Spring Flex Day Focuses on Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Budget barometer points toward leaner and tougher times.

With the theme of collaboration and an eye toward economics, Mt. SAC ushered in the spring semester with an opening meeting and the Professional Development/Flex Day on Feb. 19.

The Flex Day theme, “The College Hour—Interdisciplinary Collaboration,” served as the focus of sessions designed to recreate the college hour concept by offering presentations on interdisciplinary topics, such as “Bring Some Theatricality to Your Lectures” and “Helping Professors Across the Curriculum Respond to Student Writing.”

In other opening meeting presentations, Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator Joan Sholars and Instruction VP Ginny Burley updated everyone on learning outcomes. Student Services VP Audrey Yamagata-Noji gave a student services update, and Michelle Grimes-Hillman and Jennifer Galbraith respectively provided Academic Senate and Faculty Association updates. Students from the Repertory Dance Company and the Forensics Team also performed.

President John Nixon and Administrative Services VP Mike Gregoryk made a budget presentation that underscored the financial uncertainty and probable impacts tied to the state’s unprecedented fiscal woes. They outlined the college’s efforts to close the current budget gap, including the reduction of class offerings (which also reduced the number of part-time faculty), the suspension of class schedule distribution in the community, the freezing or elimination of vacant positions, and the frugal use of Mt. SAC’s financial reserves. They also noted that the Budget Committee continues to assess cost-cutting measures suggested by employees and plans to implement those that are feasible, including a mandatory 4/10 work week (10 hours, Monday through Thursday) during several weeks next summer. This would reduce facility operating expenses by closing the campus on Fridays.

Gregoryk’s best projection indicated that Mt. SAC would likely need to use $6 million in reserves to balance the current budget and cut $4 million from the general fund in 2010-11. He also noted that proposed state legislation could increase STRS/PERS contribution rates for both employees and employees. “There’s not a whole lot of room for cuts before you get into personnel, given that employee compensation comprises 97% of our general fund,” Gregoryk noted.

Nixon assured that the college leadership will be working diligently to operate the college within available budget resources while maintaining educational quality for students. In a separate opening meeting session, Nixon and Cabinet officers reviewed the same budget issues with the classified staff.
Current Fiscal-Year Budget Cuts Outlined

For the 2009-10 academic year, the Mt. SAC Budget Committee has already made a number of significant cuts to reduce the college budget shortfall, totaling some $13 million, which includes $7 million in categorical reductions and $6 million in general fund cuts.

“Due to the State of California’s elimination and reduction of funding to community colleges, Mt. San Antonio College has had to begin the process of making careful but deliberative budget reductions,” said Administrative Services VP Mike Gregoryk in a recent campuswide memo.

General fund reductions include cutting 800 classes and laying off 58 part-time faculty, which resulted in a $2.8-million reduction. A hiring freeze resulted in a saving of another $2.8-million. Library hours have been reduced by nearly 38% (20 hours weekly).

Some categorical reductions, which include instructional services, include elimination of hourly counseling support for a reduction of $465,000, and cutting the cohort of nursing students by 30% thereby saving $269,000.

Likewise, Student Services categorical programs were cut by 39%, totaling nearly $2.7 million. These are programs that serve students with the greatest needs—DSPS, EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs, and Matriculation. While the current cuts have affected many services for students on campus, the outlook for next year isn’t much better.

“All indications at the state level are that the next fiscal year will be much worse for community colleges,” Gregoryk said. “Although some colleges, like Mt. SAC, have worked diligently to maintain a healthy reserve, it will still be necessary to make significant budget reductions given the level of funding cuts expected to be imposed by the State of California. We realize that this unsettling news. However, we are committed to keeping you informed of developments—where the impact is good or bad for our institution. Our goal through this painful process remains to protect educational quality and our employees to extent that we can with our limited resources. We will share additional information about the 2010-11 budget forecast as it becomes available.”

For the full list of 2009-10 budget reductions, visit: http://inside.mtsac.edu

Memorial Day Upgrade Planned for Banner

While most people will be lighting barbecues and celebrating the unofficial start of summer, Information Technology staff will be working around the clock this Memorial Day weekend to upgrade the college’s management information system from Banner 7 to Banner 8. This particular weekend was selected to minimize disruption to student and financial services.

