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# SENATE **Rostrum**

**STREAMLINING**

**TRANSFER PATHWAYS**

**Educational  
Equity or Equality**

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# Streamlining Transfer Pathways: Educational Equity or Equality

by [Dolores Davison, ASCCC President](#)  
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Given that one of the missions of the California community colleges is providing opportunities for students to prepare for transfer to four-year institutions, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has long been engaged in the work of streamlining the transfer process. Students in California's community colleges transfer to the California State University, the University of California, the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities systems as well as other institutions both inside and outside of California. Discipline faculty and student services and support faculty strive to provide students with assistance and resources to successfully navigate and travel through their entire community college experience. Faculty and students also depend on administrators, governing boards, and classified professionals to ensure that adequate services and programs are available in order for students to meet their educational goals.

One of the most recent additions to facilitate transfer has been the guided pathways efforts undertaken by colleges throughout the state. The California Community College Guided Pathways Grant Program<sup>1</sup>, part of the 2017-18 Budget Act, paved the way for colleges and local academic senates to streamline and accelerate student transfer. With strong student supports throughout a four-pillar model, colleges are in year four of an institutional redesign that is intended to clarify educational pathways for students, help students to find pathways that meet their educational goals, help students to stay focused while progressing along on the pathways, and ensure that students are learning what is being taught. This institutional redesign, which is expected to take up to ten years for full implementation, is paired with efforts that began in 2007 with the creation of the first C-ID Course descriptors and continued in 2010 around transfer model curricula (TMCs).

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<sup>1</sup> The text of the legislation that granted the grant program can be found here: [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=7.&title=3.&part=54.81.&chapter=&article=](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=7.&title=3.&part=54.81.&chapter=&article=)

The ASCCC’s advocacy for discipline faculty to be brought together from all three segments of California public higher education to align transfer pathways has a long history, dating back at least two decades to the creation of the Intersegmental Majors Preparation Advisory Committee (IMPAC). These gatherings brought faculty together to discuss the most needed elements of lower division transfer preparation to four-year universities and colleges and paved the way for the creation of C-ID<sup>2</sup>, a course identification numbering system that enables colleges and students to assess transferability and degree applicability of course work. Currently, more than 350 C-ID descriptors for courses in 81 disciplines have been established. Following legislation that called for additional assistance for students preparing to transfer (SB 1440 [Padilla, 2010] and SB 440 [Padilla, 2013]), the associate degrees for transfer (ADTs) were created. ADTs allow students to graduate with an associate degree with no more than 60 units and guarantee transfer to the CSU system, as well as guaranteeing the possible completion of a bachelor’s degree with a total of no more than 120 units.

Currently, intersegmental efforts have created 40 TMCs and 20 UC transfer pathways (UCTP) that students can follow to assist in the transfer process. Although TMCs were created for many majors in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, students often transfer before completing all of the general education requirements of these degrees due to the nature of these majors and the 60-unit cap on the ADT and therefore do not earn an associate degree. Attempts to mitigate this situation led to the convening of discipline faculty in chemistry and physics from all three public postsecondary educational systems and resulted in a UCTP pilot program in chemistry and physics through which students can earn an associate degree with some of the general education units to be completed after transfer to the UC system. The pilot degree program also requires that students meet certain grade point average requirements for admission into the UC system. The major preparation in the engineering model curriculum has been aligned with a UCTP, but a TMC for engineering has not been possible due the requirement that all general education and major preparation courses be completed prior to transfer; completing all of these requirements would surpass the 60-unit cap.

At the Fall 2017 ASCCC Plenary Session, the delegates asked the higher education systems to find ways to ensure that students are prepared to transfer to either the CSU or UC systems—Resolution F17 15.01<sup>3</sup>—and to streamline that process as much as possible, removing barriers

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2 More information on the C-ID Course Identification Number System is available at <https://www.c-id.net>.

3 Full text of all ASCCC resolutions is available at <https://www.asccc.org/resources/resolutions>.

for transfer and eliminating duplication of efforts. Conversations around this topic began with the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates in fall 2018, and, in fall 2019, the Intersegmental Curriculum Workgroup and the C-ID Advisory Committee examined TMCs from seven disciplines to determine whether they could be aligned with a UC transfer pathway with no or minimal modification. Surveys, webinars, and meetings with discipline faculty helped to determine that for the TMCs in anthropology, sociology, and history, alignment was fairly straight forward, with the understanding that students would need to take specific courses in their general education patterns in order to be eligible for admission to both systems. For the TMCs in business administration, economics, mathematics, and philosophy, pathways could not be easily aligned without including additional coursework that students would need depending on their transfer destination. The next three majors to be examined to determine whether alignment between the TMC and UCTP is feasible are biology, English, and political science. All of these proposed pathways will also align with college guided pathways frameworks, which often include general education offerings that complement the major offerings.

While faculty can work within their colleges and systems to align transfer, elements also exist outside of the colleges that must be taken into account. Local employment and labor market data and local needs also drive course and program offerings in many colleges, including in disciplines that can lead to transfer to four-year institutions. Students may be place-bound, meaning they are limited in terms of the colleges to which they can apply, and college affordability is always an issue. Many of these factors can be mitigated by strong counseling programs within the systems of the California community colleges and the four-year institutions as well as through changes to the understanding of what college affordability really means. The Research and Planning Group's report *Through the Gate Transfer Study*<sup>4</sup> is particularly useful for considering the reasons that students fail to transfer even when they are transfer ready.

The work of transfer is one of the key components of all California community colleges and their faculty. Even faculty who teach in areas where transfer is not a direct goal, such as non-credit, provide opportunities to students that may lead to students moving to a four-year institution or another college. The streamlining and alignment of transfer must be done thoughtfully and in partnership with transfer institutions; it cannot be done in a vacuum or without deliberative dialogue with discipline faculty, student services and support faculty,

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4 The study is available at <https://rpgroup.org/Through-the-Gate>.

classified professionals, and administrators. Equally important is that colleges give students agency in these decisions. For transfer to work, and work well, the practitioners and students must be the ones making decisions, collaborating on structures that best serve both students and communities.

# Academic Senates and Student Governments: A Critical Partnership

by [Stephanie Curry, ASCCC North Representative, ASCCC Relations](#)  
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**A**cademic senates and student governments can create a critical partnership in addressing systemic changes to support equitable student success. Through the guided pathways framework, colleges have learned to design with students in mind. The best way to keep students at the forefront of discussions is to partner with student governments. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) and the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) have begun to model these partnerships with expanded communications and taking opportunities to work together in support of student success.

## 10+ 1 AND THE 9+1

Similar to academic senates, student governments have their own legally designated purview areas, colloquially known as the 9+1 in parallel to academic senates' colloquially titled 10+1 under Title 5 §53200. Title 5 §51023 identifies that associated student governments are the representative body of students and that they shall “be provided the opportunity to participate in the formation of policies and procedures that have a significant effect on students.” The regulation further defines these areas, which include the following:

1. grading policies;
2. codes of student conduct;
3. academic disciplinary policies;
4. curriculum development;
5. courses or programs which should be initiated or discontinued;

6. processes for institutional planning and budget development;
7. standards and policies regarding student preparation and success;
8. student services planning and development;
9. student fees within the authority of the district to adopt; and
10. any other district and college policy, procedure or related matter that the district governing board determines will have a significant effect on students.

Clear overlap exists between the academic senate 10+1 and the student government 9+1, including in the areas of grading policies, curriculum development, processes for planning and budget development, and standards and policies regarding student preparation and success. These aligned areas provide local senates and student governments with opportunities to work with and support each other.

#### STRATEGIES FOR WORKING TOGETHER

With these overlapping areas involving local senates and student governments, developing standard communication strategies and practices can help build avenues for collective collaboration. Faculty can pursue creating these avenues by taking steps such as regularly attending student government meetings, being involved with student government trainings and retreats to help familiarize student leaders with their academic senates, making space for student leader representatives to present at academic senates, creating positions on academic senate workgroups and committees to include students' perspectives and input, and partnering with student governments in events like town halls, campus life, and club activities outside of the classroom.

Partnering with student governments on shared areas of purview can strengthen recommendations to college or district offices. Joint resolutions can provide a powerful statement of unity and collaboration. Academic senates and student government leaders should engage in open and regular communication. At the state level, the SSSCC president is invited to ASCCC Executive meetings and invited to speak on student government concerns. Student government leaders are also encouraged to attend ASCCC events, and the ASCCC has partnered with the SSCCC on events like the 2019 Academic Academy.

## A PARTNERSHIP IN EQUITY

The SSCCC has released an anti-racism student plan of action that includes recommendations for how faculty and staff can support diversity, equity, and inclusion work in the classroom. These recommendations include guidance on reforming class structures and course syllabi, diversifying curriculum, and encouraging dialogue components that enable a closer connection of students, particularly those of color and other minority groups, to the lessons they are learning. This document, *Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action*, as well as more background information on its creation can be found on the SSCCC website at [studentsenateccc.org](https://studentsenateccc.org).

While *Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action* provides initial guidance and ideas, faculty and staff are encouraged to use this guide as a foundation for expanding their own exploration of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom. Furthermore, faculty senates are encouraged to share this guide at large and encourage additional feedback from the students in their colleges' classrooms. As a model of collaboration, the ASCCC has endorsed the SSCCC Action Plan and will continue to work with the SSCCC on its implementation.

When local academic senates and student governments work together, they are a strong force for systemic change. The SSCCC's *Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action* is a great place for local senates to start intentionally collaborating with student government organizations. Faculty can invite students into their conversations, ask them to present on the plan, and work together to address systemic barriers for students. Once these critical partnerships have been formed, increased collaboration will follow.

# Integrating Expectations for Cultural Competence into Faculty Evaluations

by Cheryl Aschenbach, ASCCC Secretary

The system-wide effort to diversify faculty rests on evidence that a diverse faculty improves the retention and success of diverse students served by the California community colleges. The 2019 *Literature Review on Faculty, Staff, and Student Diversity* compiled by the Board of Governors Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force summarizes a sampling of this research (California Community Colleges Diversity Taskforce, 2019). As evidenced by multiple resolutions on increasing faculty diversity, this subject has been an on-going interest of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and has included not just the hiring of diverse faculty but also the retention of faculty of color. Retention of diverse faculty includes employee evaluations and tenure review, which together are a focus of current system-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Some might question why cultural competence should be included in faculty evaluations and tenure review; however, this focus is not new, as it is already called for in California Education Code Part 51, Chapter 3, Article 4, §87663, which includes “requirements for the frequency of evaluations (subsection a), inclusion of a peer review process (subsections c and d), considerations of diversity (subsection d), inclusion of student input (subsection g), and the rights of probationary faculty (subsection h)” (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2013, p. 3). Consistent with many elements of faculty contracts that are bargained locally, this section of Education Code does not specify how these considerations are to be included.

