

# Senate Bytes

Antelope Valley College Academic Senate Newsletter

Fall 2007

## From the Senate President

Patricia A. Marquez Sandoval

Is it possible that we are heading toward the end of the semester? This issue of AVC's Senate Bytes is going to highlight much of the work of the standing committees of the Senate.

- Distance Education is moving right along helping faculty learn the technology needed to teach our growing number of online sections.
- The Student Learning Outcomes Committee has been busy giving presentations and developing forms and timelines. As you have seen from the Senate Office, we need a tenured faculty member to be co-chair who can lead the work of the committee in helping the campus develop and assess their course and program level SLOs.
- As many of you already know, tenure review is going strong for our non-tenured faculty.
- The Academic Policies & Procedures Committee is busy reviewing numerous COR revisions, new course proposals, and recent changes to Title 5 regulations. Program Review is now on track, and several divisions are either conducting their self-study or are in the peer review phase.
- The Senate Grant Committee just sent forward two Senate Grants that further enhance faculty's work with students, and the Senate approved them.

This year as well, the Senate worked with the administration through the Mutual Agreement Council (MAC) on identifying responsibilities and duties for the Accreditation Faculty Coordinator, and now will work with the faculty union on the reassigned time for the position. Faculty leadership in the accreditation process (per Title 5 Section §53200) is vital, and our responsibility as faculty is to ensure the quality and rigor for courses, programs, and services to students and community. AVC's next full self-study is due October 2010. We recently and successfully completed the progress report, which included the commission's visit, and just submitted the mid-term report; it doesn't seem possible that the full self-study is now at our doorstep, again. The Senate is hopeful that a call can be put out for those of you interested in being considered for this important position. In support and preparation for taking on this task, Statewide Senate in January will have an Accreditation Institute, along the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). For the first time, ACCJC will have additional training opportunities on Student Learning Outcomes in preparation for conducting the full self-study, along with optional campus training.

Finally, Florencia Gomez our very own AVC student, won the highly competitive Academic Senate Statewide John Laroche award of \$500 to continue her studies. At the Fall Plenary Session, she was recognized and presented her award. The following article shares with you a bit more about the award and Florencia.

Well, as you can see, the Senate is busy as always. Gloria Kastner continues to provide the best support to the entire Senate along with our two student workers, Alex Rocha and Veronica Landeverde. We'll continue to have a great and busy semester. Let us know what

**Academic Senate meets the  
1st and 3rd Thursday of each month  
at 3 p.m. in room SSV 151.**

# The Jonnah Laroche Memorial Scholarship

*Sponsored by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges*

*(background information extracted from ASCCC Web site)*

The Jonnah Laroche Memorial Scholarship was established in 1994 by Roger Laroche to honor his wife, Jonnah. A long time faculty member, Jonnah Laroche was a president of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and served on the Community College Board of Governors. She dedicated her life to serving underrepresented students and was known for her development of mentoring programs.

The Jonnah Laroche Memorial Scholarship, presented in the memory of a past president of the Academic Senate, is awarded each year to students of exceptional accomplishments. Two continuing community college students will receive a \$500 award, and one student transferring to a four-year institution will be awarded \$1,000. Each year the awards go to students from two Senate Areas. The Areas are staggered A and B or C and D. Each college may nominate one student from each category: Transferring and Continuing. The nominating criteria emphasize the wishes of the founder of this scholarship to nominate students from groups that have historically been underrepresented in higher education: ethnic minorities, women and persons with disabilities. Another major criterion is scholarship; a nominee must have a GPA of 3.0 to be eligible for consideration. Nominees are required to submit a 300 word autobiographical essay that includes their educational and career goals as well as a demonstration of financial need. Continuing students must have completed a minimum of 15 units. Transferring students will receive the award upon proof of entry at the receiving institution.



*Left to Right: Pedro Gomez (Father), Florencia Gomez, Mark Wade Lieu, Academic Senate President*

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**From the Computer of the...**

## Distance Education Committee Co-Chair

Ed Beyer

The Distance Education Committee (DEC) has been busy this semester developing recommendations that will help maintain a quality online experience for all faculty and students. As part of our efforts, the DEC has created working groups for the following areas: podcasting, online orientation, policies and procedures, accessibility, and contract issues. If you have an interest in any of the areas, your input, and you, would be welcome at any of our bi-weekly meetings. The DEC meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the board room.

