



Career Education (CE) Committee

Tuesday March 18, 2025

HSS 261 and Zoom

1:00PM – 2:15pm

In person: Rebecca Agonafir, Ruth Casillas, Jazmin Guzman, Gary Huff, Maria Leon-Vazquez, Estela Narrie, Dana Nasser, Debbie Perret, Salvador Santana, Steven Sedky, Redelia Shaw, Josh Withers.

Zoom: A.J. Adelman, Leigh Allen, Tracy Beidleman, Sheila Cordova, Drew Davis, Amanda Garcia, Gillian Grebler, David Hall, Jenny Landa, Kelly Ledwith, Lisa Lewenberg, Laurel Manson, Sharyn Obsatz, Perviz Sawoski

Call to Order: 1: 05pm

Public Comments and Announcements:

Out-of-state conference requests are under closer review, so department chairs may be asked for additional justification to determine if attendance is mission critical. Faculty and staff should be prepared for potential follow-ups.

A Theater Arts production created at SMC gained significant recognition, winning an award among 200 schools across six states. The following year, it was performed at a college in Utah. The event had notable attendees, including relatives of Cesar Chavez and Dolers Huerta, thanks to connections from Ed Begley. The experience was meaningful for the students, who remain in touch with Ed Begley and continue to reflect on the event.

Approval of Minutes: October 29, 2024 & March 4, 2025

Dana Nasser motioned to approve, Maria Leon-Vazquez second. All were in favor, no abstentions, no oppositions.

Reports:

Chair: Debbie Perret

The Cesar Chavez Walk is scheduled for March 7th from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM on the main campus. Last year, it took place during a Senate Executive meeting, replacing the meeting with a meaningful walk-through campus. About 30 participants engaged in dialogue on the lawn, making it a powerful and commemorative experience. Attendees are encouraged to join this



year. Additionally, during today's Senate Executive meeting, the OER committee announced a stipend for converting textbooks into open educational resources (OER). Roxanne Cruz shared details, and an email with further information will be sent out soon.

There is also an upcoming professional development event on Thursday March 20th. Attendees are encouraged to RSVP for Dr. Love's talk, which will be held in the afternoon via Zoom or in person at the Student Center, second floor from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM.

Vice Chair: Steven Sedky

Steven's discussion focuses on national events affecting SMC and highlights the importance of Thursday's Flex event in bringing the community together. The event will showcase positive developments and future college plans.

Information and Discussion Items

- a. [Perkins & SWP Application](#) Presentation Update - Ruth Casillas

The presentations will be on Tuesday, April 1st and Friday, April 4th. A link to sign up for the presentations was sent today to those who submitted applications and to the respective department chair. If you haven't received it, please let Ruth know. If you cannot attend please coordinate with others in your program, to present on the programs behalf. Calendar invitations were sent out to reflect adjustments to the schedule. The updated times for the presentations are Tuesdays from 1:00pm to 2:40pm and Fridays from 1:00pm to 2:40pm.

- b. [CE Program Short Promo Video Project](#) - AJ Adelman

The team is updating marketing videos for various departments, including barbering, cosmetology, business alumni, architecture, IxD, and nursing. Their goal is to enhance the online presence of these programs through platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. With an expanded team of seven student workers, video production is improving, and they are aligning edits with marketing media skills.

A key focus is increasing visibility for SMC's Career Education (CE) programs, which often get overshadowed. The team is refining program pages, replacing static labor market data with interactive widgets and Career Coach links. They are also producing short, engaging videos for platforms like TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and Instagram, repurposing existing footage to suit different formats and audience preferences.



Students are leading the editing process to ensure the content resonates with their peers. Faculty involvement has been minimal, and the output has been impressive. The goal is to engage more departments throughout the semester while maintaining a strategic, student-driven approach to showcasing programs.

c. [Community College Baccalaureate Association](#) (CCBA) Conference
Share Out- Estela Narrie

The discussion covered insights from the Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCBA) conference, where several attendees, including Steven, Debbie, and Estela, shared their experiences. Estela mentioned that while SMC is still relatively new to the baccalaureate program, it is ahead in several areas. The conference revealed that many community colleges, particularly those in other states, have been offering bachelor's degrees in various fields, like Business and Computer Science, for years. These degrees are increasingly overlapping with university offerings, which is not the way it is structured in California.

A significant change starting in the fall will be the addition of 9 units of upper division coursework and 6 extra units to the local program, which will bring California in line with other states offering bachelor's degrees at the community college level. The goal is for California to have 200 such programs by 2030, according to the state's Vision 2030.

Regarding SMC's Baccalaureate application for Cloud Computing, Estela explained that the program is in the final stages of approval, following delays due to objections from the CSU system. The decision is expected soon, as the college has been in the process for several years.

The discussion also touched on the structure of the bachelor's degree programs, where some community colleges offer a 2+2 model, allowing students to enter as freshmen or sophomores. There was debate over how to best support students entering professional fields, such as nursing or respiratory care, with the goal of ensuring graduates have the critical thinking skills required in the field.

Finally, there was a discussion about the number of units required for a bachelor's degree, with the GE requirements now set between 18 and 21 units, and a minimum of 9 units in upper-division coursework. The new structure is expected to accommodate students' needs while allowing flexibility.

d. Marketing Team Student Focus Share Out- Rebecca Agonafir



Rebecca Agonafir, the Director of Marketing and Communications, shared insights from focus groups conducted to understand prospective students' perspectives and improve marketing strategies for SMC. These focus groups aimed to gather feedback from different learner segments, including traditional and non-traditional students, Black and Latinx learners, and those from lower-income backgrounds. The goal was to understand what factors influence students' decisions to apply or not apply to SMC.

The focus groups consisted of three types:

1. In-person discussions with concurrent enrollment students.
2. Online groups with current SMC students, some of whom were older than the traditional age group.
3. A four-day online platform-based group, which included both students and non-students from various age ranges.

Key findings:

- SMC has a strong reputation, with many participants seeing it as a top-tier community college due to its upscale location and excellent transfer rates.
- However, the focus groups revealed that while being #1 in transfers is a positive aspect, it's not enough to attract all prospective students.
- Students are looking for more than just transfer opportunities. They are interested in job skills, career exploration, lifelong learning, personal enrichment, and affordability.
- Flexibility, including online and in-person classes, was a major factor, especially for working students.
- Students also value support, both academic (from faculty and counseling) and personal.
- Messaging around the wide range of degrees and certificates offered, as well as the proximity of SMC (despite students not all living locally), was seen as important.
- Visual storytelling (videos, testimonials) resonates more than text-heavy content. The focus is on showcasing real student experiences, diverse campus culture, and the beautiful Santa Monica location.

Rebecca also mentioned that the marketing efforts are aligned with the college's broader goals, including promoting career education and flexibility in scheduling. She then played a short promotional video, "Proud to be SMC," to demonstrate how visual storytelling can support these findings.

Adjournment: 2:12 pm

Next scheduled meeting: March 18, 2025, Location: HSS 261 & Zoom www.smc.edu/senate