

## FACULTY WORKLOAD SURVEY

### Workload data collection ends, data analysis begins

by Teeka James,  
AFT Local 1493 President

AFT Local 1493 has ended the collection of data for our Faculty Workload Survey and we are happy to report that we received a very high number of faculty responses—377 faculty participated in the survey. Here is a breakdown of the participants:

- 49% of respondents identified themselves as part-time faculty
- 51% identified themselves as full-time faculty
- 272 faculty completed the survey (72% of total respondents)
- 80% of respondents identified themselves as classroom instructors,
- 10% as counselors,
- 7% as librarians,
- 7% as CTE instructors,
- 2% as team coaches, and
- 4% as “other” (school nurses, non-instructional faculty, and so on).

We have begun analyzing the data collected and we hope to have a full report in the next issue of the *Advocate*.

We want to thank all faculty who participated in the survey.

And, finally, what you really wanted to know: 144 faculty entered the prize drawing, which will take place Wednesday, March 20 at the AFT 1493 Executive Committee meeting at Skyline College. ☐



## Universal health care still a pipe dream: The Affordable Care Act and SMCCCD faculty

by Rebecca Webb, AFT 1493 CSM Chapter Co-Chair

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was introduced by President Obama during his first term, and passed Congress in 2010 by a narrow margin. It is not a single payer health care system, neither is it socialized nor universal healthcare, but it is the closest this nation has been able to come in nearly 100 years of public debate on the subject. So, now that we have it, how is the ACA going to affect health insurance plans offered by our District? Many faculty members have been asking what impact the ACA will have on both part-timers and full-timers. There are two aspects of the ACA that will directly affect us: 1) the impact of new rules and provisions on premiums and 2) the possible inclusion of employees who work a minimum of 30 hours per week.

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## AFT 1493ers support CCSF at SF rally



AFT Local 1493 members (holding banner, left to right) Michelle Kern, Garry Nicol, Eric Brenner, Doniella Maher, Salumeh Eslamieh, Katharine Harer and Dan Kaplan came out to the San Francisco Civic Center on March 14 to support the City College of San Francisco (CCSF), which is facing the threat of closure by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Around 2000 supporters at the rally heard speakers describe how administrators have implemented cuts to classes, programs, services, staff, and faculty and have refused to use CCSF parcel tax funds to prevent cuts, as voters mandated in the November 2012 election. They called on City Hall leaders to ensure that funds from the parcel tax be used to reverse the cuts. Faculty, staff and students are organizing to prevent the accreditation “crisis” from being used as an excuse to dismantle or downsize one of the largest community colleges in the country. An excellent background article on the crisis is available at: <http://www.cft.org/cft-stories/983-city-college-of-san-francisco-fights-for-its-life.html>

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# Keep KCSM-TV in public hands

by Tracy Rosenberg, Executive Director,  
Media Alliance

The upcoming spectrum auction has made it lucrative for the struggling public institutions that own much of the non-commercial broadcast infrastructure to cash in their assets. The problem is that the assets they are cashing in are the few precious non-commercial broadcasting licenses around, in many cases public service media outlets for decades.

KCSM-TV, which has been broadcasting to nine Bay Area counties since 1964 is the latest to find itself potentially on the auction block due to the financial difficulties besetting its owner, the San

Mateo Community College District. There are public non profits that would consider taking over the station's operation in the public interest, but they risk being priced out by spectrum speculators who will simply hand the station's spectrum over to wireless companies, cash the check and then walk away, leaving the public with very little.

Public media deserves better than this. We don't expect the college district to raffle off the humanities building to raise extra cash. Why is public interest media being treated like it isn't a public asset?

Tell local politicians the wholesale destruction of non-commercial media is not the way to overcome higher education funding shortfalls. Public assets need to be protected from spectrum pirates. Not everything can be for sale to the highest bidder and not everything should be.

