



BOARD FOCUS

SPRING 2021



IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	3
The DEI Movement and the Board Role: A Healthy Start.....	4
For the Good of the College: Trustee's Role in Accreditation	7
The New CSU Ethnic Studies Requirement and Its Implications for Community Colleges.....	8
Supporting Implementation of Ethnic/ Multicultural Studies Programs.....	11
The Benefits of Completing the Excellence in Trusteeship Program	13
The Board-CEO Relationship	14
California Community College Catalogs: Student Guide or Student Jungle?	17

Important Trustee Publications

- Board and CEO Roles: Different Jobs, Different Tasks
- Board Ethics Resource Guide
- Trusteeship – Tasks, Knowledge and Skills

To read these publications visit the League's website at www.ccleague.org/leadership-development/excellence-in-trusteeship-program/member-resources

Read Past Issues...

Visit the League's website at www.ccleague.org/boardfocus to read articles from past issues. Topics include:

Winter 2019: AB 705; Support for Improving Student Access and Success; Giving Students More Than a Seat at the Table

Spring 2019: AB 705 Implementation

Summer 2018: AB 705 from Legislation to Action; AB 705: What Trustees Need to Know

Fall 2017: Trustees' Role in Creating Change in Support of the Guided Pathways; Campus Safety and Emergency Protocols

Spring 2016: Board-CEO Relationship; Strong Workforce Task Force; We Know Why Equity Matters

Summer 2015: Accreditation Site Team Visit; Prepare to be an Evaluation Team Member; Hiring Exceptional Community College Presidents

Winter 2014: Moving the Needle on Student Completion; A Rewarding Journey for Faculty and Students Alike; Excellence in Trusteeship Program; Effective Trusteeship, Board Chair and Legislative Events

Spring 2014: Leadership for Student Success; Excellence in Trusteeship Program: Celebrating the First Year Anniversary; Responsibilities of Trusteeship

Fall 2013: Student Success Scorecard: Trustees' Role of Oversight; What is the Excellence in Trusteeship Program?

Spring 2011: Navigating Rough Waters: The Role of the Board and CEO; Top Ten Reasons for Progress in Achieving the Dream

Fall 2010: Leadership for Student Success: The Critical Role of Boards of Trustees; Selecting the Chief Executive Officer: Ensuring Success

Spring 2010: Trustees and the Civil Rights of Student Success; Memo to a Rogue Trustee

Winter 2006: Preventing Micromanagement: Creating Higher Performance Boards

Winter 2005: Upholding Board Ethics

Winter 2003: Budget Basics: Fiscal Crises & Public Confidence

Spring 2002: The Political Nature of Trusteeship: Are Californians Different?

Winter 2000: Orienting New Board Members: A Top Priority for Smart Districts; How Good Boardmanship Pays Big Election Dividends

Fall 2000: Conflict or Consensus: Seven Steps to Creating an Effective Board

Spring 2000: Setting District Goals: The Role of the Board; Board/CEO Relations: Getting Off to a Good Start Means Listening, Then Acting

Fall 1999: A Primer on CEO Selection Process; Board/CEO Team Work Critical When Developing Meeting Agenda

Spring 1999: Technology Planning: A New Oxymoron; Community Connections Provide Valuable Information, Visibility; It's the Law: Trustee Compensation When Absence Excused

Fall 1998: Board Planning; Taming the Technological Tiger; Local Trustee Education Program: Highlights of Survey Results

President's Message

What a year. Last May, when I began my term as CCCT President, we were already in a world turned upside down. Businesses closed, college campuses emptied, and cities large and small fell eerily silent. A dangerous pathogen was spreading worldwide, illness and death rates climbed, and an expected state budget shortfall of unprecedented depth and unknown duration spelled fiscal devastation for our colleges and the communities they serve.

Only a few months before, hope was in the air. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) proposed changes to financial aid that would erase CC student eligibility barriers and triple Cal Grant Access Awards to \$6000. With an amenable legislature and thriving economy, those of us who attended that CSAC hearing had every reason to believe the ambitious plan could happen. How many more students could reach their goals? By May, though, that initial hope was replaced with dread. How many faculty and staff would have to be laid off? How many programs cut? Would districts have to consolidate? How many students most in need would be left behind?

Fortunately, there was too much to do to dwell on fears. Delivering education to 2.3 million students, transitioning to and equipping faculty and students for online learning, while supporting students' even greater needs for food, housing, and physical and mental wellness required all hands and minds working in creative and synchronous unity.

Shortly after the lockdown, then CCCT President Linda Wah, with a small team of volunteers and the League's technical support, started weekly webinars to share fiscal, operational, and regulatory guidance for trustees statewide. Linda recruiting and mentoring me in this effort helped focus and prepare me to lead in turn. When she passed the baton to me in early May, responding to the pandemic and its effects set the agenda. Little did we know the worst was yet to come. Within days of Labor Day, 2020, the video was everywhere. An agonizing, public murder of a Black man, George Floyd, by Minneapolis police shook the nation. Attention to embedding DEI throughout our system has been nonstop. Escalating racial hate against API and other communities of color shows us why this must be so.