As the DEC Co-chair, I am happy to announce that Antelope Valley College is now a member of the Instructional Technology Council (ITC). The ITC provides us with a valuable resource for enhancing our distance education. You can checkout the ITC Web site at <http://www.itcnetwork.org/>.



# A Word from the First Vice-President

Ed Beyer

Actually, there are three words from the 1<sup>st</sup> V.P. . . . . We need you! As the Academic Senate continues to work to maintain and improve the quality of education on our campus, it is obvious that our effort cannot be maintained without your involvement. For those of you who have not stopped reading this article after reading those dreaded words “your involvement,” I want you to know that there are some excellent and important opportunities coming up that warrant your reflection. Soon you will be hearing a call for several Senate positions and I hope you will seriously consider stepping forward to participate, especially those of you who are newly tenured or are about to receive tenure. Currently we are in need of a *Student Learning Outcomes Co-chair*, a position that has significant bearing on our accreditation. Other positions that are about to open up include: *Academic Senate President*, *AP&P Co-chair*, *Distance Education Committee Co-chair*, *Tenure Review Coordinator*, and the new *Faculty Accreditation Coordinator*. If you stop and think about these positions alone, a significant change in the leadership of our campus is about to occur. We need *you* to be part of that change. Remember, the responsibilities of these roles are not fulfilled in isolation; rather they are accomplished through collaboration. We need you!



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## CONGRATULATIONS!

**COACH OF THE YEAR:** For the first time since 1987, when AVC won their last conference title, AVC’s head coach has been named the Foothill Conference Coach of the Year. *Perry Jehlicka* and Dean Dowty of Desert will share the awards. Both the Marauders and Roadrunners went 9-1 this season and are co-champions of the Foothill Conference.

**MARAUDER ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AND DEAN** *Newton Chelette* will be enshrined into the California Community College Men’s Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in March of 2008 at the state basketball championships. In his 17 years as the head coach for the Marauders, his teams would win ten conference titles and he was named coach of the year seven years, including four straight.

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## Tenure Review Coordinator Report

Debra Olson-Tolar

There are currently 75 tenure review committees hard at work. Worksite observations have taken place and student and peer evaluations are being conducted. In a few short weeks, unsigned drafts of first, second, and fourth-year reports will be due.



Since last year, Sharon Lowry, Heidi Preschler, and Debra Olson-Tolar have been working on revisions to the Tenure and Evaluation portion of the contract. Many committees are piloting the new forms for evaluation, including peer and student evaluation forms, observation report forms, and the final report form. Please continue to forward Heidi Preschler and Debra Olson-Tolar your input regarding the forms and revisions.



For those of you who are wondering how you can support (or give even more support to) the tenure review process, you can be sure to fill out peer review forms that come your way regarding our probationary faculty. Also, don’t forget to submit your name to the Academic Senate to serve as a senate representative on the new tenure review committees that will be forming for new hires in 2008.

# Minimum Qualifications Audits

BY GREG GILBERT, 2006-07 STANDARDS AND PRACTICES CHAIR

***“Title 5, section 53430 establishes the standards for hiring faculty based on equivalencies, and it echoes the language of Education Code section 87358 that each individual faculty member must possess minimum qualifications.”***

—Ralph Black

**O**n May 30, 2007, the Academic Senate’s Standards and Practices committee met with Planning and Development Specialist Ken Nather at the System Office. Nather discussed with the committee the fact that the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in responding to faculty concerns during an accreditation visit initiated a minimum qualifications audit to see if the college had hired the wrong people in the wrong areas. The bottom line is where a course was judged to have been taught by an unqualified person, the credit for that course was invalidated, the course was struck from college transcripts, and transfer institutions were informed.

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It doesn’t require Stephen King to explain the horrors that can follow when courses are invalidated.

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Consider first the nightmare for affected students. Think of the impact on faculty, particularly part-time faculty who suddenly are not asked back.

Imagine the potential for litigation and charges of financial culpability. Think of the impact on an accreditation report, and consider how this issue reflects on the bodies responsible for overseeing hiring and compliance with the minimum qualifications: local senates and boards. Consider how such malfeasance can undermine the credibility of the System and our profession.

