading to degrees and certificates. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all educational activities offered in the name of the institution, regardless of where or how presented, or by whom taught.
5. STUDENT SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT	The institution recruits and admits students appropriate to its programs. It identifies and serves the diverse needs of its students with educational programs and learning support services, and it fosters a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, and success.
6. INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES	Information and learning resources and services are sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currency to support the institution's intellectual and cultural activities and programs in whatever format and wherever they are offered. The institution provides training so that information and learning resources may be used effectively and efficiently.
7. FACULTY AND STAFF	The institution has sufficient qualified full-time and part-time faculty and staff to support its educational programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds by making positive efforts to foster such diversity.
8. PHYSICAL RESOURCES	The institution has sufficient and appropriate physical resources to support its purposes and goals.
9. FINANCIAL RESOURCES	The institution has adequate financial resources to achieve, maintain, and enhance its programs and services. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of financial viability and institutional improvement. The institution manages its financial affairs with integrity, consistent with its educational objectives.
10. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	The institution has a governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution. The institution has an administrative staff of appropriate size to enable the institution to achieve its goals and is organized to provide appropriate administrative services. Governance structures and systems ensure appropriate roles for the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students, and facilitate effective communication among the institution's constituencies

Dr. Wolf provided a graph showing the number of recommendations received per standard for the past three years. Although each of the standards has received at least 7 recommendations, there was a sharp increase in the number of recommendations received for standard three (institutional effectiveness) for the 1999-2000 academic year. Thus the interest in planning for effectiveness is underscored.

However, there is a system problem in that the budget is controlled by the legislature and thus it is not possible to link planning and budgeting.

Emerging issues identified were:

- ◆ The majority of college students in general attend more than one institution. Many attend three or more. Thus the definitions of transfer and success need to be clarified.
- ◆ Approximately one-half of all accredited colleges are proprietary --accredited by special accrediting agencies. At present there is discontent among the proprietaries because their credits are not acceptable for transfer. As proprietaries continue to grow in both numbers and prominence, this situation must be revisited and the consequences explored.
- ◆ The need for unannounced visits by the accrediting agencies have been removed. Rather, the colleges are now required to provide data on student learning and other outcomes.
- ◆ The phenomenal rise of distance education brings new complications. In the words of David Wolf, “.edu is joining .com”. The accrediting agencies must answer difficult questions such as what protection does the .edu have if the .com does not deliver as promised? What happens if mechanical problems occur such as a catastrophic problem such as server failure?
- ◆ Definitions of quality are elusive and changing.
- ◆ The community colleges are frequently in a situation where the best plan of action leads only to “satisfying” rather than maximizing.

In conclusion, Dr. Wolf outlined the need for higher education in general and the community colleges in particular to evolve into their own structures and not continue to borrow from the business world. Examples such as zero-based budgeting, management by objective, total quality management, and other management strategies were all borrowed from the business community. Moreover, the administration of higher education generally adopted these principles after businesses have discarded the idea or moved along to something new. Education must be its own master of fate and determine what is the best management structure for its unique product – learning.

**Speaker 4: William H. Pickens – President/CEO of the Foundation for Educational Achievement and Director of the Executive Leadership and Management Institute at Stanford University**

The final speaker entitled his presentation “The Kinds of New Leadership Needed for the New Century”. Pickens framed his presentation with a discussion of the contradictory forces facing the California Community Colleges. The following table published by the California Citizens Commission on Higher Education both directed and summed up the discussion:

Forces on One Side	Forces on the Other Side
The need to be an equal partner in statewide higher education	A governance structure which is not collegiate but similar to secondary schools with geographical districts and elected boards of trustees
A rigid, state-determined finance system with limited ability to raise monies locally	Trustees can sign contracts and make commitments without the realistic ability to fund them or the means to raise money

State-established student fees	Trustees are charged with creating programs and educational services, which are tailored to their constituents but have no ability to determine the charges for them.
State requirement that students may attend any college, not just those within their geographic district.	Trustees are elected only by voters within their districts and are responsible only for colleges within district boundaries. Many students, especially in urban areas, live “out of district” and cannot vote for the trustees who govern their college.
The state’s Education Code imposes a mass of provisions with expensive activities, complicated restrictions and inappropriate controls on local institutions.	Colleges need to be flexible, diverse, responsive, unbureaucratic and productive.
The Statewide Chancellor has statutory responsibility to represent the colleges statewide and general responsibility for their financial viability but is often only one among many official voices and has little authority to act before a crisis.	District administrators are selected by local trustees and have allegiance and accountability to the district. Many representatives and groups compete for statewide prominence as the leader and voice for the colleges.

### **Conclusions**

The Chancellor and Presidential seminar brought together a group of Southern California community college leaders with similar and high expectations for the 2-year colleges in the state. Although not everyone agreed on the future, problems, or solutions, the general consensus was that the day was well spent and the process should be repeated on at least an annual basis. The seminar provided the medium to talk about the situations and problems facing all of the leaders. Further, the need to combine forces and to discuss important outcomes such as emerging definitions of transfer and student success was highly evident.