According to IT Enterprise Applications Systems Director Sheryl Hullings, the conversion, which begins May 28, involves two major changes: an upgrade to the Oracle database and a system conversion to the international character set. Then, in addition to the conversion, the upgrades must be tested before coming back online June 1.

To continue support from Sungard Higher Education (the vendor) and to remain in compliance with regulations for functions such as financial aid, Mt. SAC must convert to the new versions of Banner every 18 to 24 months when a new major version is released.

✦ Services that will be shut down during the long weekend are all Banner environments (PROD and TEST), self-service Banner, Internet Native Banner, Argos/FormFusion/Intellicheck, ePrint, and Degree Works.

✦ Services that will see intermittent outages are Luminis Portal, Blackboard, and student e-mail.

✦ Services not affected by the conversion are all Notes/Domino servers (including faculty and staff e-mail), Quickplace, Sametime, the Blackberry Enterprise server, SARS, WebCMS, the Data Warehouse, the campus web server, and all file servers.
Joining Mt. SAC Much Like a “Homecoming” for New HR-VP

After serving three years as the HR and labor relations executive director at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo, Annette Loria sees coming to Mt. SAC as a type of homecoming.

“Returning to the community where you started is sometimes the best place to be,” said Annette, who moved back to the area to assume duties as Mt. SAC’s HR-VP on Feb. 1.

Annette grew up in Upland, earned her bachelor’s and MBA degrees from Cal Poly Pomona. She comes to Mt. SAC with over 20 years of experience in the educational sector (17 years at the Ontario-Montclair School District) and with a clear understanding of the fiscal challenges the state’s schools and colleges face.

“Mt. SAC has always had a very good reputation not only here, but across the state,” says Annette. “It feels good to be here despite these extraordinarily difficult economic times when the college must make tough decisions that could impact employees, services and programs. The focus needs to be on our students, who represent our greatest resource for the future.”

Annette and husband Tim have two grown daughters, Anne and Alison, who used to run in high school cross-country meets at the grueling Mt. SAC course. The Lorias now live in Claremont—proving you really can go home again.

34 Faculty Members Granted Tenure

Congratulations to 34 Mt. SAC instructors who were recently granted tenure after a long and rigorous evaluation process. They are:

Toni Albertson
Gene Ano
Rocio Avila
Stacy Bacigalupi
Melinda Bowen
Robert Bowen
Ronald Brown
Alison Chamberlain
Denise Condra
Elisabeth Eatman
Thomas Edson
Jeffery Ellwood
Timothy Engle
Sun Ezzell
Jennifer Garwick
Paul Hischar
Kenneth Huang
Ron Kamaka
Constance Kunkler
Jennifer Leader
Lisa Ledebor
Eddie Lee
Jenny Leung
Billie Lynes
Monique Neel
Shane Poulter
Barbara Quinn
Carolyn Robinson
Hector Sanchez
Stephen Shull
Pauline Swartz
Antoine Thomas
Rebecca Walker
Tina Ziolowski
Trustees and employees strutted their stuff before audiences at three show-stopping performances as they impersonated and lip synched the music of the biggest names in show business. Featured on these pages are pictorial highlights from this year’s Puttin’ on the Hits production, sponsored by the Mt. SAC Faculty Association at the Clarke Theater on March 12 and 13. Photography by Jesse Mezquita.
Talking Heads — Malcolm Rickard and Nick Crow on drums

Cordettes — Shanti Atashpoush and Paul Mercier

Blackeyed Peas — Chris MacDonald, Nuy Nguyen and Julie Mallard

Charlie Daniels — Joe Franko

Robert Palmer — Cameron Troxell

She Bang — Terri Long and Kristina Allende

U2 and Mary J. Blige — Cameron Troxell and Carolyn Keys

MC Hammer — Curry Riley

Annie Lennox and Aretha Franklin — Sue Long and Luisa Howell

ZZ Top — Richard McGowen and Malcolm Rickard
Over 700 Attend “Ca$h for College”
Representatives Hernandez and Torres keynoted Financial Aid event.

Over 700 area high school students and their families converged on the Mt. SAC campus recently to take advantage of the personal assistance offered at Financial Aid’s annual “Ca$h for College.”

“Given today’s tough economic climate, we were thrilled by the opportunity to assist so many families, who are looking for whatever financial resources are available,” said Financial Aid Director Susan Jones (pictured right).

