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LOCAL 6157

What is the Outcome of SLOs?

By David Yancey, FA, AFT 6157 President

For many the idea of mandated **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** is a direct threat to the basic premise of academic freedom and choice. To others the use of SLOs seems a reasonable expectation and even a necessary ingredient of a successful classroom curriculum. But what is the truth? This is a question that is likely to become a much more debated topic in our community colleges than it was when SLOs first arrived on the scene as part of the accreditation standards first being suggested then ultimately

required by the Accrediting Commission for the California Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

Whether or not the ACCJC can or will mandate these SLOs is not the point of this article. That question seems to have been answered by the recent re-authorization of **the Higher Education Act** [See Higher Education Act, S. 1642 (110th Congress, 1st Session, at p. 380)] that clearly exempts community colleges from any mandated use of SLOs in areas of

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**Contract Reopener Ratified
by 97% of our Membership -
More information in
the December newsletter**

The World Will Never Be the Same

By David Yancey, FA, AFT 6157 President

There are moments in history where even the untrained eye can see significant shifts in the story of the United States. **Tuesday November 4, 2008** was one of those moments. I have been teaching history for over 20 years and there are many of those rare moments in history when significant

events occurred that changed the course of our country forever. But they are all mostly in the distant past, i.e. the 18th and 19th centuries. But on November 4, 2008 all of us experienced one of those events that teachers like us will be teaching about for centuries to come. We have often been accused

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faculty evaluation or academic freedom. The bigger and maybe the more important question for us and for our students is not whether we use SLOs or something like them but **how** we implement whatever we chose to use.

As many know the idea of SLOs found its way into education in the K-12 grades as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. It was aimed at imposing accountability on K-12 education and particularly on how to measure the performance of schools and then by extension teachers. It was a continuation of the conservative influence in our government to make our schools more like businesses that produce products by which we can then measure productivity according to some sort of standardized test.

The ACCJC took that mandate for K-12 and, without collaborative discussion or debate, decided it was also appropriate for the community colleges. Many in our profession have spoken out against this attempt and many have embraced the idea of mandatory standards. We are a divided community on this issue. I have colleagues that I respect and admire who accepted the mandate as an answer to the question of “what to do about poor instructors”. And taken to the extreme uses of SLOs I suppose that one possible affect will be to identify a poor instructor amongst us. But I doubt it.

I believe the way we identify poor teaching is through a responsible and professional approach to peer review.



We all need to participate and support our fellow faculty. But we also need to be willing to speak up when we, as part of a peer or tenure review process, see what we believe is inadequate teaching. We have a good contract with good language about evaluation and peer review. It stresses the need for constructive criticism when we see it and improvement plans to allow our instructors to improve areas in which they are deemed in need of improvement. And lastly it requires us all to be willing to accept such constructive criticism and embrace it in the spirit in which it is offered. We are all imperfect beings and we can all improve ourselves in the classroom.

So as this debate begins and as the ideas of one side disagree with those of the other side let us remember that we can, in the words of our new president, disagree without being disagreeable.

Let the conversations begin.

Reception for Rigoberta Menchú Tum

by Richard Regua, EVC Faculty

On October 21, 2008, **Nobel Peace Prize recipient Rigoberta Menchú Tum** spoke at a reception in her honor at the Evergreen home of Rigo Chacon. The reception, attended by District staff, Board members, and community representatives, served as a fundraiser for the SJEECD Foundation. Chancellor Rosa Perez indicated that the funds would be used for scholarships for students, particularly AB540 students, who have severely restricted access to financial assistance and scholarships. Since one objective of our union is “to promote the welfare of students and the advancement of the community college education in the public interest”, we were honored to represent the union at the reception. **Debbie DeLaRosa, Frank Espinoza, Barbara Hanfling** and I were pleased to be the representatives from the FA, AFT 6157.

The only indigenous person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, Rigoberta Menchú Tum greeted us in Spanish, English, and Quiche - one of the Mayan languages. Wearing a cinta (traditional Mayan headdress), Rigoberta is proud of her Mayan ancestry. She spoke of the personal and collective importance of maintaining a balance between the spiritual and the material. **“I have come to the understanding that humanity is deteriorating more and more,” Menchu said, “but what is most needed is hope.”** She talked of her efforts and the efforts of others on behalf of the disenfranchised throughout the world. According to Menchu, the future is now; the future is today. And now is the time for personal reflection, social commitment, and change.



Frank Espinoza, Barbara Hanfling, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Debbie De La Rosa & Richard Regua

After a book signing, Rigoberta Menchú Tum left the reception for her presentation at Evergreen Valley College before an appreciative audience in excess of 800 EVC students, staff, community members, and high school students.