It has been the honor of my life to work with trustees, students, and CC practitioners whose knowledge, dedication, and resilience inspires me every day. As I write this, more people are vaccinated, California's projected budget is healthier than we once feared, and a jury verdict brings some measure of accountability for the murder of George Floyd. As I prepare to pass the baton to the next CCCT President, I hope all we have weathered and learned together through this extraordinary year will smooth the way forward.

- CCCT Board President Adrienne Grey

2020-21 CCCT BOARD

ADRIENNE GREY
President
West Valley-Mission CCD

KENNETH BROWN
President-Elect
El Camino CCD

MARISA PEREZ
First Vice President
Cerritos CCD

ANDRA HOFFMAN
Second Vice President
Los Angeles CCD

LINDA WAH
Immediate Past-President
Pasadena Area CCD

SALLY BIGGIN
Redwoods CCD

SUZANNE LEE CHAN
Ohlone CCD

BRIGITTE DAVILA
San Francisco CCD

BARBARA DUNSHEATH
North Orange County CCD

JOSHUA ELIZONDO
Student Trustee, Santa Monica CCD

MARK EVILSIZER
Palomar CCD

PAMELA HAYNES
Los Rios CCD

GREG PENZA
Allan Hancock CCD

ANN RANSFORD
Glendale CCD

BARRY SNELL
Santa Monica CCD

LOREN STECK
Monterey Peninsula CCD

TRACEY VACKAR
Riverside CCD

The annual meeting of the **California Community College Trustees** will take place on **Monday, May 10th from 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.** and includes the election of the CCCT officers for 2021-2022, the annual report of the association's work, the introduction of newly elected board members, and an opportunity to provide direction to the CCCT Board on major issues facing local boards and their districts.

The slate of nominations for officers is:

President: Ken Brown, El Camino CCD
President-Elect: Marisa Perez, Cerritos CCD
1st Vice President: Andra Hoffman, LACCD
2nd Vice President: Sally Biggin, Redwoods CCD

To register email League Staff at cclc@ccleague.org.

The DEI Movement and the Board Role: A Healthy Start



By Adrienne Grey

President of the League Board of Directors, President of the CCCT Board, and Trustee at West Valley-Mission CCD

California Community Colleges faced a variety of systemic and demographic challenges even before a global pandemic upended all our lives. What if there was a vaccine that provided immunity against declining enrollment, a booster shot for stagnant student success, and an integrated treatment protocol to smooth implementation of AB 705, Guided Pathways, Caring Campus and all programs aimed at removing barriers to achieving [Vision for Success](#) goals? What if we could go beyond treating symptoms to implementing a cure?

It turns out we know a lot about the chronic illness that holds our students back. Once only spoken of in whispers and vague terms, we've gotten better at calling it out by name: **Structural Racism**.

Think of it as a viral infection, passed from person to person, persisting via stories handed down through generations, often running in families and whole communities. This infection acts on many levels from institutional to individual, taking many forms: from overtly racist laws, behavior and language to intentional micro-aggressions to more subtle and harder to diagnose unconscious bias that plays out in lowered expectations and half-hearted support for students of color. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified structural racism's harmful effects by widening racial disparities that existed for generations. The shocking public murder of George Floyd, though nowhere near the first or even the most horrifying such killing, opened many more eyes to how brutally lethal it can be. Structural racism is a debilitating plague that is literally sapping life and hope from what is now a majority of Californians, a trajectory that cannot help but harm us all.

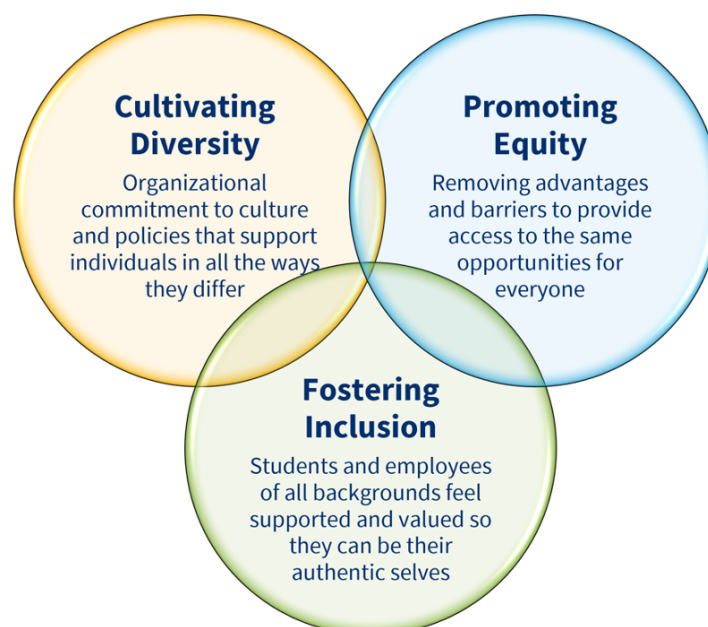
Because individuals harbor and help spread this infection, often without realizing it, education about the existence and impact of structural racism is key. Just as combatting COVID-19 requires everyone's willingness to endure some personal inconvenience, such as wearing a mask and social distancing to protect the larger community, combatting structural racism requires us to bear the personal discomfort of reexamining and coming to grips with what we thought we knew about our society and our educational system and ourselves. It requires us to engage in self-help and group therapy to learn how to recognize and displace unhealthy attitudes with new, healthier ones. As is so often the case, sunlight really is the best disinfectant.