The day-long event featured workshops, presentations, and one-on-one assistance with completing and filing the online Federal Student Aid and Cal Grant financial aid forms. California Assembly representatives Norma Torres and Ed Hernandez welcomed participants. This year’s sessions were divided into two cohort groups—one for students planning to attend Mt. SAC and one for those planning to attend other colleges. Information and application forms were available for Admissions, Extended Opportunity and Programs Services, and other Mt. SAC student support services.

The Financial Aid Office has seen a significant increase in number of financial aid applications recently. Already this year, the number of applications filed has surpassed the number of applications for all of last year (see related article on p. 2).

Mt. SAC Hosts 5th Black College Summit

More than 200 area students and area residents participated in the recent 5th Annual Black College Summit, co-sponsored by Mt. SAC’s Career & Transfer Center, the Associated Students, and the San Gabriel Valley Section of the National Council of Negro Women. The summit explored the benefits of transferring to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

“This was a family affair, with students and their relatives attending from 44 K-12 schools and colleges throughout the southland,” said Mt. SAC Transfer and Career Services Director Heidi Lockhart. “While the focus was on HBCUs, participants also had the opportunity to connect with admissions reps and successful alumni from 18 Cal State universities, UCs, private colleges, and Mt. SAC.” Eleven HBCUs participated, including Howard, Morehouse, and Grambling State.
1,200 High Schoolers Experience Seniors’ Day

Twelve hundred high school seniors from 30 area schools recently converged on campus and experienced “Seniors’ Day” Mt. SAC-style! “This is their opportunity to see and feel the campus and learn more about Mt. SAC,” says High School Outreach Coordinator Aida Cuenza (circled below). “They leave here with a better sense of what the transition from high school to college will be like. Seniors’ Day connects them to Mt. SAC in a special way so they can make an informed decision about their college plans.”

The seniors toured the campus and heard informative presentations about course and program offerings, financial aid and other support services—all designed to help them plan for the future.

Spring Enrollment Down, Full-Time Students Up

Paradox means fewer students are taking more units.

While spring credit enrollment has dropped by nearly 9% overall, the number of full-time-equivalent students (FTES) has increased by more than 14%—meaning slightly fewer students are taking more units this semester.

A major factor for the overall enrollment dip was the need to cut 154 credit class sections—about 3.5 fewer than in spring 2009. “State funding cutbacks made this action essential,” said Student Services Vice President Audrey Yamagata-Noji. “This was done very carefully through much coordination and planning in order to mitigate the net impact on our students. However, after the start of the semester, we added some high-demand class sections in English, math, and general education. And those filled up immediately.”

One area that has had no trouble with declining numbers is financial aid. Before the first day of classes, 4,650 students received checks for more than $5.5 million in financial aid. A total of 21,806 students have received Board of Governors fee waivers already in 2009-10, eclipsing the mark of 15,893 B.O.G. waivers awarded the entire 2008-09 academic year. The number of financial aid applications is also up this year. As of February, nearly 27,000 students had applied for financial aid in 2009-10 compared to the 22,290 financial aid applications filed for all of the previous year.
Students Selected for State Academic Honors

Mt. SAC students were named to the All-California Academic Teams again this year. Isaac Powell was named to the 2010 First Team and Honors student Martin Medrano was named to the Third Team by Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), the national community college honors society. They were honored at an awards luncheon in Sacramento on March 22. Powell is a math/economics student and carries a 4.0 GPA, while Medrano is a political science major and carries a 3.64 GPA.

11 Students Advance to State SkillsUSA Competition

Eleven vocational education students will represent Mt. SAC at the SkillsUSA 43rd Annual State Leadership conference April 8-11 in San Diego. The 11 students qualified for the state competition by winning gold medals at the regionals held at Mt. SAC in February. They won 11 gold medals in the fields of aviation maintenance, architecture and design technology, electronics, and welding. SkillsUSA is a nationally affiliated vocational club representing over a quarter-million secondary and post-secondary students in the trade, technical, and health fields.

1st Sharlene Anderson Memorial Run Nets $5,000 for Scholarships

Heavy rains couldn’t dampen the spirits of the more than 250 who participated in the Mt. SAC Foundation’s first Sharlene Anderson Memorial 5K run/walk, which raised over $5,000 for the scholarship fund established in her name. Participants included Mt. SAC faculty and staff, students from Arcadia High School, race enthusiasts, sponsors, and volunteers.

