

August 25, 2009

TO: All Faculty, Deans, Directors and Staff  
FROM: Jim Wright, Vice President, Academic Affairs

This week we begin our 43<sup>rd</sup> academic year. And, as usual, we have a lot to do. I look forward to working with all of you as we continue to offer high quality learning opportunities for our students.

We have a budget crisis with which to contend. There have been a number of these downturns over the years and all have been followed by upturns. Of course, we need to address the challenge of the moment. However, I would like us to spend time this year looking beyond the present moment and focus on the future and what we want to achieve over the next five to ten years.

### Focus on the Future

Some may question why we should spend time looking to the future when we are in a budget crisis. But, from my perspective, planning for the future is one of the most important things you can do during a budget crisis. I would say there are three steps we should take when we are in a spot like we are now:

1. Cut the budget to stay solvent
2. Make the cuts in alignment with mission and values
3. Plan assertively for the future

Doing 1 without 2 and 3 could lead to cuts that cause longer term damage to our core mission. Doing 1 and 2 without 3 may cause an institution to bog down in survival thinking. Of course, an organization needs to survive; but it should survive strategically.

Thus, maintaining a focus on, and setting a course for, the future is vital. We need a glass-half-full view and not fall into a glass-half-empty hole. Let's rise above the clamor of the moment and create our future.

### Educational Master Plan Update

At Ohlone we are moving ahead with steps 1 and 2 above. We are also focused on step 3 on several fronts. A 2010 local bond is being planned and a facilities master plan for the Fremont Campus is being crafted. Both are being conducted within the context of our existing Educational Master Plan.

The current Educational Master Plan has been adequate to this point, as it has been augmented by updates since the 2001 version. You can view the 2001 version and updates on the Academic Affairs website at: <http://www.ohlone.edu/org/academicaffairs/masterplandocs.html>

But it has been ten years since it was reviewed as a total package and we should take a thorough look at the various parts and conduct a comprehensive update. This past spring I worked with the Dr. Browning and the Faculty Senate to fashion a process for updating the Educational Master Plan through a Task Force of faculty leaders and Division Deans. Task Force Members include:

Tim Roberts, Bob Bradshaw, Alan Kirshner, Rachel Sherman, Deb Parziale, Jon Degallier,  
Jeff O'Connell, Mikelyn Stacey, Ron Quinta, Walt Birkedahl, Chris Warden, Gale Carli,  
Leta Stagnaro, Lesley Buehler, and Martha Brown.

To facilitate this work, I have written a draft of an updated plan, drawing from work that has been done over the past ten years. It is posted on the Academic Affairs website at the link provided above. I am hoping this will provide a good starting point for dialogue.

As part of the Educational Master Planning process, departments and programs will be asked to give updates on their future directions as developed in recent Program Reviews. You will find the format for this in the discussion draft. You will be hearing more about this from your Deans shortly.

This fall, we will work on updating the plan. In the spring we will bring it to the Senate, College Council and Board of Trustees for review and approval.

### Program and Services Review

We have been making improvements in the Program and Services Review process. Our online curriculum management database, CurricUNET, has been expanded to include a Program and Services Review Module. This module makes completion of reviews easier and it archives reviews in an online database format. Once a review is entered it can then simply be updated each year. Thus, we are moving from incremental Program and Services Review to an ongoing, annual update process. The database nature of the module also allows results of the reviews to be more easily tied to the overall planning processes at the college, including budget development.

Our goal is to have all Program Reviews entered into the new module by the end of the 2010-11 academic year. If your area is up for review this year, you will be using the module. If you completed your review this past year, now would be a great time to enter it in the module. There will be a training workshop this week on Thursday, August 27, from 10:00 am to Noon in Room HH-209 on the Fremont Campus. Deb Parziale will also be available throughout this coming year for consultation with individual departments.

### Enrollment Reduction

Over the summer, I sent three messages in an attempt to keep you up to date on our efforts to reduce section offerings in anticipation of projected reductions in funding levels from the state. These memos are posted on the Academic Affairs site at:

<http://www.ohlone.edu/org/academicaffairs/enrollmentreduction.html>

Our summer reductions came in on target. We are following fall enrollment to see if our reductions yield the FTES target we set. The reductions for spring 2010 can be adjusted depending on what happens this fall. It does appear, however, that we will have an even smaller summer offering in 2010.

We are trying to spread reductions over semesters to lessen the impact on students. Other districts may have different situations and may not have reduced enrollment for summer and fall. Some are in enrollment restoration this year. Some have been waiting for word from the state and now will be cutting way back in the spring. But, state funding for enrollment across the state is being reduced by three to five percent. Local reductions may be even higher, if colleges had growth built into their previous year. Ohlone had 2.5% growth built into our rolled-over schedule from fall 2008. Thus, we are looking at enrollment reductions of over 6%, and possibly up to 10% depending on final state funding levels.

Our sections have unprecedented fill rates, even with the \$6.00 per unit tuition increase implemented for this fall (students who registered before the increase must be billed retroactively). Right now our classes are nearly 80% full, with many of the bread-and-butter transfer GE classes at 100% with waitlists. For fall 2008 we had a fill rate of 74% after all was said and done. You will probably have less no-show students because all students have had to either pay or agree to a payment plan within seven days of registration or be automatically dropped. We predict this ongoing de-registration will result in more stable enrollment and less no-shows.

Please pay close attention to instructions sent from Ron Travenick and Chris Williamson this Monday regarding new procedures for handling waitlists next week and for adding students.

### Finally

Ohlone is an outstanding college. Our faculty and staff care deeply about providing quality learning experiences, student services, and administrative support for students. I know we will pull together and support each other to continue our excellent work even with decreased support from the state. Now is the

time for innovation and creativity in addressing our current challenges and for passion and vision for the future. Let's work hard together to keep Ohlone great!

Jim