The 2016 *EEO & Diversity Best Practices Handbook* included a provision to incorporate diversity into employee evaluation and tenure review: “Multiple Method 8 requires that diversity is incorporated into criteria for employee evaluation and tenure review...For Multiple Method 8, the Advisory Committee looked for districts that provide specific criteria to measure diversity and included clear benchmarks demonstrating sensitivity to diversity in employee evaluation and tenure review” (California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, 2016, p. 25).

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation Plan also expresses the need to include diversity-focused criteria in evaluations. Strategy A for *Vision for Success* Commitment 5 states, “Encourage diversity-focused criteria in employee evaluations and tenure review” (California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, 2019).

Given the long overdue racial reckoning that occurred following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, a greater sense of urgency focused on action is needed. As was noted in the June 5, 2020 letter to the California Community Colleges from Chancellor’s Office leaders, with “more than 69 percent of our students identifying with one or more ethnic groups... we serve the most diverse student body in all of higher education” (California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, 2020). The letter also served as a follow-up to Chancellor Eloy Oakley’s June 3 Call to Action, in which he urged colleges to mobilize around six strategies to take action against structural racism. Strategy #2, “Campus leaders must host open dialogue and address campus climate,” calls for all stakeholders, with a sense of urgency, to have open and honest dialog about how to come together to build safe and inclusive campus communities and learning environments. Strategy #3, “Campuses must audit classroom climate and create an action plan to create inclusive classrooms and anti-racism curriculum,” calls for campus leaders to together engage in an evaluation of courses and programs and for faculty and administration to “develop action plans that provide proactive support for faculty and staff in evaluating their classroom and learning cultures, curriculum, lesson plans and syllabi, and course evaluation protocols.” Strategy #3 also asks district leaders to “[e]ngage with local faculty labor leaders to review the tenure review process to ensure that the process promotes and supports cultural competency.” (California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, 2020).

These system-level documents and directives, developed with representation from groups across the system, should provide motivation for colleges to act. However, if more motivation or a greater sense of urgency is needed, then one can listen to students, who have also spoken directly about the need for the system and colleges to act more urgently and deliberately to develop and support safe, anti-racist, inclusive campus environments. In Fall 2020, tired of talk about change but seeing little meaningful action, the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) created an Institutional Success for People of Color Task Force and held two town halls to engage students, hear their stories and experiences with California community colleges, and collect feedback about SSCCC work. The result was the SSCCC’s

*Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action*, adopted September 4, 2020 by the SSCCC Delegate Assembly (Student Senate for California Community Colleges, 2020). Two elements of the Student Plan of Action directly call for or support the need for inclusion of an element of cultural competence and anti-racism in faculty evaluations: cultural awareness and respect and classroom experience.

In the SSCCC's *Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action*, cultural awareness and respect calls for "Creat[ion of] a climate of cultural awareness and respect to allow students of color to feel welcome, free to express their opinions, and safe in every collegiate environment" by engaging the following strategies:

Confront and address racial profiling and microaggression

Appreciate contributions of Black Americans and other people of color to society

Establish appropriate etiquette sensitive to cultural backgrounds

Create an environment where students can thrive while being their authentic selves (p. 2)

The classroom experience focus calls for "Creat[ion of] a classroom environment that is conducive to learning by ensuring that faculty are representative of the student population, providing students with an opportunity to give feedback to improve their learning experience," which recommends that faculty evaluations include cultural competency and classroom management. The SSCCC has since developed a DEI Compact with the intention that it be endorsed by system partners, including ASCCC, and integrated into the Board of Governors DEI Integration Plan. At its February 5, 2021 Executive Committee meeting, the ASCCC board endorsed the SSCCC DEI Compact.

Integrating an element of cultural competency, DEI, or anti-racism into evaluations is necessary, but uncertainty may exist about how to make it happen. Since evaluations are largely seen as the purview of bargaining units, questions may be raised about the role of local senates in making this change happen. Education Code §87663(f) includes the provision that "[i]n those districts where faculty evaluation procedures are collectively bargained, the faculty's exclusive representative shall consult with the academic senate prior to engaging in collective bargaining regarding those procedures." As noted in the ASCCC paper *Sound Principles for Faculty Evaluation* (2013), this language means that while bargaining units may negotiate the

language specific to faculty evaluations, they must do so with input from academic senates (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2013). The *Sound Principles* paper further explains that with the purpose of faculty evaluations being to promote professional development and effective student learning, senates and unions should work together to develop processes that support this aim.

This work requires communication, collaboration, respect, and trust, all of which can be developed with intention if the academic senate and union do not already work well together. Meeting together regularly can help senates and unions to discuss areas of shared interest or concern and learn more about each other's priorities; this practice can better position senates and unions to act proactively together. As senates and unions dialog, they can explore what can be done to integrate cultural competence and DEI into faculty evaluations while respecting the concerns each may have.

While clear impetus exists for including cultural competence in faculty evaluations, doing so is not without concerns. These concerns include worries about possible shaming or punitive consequences. This reservation may be a product of evaluation and professional development programs that seem more focused, either through intent or past actions, on compliance, deficit-mindedness, or correction. It may be a result of a history of mistrust among campus groups, including faculty, or of bad actors. Senates and unions can work together with professional development leaders and administrators to re-envision faculty evaluation and tenure processes as constructive, supportive processes of continual growth and learning. A shift in the culture of evaluation from compliance or deficit-mindedness to supportive, on-going growth can also better enable support for the inclusion of cultural competence in evaluations. Using evaluation processes to explore opportunities for growth for each faculty member, from the exemplar to those still evolving as instructors, counselors, and librarians, can help to remove the stigma associated with a professional development or, as it is sadly sometimes called, a remediation plan.

Another concern is the difficulty of measuring cultural competence, as assessing a faculty member's effectiveness in regards to DEI matters requires evaluators to be proficient in their own understanding and application of cultural competence in order to evaluate others. Senates and unions can work with college leadership to prioritize and coordinate ongoing professional learning, including on equity, cultural competence, and anti-racism, for all stakeholders, which can serve to establish a common understanding of cultural competence for all involved in the evaluation process. Further, in preparation for the dialog and negotiation of cultural

competence in the faculty evaluation process, academic senates and unions together can investigate and recommend viable means of assessing cultural competency, ideally finding potential solutions that are amenable to senates, unions, and administrations while fitting with local evaluation culture and practices.

Some may question whether this issue is purely about faculty or whether all personnel evaluations should include elements of cultural competence. In fact, all should. The DEI Integration Plan calls for cultural competence to be included in all evaluations, including the self-evaluation of boards of trustees. While academic senates and faculty unions can discuss how cultural competence can be included in evaluations and tenure review specific to faculty, if equity and a safe, inclusive environment for all is truly a campus priority, broader dialog should occur with human resources, classified professionals, and other personnel groups in an effort to embed an understanding of and sensitivity to diverse populations into all personnel evaluations.

Academic senates and faculty unions should engage together in honest and meaningful dialog with the intention of integrating an element of cultural competence into faculty evaluations and tenure review. This change may not be easy to achieve, but it is urgent. Advancing local cultures of equity and nurturing safe, inclusive learning spaces for students is needed; local senates and unions can do this work, and they can do it together. Doing so may mean setting aside past differences. It may mean spending time in dialog focused on other topics of joint interest to further develop the respect and trust needed to prepare for recommendations and negotiation together. It may mean joining together and with others to re-orient evaluation and tenure review with an asset- and growth-minded intention and then continuing to work together and with others to ensure professional learning is in place to support the continual equity- and cultural competence-focused growth of faculty and all employees. It should mean senates and unions both honor the Education Code directive by giving senates opportunities to make recommendations on evaluation processes and then having unions handle the negotiations.

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# Perspective: Students, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Career Technical Education

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California's Build Back Better effort requires reimagining possibilities. Student success is the key to the economic vitality of the state and of local regions. In a report published by the California Governor's Council for Post-Secondary Education, *Recovery with Equity: A Roadmap for Higher Education After the Pandemic*, a series of recommendations were established focused on the following guiding principles:

- **Fostering Inclusive Institutions:** Institutional cultures and approaches to teaching and learning that work for all learners, especially those left behind.
- **Streamlining Pathways to Degrees:** An integrated statewide system for admission and transfer to provide clear, easy-to-navigate pathways to degrees.
- **Facilitating Student Transitions:** High-touch, high-tech guidance and improved academic preparation for college access and success.
- **Simplifying Supports for Student Stability:** Resources and structures packaged and simplified to help students meet basic, digital, and financial aid needs. (California Governor's Council for Post-Secondary Education, 2021, p.4).

Leaders in the California Community Colleges system must stay focused on achieving positive and equitable outcomes for students.

In May of 2020, several police officers participated in and carried out the murder of George Floyd. This incident activated individuals and organizations to demand the end of racism and a call for all systems to address and dismantle systemic and institutional racism. On June 5, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office released a Call to Action to address structural racism in higher education. In June of 2020, Academic Senate for California

Community Colleges President John Stankas (2020) issued a special message that called for faculty in the community college system to create an actionable agenda to “change the parts of our system we have the power to change.” In September 2020, the Student Senate for California Community Colleges published its *Anti-Racism: A Student Plan of Action*. The plan addressed a need for increased cultural awareness and respect, equity training, curriculum changes, peer mentors and alliances, and a racially conscious classroom experience (Student Senate for California Community Colleges, 2020).

Resolutions and other feel-good statements are not doing enough to unravel a system that was created on racist ideals, and the sequence of events in 2020 made this fact painfully clear. The plan of action starts with students and with teachers, staff, and administrators. Career and Technical Education programs are essential in the lives of students of color, who often rely on the skills learned to go directly into the workforce. Unfortunately, at an institution that focuses more on supporting its transfer students, the focus on these students can be lost.

With the pandemic of COVID-19 and the unemployment numbers seen in 2020, California is in dire need of skills training for a new workforce. Employers have indicated that a skills gap exists within their current workforce due to rapid changes in technology. Industry partners face challenges filling positions that require skilled workers. Furthermore, according to a recent survey conducted by the Educational Credit Management Corporation (2021), incoming student populations such as Generation Z teens are more interested in obtaining skills and short-term training that lead to careers, compared to the decline of interest in attending four-year universities. According to the study, 61% of participants believed that skills-based education—such as trade skills or CTE education—made sense, 45% of participants agreed that two-year training made sense, and about 25% of survey participants were more likely to attend a school that offered CTE programs based on their COVID-19 experience. Industry partners are seeking a workforce with proven competencies. Incoming students are interested in attending community colleges to obtain two-year training and skills-based short-term certificates, especially in the post-pandemic landscape. Professionals in higher education have an opportunity to provide open access training to community members through the CTE programs offered on their campuses. Through collaboration with employers, colleges can offer CTE programs that address workforce needs and student interests and are foundational to mitigating the skills gap.