[Use Media Alliance's web form to send a message to your Representatives: http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1734/p/dia/action/public/?action\\_KEY=12789](http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1734/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=12789)



## The Advocate

*The Advocate* provides a forum for faculty to express their views, opinions and analyses on topics and issues related to faculty rights and working conditions, as well as education theory and practice, and the impact of contemporary political and social issues on higher education.

Some entries are written and submitted individually, while others are collaborative efforts. All faculty are encouraged to contribute.

*The Advocate's* editorial staff, along with the entire AFT 1493 Executive Committee, works to ensure that statements of fact are accurate. We recognize, respect, and support the right of faculty to freely and openly share their views without the threat of censorship.

## AFT 1493 discourages full-timers from taking on excessive overload

The following resolution was passed at the April 13, 2011 AFT 1493 Executive Committee meeting:

Whereas economic instability and budget cuts are affecting the employment status and livelihoods of part-time faculty in the SMCCCD,

Be it resolved, that the AFT 1493 Executive Committee recommend that full-time faculty members seriously consider refraining from taking on excessive overload in situations where part-time faculty will be displaced from courses to which they would have otherwise been assigned.



## Help improve the contract for part-time faculty

By Michelle P. Kern, AFT 1493 CSM Part-Time Faculty Rep.

Are there any part-time faculty issues you would like to see addressed or improved in your faculty contract? If so, please read this article carefully.

Your help is needed to identify these issues, gather information about them and propose contract language to be presented to your faculty union for upcoming contract negotiations. Because part-time faculty often teach in more than one district, we are in a perfect position to help gather information about how part-time faculty issues are addressed—for better or worse—in other district contracts.

Your faculty union has suggested issues that need to be addressed or improved in our contract. They include:

1. Defining and working toward parity with comparable full-time pay rates
2. Health care benefits for part-time faculty
3. Paying part-time faculty for committee work and SLO work
4. Right of first consideration for full-time positions
5. Part-time faculty summer session seniority
6. Long-term contracts for part-time faculty

But you may have other suggestions and we want to know what they are. Our plan is to set up a separate volunteer group for each issue listed above as well as any new issues from you. Each group will be asked to gather information and propose contract language for that issue.

The work of the groups will most likely be done via non-District email, "Facebook-type groups" or easy, toll-free, AFT-sponsored conference telephone calls, but face-to-face meetings are also encouraged – perhaps even some get-togethers before night classes on each campus just to get to know one another.

You can volunteer as much or as little time as you have available. We would like to get these groups set up soon. If you're willing to volunteer to help improve our part-time faculty contract, please send an email to me at: [kernm@smccd.edu](mailto:kernm@smccd.edu). Let me know which topic you'd like to help with. Please also list the non-District email address you would like to use for communication during the group "discussions" and work. If you're willing to volunteer as leader of a group on a particular issue, please include that in your email.

After we have gathered information and proposed contract language, I will present our findings to the AFT 1493 Executive Committee and the contract negotiations team for upcoming contract negotiations.

Your participation is important to all part-time faculty. Please volunteer to serve on a group to gather infor-

## ACCJC's controversial record and agenda under Beno

By Greg Davis, CSM Political Science, emeritus

It is surprising that Barbara Beno, the chief executive officer of the ACCJC staff and its dominant figure, has managed to remain in her position since 2001 despite the fact that the Commission's members are limited by law to two three-year terms and despite the fact that under her leadership the Commission has wildly diverged from the other regional accreditation commissions in the U.S. in its excessive number of denials and probationary accreditation rulings.

Furthermore, Beno has left her mark on the Commission by leading its attempt to impose SLO's on the colleges by administrative fiat, without any meaningful input from teacher organizations or other representatives of those engaged in the daily activity of teaching.

SLO's, as we know, are a legacy of Bush's "No Child Left Behind" law, which established them as a means of quantitatively measuring student performance and establishing teacher "accountability" at the K-12 level. At the higher education level this simplistic behavioral standard creates an opening for for-profit colleges and corporate purveyors of digital learning programs who claim they will produce more "effective" results.