DEI Defined:

● Diversity

● Equity

● Inclusion



California Community College Trustees are on a public health mission to eradicate structural racism from our nation’s largest higher education network. [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#), DEI for short, is the cure. We can all take part in administering it at our local districts and colleges. Forming the basis of an “integrated treatment protocol” is the [Vision for Success Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce 2020 Report](#). The full report identified 68 recommendations that were adopted by the CCC System Board of Governors (BOG) in September 2020 and is the foundational document for our work. The recommendations flow from these two DEI Taskforce affirmations:

1. Faculty and staff diversity is a driver for the educational achievement and social mobility of our students.
2. To be intentional and proactive in addressing faculty and staff diversity, the community colleges and districts must shift from the practice of compliance to partnerships across organizational systems/ departments/divisions to design, implement, and reinforce policies, procedures, and individual behaviors that serve to cultivate an inclusive ecosystem focused on equity and mutual respect to recruit, retain, and support a diverse workforce that is responsive to the needs of a diverse student population.

Pivotal are Chancellor Oakley’s June 2020 [Call to Action](#) in response to nationwide social outcry at the murder of George Floyd, followed by his November 2020 [Call to Action Update](#). Of particular interest for trustees as policy leaders are the [Title 5 DEI Statement](#) adopted by the BOG last September and in a [Sample Resolution](#) that Boards of Trustees, in partnership with their district CEO, are encouraged to adapt to local conditions and publicly adopt as affirmation of the district’s commitment to DEI.

Recognizing the importance of student voices in this effort, specific attention is given to expectations of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) in their [SSCCC Anti-Racism Plan: A Student Plan of Action](#). Heartfelt stories conveyed through the town hall recordings on that page, stories that make visceral the physical and emotional harm wrought by structural racism, help to focus and motivate us.

6 Major Statewide Associations each received an Integration Plan

Trustees (CCCT)	CEOs (CEOCCC)
Students (SSCCC)	Faculty (ASCCC)
Human Resources (ACHRO)	CIOs (CCCCIO)

The DEI Integration effort led by the State Chancellor’s Office is a massive, multi-year undertaking. Six major statewide associations representing trustees, CEOs, students, faculty, chief human resource officers and chief instructional officers are collaborating to articulate the 68 recommendations into clear guidelines and training modules so that they can be operationalized locally by all 73 California Community College Districts. Comparable in scope to a mass vaccination effort, the effect is intended

to be similarly transformative: fundamentally reshaping our educational mission and outcomes by putting the needs of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged students first.

A focus on DEI is taking root and growing statewide, featured in League conferences and communications and a new Equity competency in the Excellence in Trusteeship program. Chancellor’s Office webinars feature colleges from all regions of the state who are leading DEI innovation. The BOG has designated April as DEI Awareness Month. If you tuned in to the Thursday at lunchtime Trustee Webinar series that began last spring, you probably

heard about a team of forty volunteers – trustees, CC employees, students and community members – tackling ten integration plan items under trustee purview. Monthly Trustee Webinars and two Trustee Town Halls coming this spring will provide dialogue and ways for every trustee and board to locally implement DEI.

CCCT Trustee Integration Plan Workgroups

- **Group 1: Workforce Data & Diversity Hiring**
- **Group 2: Mission Statement & EEO Plans & Celebrate Diversity**
- **Group 3: Professional Development & Mentoring (Internal/External)**
- **Group 4: Exit Interviews & Faculty Evaluations**

Rationales for taking on this challenge go beyond the obvious moral imperative. Allocation of state funding increasingly requires our colleges to meet

student success and equity targets. Taxpayers deserve to know their investment in public higher education will result in efficient degree and certification attainment and transfer to 4-year institutions, enabling all Californians to contribute at full capacity. Chronically under-educating the fastest growing segments of California’s diverse population threatens to hamper our state’s potential as an economic and innovation engine that benefits all its residents and the nation.

“The beauty of anti-racism is that you don’t have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it’s the only way forward.”

— [Ijeoma Oluo](#)

Dismantling the structural racism deeply embedded in educational institutions since their inception requires new ways of thinking and doing. The work is challenging, but we know it will succeed. As Chancellor Oakley wrote in his *Call to Action* letter last year, “We have all seen campuses do what was previously considered impossible as they responded to COVID-19; it is time to channel that same can-do attitude and community resolve towards addressing equity and structural racism. This work must be led system wide in partnership with district trustees, CEO’s/Presidents and all campus leaders at all levels.”

