Greetings! I hope everyone had an enjoyable and restful spring break. I will be away attending the ASCCC spring plenary session in San Francisco April 19-21. As I didn’t send out a report in March, I thought I would regale you all with an April report in time for the April 19 senate meeting.

- **Vice President of Academic Affairs search**: The search for a permanent Vice President of Academic Affairs is in progress. The application period closed 3/6. The selection committee has convened and is in the process of screening applications. Interviews by the committee will be concluded within the first week of May.

- **Achieving the Dream DREAM Conference in Dallas, TX**: The LACCD sent teams of faculty and administrators from each of the colleges in the district to the annual DREAM conference in Dallas, held February 28 - March 2. The team from LACC were: Jamillah Moore, Lawrence Bradford, Ken Sherwood, Kalynda Webber, Jeffrey Nishimura, Reri Pumphrey, Hector Plotquin, Phil Briggs and yours truly. Community colleges from around the country participated; it was quite the large meeting, to say the least. I attended several breakout sessions during the conference, and our team met with our coaches for dinner and at the end of the conference to plan next steps. Given that Achieving the Dream is all about student completion, a question was asked of a panel during a plenary presentation and discussion. The question was basically the question that many of us, including myself, often ask: how do we know students intend to complete a degree or certificate? The response still sticks with me: do our students enroll with the intent to complete only part of a class? The point was this: unless someone is committing fraud, every student enrolled in a course intends to complete it, and completion of any program of study starts with course completion. It is our moral imperative as educators to do all we can to give our students the tools to complete courses successfully, and thus move toward completing a program of study.

- **Student Success Task Force – Legislative Update**: As you know the initial pieces of legislation to implement recommendations from the final report of the Student Success Task Force are working their way through the process in Sacramento. SB 1062 (Liu) addresses Recommendation 7.1 (Stronger CCC Office). The key points of this legislation include allowing the BOG to directly appoint vice chancellors for the system office who do not have permanent civil service status, and eliminating the requirement that the Chancellor’s Office obtain Department of Finance clearance before enacting Title 5 regulations. SB 1456 (Lowenthal) addresses the component recommendations within Recommendation 2 (Strengthen Support for Entering Students). This is a revision of the Seymour-Campbell Matriculation Act of 1986 and allows for mandatory orientation and assessment. It also requires that students that qualify for BOG fee waivers meet academic and progress standards to maintain fee waiver eligibility. Finally, AB 1741 (Fong) is a FACCC-sponsored bill called the “Student Success Infrastructure Act of 2012.” The purpose of this bill is to require the Board of Governors to provide infrastructure support for implementation of SB 1456, including increasing counselors, restoring categorical programs, and increasing the number of hours taught by full-time faculty. Implementation would be contingent on existence of funds specifically appropriated for the purposes of this act. The latest versions of these bills can be found at the ASCCC website at:

  [http://asccc.org/1143](http://asccc.org/1143)

This page is an excellent resource for following the progress of legislation related to the Student Success Task Force. I recommend checking it periodically for updates as things do change.

- **District and college budget**: As you already know due to continued issues with the state budget and lower than expected tax receipts, the chancellor is directing the colleges to plan for a worst-case scenario of a 7% cut to their operating budgets for 2012-2013. This is to allow for the possibility that the tax proposition on the November ballot doesn’t pass. If it passes, then the district faces a 1.5% cut compared to 2011-12 instead of the worst-case 7% cut. Per the district, the proposed operating budget for 2012-2013 for LACC is $50.2 million. As a point of comparison, our projected spending for the current year is $58 million. It is clear to all of us that even if we
eliminated ALL discretionary spending items (for instance decided not to pay our utility bills), we would not be able to cut enough to get down to the proposed budget of $50.2 million and make our FTES obligation. It was the consensus of the Budget Committee to submit a budget of $54.9 million, one that reflects survival-level spending for 2012-2013. This is essentially a “deficit budget” although officially it will balance by adding a line item for “revenue from district sources.” The point is to communicate to the district that we can’t cut anymore, and that district-level solutions are needed to address the fiscal crisis.

- **District-wide Bond Project Moratorium:** The moratorium review continues. An independent panel conducted a review of the district bond project and among the concerns identified was an inadequate district reserve for the bond program to cover unanticipated shortfalls and to cover OCIP (owner-controlled insurance program). The district reserve will be about $160 million, and each college is required to contribute to the reserve in proportion to their bond project budgets, with the share from LACC being $24 million, $4.7 million of which is our contribution to the OCIP. There is a possibility, but no guarantee, that the reserves will be returned to the colleges in several years as the building projects conclude. As previously reported, projects were identified district-wide for immediate release from the moratorium. The LACC projects that were released immediately were the Red Line Corridor project, the Monroe Street project, and the completion of the ADA upgrades to the restrooms in Cesar Chavez (a project left over from the Bovis days). (Previously I reported that the landscape project had been released, but only referred to the landscaping that was part of the Red Line Corridor, not the entire landscaping project.) The colleges were instructed to submit requests with justification for other projects for early release from the moratorium. Projects that don’t add square footage and can be funded with existing maintenance and operations funds, such as building remodeling/modernization, building demolition and replacement, and infrastructure projects will receive priority for early release. The district anticipates announcing the first early-release projects by the April 25 board meeting. A special SGC meeting was convened on April 12 to approve the list of early-release projects to be submitted by LACC. The LACC projects submitted for early release, and unanimously approved by SGC at a special meeting on April 12 are:

  - Holmes Hall Modernization
  - Student Services Center
  - Central Plant Phase II
  - Landscaping/Hardscape Improvements
  - DaVinci Hall Modernization
  - South Gym Modernization
  - Physical Plant (M&O Building, near the Foundation Offices)
  - Tennis Courts
  - Cesar Chavez Administration Building

The Men’s Gym demolition was not submitted as an early release project as its budget of $3.5 million is identified as part of the $24 million contributed to the district reserve. Also not submitted as an early release project is the Learning Support Center (Cafeteria Building demolition required) as this is considered a new building that increases square footage, and is thus not eligible for early release. This does not mean it won’t be released, rather it just won’t be released early.

- **Faculty Retirement Luncheon:** The Faculty Retirement Luncheon will be Thursday, May 17, 12 – 3 PM in the Faculty and Staff Center. At this writing, we don’t have the ticket price set yet as we still need the estimate from the caterer. As soon as we get that information we will send out the invitations to the luncheon. As always, it is a bittersweet occasion, and I expect it will be no less so this year. (And of course, I expect it to be well-attended!) This year we honor and bid farewell to John Erdhaus, Vaughn Obern, Freddie Harris, Vangie Ruiz, Cheryl Werble, Fred Fate and Mattie Moon. I look forward to seeing you all there!

And finally, even in these grindingly-difficult fiscal times, we need to continue to celebrate the great things that are done by all at LACC. For example, several of our Ralph Bunche Scholars students participated in the UC Irvine Honor’s Research Conference on March 31. Congratulations go to our student participants and to Scholars Director Prof. Danielle Muller! I also congratulate Profs. Christine Gengaro (Music), Andrea Spector (English/ESL) and Christine Tinberg (Physical Education) for being selected as winners for the 2012 Faculty Learning Award. The awards ceremony and presentations by the winners are Tuesday, April 24 at 1:30 in the Faculty and Staff Center. Finally, seven of our student journalists with The Collegian were awarded the Mark of Excellence Awards (Region 11) by the Society of Professional Journalists. Congratulations to our students and to advisor Ronda Guess. And let’s not forget the upcoming Foreign Language Day and Earth Day events. Keep up the good work everyone!

John