The World Will Never Be the Same

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of thinking too highly of ourselves and some of that is definitely true but I think we can surely be very proud of what this country did by electing Barack Obama as the next President of the United States.

Consider that just 54 years ago segregation was the law of the land in the U.S. and people were separated based on the color of their skin. Then Brown v. Board (1954) broke down that barrier and after years of struggle and sacrifice we have now elected the first African-American to be the next president. Those who were unsure if

we would or could have elected President Elect Obama have participated in a moment in history that will forever change the landscape for future generations of Americans. So, right now, in this moment we can all share in what has always been the greatness of this country. It shows the rest of the world that the American system of democracy, as unruly and burdensome as it can sometimes be, self-corrects and will once again right the ship of state. As we all revel in the change the world also applauds us.

When was the last time we were universally cheered?

So hold your head high and enjoy this moment for they are rare and ones like this are few and far between. Congratulations America, you did it!



President-Elect Barack Obama

Retiree Corner

Cantor Museum Tour with Walter Soellner

By: George Forrester, AFT 6157 Retiree Chapter Vice President

On Thursday, October 16th, a group of retirees (Flo Cornutt, Herb & Helen Ford, George & Gilda Forrester, Alice Gosak, Linda Heiliger, Bill Jacobs, and Walt Soellner) met at 11am at the Rodin Sculpture Garden at the Stanford Art Museum in Palo Alto. What followed was an enlightening tour and lecture led by our private docent, Walter Soellner. As we meandered through the Garden, Walter discussed the ideas behind many of the figures in Rodin's famous "Gates Of Hell", as well as the construction and meanings behind many of the other life-size sculptures. Casual discussions of the comparison of the terms 'nude and naked' and 'erotic and sexual', as

related to art works, brought an additional dimension to our understanding of Rodin's work.

We then entered the museum and went through the exhibit of paintings and memorabilia of the Leland Stanford family, through whose generosity this museum came into being. Next came the Oceanic art collection, the Asian art collection, and medieval art pieces which all received special attention from Walter as he pointed out the special attributes of each period. His energy, after two hours, was still incredibly high and his knowledge barely tapped, but the group felt a break was needed.



Walter Soellner leads a tour at the Cantor Museum

While lunching, the group decided to return, with Walter once again at the helm, at a later date to view the 20th Century Art collection. It was unanimous that it was a most enjoyable and enlightening day.

Willie Brown and You

By Alice Gosak, AFT 6157 Retiree Chapter Secretary

When Willie Brown was asked what he was doing for the poor folks, his response was "Staying out of their way at the K-Mart." If asked what he had done for community college instructors, the legendary Willie could safely reply "Giving them a shot at early retirement."

The "Willie Brown" clause, actually Article 18.2 (Early Retirement Reduced Workload) of our contract, provides full-time faculty with the opportunity to teach a minimum of 50% of their load while receiving full-time benefits and credit toward retirement. Oh, yes, the other part of "reduced" has to do with salary. Although your benefits and time credit are full-time, your pay is based on the percentage of a load you actually teach.

Why would you want to sign on for this option? The reasons are many. Some have opted for a one-semester-on/one-semester-off plan to allow them to travel, write, undertake a home remodeling project or plan a daughter's wedding. Others prefer a year-round reduced teaching load to devote themselves fully to their final classes, to work at a less hectic pace, or to keep working while their spouse/partner is also working. A few felt that they might spend half a day doing crossword puzzles or Sudoku without a structured schedule to ease them into retirement.

Requirements for Applying

Here is how it works. To be eligible, you must be 55 years old before the beginning of the leave semester and you must have spent 10 unbroken years

of service in the District. (Sabbaticals and other approved leaves, paid and unpaid, do not constitute a break in service.) You need to file the form found in Appendix L of our contract with Human Resources by April 1st for the coming fall. If you are in the STRS system, you can be on a reduced load for 10 years after which you must retire. If you are on PERS, you can only be on the plan for 5 years.

However, you may retire before the end of the period upon the completion of your academic assignments. So far, no one who has chosen this option has been on it for 10 years and that period of time has just been renegotiated in connection with the Bridge Plan for medical benefits for full time faculty hired after 1982 in the future.

Adjunct News and Views

By Jory Segal, FA, AFT 6157 Adjunct Negotiator

Retirement Benefits for Adjunct Instructors

Every month there is a little section on your pay stub from the San Jose/ Evergreen Valley Community College District entitled **STRS Instr Norm Current Month (or noninstr** for non instructional faculty). The amount that appears indicates the amount that is subtracted from your paycheck and sent to the State Teacher's Retirement System.