It’s not as if this issue hasn’t been widely discussed over the past several years. In 2004 Mark Snowwhite wrote a very informative *Rostrum* article on the subject of minimum qualifications, which included Chancellor’s Office legal counsel Attorney Ralph Black’s 2003 memo to Snowwhite declaring “that a district is not authorized to establish a single course equivalency as a substitute for meeting minimum qualifications in a discipline.” The Black memo has been available in its entirety on the front page of the Academic Senate website for several years now. Moreover, in 2006, the Academic Senate published a paper on the granting of equivalencies (available on the Academic Senate’s website at: <<http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/legal/opinions/attachments/03-28.pdf>> which detailed the faculty’s authority and responsibility in the hiring process. In 2007, the Academic Senate completed another round of hearings for the Disciplines List that featured the subject of minimum qualifications and equivalencies in breakouts, hearings, and mailings. What with all the workshops, articles, and papers on the subject, the word is getting out that those who teach within our system, regardless of their subject area, must meet or exceed the minimum

qualifications established by the Academic Senate and approved by the Board of Governors.

Even so, local practices in some instances suggest that non-compliance may be viewed as acceptable when efforts to comply become challenging, regardless of the fact that compliance is a matter of law. Perhaps it's like driving 80 MPH in a 65 MPH zone until we see someone getting red lighted. Then we slow down. Well, as you can see, it appears that the red lights are on. The story that opened this article is not an isolated example of what can happen if local senates fail to take the initiative—but a growing reality.

What should local senates do? First, download two documents, The Disciplines List at <[http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa\\_ir/psmq/min\\_qual/min\\_qual%20\\_revFeb2206.doc](http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa_ir/psmq/min_qual/min_qual%20_revFeb2206.doc)> and Equivalence to the Minimum Qualifications at <[http://www.asccc.org/Publications/Papers/Equivalence\\_2006.html](http://www.asccc.org/Publications/Papers/Equivalence_2006.html)> and read them. Local senates have joint agreement with their boards on the hiring of faculty and instructional administrators and the establishment of equivalencies. Joint agreement means that both sides must agree before any action may be taken, and, thus, compliance with the minimum qualifications and the hiring of faculty are first and foremost the responsibility of local senates.

While colleges may not grant themselves an amnesty from previous violations, they should conduct an audit and agree that from that date forward, they will no longer place unqualified faculty in courses, they will no longer grant substandard equivalencies, and they will no longer permit single course equivalencies. While it is impossible to do anything about past infractions, immediate action to rectify noncompliance would certainly be preferable to what would transpire should an external audit reveal that no effort on the part of a local senate and board had attempted to make things right. While it is possible that the greatest hardship

may fall to those part-time faculty who are not properly qualified, colleges should do all that they can to find appropriate courses for these individuals and encourage that they come into compliance as soon as possible if they wish to be eligible to teach specific courses. Also of importance is that the granting of equivalencies and eminence may only occur after local board and senate approval of policies that oversee such processes. In all instances, faculty hires must demonstrate sufficient subject area depth and breadth of general education knowledge. We are, after all, colleges.

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Where minimum qualifications, equivalencies, and hiring are concerned, it is essential that local senates step forward.

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Because it is possible that conducting audits will in some instances cause difficulties with long-term hires, teaching assignments, and the ability of the institution to cover certain courses, faculty should work as closely with their administrative partners as possible to assure that the institution is united in its resolve to come into compliance with the law. Where questions arise, senate leaders and administrators should feel free to contact the Academic Senate (Dan Crump, Chair of Standards and Practices, [Crumpd@arc.losrios.edu](mailto:Crumpd@arc.losrios.edu), 916-484-8167).

The importance of having fully qualified faculty in our classes cannot be overstated, regardless of the course, because the reality is that all subjects are cross-curricular. Whether we are discussing physics in the automotive lab, anatomy in a physical education class, or information competency in business administration, it is the role of the teaching professional to raise the discourse in any subject area to include a larger understanding of the world. When we properly qualify and place faculty in our institutions, we strengthen the ability of our colleges and the System to meet their missions. ■