In compliance with consultation requirements in Education Code §§70901 and 70902, the ASCCC formed the Career Technical Education Leadership Committee (CTELC) to provide

recommendations on CTE issues. At least 70 percent of the committee members are faculty within CTE disciplines and recognize both faculty and student needs in CTE programs. The committee works collaboratively with the ASCCC Executive Committee to assist community college districts, CTE departments, and CTE faculty to ensure that career technical education and workforce development provide responsive curriculum aligned to current and emergent industry trends and to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of career education. Due to the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the CTELC has expanded the participation of diverse CTE faculty in leadership roles at the local, regional, and statewide levels through its ongoing professional development efforts. Furthermore, the committee has actively sought out recommendations and counsel for increasing diversity from student senate leaders.

CTE programs have a commitment to engage with business and industry to offer students high-quality programming and work-based educational experiences. “Work-based learning provides students an opportunity as aspiring employees to explore careers and to turn theory and simulation into practice by gaining on-the-job experience. The hands-on experience gained from work-based learning opportunities, especially when considered in combination with the attainment and application of employment soft skills, is a critical component of career training and preparation. Students completing CTE programs with work-based learning embedded are well-equipped to enter the workforce” (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. 2019, p.1). As faculty continue to engage with these partners, colleges and senate leaders can play a role to ensure that CTE programs are supported as they explore educational opportunities for students within their local industries. These partnerships prepare students for employment in their fields.

Colleges can uphold a commitment to diversity in several ways:

- Facilitate the development of an industry steering committee convened to assist in program development and program enhancements.
- Address representation and diversity through the college outreach program focused on creating an environment for all students to thrive.
- Promote and retain vendors who do business with the college that are committed to supporting student preparation, a strong local economy, and fostering social-economic equity and social justice.

Some actions CTE departments can implement to inform industry and business partners of the commitment to diversity and to keep the local academic senate informed are as follows:

- Prepare a student participation and student CTE program completion report disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender and present the report to industry and business partners and the local academic senate.
- Prepare a report on the composition of local college industry advisory committees and present the report to industry and business partners and the local academic senate.
- Train CTE faculty to review their curriculum, student services, and support with an equity-minded focus. Include industry and business partners in the training.

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# The Passage of AB 1460 and Its Impact on the CCCs

By the Transfer, Articulation, and Student Services Committee:

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and Manuel J. Vélez, Chair, ASCCC South Representative

Since their inception in the late 1960s, ethnic studies programs and courses have faced significant opposition and scrutiny in their attempts to be recognized as valid disciplines. In California's community colleges, where the first ethnic studies associate of arts degrees were established, this opposition has served to stunt the growth of these programs and has contributed to a misunderstanding and confusion over their definition and implementation.

Despite this confusion, ethnic studies programs have been established in over fifty California community colleges and have been supported by a growing movement to add ethnic studies requirements to academic curricula across the state. This movement has already begun to bear fruit, as concrete efforts are underway to establish ethnic studies requirements in high schools and universities. In fact, this movement has produced the passing of California's Assembly Bill 1460, which mandates an ethnic studies requirement for bachelor's degrees awarded by the California State University beginning in the Fall of 2021. While the impact of this new law is certainly important for ethnic studies overall, the inclusion of lower-level courses means that community colleges will be directly affected by the new requirement in a way for which they are not currently prepared. This fact is already evident as community colleges begin to search for ways to ensure that their students will be able to meet these new requirements on their campuses.

Ethnic studies is a comparative discipline focused on the experiences of African-American, Asian-American, Latinx-American, and Native American communities in the U.S. from an

interdisciplinary lens. It examines culture and contributions through a social justice framework, combining history, economics, politics, and social science for groups that have historically been left out of U.S. history. The field of ethnic studies combines the connections in the historically racialized and marginalized groups in the U.S. It requires critical thinking and understanding of the oppression of people of color and social engagement for the uplifting of communities, and it inspires advocates to value intersectionality and be change agents. A study at Stanford University (Donald, 2016) evaluated a pilot in San Francisco high schools that required an ethnic studies course for graduation and found that students had increased grade point averages and course completion, particularly for boys and Latinx students.

In January 2014, California State University Chancellor Timothy White created a state-wide CSU Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies. On January 30, 2016, the task force submitted to Chancellor White its report, which included ten broad recommendations (CSU Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies, 2016). The first recommendation was to create an ethnic studies general education requirement for the entire CSU system. Other recommendations included increasing and maintaining hiring within ethnic studies departments and curriculum development to strengthen ethnic studies and increase enrollment. On August 23, 2017, Chancellor White signed changes to General Education Breadth Requirement Executive Order 1100 (White, 2017). The changes to the policy were intended to clarify and streamline graduation requirements as well as to ensure equitable opportunity for student success. However, the changes to EO 1100 did not include adding a general education ethnic studies area to fulfill one of the recommendations from the CSU Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies.

California Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 1460 (Weber, 2020) in August of 2020, months after the tragic death of George Floyd sparked protests across the nation. AB 1460 mandates that all 23 California State University campuses require an ethnic studies course as a baccalaureate degree requirement. The bill expressed “the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would require California State University students to complete one 3-unit course in ethnic studies in order to graduate.”<sup>1</sup>

While the California Assembly was working on AB 1460, the Academic Senate for California State University (ASCSU) worked to establish recommendations for ethnic studies curricula. This process involved a lengthy series of negotiations and compromises between the ASCSU,

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1 The full text of AB 1460 is available at [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201920200AB1460](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1460).

the CSU Chancellor's Office, and the CSU Board of Trustees through several different proposals that ultimately had to be modified to satisfy the mandate of AB 1460. On December 3, 2020, the CSU Chancellor's Office released the revised CSU General Education Breadth Requirements (California State University, 2020), which included the addition of Area F Ethnic Studies and reduced Area D Social Sciences to six units to accommodate for the added area.

At its Fall 2020 Plenary Session, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges passed two resolutions to address the issues involving ethnic studies requirements. Resolution 09.03 Fall 2020, Ethnic Studies Graduation Requirement,<sup>2</sup> directed the ASCCC to work with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to amend Title 5 §55063 to include ethnic studies as a competency graduation requirement for local associate degrees. Making students complete a competency does not add additional general education requirements but ensures that all students who complete an associate degree complete a course in ethnic studies. This requirement would apply for all students, including students who transfer to the CSU and the UC. Resolution 09.04 Fall 2020, Clarify and Strengthen the Ethnic Studies General Education Requirement, directs the ASCCC to work with the CCC Chancellor's Office to amend Title 5 §55063 (b) (1) to add a fifth general education area entitled Ethnic Studies. Adding an Ethnic Studies area to Title 5 §55063 (b) (1) would only add it to general education for local associate degrees, so students who complete general education under the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) breadth pattern would not need to fulfill ethnic studies. Students who transfer to the UC typically complete the IGETC breadth pattern, while students transferring to the CSU have a choice of CSU-GE or IGETC breadth patterns.

Now that AB 1460 has passed and the CSU Chancellor's Office has revised EO 1100, the work for community colleges begins. Implementation will vary by campus and should follow local governance policies and procedures. Every December, usually on the first Friday of the month, California community colleges are invited to submit course outlines of record (CORs) to the CSU and the UC for approval as meeting IGETC, CSU-GE Breadth, or American Institutions requirements. The CORs are submitted through the Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer (ASSIST) by college ASSIST managers, usually campus articulation officers or their designees. Courses go through a review process with representatives from the UC Office of the President, the CSU Chancellor's Office, and postsecondary faculty. Results are typically reported to community colleges in late spring and made available

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2 Full text of all ASCCC resolutions is available at <https://www.asccc.org/resources/resolutions>.

on ASSIST. Prior to being submitted for IGETC, CSU-GE Breadth, or American Institutions requirements, courses need to go through local curriculum approval processes.

Recommendations to implement AB 1460 on local campuses are as follows:

1. Create a work group of cross-discipline faculty to identify courses that meet at least three out of five of the core competencies as outlined in EO 1100 CSU-GE Breadth Article 4 Area F Ethnic Studies (California State University, 2020).
2. Courses must have one of the following prefixes: African-American, Asian-American, Latinx-American, or Native American Studies or similar course prefixes such as Pan-African Studies, American Indian Studies, Chicana/o Studies, or Ethnic Studies.
3. Courses may need to go through the local curriculum approval process to address the requirements outlined in EO 1100.
4. Once courses have been identified and approved through the local process, the campus ASSIST manager can enter the COR on ASSIST and submit the course in the workflow to request that it fulfill Area F Ethnic Studies.

In addition to having courses approved for CSU-GE Area F Ethnic Studies, colleges will need their technical work aligned with EO 1100 CSU-GE Breadth requirements. College catalogs starting in Fall 2021-2022 will need to include CSU-GE Breadth Area F and the reduction of units in Area D from nine to six units. Although results of submissions for approval by CSU will not be known prior to printing of the catalog, colleges may wish to add Area F so that students who have catalog rights in 2021-2022 will complete Area F in order to meet the CSU graduation requirements. Other changes will include updating colleges' various student management systems, student advising systems, and documents.

One of the most important things campus leaders, articulation officers, curriculum chairs, and academic senate presidents can do is to train their campus communities on these changes. They should be prepared to answer questions and address people's concerns, as many questions and concerns are likely.

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# Effective Student-Centered Online Education Using the CVC-OEI Online Course Design Rubric and Local POCR

by [ASCCC 2020-2021 Online Education Committee & California Virtual Campus](#)

Course design and teaching are two sides of the same coin of effective student-centered online education. Research regarding online community college students shows that a caring, engaged instructor is the biggest predictor of student engagement and performance (Jaggars & Xu, 2016), and it also shows that course design is a key driver of quality (Joosten & Cusatis, 2019). The **CVC-OEI Online Course Design Rubric**<sup>1</sup> is an important and helpful resource to guide faculty toward the goal of effective student-centered online education.

When one is building a house, local and state building codes provide the standard to which structures must adhere; these requirements are not only effective practices but also practical and safe ones that optimize the livability of a house. Similarly, the CVC-OEI Online Course Design Rubric serves as a local building code of sorts, defining effective practices that improve the learner experience and maximize student engagement with the course materials and, ultimately, student success.