ACCJC's attempt to impose SLO's on community colleges largely transcends its accreditation role and amounts to a fundamental policy change which redefines educational pedagogy, goals, and evaluation methods. This action, which fits in with a national privatizing effort, has not only destabilized California's globally-admired community college system, but it has demoralized its faculty and led to a colossal waste of time and energy.

### The Commission's Problematic Composition and Shadowy Mode of Operation

There is a lack of transparency in ACCJC's decision making, revealed, for example, by the absence of any public dis-

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# Universal health care still a pipe dream: The Affordable Care Act and SMCCCD faculty

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## New rules and provisions on premiums

The ACA has introduced a number of new rules and provisions designed to make healthcare affordable and available for the 53 million uninsured currently residing in the U.S. Some of the new rules include: requiring coverage of all U.S. citizens; requiring employers with 50 or more employees who work an average of 30 hours or more a week to offer affordable group coverage; expanding current public programs to include childless adults under the age of 65, pregnant women, and families with children under age 26 who are at 133% of the Federal Poverty Level; putting a cap on premiums and offering subsidies to families on non-employer plans to keep their premium costs to a maximum of 9.5% of income and as low as 2% of income; creating a number of health insurance exchange programs administered by the federal government for individuals and families not offered coverage by an employer. (See "Summary of New Health Reform Law" by The Kaiser Family Foundation available at [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org) for full details).

It has been reported that these new rules and provisions have already caused premiums to increase from 1% to 5%, but this is primarily happening to individual plans. Group plans, such as those offered through our District, have seen the least amount of increase in premiums. Premiums for group plans are kept lower because the risk is spread out over a large population. The larger the population of members in the plan, the lower the premiums will be for each member. This rule applies to any added risks to the group's plan. The ACA has another provision that might help offset potential increases to premiums. The ACA requires insurance companies to use a minimum of 80% of premium dollars on medical care and not on company overhead, and if they do not, they must reimburse the amount they did not use on medical care. In addition, premium caps will discourage higher premiums because when an insurance company charges a premium that exceeds the "high cost threshold," they will be taxed at 40% of the difference. This will mean that employers and unions will choose plans whose premiums do not exceed the threshold, in effect forcing the insurance companies to lower premiums as a result of market demand.

As for how this will affect our district's health plans, Harry Joel, Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, stated in an e-mail that any premium increases will be decided by the individual insurance companies. As he wrote, any changes to our premiums is a "PERS Blue Cross/Blue Shield/Kaiser determination and I will never know." Sara Flocks of the California Labor Federation predicted a 1 to 2% increase on

premiums prior to 2016, with a projected 0-3% reduction in premium costs after 2016 ("How the Affordable Care Act Will Impact Your Union" January 2013). This reduction would be the result of the increase in insured individuals throughout the nation.

## Inclusion of employees who work a minimum of 30 hours per week

What impact will the new provision to cover all employees who work 30 hours or more for an employer have on our part-time colleagues? This mandate clearly targets part-timers who historically have been left out of employer-offered health plans. Part-timers in every industry and profession are the voiceless laborers with the least amount of clout and security either economically or politically. They are truly the most disenfranchised laborers of this nation, and yet, they are becoming the majority of the workforce in every sector, including academia.

Here in SMCCCD, we have over 700 part-time instructors who teach anywhere from 4 to 7 courses at colleges throughout the Bay Area. If a part-timer teaches five courses (2 courses in one district and 3 in another), they might be carrying anywhere from 15 to 20 units per semester, then the part-timer is working the same 40 hours per week as a full-timer. However, at 10 units per semester, which is the cap here in the SMCCCD, a part-timer is at 67% of a full-time load. This, unfortunately, puts the part-timers at 26.8 hours per week, and not at 30 hours (assuming that a regular full-time load at 18 FLCs equals a 40 hour per week workload). At this time, Harry Joel and the District are not prepared to respond to the question of extending benefits to part-timers because, as Mr. Joel stated, "It is too premature to respond" since major parts of the ACA won't be instituted until 2014 and 2015. Even if the District wanted to generously extend health benefits to part-timers who work less than 30 hours per week, it is clear that they will not be legally bound to do so. The ACA has helped the adjuncts in many respects, but until we can demonstrate that 10 FLCs is equal to a 30 hour per week workload, part-timers will not be entitled to employer-offered health benefits anytime soon.