As public health professionals studied and taught the public safe behaviors to slow the spread of COVID, we can learn and teach each other to become **equity-minded anti-racists**, continuously monitoring educational system health, alert to how every policy and procedure and aspect of the college experience advances or inhibits students of color, the goal being to stamp out the “virus” that impedes their and our success. Assessing disaggregated data to track intervention results and regularly interrogating those results publicly will demonstrate commitment to students and communities we serve. Like suppressing a viral outbreak, it will take an all-hands level of resolve and focus and, yes, funding. Because just like in this pandemic, lives are at stake. ■



DEI GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Racism: Is the intentional or unintentional use of power to isolate, separate and exploit others on the basis of race. Racism refers to a variety of practices, beliefs, social relations, and phenomena that work to reproduce a racial hierarchy and social structure that yield superiority, power, and privilege for some, and discrimination and oppression for others. It can take several forms, including representational, ideological, discursive, interactional, institutional, structural, and systemic. Racism exists when ideas and assumptions about racial categories are used to justify and reproduce a racial hierarchy and racially structured society that unjustly limits access to resources, rights, and privileges on the basis of race.

Structural Racism: Is the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.

Equity-Minded: Is a schema that provides an alternative framework for understanding the causes of equity gaps in outcomes and the action needed to close them. Rather than attribute inequities in outcomes to student deficits, being equity-minded involves interpreting inequitable outcomes as a signal that practices are not working as intended. Inequities are eliminated through changes in institutional practices, policies, culture, and routines. Equity-mindedness encompasses being (1) race conscious, (2) institutionally focused, (3) evidence based, (4) systemically aware, and (5) action oriented.

Anti-Racist: Person who actively opposes racism and the unfair treatment of people who belong to other races. They recognize that all racial groups are equal (i.e. nothing inherently superior or inferior about specific racial groups) and that racist policies have caused racial inequities. They also understand that racism is pervasive and has been embedded into all societal structures. An anti-racist challenges the values, structures, policies, and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism, and they are also willing to admit the times in which they have been racist. Persons are either anti-racist or racist. Persons that say they are ‘not a racist’ are in denial of the inequities and racial problems that exist.

[CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL GLOSSARY OF TERMS.](#)

For the Good of the College: Trustee's Role in Accreditation



By **Barbara Dunsheath**
Trustee, North Orange County CCD

When I began my role as a trustee for the North Orange County Community College District, 16 years ago, I was initially appointed to fill a vacancy. The process involved a public interview where I was asked different questions. I was selected from seven candidates in part because I linked my answers to recently completed accreditation team reports that highlighted commendations of the colleges as well as recommendations – strengths and weaknesses.

I understand that this path to trusteeship is unusual. Most candidates who run have little to no knowledge about accreditation, nor is it a topic that often comes up in the community. Reading over the biographies of those running for CCCT positions, none mention accreditation as a major issue facing our colleges at this time.

It is true that as a whole, accreditation doesn't get much attention from trustees. At least not until there is a problem, aka sanction. However, the topic of accreditation is one of the components of the Excellence in Trusteeship Program (ETP) and Board member participation in Accreditation is one of the Accreditation Standards – meaning if Board members are ill informed about accreditation, it can result in a recommendation from a peer review visiting team.

So, if you are one of the new trustees, just elected in November 2020 (There are 79 of you) or a

veteran I hope to point out five basic points that trustees should know about accreditation.

1. All colleges must be accredited. In California, all public community colleges (except Calbright) are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). ACCJC, and all other federal accrediting agencies are peer-review entities, meaning they are reviewed by like-minded members in similar institutions. ACCJC focuses on educational institutions whose primary mission is on associate degree granting institutions. (Because Calbright's mission is not to award associate degrees, it does not fit into the parameters of ACCJC jurisdiction.) Notice, the operative word is "focuses primarily on" – a squishy phrase that does allow the fifteen baccalaureate degree granting California community colleges to remain a part of ACCJC. ACCJC also serves associate degree granting colleges in Hawaii, and the Pacific. Federal Financial aid is tied to accreditation status. (For an overview of Accreditation take the Accreditation Basics online course.)

2. Accreditation is a measure of Academic and Institutional Quality. The focus of Accreditation

is to ensure academic quality, student learning and institutional competency. In other words, Accreditation incentivizes colleges to strive for improvement AND checks that minimum standards are met. This is a check on colleges to maintain minimum requirements to ensure that funds are appropriately spent.

3. Accreditation is on a seven-year cycle. While ACCJC monitors member colleges, the colleges provide information to ACCJC and in that sense, it is a self-reflective process that culminates in a site visit, at least once every seven years when a peer-review team verifies the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER). *Note, lots of acronyms. In between the seven-year site visit, the college



continues to engage with the work of ensuring academic quality assurance. Colleges provide annual updates to ACCJC, they address previous recommendations for compliance in follow up reports, and address recommendations for improvement in the Midterm Report. Trustees should know where their college(s) are in the cycle. Are you close to a visit? Preparing for a visit? Responding to a recent

visit? AND Trustees should receive regular reports about the status of accreditation for their college(s).

4. Pay attention to Standard

IV.C. There are over 120 standards, and unless you are an accreditation junkie, no one has them all memorized. However Standard IV.C focuses on roles and responsibilities of a “Good Board”. These standards were carved out of best board practices for governance. Standard IV.C.1 summarizes the key components of a good board,

“The institution has a governing board that has authority over and responsibility for policies to assure the academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution.”