Like building codes that outline the industry-standard effective practices for wiring an appliance, the CVC-OEI Online Course Design Rubric outlines the effective practices for designing an online course. Course design includes the organization of a course and other categories including content presentation, interaction, assessment, and accessibility. As homeowners can choose any variety of appliances to put in a home, instructors can choose a variety of methods to support students in their courses.

Poor course design is a barrier that can prevent students from achieving their academic goals. When courses are not aligned with effective practices, students can easily become disengaged because they are likely to spend more time locating materials and assessments than engaging with them. To that end, effective course design guides the system towards its goal of achieving educational equity. The design and organization of an online course have

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<sup>1</sup> The rubric is available at [https://onlinenetworkofeducators.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CVC\\_OEI\\_Course\\_Design\\_Rubric\\_rev\\_April\\_2020.pdf](https://onlinenetworkofeducators.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CVC_OEI_Course_Design_Rubric_rev_April_2020.pdf).

been shown to significantly predict student learning, satisfaction, and academic performance (Joosten & Custatis, 2019). Courses that are designed with a clear navigation and structure, have aligned objectives and assessments, are accessible, and include varied content support greater learner variability, which is key to supporting the academic goals of diverse students. All faculty want students to maximize their time spent engaging with subject matter, and aligning an online course with the CVC-OEI Online Course Design Rubric can help to accomplish that end.

The rubric is a guide for both seasoned online instructors and those just beginning to learn how to build online courses. Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Resolution 09.03 Fall 2018<sup>2</sup> recommends that local academic senates, in conjunction with their curriculum and distance education committees, adopt the rubric as an aspirational standard for all online courses. The rubric was created in collaboration with faculty and is not intended as a tool to measure faculty performance. Instead, it was designed to provide a solid set of standards around which to build online courses that are accessible, navigable, clear, and logical. Many California community colleges and faculty across the state depend on the rubric to serve as their north star of online course quality, with several colleges compensating faculty for achieving and maintaining rubric alignment.

Just as one does not quickly construct a house to industry standards, one does not quickly create a CVC-OEI Rubric-aligned course; the high-quality structure and accessibility compliance require a significant time investment and often also require support from course design or accessibility specialists. Academic senates are encouraged to develop faculty peer review teams dedicated to peer online course review (POCR). These carefully chosen teams should consist of adjuncts, tenure-track, and tenured faculty, minimizing any inappropriate power imbalances that would dampen positive effects of candid peer engagement. With local senate approval, instructional designers should also be included on POCR teams. Teams should also include faculty who have significant online teaching experience to help instructors apply the rubric standards to the courses at hand. Through these mentoring experiences, faculty learn and develop effective online pedagogical practices that are student-centered in their design and practical in their approach. Done well, the POCR process informs and improves pedagogy whether it involves working with students online or face-to-face.

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2 Full text of the resolution is available at <https://www.asccc.org/resolutions/local-adoption-california-virtual-campus-%E2%80%93-online-education-initiative-course-design>.

Local distance education committees will need to establish the mechanics of POQR support and a professional development mechanism, and local districts will need to provide proper resources such as stipends, Flex credit, or reassigned time for instructors, POQR teams, and trainers.

The POQR process can seem daunting, but the work it requires varies greatly based upon the course being developed. The end result is a course that applies research-based strategies derived from student data. Improving the design and organization of an online course positively influences outcomes for students who are disproportionately impacted.

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# Legislation for 2021: Full Steam Ahead

by [Adrienne C. Brown](#), ASCCC Legislative and Advocacy Committee  
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2020 was the second year of a two-year legislative cycle. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the legislature slowed the legislation train down, limited the bills to be heard, and prioritized those that absolutely must pass in that year, were directly related to COVID-19, alleviated homelessness, were related to wildfire preparedness, or were a response to PG&E bankruptcy. In 2019, 2,625 bills were introduced to legislature, 1,042 made it to the governor’s desk, and 870 became law. In 2020, those numbers were 2,390, 513, and 457, respectively. The legislature indicated that the number of bills in 2021 would also be reduced and focused similarly as in 2020. However, as of the closing day to introduce bills, February 19, the legislature was moving full steam ahead: 1,564 assembly bills and 815 senate bills had been introduced. That is a total of 2,379 bills for 2021. A number of bills that may potentially impact the California Community Colleges system, especially regarding academic and professional matters under the purview of academic senates, have been reintroduced or are expected.

## REINTRODUCED BILLS

**AB 417 (McCarty, 2021)**,<sup>1</sup> the Rising Scholars Network, reintroduces **AB 2341 (McCarty, 2020)**. After passing out of the Assembly, AB 2341 died in the Senate, as did many of the bills in 2020. This bill would authorize the Chancellor’s Office to establish a program, named the Rising Scholars Network, to enter into agreements with up to fifty community colleges to provide additional funds for services in support of justice-involved—current or formerly incarcerated—students. The ASCCC has long supported providing educational opportunities and services to current and formerly incarcerated students as demonstrated by resolutions **F19 3.06**, **S17 5.01**, **S17 7.02**, **S17 17.02**<sup>2</sup> as well as numerous *Rostrum* articles and presentations at ASCCC events.

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1 Text of all bills can be found at <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>.

2 Full text of all ASCCC resolutions can be found at <https://www.asccc.org/resources/resolutions>.

**AB 421 (Ward, 2021)** would equalize noncredit career development college preparation (CDCP) funding to credit course funding by requiring the accounting of students enrolled in CDCP courses to be conducted by positive attendance count or by census basis. In addition, it would alter the definition of qualifying courses to a “complement of courses” instead of a “sequence of courses.” This bill reintroduces **AB 1727 (Weber, 2019)** that was vetoed by the governor due to a likely substantial increase in cost. Although the ASCCC did not take an official position on AB 1727, positions of support to equalize noncredit funding with that of credit are found in resolutions **F20 13.02**, **S19 9.02**, **F18 9.02**, the *Rostrum* article “*Changes Ahead for Noncredit*” (Rutan, 2019), and the paper *Noncredit Instruction: Opportunity and Challenge* (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2019).

**AB 940 (McCarty, 2021)** reintroduces **AB 2017 (McCarty, 2016)**. AB 940 would reallocate existing funds to be used for increasing campus student mental health services and mental health-related education and training. Although interest and support existed in 2016, the issue is much more urgent now, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting impact to students. The ASCCC took a position of support (Morse, 2016) for AB 2017.

#### BILLS INTENDED TO IMPROVE EXISTING LEGISLATION

**AB 927 (Medina, 2021)** and **AB 1115 (Choi, 2021)** are two bills proposing amendments to the community colleges baccalaureate degree pilot program that resulted from the passage of **SB 850 (Block, 2014)**. While AB 1115 would only extend the sunset date of the pilot program by one year until July 1, 2027, AB 927 would remove the pilot designation, permit more than the current fifteen colleges to participate in the program, and permit districts to offer multiple programs. Colleges would still be required to provide documentation regarding unmet workforce needs and would still not be allowed to duplicate programs that exist in the California State University or University of California systems. The ASCCC passed resolution **F19 6.01** that reversed the ASCCC’s prior position of opposition to the baccalaureate program and urged the removal of the pilot designation. In addition, Resolution **F19 6.02** supported the expansion of the baccalaureate program in disciplines and communities that best serve students and prioritized the expansion of baccalaureate programs in allied health fields.

**AB 928 (Berman, 2021)**, a bill on transfer from the California Community Colleges to the California State University or University of California, purports to streamline transfer processes and increase the number of students that receive associate degrees before transfer.

As of March 16, 2021, this legislation was still what is often referred to as a spot bill, which are bills that are submitted with minimal language while the author continues conferring with sponsors and possibly other stakeholders in creating the bill language. Currently, expected language for the bill would seek to create a single transfer pathway to both the CSU and UC systems. The bill is also expected to require the automatic placement of community college students into an associate degree for transfer (ADT) pathway, which students would then have to opt-out of if they prefer a different pathway that better meets their educational goals. The ASCCC has done extensive work to create, simplify, and align transfer pathways for students. Forty Transfer Model Curricula and twenty University of California Transfer Pathways have now been finalized for colleges to use in designing their ADTs and local associate degrees. However, while attempts to align both CSU and UC requirements into single pathways have been successful in some cases, they may not be feasible in others due to the excess units required of students to meet the degree outcomes and objectives for both systems. In addition, auto-placing students into transfer pathways could limit students' options to pursue transfer to the UC system and prove problematic in other ways. The ASCCC will continue to monitor this bill.

**AB 1040 (Muratsuchi, 2021)** is part of a recent suite of bills [**AB 1460 (Weber, 2019)**, **AB 310 (Medina, 2019)**, **AB 3310 (Muratsuchi, 2020)**, **AB 101 (Medina, 2021)**] with the goal of ensuring that students in California public institutions take an ethnic studies course as a required component of their education. While this bill could be viewed as a reintroduction of AB 3310, it has some fairly substantial differences and would require only those students pursuing an associate degree for transfer to take an ethnic studies course. The ASCCC has a long history of supporting ethnic studies education in the curriculum through numerous resolutions and *Rostrum* articles dating back as far as 1988. **F88 5.04** directed the Executive Committee to pursue strategies to develop ethnic studies as a component of the associate degree, and **F98 3.06** reaffirmed the ASCCC support of an ethnic studies graduation requirement. In **2008** and **2009**, more resolutions directed examination of and resources for how colleges were meeting the requirements, and in fall 2020 two additional resolutions, **F20 9.03** and **F20 9.04**, were passed to clarify and strengthen the ethnic studies requirement in Title 5. In early fall 2020, the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee proposed language to codify the requirement in Title 5 Regulations §55063. For more information on ethnic studies education and how it has evolved over the years, see the *Rostrum* articles “**Ethnic Studies Requirement: Understanding It and Fulfilling It**” (Morse & Watkins, 2010) and “**Ethnic Studies: Looking Back; Looking Forward**” (Beach, et.al, 2021).

**AB 1456 (Medina, 2021)**, the Cal Grant Reform Act, has been a long time coming. This bill aims to overhaul Cal Grants and provide financial aid to community college students that will cover the full cost of college. The ASCCC actively supports the expansion of financial aid for all students in the state as evidenced in the ASCCC President's **January 14, 2019 Letter to Vice-Chancellor Laura Metune (Stanskas, 2019)** and through resolution S16 6.01.

Those interested in more information on legislation that the ASCCC is following can go to agenda item IV.A in any Executive Committee meeting agenda, which can be found at [asccc.org](http://asccc.org).

