

# Minutes Los Rios District Equity & Student Success Committee

5.17.2021 2:30 - 4:30 PM

Via zoom: <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/96203809656>

**Attendees:** Bernadette Anayah, Tera Reynolds, Victoire Chochezi, BJ Snowden, Ea Edwards, Karen Tercho, Shreya Gowda, Courtnee Mack, Jeff Stephenson, Inna Tikhonov, Leila Stone, Andrea Fuertes, Yolanda Garcia,

**Guests:** Lori Petite (SCC Academic Senate President), Olga Prizhbilov, Valerie Chueh

## Minutes

- I. Call to Order - Meeting called to order at 2:31pm
- II. Approval of Agenda - Agenda approved
- III. Approval of Minutes [Minutes DESSC 4.19.2021](#) - Minutes approved
- IV. Administrator's report - BJ Snowden
  - a. Congratulations on end of semester, and thanks for everyone's hard work this semester!
  - b. Equity work: Consultants Lasana Hotep & Cynthia Olivo. Los Rios hasn't committed to a 2nd year contract. BJ asks for feedback on areas that are front of mind re: equity. What do we need help with? Are there gaps? Please check with constituencies - 2021-22 academic year, if there is a need, let's bring some people in. College Futures grant is ongoing - some elements naturally go into the second year. As far as new BJ would like feedback by this July.
  - c. New Assoc VC of Instruction - Terrance Powell - possibility of inviting TP as a guest to future DESSC meeting.
- V. Chair's report
  - a. Our committee - DESSC - has been asked by District Academic Senate to be a forum for discussion re: centralization of A&R and Financial Aid.
- VI. Discussion items
  - a. College discussions about centralization of A&R and Financial Aid
    - i. ARC: Olga & Jeff - listening session happened w/ Melanie Dixon. Not knowing what questions to ask because there is not a lot of information yet. Will there be physical moves for classified professionals? Answer: no one is losing their jobs - though jobs might change; this is not a people issue, it is a systems issue. What barriers are created for students? Many questions about specific processes that we know are barriers. The big concern from classified professionals - will processes become easier for students or will more barriers appear? ARC Academic Senate discussion: people are concerned about the consultants being hired to help make decisions - how will this impact local talent and decision-making and how will changes be implemented? Concerns about losing connections with students. Jeff is fielding questions from ARC classified & faculty. Outstanding questions about timing of changes.

- ii. CRC - Yolanda - VPSS has gone to Classified & Academic Senate meetings; there have been listening sessions. Yolanda set up a Google Form for employees to ask questions. Questions include - what will be the timeline, how will the day-to-day work change. Yolanda will share with Bernadette the questions and concerns that have come up. Ea - The timing for counseling dept. was going to talk about this coincided with George Floyd/Chauvin verdict. Counseling has similar questions echoed throughout every office.
- iii. FLC - Inna - there are more questions than answers; concern about who will be responding for students and how the high touch aspect of A&R / FA / Counseling intersecting in person to help people. Andrea - centralization should not mean standardization for example, specialized services and knowledge for undocumented students. Andrea has mentioned this to her dean. Victoire - in conversation with Black Faculty Association; some concerns from faculty about the process of centralization and including faculty input. Concerns about how centralization will affect disproportionately impacted students and African American students. It is necessary that these efforts are data driven (centralization efforts that have already taken place). For ex. enrollment rules that privilege some students over others. In the past, concerns raised were ignored. Bernadette also chairs Matric/Student Success/Pathways design team. The feeling is that if those services are centralized, it's difficult to get answers / slow response time. FLC is working on a Google doc that will capture feedback. One question: has there been student input? Concerns about proximity (students to services), outreach, and the unique programs offered; loss of autonomy
- iv. SCC - Leila - counseling relies heavily on relationships with FA and A&R, for example walking students down the hall to get whatever needs met. Same question of whether students were involved in this process. Karen - we did hear from one of our A&R supervisors that some of the streamlining will help students; still there is concern about having students connecting with the best classified professionals. We were told (by admin) that face to face services would not go away. Lack of consultation is an issue - many faculty are concerned about centralization efforts. Valerie - does think the district has the best interests of students in mind. At times, admin asks to hear our thoughts, but seemingly no action comes out of it. One example is the call center, which seems to be working well for students (anecdotally). Unexpected change isn't easy. Looking at the system is the way to address racism. Hopefully this change will benefit students and increase equity.
- v. BJ: we are overdue for dialog about systemic change - we need to take this info and share it. Looks forward to this as a continued dialog and DESSC can make recommendations on how students can navigate our system and be successful.