There are alternatives to this, however. Public programs will be extended to cover more low-income individuals and families (at 133% of Federal Poverty Level, which is \$44,000 per year). There also will be subsidies offered by the federal and state governments to help offset the cost of individual plans. In addition, it is worth looking into the California

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## The Affordable Care Act and SMCCCD faculty

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Health Exchange program. Starting in January 2014, any individual can purchase a health plan through an exchange and may also qualify for subsidies in the form of tax credits. The California Health Exchange was established by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2010 with the signing of the laws AB 1602 and SB 900. You can find out if you qualify by visiting this website: <http://www.coveredca.com/getting-covered/individuals-and-families/>.

Finally, the union can do more to provide benefits to its members through contract negotiation. In a recent e-mail, AFT 1493 President, Teeka James, stated: "Clearly we want adjuncts to have whatever access to health insurance that we can get. I'm not sure what the best approach is, but one way might be to think of parity in pay as including the monetary value of health benefits. Then the District might have incentive to pay the percentage of the premium that corresponds to the percentage of full-time that each employee works. Then most part-timers would get 67% of the benefits cap paid, so if the full-time faculty got \$100 paid towards health insurance, an adjunct teaching 10 units would get \$67 paid towards the same." This idea is certainly worth investigating and working out the language for in a future contract. (See the article on the parity committee in the February 2013 Advocate if you would like to work on such a provision.)

## Part-timers need protection from hourly cuts

One question that has arisen, however, is whether employers will actually offer health benefits to part-timers who reach the minimum 30 hours per week, or will they, as some employers have done already, simply cut part-timers' hours down to less than 30 hours per week to avoid the requirement? After all, isn't avoiding the cost of benefits one primary reason why companies hire part-timers in the first place? Protecting a part-timer's right to access affordable health benefits will most likely require added language in labor contracts throughout the nation to prevent employers from reducing workers' hours in an attempt to avoid the cost of benefits. Here in our District, we have already implemented such language in our new contract under provisions 19.2.4 and 19.2.5. It would be very difficult for the District to cut the regular FLCs of a part-timer with seniority and "who has received two (2) consecutive satisfactory evaluations or has been given an assignment for six (6) semesters with no negative evaluations" (AFT 1493 new contract section 19.2.4).

While our full-time faculty in the District will not feel any negative impacts from the ACA, our part-timers will, unfortunately, not feel any positive benefits of the ACA in the form of access to employer health benefits. This is not to say, however, that we cannot change that in the near future.

## DISTRICT ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED TEACHERS

### Retiree's group planning three social events

*by John Searle, DART President, CSM, Emeritus*

DART (the District Association of Retired Teachers, affiliated with AFT Local 1493) will come out of hibernation and is planning three activities for the coming months:

- A social gathering in May (tentatively the 15th/22nd) to share ideas on how to constructively pass one's retirement, or more simply, share some travels ideas and experiences
- A theatre visit as a group (with group discounts, together with a subsidy from the DART treasury... tickets half price!) to the ACT/National Theatre of Scotland's production of *The Black Watch*, taking place in San Francisco, tentatively scheduled for the matinee performance on June 9th
- In the fall, a hike in the watershed area of Crystal Springs.

If anyone needs more information, contact John Searle at: [searle@my.smccd.edu](mailto:searle@my.smccd.edu)

As we proceed with this discussion and ways to resolve the problem of affordable coverage for part-timers, we need to remind ourselves of the purpose of a large group health plan: the more members in the group, the lower the premiums will be for all members. So, who really benefits by denying part-timers access to a group plan? One problem with the current reliance on a marginalized work force like part-timers is that reducing the already minimal hours of part-timers will only push them deeper into economic hardship and will likely further strain our already stretched public welfare programs and services. The solution to the economic hardships of our part-time colleagues surely is not to push them closer to the brink of poverty, but rather to raise them up and share with them the dignity and benefits of a healthy and secure employment by offering them access to affordable health plans through the District's employee health benefits packages.

