

## **Faculty Position Paper on the Final Recommendations of the Student Success Task Force**

Cabrillo College Faculty Senate and Cabrillo College Federation of Teachers  
*March 30, 2012*

While the Cabrillo College faculty commends the Board of Governors and the members of the Task Force for their commitment to student success, we have serious concerns about the recommendations, and we fear that many of the provisions would inhibit, rather than enhance, student success.

We support:

1. Increased focus on counseling services;
2. Greater clarity in matriculation (the processes by which a student can move through the system);
3. Outreach to K-12 and universities.

We oppose many of the recommendations for the following reasons:

1. The recommendations propose permanently changing the mission of our colleges in response to a budget crisis that should not be permanent.
2. Increased focus on metrics and the potential for outcome-based funding will almost certainly lead to an erosion of academic rigor by indirectly promoting grade inflation and the lowering of standards.
3. The definition of student success is excessively narrow and overlooks many students whose success may not be captured by numerical data.
4. Undue focus on student success as defined in the SSTF along with the potential for outcomes-based funding may reduce access for at-risk students and increase the achievement gap among student populations.
5. The use of paraprofessionals and electronic advisement tools may degrade student access to professional counseling faculty.
6. Penalties assessed for students making changes in their educational plans are counterproductive to the educational process and the goals of a liberal arts education. The goal of students becoming productive members of society cannot be at the expense of the exploration to find purpose.

While we appreciate the need for fiscal responsibility, we also believe that the specific plan should be committed to achieving educational excellence. Such sweeping reforms must be the result of highly inclusive and collaborative efforts of students, faculty, staff, administrators, local Governing Boards, and all immediate stakeholders.

It makes no sense to enact policies designed to increase student success that will require fiscal support while community college funding is being slashed by the state. We are convinced that most citizens of California want their colleges to remain funded and viable. The most effective way to improve public education in California is to restore public investment in education. We urge the legislature, local governing boards, and all concerned for California's community colleges to keep the focus of any educational reform on the need for increased investment in public education.