

Spring 2007 Plenary Session:  
*Consult, Confront, Collaborate???*  
Report by Helen Nickolson

General Sessions:

*The Basic Skills Initiative—Origin, Research Results and Next Steps*

This session featured a 10-member panel presentation which covered the research phase of the Basic Skills Initiative and gave findings on the most effective practices toward success in developmental education. This study was commissioned by the California Community Colleges System office to identify effective practices in basic skills programs and conducted by Associates of the Center for Student Success which is affiliated with the Research and Planning Group for the California community Colleges. For the purposes of this study, these working definitions were established:

*Basic skills are those foundation skills in reading, writing, mathematics, learning skills, study skills, and English as a Second language which are necessary for students to succeed in college-level work; and,  
“Effective practices” refer to organizational, administrative, instructional, or support activities engaged in by highly successful programs, as validated by research and literature sources relating to developmental education.*

More than 250 literature reviews related to basic skills practices were conducted, making this the most comprehensive basic skills study conducted in California Community Colleges to date. A total of 26 practices are outlined under four major categories: Organizational and administrative practices, program components, staff development, and instructional practices (attached).

*The Long Journey to Cultural Proficiency*

The speaker for this keynote speech was Pamela J. Fisher, Chancellor Emeritus at Yosemite Community College District. Her current professional work focuses on leadership development, board/CEO relationships, and equity, diversity, and cultural proficiency. She discussed the evolving employment of terms relating to culture and diversity, the evolving focus on multiculturalism, and the latest preferred step which is called “Cultural Proficiency.” The cultural competence continuum involves six steps:

- Cultural Destructiveness
- Cultural Incapacity
- Cultural Blindness
- Cultural Precompetence
- Cultural Competence
- Cultural Proficiency

Dr. Fisher was a dynamic speaker who involved the audience by requiring some group work/communication. Furthermore, she gave a brief “cultural proficiency” quiz and then discussed why some ideas that have been considered true or false have now taken on a different flavor.

Breakout Sessions:

*Legislative Tracking*

Information on bills that are important to faculty may be tracked on the State Academic website. Currently, there are over 20 bills that the AS is either watching or upon which has taken a stance. These bills include AB 573—Nursing Education Programs; AB 577—Open Source Resource Center; AB 591—Part Time Faculty; AB 750—Technology Curriculum; AB 876—Career Technical Education; AB 906—Salaries of Classroom Teachers; AB 1038—Student Fees; AB 1041—CCC Health Services Programs; AB 1305—Employment of Full-Time Faculty; AB 1343—Faculty and College Excellence Act; AB 1409—Concurrent Enrollment; AB 1548—Transparency in College Textbook Publishing Practices Act; SB 36—California Community Colleges; SB 139—Nursing Education; SB 283—BOG Membership; Student Senate; SB 325—California Postsecondary Education Accountability Act of 2007; AB 347—Reimbursement of Community College Enrollment Fees; SB 808—CCC Economic and Workforce Development Program: Customer Service Academy; Public Sector Professional Development Institute; SB 811—Access to Public Postsecondary Education; SB 832—Textbooks; SB 895—Transfer of Community College Students; and SCA 3—Community College Districts.

*Assessment*

Assessment of students was discussed in various sessions since at their March 6, 2007 meeting, the Board of Governors approved the following motion:

The Chancellor is directed to begin the process of evaluating the implementation of a system-wide uniform, common assessment with multiple measures of all community college students in consultation with...In addition, and integral to the above, the Chancellor shall study policy strategies for consideration by the Board of Governors in the following areas: non-barrier access, student success, early assessment, orientation, prerequisites, failure to participate, funding, exemptions.

In response to this motion, the Academic Senate is proposing the creation of a Consultation Assessment Task Force to address the concerns expressed in the Board of Governor's motion. The AS has identified 23 preliminary concerns that should be considered by the Task Force as a starting place.

*Basic Skills*

Several workshops focused on basic skills. The latest terminology is foundation instead of basic skills. For the most part, discussion in these workshops was a continuation of the keynote session. The problem that everyone is aware of is that students cannot be required to complete their basic skills courses prior to enrolling in college level courses.