I would guess that many adjunct instructors pay very little attention to that amount, and don't know how it may affect their retirement in the future. I know that 4 years ago I missed an important window of opportunity, for the Defined Benefit Program, to purchase additional service credits. The cost is almost twice as

much today. I didn't spend the time I should have to understand the plan.

There are 2 ways to understand how the Teacher's Retirement System works. You can read **Chapter 3 in the Cal STRS Member Handbook** that is sent to every member. Or you can call the Cal STRS on the phone at (800)228-5453 option #0. I found the advice given on the phone to be incredibly helpful. The people I spoke with on the phone were very knowledgeable and were willing to explain everything in detail.

There are 2 options for adjunct instructors in the district. The first option is the same program as the full-time instructors have. **It is the defined benefit program.** You pay into the system (about 8 percent is paid by you and 8 percent is paid by the District) and your retirement benefit is based on the number **full time** equivalent years you worked in the district multiplied by the average of the last 3 years **FULL TIME** Equivalent Salary multiplied by

1.6, if you retire at 55; 2.0, if you retire at 60; and 2.4, if you retire at 63. The age at retirement can make a significant difference on your salary. The major negative is that you have to work 5 full time equivalent (FTE) years before you are vested. Remember by FTE is equal to a 100% load (which means you are working either at other colleges or adding each year of work until you reach 100%.

The second option is the **Cash Balance Benefit Program.** It has immediate vesting and the district matches your 4% contribution. This program is more like a 401K in the private sector in that the money is invested and your rate of return determines your payout when you retire.

I encourage you to call STRS on the phone to have an informal discussion with the telephone help line. If you have more time, you can set up an hourly consultation with a counselor.

Willie Brown and You

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There are a few glitches and some guarantees to consider. One member reports that her dean did not understand that 50% was a minimum, not a maximum, and required a change in her requested schedule. The contract states that, once you request the reduced workload, the District must inform you in writing of the action on the leave at least 30 days before it becomes effective. Then you and your employer



must mutually agree on your specific assignment.

With today's less-than-stellar economy, you might find that you are on a reduced workload,

but need that full-time salary. During the first year that you are on the plan, you have the option of returning to full-time employment by submitting a written request to HR. Full-time employment would go into effect in the next academic year.

Have questions or need assurances? Contact Barbara Hanfling or me, yogosak@aol.com

AFT 6157 Executive Board Retreat, Fall 2008

By Debbie DeLaRosa, EVC Rep/Grievance Officer and Barbara Hanfling, Executive Director, FA, AFT 6157

Your Executive Board members, **David Yancey, Vivian George Morgan, Debbie De La Rosa, Jory Segal, Frank Espinoza, Clem Lundie, Bill Jacobs, Jesse Votaw, Laura Sanchez and Minerva Duke** met all day on Friday, October 3, 2008, at the home of Executive Director Barbara Hanfling for their annual Fall Retreat. The retreat gives the Executive Board an opportunity to review the previous year and plan for the future. Sometimes we all feel like we are putting out fires all day long and the opportunity to spend a full day strategizing is very invigorating.

A range of topics including sick leave accrual, negotiation's update, new faculty positions, our 5 year plan and the new Faculty Union Mentorship Program were discussed.

Sick Leave Accrual: On the district "My Web" site under employees, it was noted that pay stubs have a generic leave summary accrual which covers full time faculty regular sick leave and instructional full time overload sick leave and adjunct faculty. We have discovered the full time non instructional faculty are not receiving

their sick leave for overload and have let the District know and are working to resolve that issue.

Proposed Bridge Plan-Retiree Medical Benefits for Post 1982 Full Time Hires: Members of the negotiation team shared the summary of the proposed bridge plan for faculty hired after 1982. As noted in the tentative agreement, key components of the bridge plan include fully paid medical benefits for all faculty hired after 1982 after 15 years of full time service (including Early Retirement Plan), age 60, and no dependent/spouse coverage (additional coverage may be purchased).

New Full Time Faculty Hirings: In addition, the Chancellor, in an earlier agreement with the Faculty Association, AFT 6157 approved four new full time faculty positions, two for each campus, to be added each year to the already existing open positions. The Chancellor, Vice Chancellor and Presidents are committed to including these positions in their hiring recommendations for these years. Although there remains some concern that these positions will not be added

this year due to budget

restraints, we are not reacting until the state Legislature comes down with its proposal sometime before December 1, 2008. The union will continue to advocate for these additional positions on both campuses this year and in the future.

Faculty Union Mentorship Program

Laura Sanchez, Frank Espinoza, and Vivian George Morgan unveiled the newly developed Faculty Union Mentorship Program. These executive board members hope to create a community for new faculty hires and help educate these new faculty members about the union and the important role it plays in the district. This fall the mentors will be introduced and the first training session will take place on Nov 14th.