This standard focuses on the policy-making role of the board, and highlights that the board needs to pay attention to academic quality... as well as financial stability. This is a high bar to follow. Think about the word, Trustee (guardian, manager, representative). Trustees need to come together to ensure your institution runs efficiently (including within budgetary constraints), ethically (fairly, honorably, decently) and true to its mission. As a practical tip – do your board meetings focus on this directive? Trustees are the What, not the How. For a list of all the ACCJC standards visit, accjc.org/eligibility-requirements-standards-policies/

5. Learn about Accreditation.

This article contains some basic points about accreditation, but it only brushes the surface. While a

good trustee doesn't need to know all the intricate details, a deeper dive into the trustee role is advised. Trustees do not write the ISER, but they should review the document and ask probing questions. They should be involved in the process when appropriate. Trustees should receive regular updates about accreditation. [Trustees could serve as peer advisors on visiting teams.](#) Finally, ACCJC is undergoing a [standard's review](#) and is looking for volunteers to provide input and revise the existing standards.

The accreditation process can be extremely gratifying when honest reflective discussions ensue. Trustees play a pivotal role to guarantee that happens. ■

The New CSU Ethnic Studies Requirement and Its Implications for Community Colleges



By Dolores Davison

President, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

In August 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 1460 (Weber, 2020), which, “commencing with the 2021–22 academic year, would require the California State University to provide for courses in ethnic studies at each of its campuses. The bill, commencing with students graduating in the 2024–25 academic year, would require the California State University to require, as an undergraduate graduation requirement, the completion of, at minimum, one 3-unit course in ethnic studies, as specified.” While this bill does not specifically mention the California Community Colleges, any change in CSU graduation requirements directly impacts the 115 degree granting institutions in the CCC system. Local boards of trustees should therefore be aware of the new legislation and its implications as well as ongoing discussions regarding ethnic studies requirements in the community college system.

At this time, the California Community Colleges system does not have a meaningful ethnic studies requirement. Title 5 §55063 (b) (2) includes among the requirements for an associate degree that “Ethnic Studies will be offered” in at least one of the other areas of general education. However, this requirement states only that the colleges will offer such courses; it does not mandate that the students actually take them. At the Fall 2020 Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Plenary Session, the delegates passed Resolution 9.04, which, among other matters, directed the ASCCC to “work with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office through existing processes to establish an ethnic studies general education requirement for California Community colleges.” However, such discussions are now only in their initial stages, and thus for the present the only direct requirement for the community colleges system is the rather vague language of Title 5 §55063 (b) (2).

Because AB 1460 is directed at the CSU rather than at the community colleges, some colleges may be hesitant to act or may believe that the bill will not be of much impact locally. However, because the law requires a new lower division requirement, it will directly impact the community colleges and specifically the associate degrees for transfer (ADT) that exist at all 115 degree granting institutions in the system. Local processes regarding curriculum vary greatly and may even be different from college to college in the same district; however, all districts have a policy about the role of the academic senate or senates in the district and whether the board relies primarily on the advice and judgement of the academic senate in areas of academic and professional matters or whether the board will mutually agree with the academic senate on such matters. The role of the board of trustees in curricular processes is clearly explained in the [white paper](#)¹ that the Community College League of California produced in conjunction with the California Community Colleges' Curriculum Committee, which is the statewide curriculum committee for the community college system in California.

Local boards normally and appropriately defer to the expertise of their local academic senates and, by extension, their local curriculum committees on matters of curriculum. Nevertheless, the potential for changes to degree requirements due to the new CSU requirement of ethnic studies is a matter of which local boards should be aware. The following discussion offers suggested guidance for local boards in dealing with matters related to the new requirement. However, the issue may present itself differently depending on the district for which the board serves, and thus boards may need to address additional matters apart from those examined in this general guidance.

First, the new requirement for CSU graduation may necessitate new curriculum at community colleges. Assemblymember Weber's bill states that the courses that meet this requirement must demonstrate core competencies developed by the CSU Ethnic Studies Council and the Academic Senate of the CSU (ASCSU). Those competencies were released by the ASCSU in October 2020 and can be found on the [CSU website](#).² Even for community colleges with robust extant ethnic studies programs or courses, some courses may need to be revised or created to meet the requirements of the new CSU competencies. In addition, many colleges do not currently have courses that would fulfill the requirements—for example, colleges that do not have an ethnic studies course in one of the areas approved by the CSU—and such courses will need to be created and approved through the district's established processes. These revisions will require resources, both in terms of financial and personnel resources, and should be a priority for boards to approve in order to ensure that the coursework students need to transfer to the CSU exists and will be acceptable upon transfer. Additionally, these courses or programs will likely be time-sensitive, and as such boards of trustees should prioritize these curricular changes or additions while retaining fidelity to the established and approved processes at each college and district.



