

Year End Report to TVCC Faculty: 2014 – 2015

The Executive Council including Representatives from each of the campuses, have been busy these past two semesters. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of some of the key areas the Council has been involved with related to faculty advocacy, planning and communication this past year.

First, as President, I would like to take a moment to thank each of the Executive Council members and associated campus representatives. In several situations this past year, their collective wisdom and experience have been instrumental toward facilitating success on several projects. On a personal level, that wisdom and counsel have been invaluable to me as President. Thank you.

Second, as noted, this group has been busy this past year. Areas of focus included faculty overloads, faculty pay scale comparison and evaluation, timing of student evaluations of faculty, e-cigarette use on campus, effective communication from the Council to faculty at large, membership dues management and Executive Council succession planning.

Without question, the Council spent a good deal of time and attention researching and addressing a concern by a faculty member last fall pertaining to overloads, specifically, reducing the number after the fact. While the initial concern pertained to “face to face” course assignments, the Council discovered quickly that faculty had ongoing, albeit episodic, concerns over both face-to-face and on-line course overloads.

The results from this “investigation” with the College’s Administration were mixed. Awareness around this issue was raised with senior curriculum management, in particular the concerns from the faculty’s perspective and at the same time, the Council gained an appreciation of the College’s management pressures associated with the operations of course balancing and maintenance of quality. Bottom line, while the College has and continues to operate with a “maximum overload” of two per semester for full time faculty, it often finds itself needing to “relax” that guideline secondary to both student admission needs and semester class demands. In addition to this operating guideline, the College attempts to balance

class and teaching loads among the various campuses, especially with regard to on-line course management. This topic, which was not addressed initially is an open area for the Council to explore with the College this next year.

As an offshoot of researching and investigating the overload question, the Council completed a comparative pay scale analysis. The purpose for this analysis was multi-factorial, but was directly associated with the issue of overloads. A copy of that report, comparing local Community Colleges and area school systems (ISDs) can be found on the Faculty Association website. The findings strongly suggested a general negative gap in pay scale amounts between TVCC and the two comparative groups at the "at-hire" level and associated five year milestones. This gap also extended to overload compensation amounts. This report was published and distributed to Senior Administration of the College and ultimately, the faculty, albeit on a limited basis.

Student faculty evaluations have and continue to be a concern at times, especially as it relates to their timing to drop dates. Faculty concerns this past year were taken to the College Evaluation Committee for consideration in relation to policy changes. However, no additional changes have been made to the existing evaluation process to that reported in the January 2015 Faculty Association meeting.

Another area addressed this past year pertained to e-cigarettes on campus and in the classroom. The Council worked with the College to survey and report findings. Based on those results, the faculty strongly support limiting e-cigarette use in the classroom area, but support was mixed for limiting e-cigarette use on the campus in general. The Council anticipates the findings will be utilized for future policy development at the College.

Looking forward to the 2015-2016 school year, the Council will be monitoring overload concerns, especially for on-line classes. Other anticipated areas of focus will include development and refinement of mechanisms to improve communication between the Council and faculty at large, sampling faculty related to faculty association membership value, membership dues disposition and Executive Council succession planning.

To facilitate communication, the Council has planned for and constructed a dedicated website. This will be an evolving project. From this platform the Council will be positioned to facilitate membership value and communication. One example is the short survey regarding membership dues disposition. We've posted a short survey to get your opinions.

Finally, we hope to utilize the online presence to facilitate capturing future interests and concerns.

On behalf of the Executive Council, we are looking forward to this next year's work and activities. We thank you for your continued membership and interests as a member of the College's faculty.