This is by no means an exhaustive analysis of the question of access to affordable health benefits, but I hope it will be the beginning of an ongoing discussion. I envision this article as one in a series through which we will both provide answers to questions from the faculty and engage in spirited dialog about how to go forward with contract negotiations on the inclusion of part-timers in the health plans offered by this district. I welcome your comments and questions. □



## AFT HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

## Confronting the “New Normal”: Corporatization

by Monica Malamud, AFT Local 1493 Secretary, Canada

I attended the AFT National Higher Education Issues Conference in San Diego from March 8-10. In this article I want to share what I consider to have been the highlights of the Conference.



Monica Malamud

The theme of this year's AFT Higher Education Conference was “Confronting the ‘New Normal’”. So what is the ‘new normal’: the privatization and corporatization of higher education, with schools that mirror for-profit institutions. We're told

that higher education as we know it is dead. But...

### Union-driven solutions needed

There is no evidence that these changes make education better. So how do we confront this? The subtitle of the conference was “Union-Driven Solutions for the Future of Higher Education”. Fingers are pointed at unions claiming they are ‘the problem’. Teachers are constantly being asked to do more with less, and then when the quality of education suffers they are accused of being bad teachers. But instead of blaming unions and teachers, and imposing top-down changes, everyone should be calling on teachers, the experts on education, to help find solutions. This is solution-driven unionism; and we are engaged in it.

A draft of a document titled “AFT's Quality Agenda for Higher Education” was distributed among conference attendees. The goal was to elicit answers to several questions, in order to improve the content of the document and to better articulate what is needed in order to have quality education.

### A critique of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

Steven Krause, of Eastern Michigan University, gave a talk on “MOOCs: Fad or the Future?” He took two Coursera classes, “Listening to World Music,” and “E-Learning and Digital Cultures.” His experiences in these classes caused him to ask the question: “What is education?” In these experiences, there may have been an opportunity for “learning”, but so what? We can learn in so many ways. And an opportunity for learning does not necessarily mean that learning has taken place. There was no “teaching”—teaching requires an exchange with a facilitator of the learning process. There was no credit awarded for the courses. Students who completed the courses, about 10% of those who originally registered, received only a “Statement of Accomplishment”.

Krause concluded from his experience that MOOCs were a threat to academic labor, furthered the “business model”

of higher education, furthered the distance between “haves” and “have-nots,” and are a disservice to students. MOOCs are like an online textbook. They have content, so they could be used instead of textbooks. But they do not replace teachers. However, this seems to be the goal of MOOCs: to get rid of the most costly component of education—the instructor.

### How to put brakes on overreaching accreditors

Addressing the Expanding Role of Accreditation was also the focus of much discussion at the Conference. Alisa Messer, President of AFT 2121 at City College of San Francisco, gave an overview of CCSF's accreditation conundrum. In a nutshell, and at the risk of oversimplifying a very serious situation, what happened was that the recommendations that the accrediting team made were totally changed by the leadership of the accrediting body, without going back to the accrediting team. Additionally, CCSF suffered budget cuts like every other college in the state, but then they were penalized because of their precarious fiscal situation and for keeping classes open and saving on administrative costs, thus keeping the cuts as far away from the classroom as possible (a standard practice in tight budget times). And even though CCSF faculty and their union were instrumental in rallying the San Francisco voters to pass a parcel tax that would alleviate the financial situation of the district, the Governing Board now refuses to allocate the money raised through this parcel tax in the manner it was intended.