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# Keeping the Guided Pathways Groove On

by Stephanie Curry, ASCCC North Representative, ASCCC Guided Pathways Task Force  
Jeffrey Hernandez, ASCCC Guided Pathways Task Force  
and Ginni May, ASCCC Vice President, ASCCC Guided Pathways Task Force Chair

## GETTING THE GUIDED PATHWAYS GROOVE ON

During the past four years or more, California community college faculty have taken the lead in moving their colleges into the guided pathways groove. The California Community Colleges Guided Pathways Grant [Award] Program<sup>1</sup>, part of the 2017-18 Budget Act, provided \$150 million to be distributed by the CCC Board of Governors over five years. Ten percent of the funding was allocated to the CCC Chancellor's Office for statewide assistance and programmatic support, with the remaining \$135 million to be allocated to the CCCs participating in the CCC Guided Pathways Grant Program. As of the writing of this article, participating colleges have received 90% of the funds. All funds, including the last allocation of the remaining 10% for year five which will be dispersed in July 2021, sunset at the end of June 2022. As with most grant funding, colleges are expected to sustain the programs developed. In other words, colleges need to stay in the guided pathways groove to sustain the systemic changes and institutional redesigns that have been set in motion.

Furthermore, statements such as Chancellor Eloy Oakley's Call to Action (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2020) and the Special Message from the President of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (Stanskas, 2020) have indicated the importance of leveraging the guided pathways framework to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion with high-touch student support and integrating those concepts into college structures. Significant guided pathways practices fall under local academic senate purview, including curriculum, degree and certificate requirements, program development, institutional planning processes, professional development, and strategies for student success. Local academic senates are situated to take the lead in planning for institutionalizing guided pathways frameworks in California's community colleges.

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1 The legislative language establishing the grant program can be found at [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=7.&title=3.&part=54.81.&chapter=&article=](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=7.&title=3.&part=54.81.&chapter=&article=)

## PLANNING TO KEEP THE GUIDED PATHWAYS GROOVE ON

One distinction between the guided pathways framework and other grant or initiative programs is that it focuses on sustainable systemic changes that form the foundation for redesigning institutions with students in mind. Colleges throughout the California Community Colleges system created meta majors and program maps, re-designed onboarding student support, focused curriculum review on student experience, and built holistic wrap-around services for students. Sustaining these changes is key to the institutional redesign taking place to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion and eliminate those structures that have upheld racist practices. Research on guided pathways nationwide has shown that full implementation can take up to ten years (Belfield, 2020). The five-year grant from the legislature was a starter grant to enable colleges to begin designing and implementing a guided pathways framework. Although hope remains for additional funding from the state to continue the work on guided pathways, no additional funding has been secured to date. The benefits to students resulting from institutional redesign accentuate the need for colleges to plan for the continuation and expansion of guided pathways work regardless of funding. Colleges may use data, both qualitative and quantitative, to review the effectiveness of guided pathways activities and prioritize for sustainability and continuing in the guided pathways groove.

## ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges also received guided pathways funding. The Guided Pathways Task Force (GPTF) was established in spring 2018 to provide resources, professional development, and services to member academic senates. However, the ASCCC grant funds expired December 31, 2020, halfway through year four, motivating the GPTF to create a plan to institutionalize ASCCC guided pathways support. In fall 2020, the GPTF reviewed the work that took place over the previous three years, identifying where resources, professional development, and services could be embedded into ASCCC structures. The GPTF provided recommendations to the ASCCC Executive Committee for integration of guided pathways work into the work of the organization's standing committees. Each committee was asked to review the recommendations and its committee charge with a focus on which elements of guided pathways aligned with the committee's work. The GPTF clarified that the intent in reviewing and updating the charges was not to add duties but to clarify guided pathways elements that fell under the role of each committee. In addition, as ASCCC

standing committees conducted this review, they could also review and update charges with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## LOCAL ACADEMIC SENATES

Similar to the ASCCC strategy for sustaining guided pathways support, local academic senates can take a lead in multiple areas, including the following:

- Leverage the guided pathways framework to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Integrate and clarify guided pathways work and supports into existing or revised academic senate committees and college governance structures.
- Support effective communication of guided pathways efforts, successes, and areas for improvement.
- Encourage, facilitate, and institutionalize faculty involvement.
- Integrate guided pathways efforts with the college mission and planning.
- Provide leadership in highlighting the student voice in guided pathways efforts.

Local academic senates are well-positioned to initiate the review of not only academic senate-led committee operating agreements and charges but those of college or district governance groups as well. Local senates are encouraged to consider broad constituency group representation with a focus on diversity of voices, including highlighting the voices of students. Committee reviews should also continue the efforts to de-silo committees and promote cross-functional dialog. Local senates should also work with their local budget committees to discuss budget processes that will continue to support effective guided pathways efforts. All of these activities should focus on supporting equitable opportunities for students through guided pathways frameworks.

The guided pathways framework prioritizes inquiry, dialog, and assessment. Local academic senates, due to their purview over academic and professional matter as provided in Title 5 §53200, are in a prime position to partner with students, classified professionals, and administrators on planning for guided pathways sustainability. Doing so will ensure that students today and in the future benefit from guided pathways reforms and that colleges will keep their guided pathways groove on.

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# Cal Grant Modernization and the True Cost of College

by [Stephanie Curry, ASCCC North Representative, ASCCC Legislative and Advocacy Committee](#)  
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In March 2020, as colleges were suddenly shifted to fully remote instruction and services as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the California Student Aid Commission<sup>1</sup> put out a report recommending significant and beneficial changes to the Cal Grant system for California community college students. The report *Cal Grant Modernization: A Vision for the Future* (California Student Aid Commission, 2020) proposes to be a student-centered framework for modernizing financial aid. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the report received less attention than it otherwise might have in better years. On February 19, 2021, Assembly Bill 1456 (Medina, 2021) was introduced into the current legislative cycle. The bill includes proposed changes to Cal Grants that reflect many of the recommendations in the Student Aid Commission’s report but that do not include increasing access awards for community college students to the extent recommended in the report.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated many things, one of which is that tuition and fees are just the beginning of the true cost of college for community college students. Through the guided pathways framework, the importance of holistic student support, inside and outside the classroom, has become clear. California’s financial aid system needs to focus on supporting the true cost of college, which includes more than just tuition and fees but also other expenses such as textbooks, food, housing, transportation, computers or tablets, and access to high-speed internet.

## WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES WITH THE CURRENT CAL GRANT SYSTEM?

As the Student Aid Commission’s report states, “Cal Grant was designed six decades ago and no longer meets the needs of the state’s growing number of struggling college students.” Their conclusion is that the current system is a barrier to “advancing affordability and providing

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1 Information on the California Student Aid Commission can be found at <https://www.csac.ca.gov/>

a pathway to success.” Currently community college students are disadvantaged in that they are only eligible for a fraction—\$1,672—of the \$6,000 Access Award funding that four-year students are eligible to receive. Access Awards are designed to support expenses beyond tuition and fees. This current system perpetuates inequalities to college access and success. Other parts of the Cal Grant system have disadvantaged community college students as well, including financial aid deadlines and grade point average (GPA) requirements. GPA verification disadvantages many community college students who are not direct matriculants from high schools. The application deadline of March 2 also impacts students who take advantage of the rolling admissions opportunities at community colleges.

#### WHY DO STUDENTS NEED CAL GRANT MODERNIZATION?

The Student Aid Commission Report was influenced by the commission’s 2018-2019 *Student Expenses and Resources Survey*, or SEARS (California Student Aid Commission, 2019). The tri-annual report details that student loan debt in California has ballooned to \$133 million, double the previous amount, in the past ten years. The SEARS report found that many students do not have the financial means to cover the full cost of attendance, and they do not have access to sufficient financial aid. The cost of attendance “is more than just tuition and fees.” According to the Student Aid Commission, the average cost for a full-time student at a California community college is \$18,200 when one considers food, housing, transportation, textbooks, materials and fees. Even with financial aid, the average community college student has \$9,233 of unmet need (California Student Aid Commission, 2019). When students were asked what the greatest obstacle to succeeding in college is, 64% of students chose either the “cost of college” or “balancing school and work priorities.” The SEARS survey also found that one in three students reported food and housing insecurity, and this issue was especially acute for black and Hispanic students (California Student Aid Commission, 2019).

#### HOW DOES THE PROPOSAL SUPPORT CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS?

The Student Aid Commission proposal remodels the Cal Grant A, B and C programs into Cal Grant/2 aimed at community college students and Cal Grant/4 for four-year students and provides the Access Award for student costs beyond tuition and fees. With this proposal, the new Cal Grant/2 program would guarantee Access Awards for up to \$6,000—up from \$1,672—and increase the number of awards from 123,260 to 430,000 per year. The proposal suggests

the following mechanisms to address goals identified by the Student Aid Commission (California Student Aid Commission, 2019):

- **Eliminating the GPA verification** for community college students, which supports non-traditional students who do not enroll directly from high school. The commission currently denies an average of 165,000 students per year because they cannot verify their GPA.
- **Extending the Application Deadline** to September 2, which aligns better with the open enrollment and application period for community colleges. On average, 182,000 students are denied benefits because they do not apply by the March 2 deadline.

The proposal does not offer any changes to tuition and fee support but focuses on non-tuition aid for students. Though the proposal does not include provisions to increase the number of per-student awards to include summer terms, as groups such as the Fix Financial Aid Coalition have advocated, the report states, “Summer Cal Grant eligibility is a critical component to enhancing financial aid to help students graduate in four years.”

#### LEGISLATION INTRODUCED AS OF FEBRUARY 19, 2021

Assembly Bill 1456 (Medina, 2021)<sup>2</sup> on Cal Grant reform was introduced in February of 2021. The bill is authored by Assemblymembers Jose Medina and Kevin McCarty and Senator Connie Leyva, who, along with other advocates, called for the California Student Aid Commission to form the Cal Grant Reform Workgroup. It supports a number of the recommendations in the Student Aid Commission report, including the GPA elimination for two-year students and the extension of the application deadline to September. Unfortunately, it does not equitize the access awards for community college students, although it does allow increases when the total cost of attendance is annually adjusted by the commission. As of February 19, the bill states, “A Cal Grant 2 award shall include an access award, covering nontuition expenses, of one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250) in the first award year” with provisions for possible future adjustment based on the California Consumer Price Index. This figure appears to fall short of the “up to \$6,000 for highest need community college students” in the commission’s proposal. The conversation on how to fully support students with the true cost of

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<sup>2</sup> The text of AB 1456 is available on the *California Legislative Information* website at [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220AB1456](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1456).

college is at hand. The current proposal is to phase in the reforms, so the work needs to start now. Student needs continue to grow.