Second, the addition of a new lower-division requirement for the CSU system may force some adjustments to local associate degrees for transfer, which are by law limited to sixty total units. In some disciplines, the ADT requirements for the major and general education are already a very tight fit under that sixty unit cap. Practices such as double-counting units—allowing one course to fulfill multiple requirements—may help to address this issue, but in some cases careful examination and adjustment may be needed to meet both the requirements of the degree and the new CSU requirement while staying within the limitations of the ADT. Local boards should be supportive of faculty decisions regarding any such needed adjustments and, once again, should prioritize such changes while retaining the integrity of all local processes.

Third, while many colleges currently have robust programs in ethnic studies and personnel that meet the minimum qualifications to teach these courses, the additional graduation requirement is likely to increase the number of sections needed at all colleges in order to meet demand. Colleges that currently rely exclusively or almost exclusively on part-time faculty may need to hire full-time faculty as demand increases. Furthermore, colleges that do not currently have an ethnic studies program or courses that meet the required competencies will need to hire personnel in order to teach these courses. These hires are likely to be prioritized by the colleges and will need financial support from the districts to be realized. Having board support for these new or expanded positions will be essential for colleges to be able to support the programs going forward.

Finally, significant professional development will be needed for college personnel in all areas—faculty, classified professionals, and administrators—about the new requirement for CSU graduation and transfer using the ADTs. Changes to transfer requirements are always complicated to put into place, and college personnel will need to remain current regarding updates and other changes in order to ensure that students receive the most recent information about any new graduation requirements or alterations in degrees and programs.

Boards of trustees are always the final step for approval of all actions within a district and as such serve a crucial purpose in moving forward the potential changes or additions that will arise regarding ethnic studies. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges will be providing information and assistance for all colleges in this effort and is hopeful that this work will be welcomed by local boards and recognized for the important changes that colleges and students will be facing. ■

References

1 https://ccleague.org/sites/default/files/trustees-resources/curriculum_approval_process_publication.pdf

2 https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/diversity/advancement-of-ethnic-studies/Documents/final-csuces-core-competencies-oct_8_2020.pdf

California Community College Trustees (CCCT) Endorsements for ACCT Elections



Considering a position on the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Board or one of its Committees?

Apply for a CCCT Board Endorsement from the Community College League of California. For questions about the endorsement process, contact Rina Kasim at Rina@ccleague.org

IMPORTANT DATES

August 1, 2021 – Application for CCCT Endorsement of 2022 ACCT Candidates available online at www.ccleague.org/ccctendorsement

October 19, 2021 – Application Deadline

Early November – Candidate Interviews

Supporting Implementation of Ethnic/Multicultural Studies Programs

In matters of curriculum, boards' primarily rely on their academic senates and curriculum committees for guidance. Following is a list of sample questions boards' can ask regarding progress on the implementation of Ethnic/Multicultural Studies program requirements.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DISTRICT:

1. What can our college(s) do to ensure that our courses in ethnic studies articulate with CSU requirements? Not all colleges have an ethnic studies department – some are housed under various names: Latinx studies, African/American studies, etc.
2. What courses do we already offer that will meet the CSU requirement? Could existing courses be re-imagined to fit CSU requirements? Consider courses in areas outside the social sciences.
3. Where are those courses we already have in the GE pattern? For example, are they all in social studies, or are there options in other areas such as the arts, literature, theater, film, etc.
4. How do ethnic studies requirements fit into existing transfer/graduation requirements without adding additional total units to these requirements?
5. The CSU requirement says ethnic studies should be completed in lower division courses (community college level classes). This means there will be an increased demand for these classes that are now optional. Does our college need to add faculty, courses (sections of existing classes and/or entirely new classes) to meet this requirement, or both?
6. How does the ethnic studies requirement fit into Guided Pathways? Transfer Admissions Guarantee (TAG) Agreements?
7. How do we ensure that ALL courses even those not specified to meet the CSU ethnic studies requirement employ an equity-minded approach to the subject matter? How do we decolonize the curriculum? Strictly defined, decolonization is the undoing of colonialism. It is the unequal relation of politics whereby one people (or nation) establishes domain politically and culturally over another.
8. How can our college include a student voice in curriculum development for ethnic studies? Example: what would you like to learn about African-American, Hispanic, Asian-Pacific Island (API) or Native American culture?
9. How should professional development be modified to prepare full and part-time faculty for culturally relevant pedagogy?

Congratulations

to the recent

Excellence in Trusteeship Program Graduates

Julie Boss, Butte-Glenn CCD (May 2019)

Mary Combs, El Camino CCD (May 2019)

Jennifer Tarpley, Victor Valley CCD (May 2019)

Nancy Dalton, Lake Tahoe CCD (July 2019)

Tim Sbranti, Chabot-Las Positas CCD (September 2019)

Genevieve Randolph, Chabot-Las Positas CCD (September 2019)

Josh Chancer, Ventura County CCD (December 2019)

Hal Gin, Chabot-Las Positas CCD (May 2020)

Danny Kelley, Redwoods CCD (October 2020)

Uduak-Joe Ntuk, Long Beach CCD (January 2021)

Suzanne Chan, Ohlone CCD (January 2021)

Edel Alonso, Santa Clarita CCD (Recertification - March 2021)

Nan Gomez-Heitzeberg, Kern CCD (April 2021)

Cindi Reiss, Peralta CCD (April 2021)

Randi Kinman, West Valley-Mission CCD (Recertification - April 2021)

The Excellence in Trusteeship Program (ETP) is designed to facilitate the ongoing education of all trustees in California community colleges by providing a solid foundation for effective board governance. The League proudly offers the only certificate program in community college trusteeship in the state.

