May 16, 2016

MEMO TO: ACCEPT Task Force Members

FROM: Sylvia Kelley, Interim President

TOPIC: Response to ACCEPT Task Force Recommendations

First, many thanks to all of you for the immense amount of time and talent you have dedicated to this thoughtful report. It demonstrates a clear intent to create a teaching and learning environment at PCC that is critical to student success. I applaud you for remaining true to our mission.

My responses to your recommendations here are generally brief, as I have discussed them with most of the task force members, and the EAC leadership group. However, I would welcome dialogue should you wish further clarification. I recognize that some time has passed since your original submission and that in general there have been a number of changes in some areas.

It is my understanding that the original report primarily addressed part-time faculty, indeed an important area of focus for PCC. The current recommendations now encompass full-time faculty as well, with a number of issues having been addressed during contract negotiations; of course, as we discussed, any recommendations or issues connected to contract negotiations and bargaining are not within the purview of this response.

**Recommendation One:** Establish a “Faculty Development and Institutional Climate” (FDIC) committee or other institutional entity to continue the work of Project ACCEPT, to monitor implementation of changes, and to continue identifying best practices to address the culture, climate and experience of instructors at PCC.

**Response:** I understand and appreciate the desire and need to identify best practices to address the culture, climate and experience of instructors at PCC. All our faculty are central to accomplishing our mission. I believe the institution has a responsibility to provide the necessary support as faculty seek to advance teaching and learning at the college.

To that end, rather than creating a separate college-wide committee (FDIC) to “monitor implementation of changes” etc., I would recommend that this work be accomplished either with a sub-committee or standing committee (or other EAC-related structure, for the group to determine and us to agree upon). It appears that this can be achieved in alignment with the mission of the EAC:

*The EAC crafts and revises policies and standards pertaining to academic, curricular, student development, and student governance issues and makes recommendations to the district president. The EAC provides an opportunity for discussion and exchange of views regarding educational issues at PCC—whether initiated by students, faculty, staff, or administration.*
It’s important that the purpose of the committee should be to “identify best practices, assess the needs at PCC and make recommendations for improvements” rather than to “monitor implementation” as stated in this recommendation. It will be important and necessary to decide how Human Resources will be involved. This is particularly true in terms of participating in discussions as the committee progresses in its work. I would suggest including more than one manager so that there is management representation contributing to implementation solutions and practices. (Please note that the recently-released campus climate survey findings should also provide additional guidance and information.) I am open to discussing these ideas as you continue in your planning.

**Recommendation Two:** *Provide all instructors at PCC, regardless of part-time or full-time status, the opportunity to participate in decision-making functions of the institutions.*

**Response:** Shared governance at many colleges and universities like ours often takes the form of representative governance; a review of the major governance groups at PCC might be in order, especially to ensure that part-time faculty are participants. I understand that the SACs may extend decision-making rights to all SAC members who attend, which might provide opportunities. Discussion between the EAC and the SAC Chairs could be important in order to explore how part-time voting/participation might expand the ability to participate in academic decision-making, and create a role in shaping policy. Again, clearly this area may require additional conversation.

**Recommendation Three:** *Provide all instructors at PCC, regardless of part-time or full-time status, the necessary information and support to perform the functions of their positions.*

See Recommendations Four and Five.

**Recommendation Four:** *Create a best-practices orientation system for all instructors, so that all new faculty receive the necessary training and resources to begin their work at PCC.*

I absolutely agree that this is important and an obligation of our organization. The examples such as those model programs highlighted in your report can provide guidance as we move forward in this area. As I understand it, work has begun in this regard in several areas of the college; the newly-formed EAC sub-group (under consideration among the EAC) can work with others to discuss, create, formalize, etc.

**Recommendation Five:** *Provide all instructors at PCC, regardless of part-time or full-time status, awareness of and support for professional development and training opportunities.*
As you know, the college conducted a survey of full-time, part-time faculty and AP’s with regard to the type of training and professional development desired; there were about 350 responses. For this Spring 2016, the college is funding stipends to pay part-time faculty to participate in professional development activities; we are supporting increased part-time faculty participation in college-approved special project work (with application to their immediate supervisor). For clarification, the proposed standing or subcommittee will not be reviewing or evaluating how this process is working as that is the responsibility of those managing the program. Input, however, is certainly valued.

**Recommendation Six:** Provide faculty development opportunities specific to the needs of instructors at various stages in their careers.
Same as response for Recommendation Five.

**Recommendation Seven:** Adjust and continue data gathering practices so that PCC captures the information necessary for determining the impact of the part-time/full-time faculty ratio on the culture, climate and experience at PCC.

This is an important recommendation and requires continued attention at PCC. Determining what data gathering processes currently exist, what we might leverage, and what we might expand upon should be addressed. Although the recent campus climate survey may have some of these data and the information regarding the ratio is updated each fall, a deeper evaluation on impact is in order.

**Recommendation Eight:** Utilize institutional data and national research to make recommendations regarding best practices.

This is our goal and practice at PCC, with the student at the center. I agree that streamlining the process and putting a system in place that doesn’t unduly burden the Institutional Effectiveness division, the Office of Equity and Inclusion, and Human Resources is important. Each of those areas also have similar goals as those expressed in the ACCEPT report and it is alluded to throughout the strategic plan in terms of data-driven decision making. Given some time allocation, input from faculty and staff, resources and planning, we can achieve this important goal. The new EAC group might consider beginning the process of identifying the needs and outcomes, with consultation from Institutional Effectiveness, Equity and Inclusion, and Human Resources.

**Closing Comments**
Thank you for your good work and I’m looking forward to working with you (as will the next president) as we address many of the valid ideas, suggestions and recommendations you have brought forward.