A math professor and involved faculty leader at Mt. SAC for 20 years, Anderson passed away in 2005. She was also a running and bicycling enthusiast, having competed in over 60 marathons, including a 100-mile Angeles Crest endurance run, five Ironman triathlons, and a marathon in Antarctica. As a cyclist, she biked across the country and took a year of leave to bike around the world.

Sponsors for the fundraiser, which will be an annual event, included the Foothill Flyers Running Club, Gotein, Hannam Chain Inc., the Inland Inferno Triathlon Club, Healthpoint, Honest Tea, and Pomona Valley Medical Center.
Mt. SAC Wins Gold and Silver National Marketing Awards

Mt. SAC won the coveted Gold Paragon Award recently for the nation’s best Government/Community Relations Project or Campaign at the annual conference of the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) in Albuquerque. The college’s entry was the Measure RR Campaign, and the adjudicating panel of top public affairs and marketing professionals noted that the campaign was the “most thorough and comprehensive and was clearly the most effective” with an extraordinary 70% voter approval victory, despite a unprecedented economic recession.

“Even though Jill Dolan and my team wrote and packaged the entry and played a key communication role in the Measure RR campaign,” noted Clarence “CB” Brown, “this prestigious honor is shared by all major stakeholders across the college, including Mike Gregoryk’s overall campaign leadership, Lila Belinski’s grassroots campaign management, the bond strategy consultants, our internal and external funding partners, and certainly the stellar volunteer team, composed of the many ‘friends of Mt. SAC,’ our Foundation partners, students, faculty, staff, managers, the Associated Students, CSEA, Classified Senate, Academic Senate, and Faculty Association.”

In addition, Mt. SAC’s chief photographer, Mike Taylor, won his first Paragon (silver) at the NCMPR conference as well. Mike captured an especially moving expression on the faces of a row of our grads at last year’s commencement. We appropriately captioned the photo: "Inspirational." This is Mt. SAC’s first national photo award, so we're quite proud of Mike as a professional and as a valued colleague.

KSAK Wins 2 Golden Mikes

Mt. SAC’s radio station, 90.1 KSAK, won two Golden Mike awards at the Radio and Television News Association of Southern California’s recent ceremony at the Universal Hilton in Hollywood. The station won awards for “Best Traffic Report” in Division B (for radio stations with fewer than six full-time staff) and won the “Best Individual Writing” award for KSAK operations coordinator Cason Smith’s story on South African track star Caster Semenya. KSAK has won an impressive 16 Golden Mikes over the past five years.
The Music Department showcased its operatic faculty and students in the production of “Opera Scenes,” a performance of opera’s most memorable moments.

The Foundation and Classified Senate hosted the sixth annual “Mountie Carlo Night” fundraiser, an evening of gaming, dinner, and dancing. Proceeds benefit the Foundation’s scholarship program, special campus projects, as well as professional development scholarships. This year’s event netted $10,800, nearly double the amount raised last year.
The World Comes to Walnut for 52nd Relays

There was plenty of excitement at this year’s edition of the Mt. SAC Relays, including Giovanni Lanaro’s win in the pole vault (18-8.25), Olympian Allyson Felix’s anchor leg in the 400-meter relay for the Kersee All-Stars’ win (43.64), and American Olympic gold medal decathlete Bryan Clay’s competition in the discus and scratch in 110-meter hurdles.

Mountie Women Make 9th Trip to State Championship in 10 Years

For the ninth time in the past decade, the Mt. SAC women’s basketball team competed in the state championship and have been counted among California community colleges’ Elite Eight.

The Mounties’ quest for the state title came to end as Santa Rosa defeated Mt. SAC, 68-64, in the championship opening round. The women’s top scorer, Brittney Lewis, led the team with 11 points while Kaiameka Brown had 10 points in the effort.

The Mounties, who finished their season 24-7, advanced to the state championship after beating L.A. Trade Tech, 60-47, in the final bracket in the Southern California playoffs.

The team has won three consecutive state championships (2006-08) and has won four state championships in the last seven years.
New Campus Photo Directory Released

The 2010 Campus Directory has been released in both printed and online formats. The printed version lists permanent employees (with their photos) alphabetically by last names and separately by first name. It also provides a breakdown of departments and divisions, a “yellow pages” section that lists programs and services, and an updated campus map. The online version can be accessed on the college's employee website: http://inside.mtsac.edu

Mt. SAC Campus Connection

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Please direct comments and story suggestions to the Editor at ext. 5334.

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