For a full list of ETP graduates visit www.ccleague.org/etpgraduates

The Benefits of Completing the Excellence in Trusteeship Program

Originally published in
the Spring 2017 Issue of
Board Focus



By Dianne McKay
Trustee, Ventura County CCD

The night I was elected to the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) Board in November of 2010, we had our first split vote. In the same election, one of our trustees had been elected mayor of his city and we had to fill his seat by appointment. I had been going to VCCCD meetings and knew the trustee that was being replaced. I carefully read the applications of the five people being considered for the appointment from that area and looked forward to the personal interviews. I did not know any of the men personally. There were no women so I knew that I would stay the sole female voice.

The way the process worked, the person I nominated was not the first to be voted on so I voted no on the first candidate, saving my yes vote for my nominee. This left me in the unfortunate position of being the only no vote against the person who was seated as my fellow trustee. My nominee was never voted on. Given what I know now I would have at least abstained so I wasn't a no vote. Maybe our chair would have abstained so my nominee could have had a vote with my yes; and then the new appointee could also have had my yes vote for a 5-0 beginning. These are all things we would have known with some further training.

Also shortly after being elected, our district was notified that two of our colleges were on accreditation warning. Followed later that year by a special concern with our board

that put all three of our colleges on probation. I won't get into how we got there or if it was deserved, but we were not getting along well as a unit or working together as a unit to get stronger. We were the bad examples in presentations—names changed to protect the innocent. However, we made a commitment. We were going to work together to improve. At this same time the League introduced the Excellence in Trusteeship Program (ETP). I had joined the Advisory Committee on Education Services for the League, which was the group behind this initiative and brought this back to the VCCCD Board. Fortunately, we all embraced this opportunity to grow and learn. Since we are all a bit competitive, we set out to complete the certification as a board. We challenged each other to complete.

Along the way to being the first full board to complete the certification, we learned a lot about each other. We learned to communicate better. We learned how to convey our goals within the policy-making role and the benefits of participatory governance. By the time we were all certified, we all had some kind of involvement statewide with the League. We were proud leaders.

When the re-certification of ETP came up, we made it an annual goal for all of us to complete this, knowing the continued benefits of ongoing professional development. We are a confident board, that can disagree with respect in our public deliberations and through a thorough evaluation process, that includes the districts Consultation Council, our improvements have data to back it up. ■



The Board-CEO Relationship

Originally published in
the Spring 2016 Issue of
Board Focus



*By Wanden Treanor
Trustee, Marin CCD*

The League has identified CEO development as a strategic objective. The experiences of our current CEOs will naturally inform the strategies to meet that objective. In this Board Focus, we highlight how trustee leadership in partnering with the CEO, not only supports the CEO to be engaged, challenged and able to reach his/her true potential, but also how it benefits the district.

The Board-CEO connection is an employer-employee relationship and its success can significantly affect the success of one of the community's greatest public assets, its community college.

Like any relationship, the Board-CEO relationship must be grounded in respect, mutual support and authenticity. A successful relationship requires a level of maturity to honor each other's strengths and to be able to support each other in taking on new challenges.

Frequent CEO turnover is not in a district's best interest and board conduct plays a central role in that statistic. Search consultants placing community college CEOs say that the most common question asked of them by a potential candidate is, 'tell me about the Board'. Good candidates want to know how the board treated the out-going CEO, why he/she is leaving, and if the Board members understand their role in the Board-CEO relationship.

If you want to attract and retain the best candidates, understand the

role trustees play in a successful Board-CEO relationship. Ask how trustees can support the professional development of CEOs and identify benchmarks to create and sustain an environment where the health of this critical relationship is monitored and supported. While there isn't one answer, we can share the collective wisdom of current and past CEOs who have discussed how trustees can strengthen the relationship and become better partners in the success and professional growth of the CEO.

A Good Relationship Requires Both Parties to Work at It

If the Board is working to maintain a healthy CEO relationship, the individual board members need to understand the board's role and must conduct themselves such that they 'stay in their lane' as Dr. Helen Benjamin explains in the box about "What CEOs want from Trustees".

If the Board is not working to maintain a healthy CEO relationship, they risk the district having to look for a new CEO and the fact that CEO turnover can negatively impact the district. The cost of the search, the lost opportunities that might have come with continuity of leadership and the time required to get a new CEO functioning at his/her optimum, are all factors that weigh on the board and district during a CEO transition. You can never predict if the transition will be short or prolonged. It may be that you will have an interim CEO for a year while you conduct a search, and/or you may

not get a 'good fit' in the first round of the search and find that you must go out again. Whatever happens, it is time-consuming and it comes with a cost.