- VII. Public Comments (Lori Petite): Lori is Academic Senate President. District has centralized many services in the last few years. Research / IT. Most of these changes have not been part of the conversations with Academic Senate. Recently the SCC Senate passed a resolution "Resolution against Centralization without Consultation." At the most recent Board of Trustees meeting - 15 public comments, mostly about issues of shared governance and consultation. Deans and administrators also made public comments (anonymously) about lack of consultation and top-down decisions. The lack of data provided by the district was pointed out as a concern - Chancellor King was directed by BOT to gather data and evidence. None of the changes yet have included input ahead of time (from faculty or classified professionals). Processes for institutional planning is a 10+1 issue. Chancellor's Cabinet is a steering committee for district-wide strategic planning - faculty have brought this issue there, but so far no results. SCC has a governance guide - the local process has not been honored yet. The charge of DESSC, according to board regulation 34-12, DESSC recommends on issues of district-wide equity related to student support services, onboarding, and technologies. Lori says that DESSC should have been consulted on these changes; DESSC has a right to be part of this discussion. Lori requests that this body makes a statement, looking at all of these areas that have been centralized (past, present and future) and express interest and concern about purview. Including foundation offices, PIOs, college websites/webmasters. Statement to DAS, to BOT, and to Chancellor could express concern that DESSC has not been brought into the conversations about centralization.
- a. Question from BJ: has the state Academic Senate (ASCCC) been brought into this conversation? Collegiality in Action session happened earlier this year. Lori will reach out to ASCCC and Julie Oliver; a technical visit could possibly be created.
  - b. Question from Valerie - In terms of 10+1, what are the fears and consequences of centralization of FA and A&R. 10+1 - faculty has a legally recognized relationship with BOT - designee is the chancellor. To the extent that our relationship was circumvented, this is problematic. Areas that have board-recognized purview have been side-stepped. 14 areas have been centralized or will be, in the last year and a half. No question that we have to improve as individuals and institutions. Lori doesn't believe they have done the research to support the changes - no data has been provided, just promised. No evidence or data has been provided to the consultants. How can a problem be solved if they don't know what needs to be fixed? Decision-making model on the part of the district is troubling - does not appear to be informed or supported by evidence.
    - i. DAS has not taken action or resolution - DAS President Oliver did send a message to Chancellor King asking that centralization efforts be stopped until evidence is provided. Failure to recognize DESSC as a committee
- VIII. Committee discussion (continued) about centralization of A&R and Financial Aid, following public comment by Lori Petite.

- a. Is centralization happening / has it happened at other colleges across the state? Yes, and it's a mixed bag.
- b. BJ is tasked with doing a climate survey in the fall 2021 with DI populations
- c. Karen - would make sense to ask district that DESSC be equity "consultants" and part of the conversation. But looking at all 14 areas sounds onerous and perhaps in some ways counterproductive (website changes do not directly impact student equity).
- d. Leila - communication to district re: equity issues? Yes, if there are pain point at one of the colleges we can bring this to the district. If students are being impacted, we can take this directly to the executive team (district), with BJ's help as a conduit for conversations.
- e. Information moves very quickly - how do we stay on top of it and stay plugged in? Because we only meet once a month, work is slow. This could be addressed via DESSC's workgroup model.
- f. DESSC can make recommendations with DAS, but those have to fall under 10+1. We can deal with issues that don't fall under 10+1.
- g. Financial aid - BJ expects that the FA experts will not be taken off their campuses and moved to district.
- h. Intricacies of FA are many - the list of issues that need to be addressed is long. Need right now: there is no clear direction on different amounts of money (CARES Act, HEERF). The idea is that the streamlining of FA will address these issues and clear up the confusion.
- i. Classified professionals need to be well-informed about impending changes.
- j. What are the things that need to be fixed? Lower income, undocumented students need extra care. Customer service experiences are uneven at the colleges.
- k. DESSC structure - how can this be adjusted to be more responsive? For example monthly meetings are not enough time. DESSC workgroups can address this.
- l. DESSC needs more info about decisions re: alignment. How will this committee be referenced by consultants? BJ is tasked with this.
- m. Also noted: front desk A&R student experiences of not being equitable to students with accents/language barriers. Perhaps the streamlining could include cultural competency trainings. And the group that is least likely to start and NOT complete the application is Black/African American women. How are we addressing this equity gap in access? FA & A&R could benefit from more trained full time staff to answer tough questions with an equity minded approach. Maybe we need an equity assessment / audit for different areas so we can see the results and gain insights on how we can improve equity systemwide
- n. Karen - perhaps a workgroup could be formed in fall to help address impending changes to FA and A&R - could consult on equity-minded changes, identify current issues impacting students.
- o. Tera can help lead a workgroup about this.

IX. Discussion items tabled until fall 2021:

- a. Tutoring and Black/AA students
  - b. Concerns and suggestions raised at our April meeting about the the George Floyd murder trial verdict.
  - c. Equity work at the colleges.
  - d. Obstacles to equity and student success.
  - e. Goals and topics for next semester.
- X. Fall 2021 meeting dates:  
2:30 – 4:30 pm August 23, September 20, October 18, November 15
- XI. Future Agenda Items
- a. Tutoring and Black/AA students
  - b. Dual Enrollment/Advanced Education outreach efforts to Black/AA students