



UPDATE

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• A Publication of the All Faculty Association at Santa Rosa Junior College •

Academic Affairs Re-organization

Change is inevitable, yet we all fear change. Just when we think we've got the world all figured out, someone else introduces a new variable. VHS becomes DVD, fatty foods considered all bad become subdivided into good fats and bad fats, and the Weapons of Mass Destruction we expected to find in Iraq just aren't there. We have expectations which create a sense of security (mostly false), and then it all goes to hell. Well, that's how it feels.

On Tuesday, March 21, Dr. Mary Kay Rudolph, our new Vice President of Academic Affairs, unveiled her plan to reorganize the administrative structure of the College. This was not a complete surprise since President Agrella had directed her to restructure from the very beginning of her employment. This is certainly the right and the prerogative of the District, and AFA does not question that right. What was surprising was that AFA was not consulted about the contractual effects of the proposed reorganization. The feeling is unsettling to faculty, department chairs, and AFA.

Here are the highlights of the plan, and the full presentation can be accessed on the web (see box below):

- Six deans will report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Currently there are two Dean 3's, two Dean 2's, and seven Dean 1's (including Petaluma); at this time it is not entirely clear who will be filling the higher level positions or whether or not the existing cluster deans will continue in that capacity.
- These six deans will preside over a more coherent set of essential functions divided differently than they are at present.
- Other specific institutional themes will be assigned to academic administrators; this will address the fact that certain key functions within the institution are not currently the responsibility of any administrator.

- Existing clusters will be revised or reconfigured, and some departments/programs will report to a different dean.
- Some departments will be subsumed by other related departments or moved to another cluster. The affected departments and programs are:

- American Sign Language
- Applied Graphics
- Applied Technology
- Business Administration
- Business Office Technology
- Computer & Information Sciences
- Consumer & Family Studies
- Culinary Arts
- Disability Resources
- Electronics
- Engineering
- Humanities & Interdisciplinary Studies
- Life Sciences
- Modern & Classical Languages
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Social Sciences
- Tutorial Center

AFA officers have had some discussion with the administration about areas of concern, and it is clear that our concerns will need to be addressed through the negotiation process. In the meantime,

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Proposed AA Re-org Documents On-line

Presentation:

<http://www.santarosa.edu/media/presentations/AAC-Reorganization-3-21-06-bw.pdf>

Single-page chart:

<http://www.santarosa.edu/media/presentations/AAC-Reorganization-Chart.pdf>

Reorganization *(continued)*

there are primarily three problem areas we will need to address in implementing and rewriting the Contract.

Article 16: Hourly Assignments

The section of Article 16 that creates the greatest concern is 16.04.A.5, which outlines the principle of “length of service.” The language now says, “date of first paid service in the department” but what happens if an instructor’s “department” becomes part of another department? This would not only affect adjuncts with assignment priority but also regular faculty teaching overloads. We will certainly need to find some equitable way to reorder the length of service lists in affected departments before the development of the Spring 2007 schedule.

Department Chairs

While it is certainly the legal right of the District to redefine and reorganize departments, the job description, duties, and compensation of those chairs is a negotiated item. First of all, the Contract says that, “Term of office shall be three (3) years.” If a chair was elected in the last two years, that term has not yet expired whether or not the department has been eliminated or subsumed by another department.

Another problematic area is department chair reassigned time, which is outlined in Article 13.06. Notwithstanding the reorganization, this part of the Contract is still in force until renegotiated, and the same would be true for 13.07, which outlines chair work days outside the normal 177 contractual days. During Summer term, affected chairs will need to continue to work with compensation on staffing and scheduling courses for Summer and Fall of 2006.

Article 17 of the Contract outlines the duties of the department chair. Here again, there are problems we will need to remedy. The two major functions of the department chair are to provide department leadership and to serve as “liaison to the administration in terms of curriculum, hiring, budgeting, scheduling, evaluation, facilities, etc.” During this time of extreme uncertainty, all these functions will be particularly important. Without the knowledge and guidance of a

department chair, maintaining department morale may prove to be especially difficult.

Another important question will be the reporting structure for existing classified staff. The Contract clearly says in 17.03.C.1.e. that, “The Department Chair is considered the immediate supervisor of the department’s classified staff, and evaluates classified staff consistent with the provisions of the SEIU Contract and Board policy and procedures.” In writing this, it occurs to AFA that SEIU may also want to revisit their contract to see what adjustments may be necessary.

Faculty Service Areas (FSA’s)

Article 15 of the Contract explains FSA’s and Competency Standards and their implementation vis a vis minimum qualifications. These are very complicated matters and AFA realizes that faculty will not have time to apply for additional FSA’s since the “application must be received by the Human Resources Department on or before February 15 of any year.” These FSA’s are used primarily for the purpose of determining whether or not regular faculty may be laid off during a financial crisis or down-sizing. They are also important in determining who is able to teach overloads in any new configuration of a department or program. It would be extremely unfair to overlook such an important component of our Contract.

AFA’s Position

We understand that change is not only inevitable but it is necessary. Santa Rosa Junior College has been stagnant for a very long time, lacking in educational vision and certainly afraid of innovation. We realize that the College and the District must move in new directions in order to serve our students and our changing community. That is the mission of the College—to serve our community with excellence. We do not question the District’s right to reorganize nor their responsibility to do so. What we do require is that the District respect the value and legal standing of the Contract as we discuss and refine the proposed reorganization plan. Faculty input is essential in making the new administrative structure effective and responsive.