## WHAT CAN FACULTY DO TO SUPPORT CAL GRANT MODERNIZATION?

Although student financial aid is not directly stated as an academic and professional matter under Title 5 §53200, students who cannot meet their basic needs face an almost insurmountable barrier to a successful college experience. The ASCCC has conveyed to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office its ongoing support for expanding financial aid and "support for the expansion of Cal Grant eligibility to more low-income students and an increase to award amounts based on the total cost of attendance" in 2019 (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2019) and adopted Resolution 6.01 S16: Support Legislation to Increase Cal Grant Awards<sup>3</sup> in 2016. This call to support Cal Grant modernization aligns with the ASCCC Executive Committee's 2020-2021 legislative priority "In Support of Students: Financial Aid Reform and Basic Needs Funding" (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2020, September 17) and aligns with the ASCCC 2020-2021 Executive Committee areas of focus on equity-driven systems and culturally-responsive student services, student support, and curriculum (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2020, June 17).

Faculty can advocate for Cal Grant modernization to support student needs outside of the classroom in order to help meet student needs inside the classroom. Interested faculty can read the commission report and the SEARS data and share them with colleagues. They can also meet with their local student associations or governance bodies to discuss the role faculty can play to support student efforts.

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3 Full text of the resolution can be found at <https://asccc.org/resolutions/support-legislation-increase-cal-grant-awards>

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# Regional Advisory Boards

by [Mayra Cruz, ASCCC Treasurer, ASCCC CTE Leadership Committee Chair](#)  
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and [Lynn Shaw, ASCCC C-ID CTE Director](#)

**C** OVID-19 conditions have challenged the definition and validity of regional industries. Modified approaches to jobs beyond brick and mortar, stationery offices, and manufacturing locations have expanded employment to include working via the internet regardless of geographic location. Business and industry are changing and transforming at a rapid pace as technological advances accelerate and alter the way things are done. These conditions present the necessity of re-examining whether advisory boards should be expanded and modernized to a regional approach. Industries in general might be better thought of in terms of a more global marketplace.

## WHAT IS A REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD?

Advisory boards are an integral part of every career technical education (CTE) program. The goal of every CTE program is to prepare students for careers and the world of work. Advisory boards give faculty the voice and connections of business and industry, the primary partners of CTE programs. The connections to industry help guide curriculum to be up to the speed of business, give students direct connections to employers and careers, and help put the community in community college.

Regional advisory boards are a way to connect with employer decision-makers and get an overall view of current labor market need. Business leaders have the on-the-ground ability to see the future of their businesses. Labor market information, while valuable, only looks backwards at what has happened. Having higher-level decision makers at advisory boards can help students and programs gain direct access to careers in that industry. This practice also helps faculty spend time at what they do best: teaching and curriculum.

Many, if not all, of the logistics of coordinating a regional advisory board could be coordinated by regional consortium partners, state directors, and regional directors, as well as others at local colleges such as economic development departments, career centers, foundations, or other areas of colleges that are working directly with local businesses. Many regional consortia are already gathering business and industry together with faculty as well as conducting research on the jobs of the future.

For many CTE programs, the coordination of local advisory board meetings is done by CTE faculty leaders like department chairs in addition to their teaching duties. One idea is to specify what duties could be performed by “off-shuttled work.” Examples of off-shuttled activities are the identification of potential employers and keeping track of and communicating with graduates to establish non-advertised career pathways and job openings. In other words, the networking part of the job can be assigned to a career center or division administrator if the college and programs have the funds to employ an individual whose primary responsibility is to focus on industry and business contacts in collaboration with discipline faculty, advertise the CTE pathways offered by the college, and establish ongoing communication with partners.

Local advisory boards have long been a concern of employers because they can receive multiple requests from even one college. For example, a company like Boeing may get requests to serve on the advisory boards of multiple departments and programs, from the electrical department to the engineering department to manufacturing. When one multiplies that situation by the number of surrounding colleges, one can see how employers become overwhelmed. Employers may be forced to send people who are not the decision-makers to the multiple advisory board meetings and in some cases may not be able to send anyone at all.

#### WHY DO ADVISORY BOARDS EXIST?

Advisory boards are a required part of the federal Perkins funding for career technical education. The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 was the first authorization for the federal funding of vocational education. Subsequent legislation for vocational education—now called career technical education—included the Vocational Act of 1973 and the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1984. Perkins was reauthorized in 1990, 1998, 2006, and most recently in July of 2018. CTE programs receiving federal funding through Perkins may fund an advisory council under the grant program. Only the following types of advisory councils are allowable:

- The advisory council includes representatives of business and industry, including small businesses, and, to the extent possible, labor organizations, higher education representatives and faculty, administrators, representatives of special populations,<sup>1</sup> CTE and academic teachers, students, and community partners;
- The role of the advisory council is to participate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of CTE programs, including establishing effective programs and procedures to enable informed and effective participation in CTE programs.

## WHO ATTENDS ADVISORY BOARDS?

The ideal advisory board participants should be employers, unions, students, faculty, and administrators. The meetings should be listening sessions for faculty, with employers describing the needs of business and industry and the types of employees they need and want, both short and long term. The dialogue should be focused on how students can get the best quality education and training to be prepared for the jobs of the future. Administrators can help facilitate and translate the employer needs into action by helping the programs receive the resources, staffing, and funding needed to achieve the highest possible quality training. Administrators can also play a role in ensuring CTE funding and resources do truly go to CTE programs.

An organized system of regional advisory board participation can help to provide a wide variety of diverse representation from business. At many colleges, individual faculty must solicit industry professionals, which can be limiting and problematic and can possibly pose potential conflicts of interest. A more cohesive system of oversight can assist administrators in overseeing and ensuring the best possible use of CTE funding.

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<sup>1</sup> Perkins V defines special populations as “individuals with disabilities; individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults; individuals preparing for non-traditional fields; single parents, including single pregnant women; out-of-workforce individuals; English learners; homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a); youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system; and youth with a parent who is a member of the armed forces and is on active duty.”

## WHAT ARE THE EMPLOYER'S POINT OF VIEW AND THE EMPLOYER'S ROLE ON ADVISORY BOARDS?

Employers need employees. A small employer often may not have the funding to run internal training programs and may look to community colleges and other community partners to prepare students to hit the ground running when they begin work. Even larger employers want their new hires to be as fully trained and prepared as possible.

Direct interviews of potential employers, pointed questions regarding past or present employment of community college students, and the creation of surveys are some examples that can assist a program in keeping abreast of current industry trends. Deep links and dialogue with employers are essential to the maintenance and efficacy of curriculum and programs. Simply put, employers want well-trained students, faculty want curriculum that prepares students, and students want careers.

## WHAT IS THE FACULTY ROLE AT ADVISORY BOARDS?

Faculty at advisory boards should listen to the needs of employers and critically examine their curriculum to decide whether it meets the needs of business and industry in order to ensure their students can get the careers they want and need. A guided system for the interpretation of advisory board needs could aid with being responsive and in alignment with college and district goals.

## WHY DOES THE ASCCC SUPPORT REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARDS?

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges always supports actions that bring more value to the faculty role. Having faculty connect with business and industry decision-makers helps colleges, programs, and students. Allowing time for faculty to focus on teaching, learning, and curriculum is best for colleges, programs, students, and faculty. Collaborating with the other career education partners in the system and community can break down silos and create an even smoother guided pathway for students to travel from education to careers.

## WHAT WILL BE THE ROLE OF LOCAL ADVISORY BOARDS IN THE FUTURE?

Having a regional advisory board can relieve some of the required work to receive Perkins and Strong Workforce funding. Faculty should still engage and talk with their local business and industry leaders, but those discussions can be more focused and informal because all the requirements of funding are met by the regional advisory boards. Dialogue with local businesses and industry is always helpful to students.

Discipline-specific meetings among all faculty throughout the state could jointly work to create job-specific questions that could be asked by career center representatives via either an in-person call or survey. At this point, no method is established for disciplines throughout the state to collaborate.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD?

In 2016, the Strong Workforce Task Force recommendations highlighted the need for the engagement of industry professionals and faculty. Engaged employers, workforce boards, economic development entities, unions, and other workforce organizations can advise faculty in the program development and review process.

Many benefits can come from establishing a regional advisory board composed of diverse industry and business partners within a college or district's geographical boundaries or a region along with faculty, CTE students, administrators, and other college community stakeholders. Among these benefits are the following:

- Gain insights regarding curriculum and training needs from potential employers of students.
- Gain insights regarding work-based opportunities such as internships, mentoring, job shadowing, externships, and apprenticeships.
- Gain insights and help establish standards regarding equipment and software purchases.
- Gain insights into local program review processes.
- Develop community and public relations for college and CTE programs to boost enrollment.
- Create collaborative learning experiences between industry and business partners and faculty.
- Advocate for financial and legislative support for CTE programs.

A regional advisory board could provide a listing of current skills, technologies, internships, job opportunities, work-study, mentorship, current issues surrounding the industry, networking opportunities, publications, and other forms of partnerships and collaborations.

Every CTE program is required to connect with business and industry. Regional advisory boards can help discipline faculty connect with others in their regions and give faculty access to business leaders who are decision-makers. Several regions and employment sectors around the state are already conducting regular regional advisory boards. These events have had success in attracting business leaders and decisions-makers along with faculty from multiple colleges, which has resulted in a smoother and faster pathway for students to get the careers they want and need.

# The Walls are Shaking: A Case for Anxious Pedagogy in the Present- and Post-COVID Writing Classroom

by [Angelo Antonio Jr., Santa Monica College](#)

*Note: The following article is not an official statement of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. The article is intended to engender discussion and consideration by local colleges.*

**T**he academic institution is a professional space; perhaps it always has been. Thinking pithily within a western context, from the Socratic seminars to the modern R1 university, teachers and students alike have always negotiated and operated upon a set of norms, conventions, and protocols that aired the hallways of intellectual thought. And while pinpointing where professionalism may have first arisen in the long-storied history of higher education might be a futile endeavor, one must acknowledge with greater accuracy the large degree to which the utilitarian shift of the academy in the mid-twentieth century toward job market-facing, skills-based education solidified the link between education and professionalism, or perhaps fused them altogether.

Faculty and staff, by the very nature of campus being their workplace, utilize professionalism to help outline their roles and modes of interaction as educators, counselors, administrators, and colleagues. For students, a vastly underwritten portion of their learning consists of acclimating to functional protocol: how to be punctual with deadlines, write a proper email to superiors, and participate under a standard mode of communication governed by decency and respect for others (Morse, 2012). These written and unwritten codes are as nuanced as the academic landscape is diverse, but they all, to a large degree, dictate how members of a college community operate on a day-to-day basis.