The primary goal of this program is to provide support and guidance for new full time faculty in their first year (hopefully adjunct in the future); to guide them through the complexities of the campus; and introduce the new members to the union, emphasizing its great importance in continuing to provide a positive and supportive work environment here at SJECCD.

Overall, a lot was accomplished, new goals set and hopefully the Union is on the way toward another proud and productive year.



Record Crowd at the Eighth Annual Picnic

By Mark Newton, Past President, FA, AFT 6157

Thanks to everyone who came to the FA's Eighth Annual Picnic; your participation made it a huge success. I have said it before, the ingredients to an excellent picnic is no secret from the



FA, AFT 6157. Beautiful weather, lovely Vasona Park, great food, and a bunch of nice people (I did not want it to read "old friends"). This year we set a new attendance record with about 125 adults and a bunch of kids bouncing around the jump house.



Once again, **Bill Jacobs** was an exquisite chef – I'd say he is ready to be challenged by Bobby Flay on the Food Channel. The marinated tri-tip and steak were succulent. You have to get there early to taste the stuffed mushrooms. (It is possible I ate my



weight in them.) Also off the fire came barbequed chicken, vegetables, pineapple (so sweet when barbequed), sausages and hot dogs for the kids (and bigger kids). Coolers were filled with everything from water and fruit juices to soft drinks to beer and wine. **John**



Song (SJCC Chemistry) stole the adult beverage category with his mini keg of home made red ale – delicious. (No sangria Espinoza???) Oh, by the way, I haven't even mentioned all the great



salads, side dishes, and deserts that the members brought – FANTASTIC! The picnic is a lot of work to do right. Kudos to **President David Yancey** (applause please) and all the Executive



Board who helped, but particularly the Executive Director Barbara Hanfling, Office Manager, Patti Berg, and members extraordinaire Debbie DeLaRosa, Minerva Duke (and Don), and Marc Sola. Thanks again to Vice President Frank Espinoza for keeping the speeches brief but allowing our



welcome guests, **Board Trustees Ron Lind and Richard Hobbs** to say a few words. So, picnic number nine is only 11 months away. Which means it is only 10 months until Frank and I will start bragging about which campus showed up in greater numbers – **Tip:** don't believe either of us – next time come for yourself and bring some friends.

A Love Affair for Over 45 years

By Minerva Duke, EVC Executive Board Representative

I was 10 years old when my love affair started. I was youngest with two older brothers who gave me my first scars while playing soccer, wrestling, and trying to race with them. They also made me a left handed softball batter even though, I am a right handed player. It helped that my dad loved sports, and I received all of his D.N.A.

The year I started my affair, (fifth grade), my dad asked what we wanted for Christmas, and I had asked for a camera, then I changed my mind, and asked for bicycle—or maybe a new Barbie doll. I just was not sure. Everything changed one day in September when I went to school and we were introduced to our first physical education teacher. He was not our classroom teacher, but just a teacher who was going to teach us different fitness activities, and sports. After two weeks, he announced the starting of a girl’s basketball team after school. I asked my mom if I could join the team,

and she was not very happy, but when I asked my dad, he said go for it.

I remember the first time, the physical education teacher had set up cones on the inside of the basketball court, and we had to dribble around the cones. I started dribbling the ball and it was magic; I was hooked for life. I ran home and told my dad what I wanted for Christmas. I wanted him to build me a basketball court in the backyard. He did.

On Christmas day, I had a new basketball, and my own court in the backyard. That day, I rounded-up my best friends, and we played and continued playing almost every day. I used to walk to school dribbling the ball on the streets of Tecate, Baja California, Mexico.

My love affair developed into knowing what I

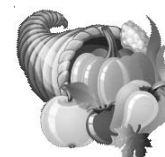


wanted to be since I was ten years old: **A Physical Education Teacher.** My love affair continues. I am turning 55 years old with two knee surgeries. Currently, I am teaching two basketball classes at EVC. I have 40 men and three women in one class, and 34 men and 8 women in the other.


When students are absent, I am the substitute player for that team. I love when my students are walking towards their court and yell at me, “Ms. Duke, we have your shirt, come play with us”. Yes, time has made some changes. I am not as quick or as brave as I was 30 years ago. However, once in awhile, I make a move or a shot that my students recognize as being pretty good, and they give me a big cheer. I love teaching and playing basketball, and now that I know my days are numbered as a physical education instructor, I am enjoying my love affair more than ever. My love affair with teaching sports will continue until my body decides to retire me.

FACULTY ASSOCIATION, AFT 6157 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS — FALL 2008

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Friday, Nov 14, 2008	9:30-12:30pm	SC104-Downstairs Conf Room
Friday, Dec. 5, 2008	9:30-12:30pm	SC204-Community Room



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