If the CEO is not effectively working on a healthy relationship with the Board, it is important to have honest communication, in closed session, about the CEO's performance. Recognize the demands of job; provide good feedback, but always critique in private. Before leaping to the conclusion that the relationship is not salvageable, spend time together to work through, in a supportive, collaborative manner identifying what steps might help to improve the CEO's skills. Professional development and/or engaging a sage outside coach/mentor are but two ways to build the CEO's skills to meet the demands of the job. If the CEO is coming from out of state, it is particularly important to understand that he/she may not know all the nuances of our unique system and that additional support early on may be necessary to maximize the talents of a capable leader.

Change Is Good – Create a Great Launch

This article is not saying that change at the helm is bad. Change can be good and new opportunities will come with new leadership. However, the launch of a new CEO requires thoughtful planning. The sooner a new CEO can hit the ground running with college constituencies, with business and civic leaders, with community

partners and educational leaders, the better for the district. Each district has its unique communities and internal groups so no one approach will work for all; however, it is clear that internal and external forums and/or receptions are critical to introduce a new CEO.

The Board plays an important role as ambassadors in identifying the 'connectors' in the community and making those introductions for the new CEO. The Board can also invite the new CEO to community events, such as nonprofit fundraisers, so that the CEO can be introduced and so direct contact can be made with community leaders and potential partners.

CEOs Rejuvenation

The CEO is human, so don't forget that he/she needs a life outside of the job to be happy and healthy. The CEO's job requires him/her to be available seven days of a week, 24 hours a day, but that doesn't mean he/she should have to respond to the Board non-emergency issues 24-7. The demands of the job are such that it is likely the CEO works on the weekends and into the evening, but it should be something he/she controls, not to be at the beck and call of a trustee. Sure, we all have great ideas at all times of the day or night, just think before calling or emailing if it is necessary right then, or if it can wait.

CEOs must take vacations. A genuine break from the demands of the job will be refreshing and essential to the CEO's health and well-being. The world we live in is continually connected so it is very hard to completely disconnect. The board should own a shared ethic, supporting and encouraging the CEO to take the time. There will never be a perfect time for the CEO to be gone, but part of the job requires making sure there is a

succession plan and that competent administrators are prepared to step up and take charge when needed to do so.

If the CEO gets away, the district will benefit from his/her renewed energy and creative ideas that will flow from the CEO's rejuvenation. Finally, while the CEO has a very important job to do and he/she is the board's only employee, don't forget to have fun together and have a sense of humor. ■

What the CEOs Say They Want From Trustees

For the past several years, the League has been fortunate to have Dr. Helen Benjamin, Chancellor of Contra Costa Community College District, candidly share her perspective of what CEOs want in the Board-CEO relationship in the Board Chair Workshop. Dr. Benjamin shared her own experiences, as well as she wove in suggestions from other CEOs throughout the State. Many of the CEO tips relate to the importance of the Board understanding its role, but also emphasize the need for the Board to support professional development and to recognize that the CEO needs to 'have a life' outside of the 24/7 job with the district.

A few highlights include:

- The Board needs to remain in their policy-setting "lane" by relegating responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without interference;
- Operate on principle of "no surprises";
- No "end runs" that bypass the administration;
- Respect that the CEO works only for the board as a whole, so that the CEO does not have to respond to individual board member agendas;
- Ensure that decisions are based on what is best for the district and the students and not on special or personal interests;
- Think about and protect the long-term interests of the district;
- Be open, forthright and even-handed, be trust-worthy by maintaining confidentiality – personal & personnel;
- Hold the CEO accountable; set annual goals, ensure regular evaluation based on mutually agreed upon parameters; avoid at all times public criticism of the CEO by the board;
- Serve as sounding board; be a good listener; and,
- Review the CEO's contract regularly to ensure provisions are fair and competitive.

While most of the above suggestions are covered in the League's Excellence in Trusteeship Program training as 'best practices' for trustees in understanding our role and responsibility, it is important to note that these characteristics were presented as what talented, experienced CEOs are saying they want from their board. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that a talented CEO will expect all board members to operate at that level and, if they don't, the CEO will look for other opportunities to thrive, personally and professionally.



California Community College Catalogs: Student Guide or Student Jungle?



By Terry O'Banion, Senior Professor of Practice, Kansas State University & President Emeritus, League for Innovation in the Community College; and



Cindy Miles, Professor of Practice, Kansas State University & Chancellor Emerita, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District

All 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 community college 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 both simplify 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. 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. ■

Note: This article is adapted from the author's report of a national study of community college catalogs to be published in Inside Higher Ed. The article is being published simultaneously in ASCCC's Rostrum to encourage a statewide conversation on this issue. The views of the authors do not necessarily represent those of the Community College League of California.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE
OF CALIFORNIA

BOARD FOCUS

*Published to provide locally-
elected trustees and chief
executives with information and
strategies for
effective boardsmanship.*

Adrienne Grey
CCCT Board President

Larry Galizio
*President & CEO
Community College League
of California*

Carmen T. Sandoval
*Editor
Director, Education Services and
Leadership Development*

(916) 444-8641 • www.ccleague.org
Questions/Comments
Email Carmen T. Sandoval at
csandoval@ccleague.org

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 730
Sacramento, CA