Professionalism is either like a tightrope or a set of walls in this sense, but unlike a tightrope to which one might keep one's eyes glued, the walls of professionalism divert attention away from its materiality – from questioning the literal codes and values embedded within them –and, instead, busy individuals with their own movement, their navigating, and thus reinforce a complex social labyrinth.

Moreover, the personal-professional divide signifies the classroom threshold as a bizarre self-separating moment. Students arrive with their writing already postured by professional discourse, the “I” long-removed, and they, as a result, are dislocated from self-ideation and meaningful investment altogether. For junior, non-associate, and contingent faculty –marginalized groups such as women and BIPOC educators especially – academic freedom and agency are compromised by pressures to conform in a space that is coded in and rewards an unstable universal definition of professionalism historically rooted in white male hetero-normative notions of objectivity and non-emotional stoicism.

Thus, for teachers and students alike, coming to campus can resemble a departure: a departing from oneself as one arrives into prescribed roles and the values and codes embedded within them. More than just a maze, professionalism acts as a set of walls because of its propensity to compartmentalize diverse areas of one’s personage.

The walls of the academy are shaking, not because professionalism in academia is entirely moot, but because value exists in interrogating professionalism as a standard operating mode. When faculty perform their jobs, and thus relegate a portion of their shape to professionalism, they simultaneously make claims about who they and their students can be within a given moment. For a space that encourages teacher and student agency and the proliferation of ideas (Velez and Curry, 2020) and yet precludes context and full embodiment of its actors in the name of professionalism, far too much is at stake. The walls of academic professionalism are shaking because it was always unstable in design.

## NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND ANXIOUS PEDAGOGY

Emotions in the workplace are locked into their culturally connotative baggage: rash, sensitive, and unsubstantiated. Such values are reflected in traditional writing instruction, which steers students away from emotional, non-objective claims, personal anecdotes, and other affective modes by confining them solely to poetry and personal essay.

This practice compounds with the present era of disinformation, where the re-privileging of facticity and objective appeals to rationality continue to render all emotions within a critical context as negative. Campaigns of returns to science, while most appropriate and necessary in a global pandemic, should also give approximations of how far society is, culturally, from accepting emotions as valid sources for theory and praxis.

But the college campus as a unique professional space has the potential to reexamine its walls and carve openings for reading value into that which professionalism traditionally disallows: fully emotional and autonomous beings. Anxious Pedagogy is a field within rhetoric and composition studies, popularized and formally coined by Shawna Ross and Douglass Dowland (2019), that encourages ways of theorizing the complex functions of anxiety in the classroom.

As Dowland (2020) posits, students and teachers alike arrive already saturated with anxious discourse. Under the larger cultural umbrella of a global pandemic, mass protests, and political insurrection, everyone bears individual stressors: relationships, domestic disputes, or the hardship of food or housing insecurity. Imposter syndrome runs rampant as a product of an assessment and evaluation culture, which often creates for teachers and students alike more pressures to fit in than stand out.

Anxiety is not a monolith, but much of the work taking place within Anxious Pedagogy recognizes that as a start and tries to understand the many forms through which anxiety manifests. It asks which anxieties should be ameliorated, which should be positioned as a positive force for student learning, and who should be doing this kind of affective labor. Ross and Dowland (2019) posit these as just some of the worthy questions Anxious Pedagogy seeks to answer. At its core, Anxious Pedagogy invites new ways of thinking about teacher-student interaction, agency, outcomes, and transparency within critical spaces.

## PRAXIS

Faculty, to some degree, already recognize anxiety for the comfort of their students. They give momentary acknowledgements at the beginning of class and create sections in course syllabi with a tone unsettled by unprecedented times. They sometimes fail to consider, however, how these small recognitions fall short in their reach, how compassion and empathy performing in the COVID-19 section of syllabi fail to inform the rest of the document in terms of how the course is structured: how it formulates policy, chooses readings, or formulates assessment.

Ross (2020), in a most effective way, describes anxiety as one of the primary interfaces with the real world in the way that negative emotions, like anxiety, can act as flags that remind people what they value and what matters most to them. Irritation, frustration, or writer's block often indicate that something important is floating nearby. Anxiety, in this way, acts

as a sort of mirror, a form of self-attunement: a tool that can help one reveal oneself in one's explorations.

In today's writing classroom, where process is largely emphasized, process has to incorporate these negative emotions as constituent. When faculty preclude negative emotions, they disservice students by selling the deceptively false idea that writing is seamless, easy, or natural for others. They create discouraging moments and exits for whenever students do encounter those inevitable emotions. When faculty disallow the presence and power of anxiety to exist openly, they train students to avoid failure, complexity, nuance, and experimentation that, ideally, sites of learning privilege and need (Ross & Dowland, 2019).

To reappraise and normalize the value of negative emotions, one can begin by creating more affective response exercises, such as individual reflection and group discussion. What students thereby grow committed to is the ability to work honestly, to not feel the pressures to conceal, conform, or rush through uncertain and vulnerable moments of their thinking. Simplified models within process theory are reluctant to consider the speed at which faculty pressure students to pass off as experts in their thinking. Anxious Pedagogy affords students valuable time and place to think through their emotional investments without penalty.

#### WHEN THE WALLS AND FLOOR ARE GONE

Amid the slew of COVID-19-related professional development opportunities, many faculty have, at one point or another, considered ways to restore the humanity in their digital exchanges. But along this line of thinking lies the faulty assumption that in-person practices were humane to begin with. One thing faculty should keep in mind amid a rhetorically dangerous pivoting back is that a return to on-ground learning does not automatically reinstate a common ground between them and their students. Faculty should disrupt this conflated way of thinking about formal relationships for the sake of students, colleagues, and themselves as they may persist under precarious circumstances, global pandemic notwithstanding.

But even more to this idea of building the classroom – to extend the metaphor further by literalizing it – one should also understand anxiety and other negative emotions as a real meeting place. That is, as has been seen during the global pandemic, when classes are precluded from meeting face-to-face, a shared space, a common ground, between faculty and

students can be difficult to find, but it can exist in the broad and rich set of emotions complex human beings experience.

More than recognizing anxiety as a minor presence, faculty can make it the floor and the walls within which more meaningful engagement might take place. In doing so, they begin to make the staunch claim that anxiety and negative emotions can be foundational.

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# Two Roads for Adjunct Faculty

by [Luis Zanartu, ASCCC Part-time Committee](#)

**A**djunct faculty have two roads to further employment: pursue a move from part-time status to full-time, tenure-track positions or embrace the adjunct status of full-time equivalent assignments. The processes and decisions in contemplating these two roads are complex, and the economic imperative is real.

Community colleges employ adjunct faculty, also called part-time or temporary faculty, every year to fill course assignment needs, and many part-time faculty work hard to build experience in order to compete for full-time, tenure-track positions. This path is one option for further employment.

However, another path exists for those who want to remain as adjunct faculty and build their seniority. The process to remain eligible to receive class assignments every semester can be very complex. Often, the faculty member must reach out to the dean or department chair of the department in which he or she is qualified to teach; these individuals are regularly planning which faculty will be filing the course offerings for the semester. Adjunct faculty need to remain actively registered in the faculty list or pool.

## THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE OF PART-TIME FACULTY

The majority of part-time or adjunct professor salaries currently range between \$34,900 to \$77,665, with top earners making \$102,242 annually in California (ZipRecruiter, 2021). Nearly one third of the 3,000 adjuncts surveyed by ZipRecruiter earn less than \$25,000 a year. That salary puts them below the federal poverty guideline for a family of four. Another third of respondents make less than \$50,000.

The most comprehensive survey of adjuncts was published in 2012, by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (Basu, 2012). That survey found that the median per-course pay was about \$2,700, or \$24,000 per year as a full-time-equivalent employee. Although the Coalition on the Academic Workforce data is from almost a decade ago, the unreliability of the economic

situation, the ongoing requirements to sustaining viable employment for a living wage, and the hiring process for part-time community college faculty remain rigorous and demanding; however, adjunct faculty can achieve first preference or seniority.

Some adjunct faculty are content with remaining on the adjunct path. Many, in fact, have secured full-time employment elsewhere. An example would be a probation officer teaching in an administration of justice program.

## RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PART-TIME FACULTY EMPLOYMENT

One needs to know where to look when searching for part-time or full-time positions. The California Community Colleges Registry is a very reliable resource to search for a community college position.<sup>1</sup> The site includes the option to sign up for e-alerts for jobs in one's field. The CCC Registry is a very useful and necessary tool when one is seeking a full-time position. Beyond offering recruitment information, the registry also offers suggestions and guides on how to prepare for an interview.

Applying for a position once does not establish on-going applicant status at a college or district. Applications are screened to determine completeness and that the applicant meets minimum qualifications or has equivalent experience and training. Minimum qualifications are established at the state level, but equivalence is dependent on the standards and processes established by each district.

Those seeking part-time employment must also stay in touch with the department chair or administration, whether they are assigned classes to teach or not. If one is hired, a good practice is to attend meetings that are open to adjunct faculty. Other ways to build one's visibility are to join working committees in order to know what goes on in the college and the campus community and simply to ask questions, which shows interest in the profession and the institution.

Adjunct faculty seeking full-time positions must follow a very competitive and arduous process. Often, they interview multiple times before being offered a full-time position. They must be tenacious, persistent, and resolute.

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1 The California Community Colleges Registry can be found at <https://www.cccregistry.org/jobs/index.aspx>.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE FOR SUPPORT

The road to being offered a full-time position can be very long; it does happen, but not regularly. Therefore, considering the two roads open for an adjunct is important. No matter which road one selects, it will be a long, arduous, and at times very demanding process with significant economic barriers. As California community colleges look to the future of the system, they should consider a more intentional approach to advocating for the significant number of part-time, temporary employees in the system.

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# California Community College Catalogs: Student Guide or Student Jungle?

by Terry O'Banion, Senior Professor of Practice, Kansas State University and President Emeritus,  
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*Note: The following article is not an official statement of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. The article is intended to engender discussion and consideration by local colleges.*

**A**ll community colleges have a catalog, from their first proud copy heralding the institution's launch to annual editions calibrated with the academic calendar. Most open with a welcome message like these extolling the value of the catalog:

*The Course Catalog is your guide to understanding all that we offer...*

*The information in this catalog is designed to help you refine your educational goals...*

*The college catalog is a vital resource for you as a [XXX] College student.*

Unfortunately, our recent review of catalogs from California community colleges suggests these documents may not live up to their aspirations as vital guides for students' educational journeys. Using the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education listing of California public two-year colleges as 52 % large (FTE enrollment 5,000 or greater), 38% medium (2,000-4,999 FTE), and 10% small (1,999 or fewer FTE), we generated a random, stratified sample of 10 colleges and examined their most recent catalogs. The following findings will not make those who create catalogs happy.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

In general, we found the catalogs to be crammed with information for a variety of purposes and largely undecipherable unless you know in advance what you are seeking. They offer a hodgepodge of basic and exotic information to ensure nothing is left out. They do not seem written for the benefit of students. In fact, catalogs seem to confuse more than enlighten even college staff, who report making their own versions of catalog sections to better guide students. We find three key barriers to overcome if catalogs are to meet their stated purpose of serving as student guides: excess scope, unbounded choice, and ambiguity of purpose.

