

# FACCC Delivers Preliminary Feedback to the Task Force

Prior to the official start of the public comment period on the Student Success Task Force, FACCC has already utilized three opportunities to deliver its initial response to the recommendations. Here are preliminary responses, along with a disposition of the issues being raised.

## *Overview:*

In general, the recommendations offer significant potential for an overall increase in student services and professional development. The rejection of performance-based funding, moreover, is a positive development as that could significantly skew course offerings and interfere with academic freedom.

## *Concerns:*

1) The failure of the Task Force to recognize the function of full-time faculty in the role of student success is glaring. Our current ratio of 58/42 full- to part-time faculty teaching credit classroom instruction is insufficient to expect major improvement by our students.

In response to FACCC's concerns, the Chancellor and his staff have acknowledged the role of full-time faculty in this discussion, but have cautioned against expecting additional revenues to hire new full-time faculty during the economic downturn. Nonetheless, in response to FACCC's concerns, referencing the need for full-time faculty may be included in the document.

2) Combining faculty categorical programs into a block grant may not lead to an increase in student success. In fact, it may lead to a diminishment of part-time faculty office hours, a program deemed essential to facilitate greater after-class access of students to instructors. Additionally, while the part-time faculty office hours, health benefits, and compensation equity categoricals all represent a common theme, they have little relation to the equal employment opportunity fund, which is designed to support more diversity in faculty hiring.

This item remains under discussion with public comment encouraged.

3) Combining student services, including EOPS, into a block grant would cause varying groups of vulnerable students to compete with one another before local trustee boards for meager funds. This is not a new issue; it has been discussed over the years, long before the current Task Force was ever created. Faculty and student service groups have traditionally opposed this consolidation, noting the state created these individual programs to perform essential functions that many districts, on their own, wouldn't do. Administrators, on the other hand, have argued for flexibility, insisting that local CEO's and trustee boards can judge how to serve students better than state policymakers.

In response to the testimony of FACCC, EOPS professionals, and EOPS students, the Task Force removed EOPS from the proposed student services block grant. The conversation will continue through the public comment period with representatives of other student services programs expected to voice concerns similar to EOPS.

4) Combining career technical education services into a block grant is a complicated proposition, which must be studied carefully. Emphasizing the relatively higher expense of CTE courses, FACCC emphasized that any proposal on CTE categoricals lead to greater, not fewer, course offerings.

This item will be discussed among CTE and economic and workforce development professionals, including the California Community Colleges Association for Occupational Education.