## EXCESS SCOPE

The 10 catalogs we reviewed averaged 308 pages in length, ranging from 165 to 576 pages. The average page length of catalogs from large college was 402 and from medium-sized colleges was 227. The small college catalog in our sample had 165 pages. These data alone suggest they were not designed as *easy guides*. All included standard information: application and admission procedures, academic program listings, degree and course descriptions, graduation requirements, student support services, and academic rules and regulations. All offered academic calendars, costs, departmental contact information, and students' rights and responsibilities, along with extensive student codes of conduct and ominous details of the variety and stages of disciplinary action facing violators.

Unfortunately, the nuts and bolts of how to go to college was largely cloaked in legalistic language or buried under mountains of details about the college and its history, governance, and philosophy, plus stacks of policies and procedures. All were peppered with educational jargon that few new students could be expected to decipher. Approximately 40% of California community college students are first-generation, who likely find terms such as articulation, assessment, accreditation, academic freedom, academic load, credit hour, lower division, prerequisites, corequisites, and registrar, as initially confounding. To be fair, the welcome messages in two catalogs explicitly urged students up front to meet with an academic counselor to help with their plans. Successful students learn to navigate college nomenclature and norms. Yet, why make translating a technical manual the gateway to entry? How many students will plow through 300-plus pages to figure out "*the steps you need to take to move through your studies efficiently and reach your academic and career goals*"?

## UNBOUNDED CHOICE

One problem for students is the unbridled abundance of certificate and degree options and variant descriptors for these options across institutions. These seasoned researchers struggled to make fair comparisons among the catalog offerings. Pity students striving to make informed choices with only a catalog as their handbook. Colleges offer multiform programs, majors, degrees, and certificates, most with multiple choices in the same area of study. One catalog featured 5 full-page charts listing 160 degrees and certificates, including 8 choices just in Early Childhood Education. Overall, the offerings increased with institutional size.

**The General Education (GE) Jungle.** Students able to zero in on a preferred program of study confront another convoluted decision: selecting a handful of GE courses from a stunning array of course offerings. Among the large colleges, the average number of required GE courses was 8 to be selected from an average of 365 eligible GE course offerings. On average, the medium colleges required 7 GE courses, yet offered 212 from which students could choose.

To make educated choices among the GE assortment, students must read through course descriptions and draw conclusions about which will best prepare them to “participate in a diverse and complex society,” as one college framed it. Students following this roadmap may also be flummoxed to figure which among all the courses listed are available in any given term. That ciphering requires cross-referencing with another guidebook altogether—the course schedule.

**The Challenge of Choice.** No one advocates for limits on choosing one’s destination or destiny. Thinking of choice as a bad thing is deeply counterintuitive. Don’t we all prefer 31 flavors of ice cream over three? But, if you are anything like the authors, you typically order the same favorite scoops each time you visit the ice cream parlor, despite the options. We are creatures of habit after all. Choice seems premier when it comes to big decisions like what to study in college, but research in behavioral economics and psychology has taught us that too much freedom of choice can lead to *choice paralysis* and unhappiness. According to *Paradox of Choice* author Barry Schwartz, having to choose among many good options activates our powerful drive of *loss aversion* and anxiety about making the wrong choice. Confronting students with dozens of desirable programs and courses may trigger fear of loss rather than the thrill of opportunity.

## AMBIGUITY OF PURPOSE

What is the true aim of a college catalog? Is it a pathway to student success or a compliance manual or an institutional repository? The catalogs we examined served many masters and purposes. One noted its multipronged function as “the general guidance of students, faculty, staff members, prospective students and other educational institutions.” Having an accessible compendium of up-to-date college processes, procedures, people, and programs is handy. Counselors, advisors, outreach, marketing, and public relations staff use them. Catalogs help institutions keep up with employee lists and college milestones. Regional accreditors require colleges to publicize their purpose, processes, and outcomes; and catalogs served this function long before websites were universal. Accreditors, lawyers, auditors, compliance officers, and college employees all benefit from the smorgasbord of information crammed into catalogs. But one audience appears to have been omitted from catalog design plans: *students*. To be fair, with enough time and coffee (and perhaps a Rosetta Stone), one can winnow wheat from chaff, decipher GE and graduation requirements, and flesh out a degree plan. For community college students slogging through the catalog quagmire, lack of coffee is not their problem.

## DIGITAL PROGRESS

All 10 California community colleges we examined offered some form of online catalog. Several provided only downloadable Portable Document Format (PDF) versions of standard print catalogs. Sadly, even those offering web-based versions replicated the shortcomings of their printed precursors. Several added links to fuller information on their website, one arranged catalog information with student-friendly headers such as, “*How do I become a student? How do I enroll in courses?*” But most were verbatim digital reproductions of their print catalogs.

Even more troubling, the catalog information was neither the same nor as student centered as that in other parts of the college website. Financial aid was the best example. The catalogs gave dry, technical descriptions of the complex array of financial aid programs available, plus warnings and rules for repaying funds if students drop out. College financial aid web pages were abuzz with vibrant photos, how to apply videos, pop-up chatbots in multiple languages, and encouraging “*You can afford college!*” messages. The contrast was stark.

The current trend to digitize is a no-brainer, and quite frankly, too many community colleges came late to this party. A couple of online catalogs we examined were more student-centric, web-based designs that were searchable and linked to the rich content available throughout the college website. For most, there remains great opportunity to simplify, humanize, and focus their content to provide an easy-to-follow roadmap for students or to stop pretending that is its purpose.

Our conclusion is that traditional community college catalogs—intended to convey helpful information to assist students and staff in navigating a complex set of rules, regulations, programs, services—have become overgrown jungles that students, advisors, and faculty have to hack their way through to find the treasure. This is true in California, but it is also true in almost all community colleges in the U. S. Across the nation, community colleges are deeply engaged in student-centered reforms buttressed by significant research and resources. Yet, the college catalog has been overlooked in these efforts, enduring as a medieval manuscript better kept vaulted than distributed to students. It is time for reform leaders to examine their college catalogs and revise them for 21st century learners or reframe them for their honest purpose.

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This article is adapted from the authors' report of a national study of community college catalogs to be published in *Inside Higher Ed*. It examines California community college catalogs and is being published simultaneously in the *Rostrum* of the ASCCC and the *Board Focus* of the Community College League of California to encourage a statewide conversation on this issue.

# Congratulations to the 2020-2021 ASCCC Award Winners

by [Julie Oliver, ASCCC Standards and Practices Committee Chair](#)

## THE EXEMPLARY PROGRAM AWARD

**T**he Exemplary Program Award was established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges in 1991 to recognize outstanding community college programs. Selected California community college programs receive cash awards of \$4,000, and up to four programs receive honorable mention plaques. The awards are sponsored by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) selects an annual theme related to the award’s traditions and statewide trends. The California Community Colleges system is the largest public higher education system in the United States, enrolling over 2.1 million students. The global pandemic that emerged in early 2020 has disrupted much of people’s everyday lives and caused higher education institutions to adapt much more rapidly to the changing landscape in order to best serve their students. In light of the work that colleges and faculty have done to transition most learning to an online environment, the ASCCC focused the theme for the 2020-21 Exemplary Program Award on “Equitable Practices in a Virtual Educational Environment.” These practices can be demonstrated by faculty who have excelled in equitably providing instruction, support, and services to students in virtual formats, whether through distance education, correspondence education, or temporary remote instruction.

For 2020-21, the ASCCC has selected three Exemplary Program Award winners and two honorable mentions.

### Award Winners

Sierra College – Undocumented Student (Undocu) Center

Santa Barbara City College – The WELL

Ventura College – Faculty Academy Program

### **Honorable Mentions**

College of the Canyons – Noncredit Program

Oxnard College – Public Safety Department

## **THE HAYWARD AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION**

The Hayward Award for Excellence in Education was established in 1989. Awards have been presented annually to honor community college faculty members who are selected by their peers for demonstrating the highest level of commitment to their students, colleges, and profession. Award recipients, nominated by their college academic senates and selected by representatives of the ASCCC, must have a record of outstanding performance in professional activities as well as active participation on campus. Up to two full-time and two part-time faculty members are selected each year to win the award. The Hayward Awards are supported through a grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges. Each recipient receives a \$1,250 cash award and a commemorative plaque. The award is named in honor of Gerald C. Hayward, who served as chancellor of the California Community Colleges from 1980 to 1985.

For 2020-21, the ASCCC has selected three winners of the Hayward Award for Excellence in Education.

### **Award Winners**

Brandy Thomas, full-time academic counseling faculty member at Butte College.

Peter “Tony” Zitko, part-time political science faculty member at Solano College.

A. James McKeever, full-time sociology faculty member at Los Angeles Pierce College.

## STANBACK-STROUD DIVERSITY AWARD

Established in 1998 by the ASCCC, the Stanback-Stroud Diversity Award each year recognizes one California community college faculty member who has shown outstanding commitment to diversity. Serving the most diverse student population of any higher education system in the country, the California Community Colleges system is largely comprised of demographic groups that have traditionally faced barriers to education and are often underprepared when they reach the classroom. California community college faculty accept the challenge and responsibility of demonstrating the sustained attention and support necessary to fully engage and excite these students.

The ASCCC bestows the Stanback-Stroud Diversity Award upon faculty who work tirelessly to promote student success in one or more of the following: (a) creating an inclusive and supportive campus climate, (b) implementing effective teaching and learning strategies, (c) facilitating student access, retention, and success, and (d) fostering student engagement in campus life. Each local academic senate may nominate one faculty member to receive this prestigious honor, which this year includes a cash award of \$5,000. All faculty, both inside and outside of the classroom, are eligible for nomination. One faculty member is chosen for the award and is honored at the ASCCC Spring Plenary Session. The award is named in honor of former ASCCC President Regina Stanback-Stroud.

For 2020-21, the ASCCC has selected Dr. Hossna Sadat Ahadi, assistant professor of counseling from Palomar College, for the Stanback-Stroud Diversity Award.

Please join the ASCCC in congratulating all of the winners of these prestigious awards. For more information, please visit the [ASCCC Awards webpage](https://www.asccc.org/awards) at <https://www.asccc.org/awards>.

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