The panel that discussed accreditation offered several suggestions to reverse what's happening with accreditation:

- Change the composition of the commission, by getting good faculty appointed to it.
- Go to body that accredits the ACCJC and tell them that they are not doing a good job, and “put THEM on probation”.
- Focus on the real goal of accreditation: institutional improvement. If an institution did this, then the accreditation process would have real value to the institution itself. Of course, other things would need to change too, for example, remove ties between accreditation and federal funding.
- Show that sanctions do not improve the quality of education. The way accreditation is approached today, being put on sanction doesn't serve the purpose of improving the institution.
- Seasoned tenured faculty should play an important role in the accreditation process. But they often get burned out by the accreditation process and its lack of real value for the institution, and they don't want to be

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## Confronting the "New Normal"

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involved in future accreditation cycles. As a result, less senior faculty are called on to do the job. But they are at risk of being easily influenced by administration and being forced to do whatever the Accreditation Commission wants the institution to do. In this way, with each successive accreditation cycle, the process becomes further removed from the original goal – institutional improvement.

## Funding cuts make quality education unaffordable

Randi Weingarten, AFT President, gave the keynote address. She asked the question: What's happening in higher education currently? Her answer focused on three issues: privatization, the expansion of for-profit education and de-professionalization.

Students are being burdened with huge debt as federal and state funding decreases and students have to pay a larger share of the cost of education. Education is increasingly seen as a good that someone needs to purchase, as opposed to a contribution to the public good. When only those who can afford an education can obtain it, education ceases to be the great equalizer in a society, and the vehicle for socio-economic mobility (last year income for the top 1% increased 11% while for the rest it decreased 0.4%). To make matters worse, the media is questioning the quality of higher education. So this leaves the public wondering whether higher public education is really worth the cost. But we know that quality public education is key to reversing the current trend of increasing income inequality. We know the value of education both for individuals as well as for the nation. So we need to fight the privatization and lack of public investment in education.

Our students and other members of our communities do not want educational institutions to be closed down. They need quality education that is affordable. All faculty (not just union members) want the same: institutions of higher education that deliver quality education. And at a time when educators and their unions are under attack and education is underfunded, we need to prove more than ever not only that we are not the cause of the problem, but that we can deliver solutions. In order to accomplish the common goals of students and faculty, Weingarten urged unions to work on membership mobilization, community engagement and solution-driven unionism.

It was an excellent Conference, with a lot of discussion on some very important subjects. I am very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to listen to enlightening and inspiring speakers, attend informative workshops, interact with higher education colleagues from all over the United States and represent AFT Local 1493 at this important event. □

## AFT 1493 CALENDAR

### AFT 1493 Executive Committee/ General Membership Meetings:

- **Wednesday, April 10, 2:15 p.m.,**  
**Cañada, Building 3, Room 104**
- **Wednesday, May 1, 2:30 p.m.,**  
**CSM, Building 10, Room 401**
- **Wednesday, May 8, 2:15 p.m.,**  
**Skyline, Room 6-203**

## ACCJC's Controversial record under Beno

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closure of deliberations at the full Commission stage which resulted, in a number of instances, in the overruling of positive findings in initial evaluation reports. Other matters of concern include the lack of adequate public notice of its meetings in spite of its own rules of procedure, the lack of proper training of individual college evaluation team members, and 19 commissioners whose backgrounds do not appear to sufficiently equip them to appreciate the broader pedagogical, cultural, and substantive implications of actions like their SLO directive. The fact that many of these commissioners are administrators or education bureaucracy connected individuals is a fundamental flaw in the Commission's make-up. ACCJC's complicated selection process of nominees from various accreditation-affected constituencies has resulted in an artificial potpourri of members, predominately from rural and suburban areas and short on representation of more heavily populated metropolitan areas. These shortcomings have undoubtedly provided fertile ground for Barbara Beno, who has used her insider position of Chief Executive Officer to push an agenda which favors greater privatization and digitalization with a Commission which meets twice a year in hotels and is composed of part-time, geographically-scattered members with staggered terms.

## An Egregious Lack of Accountability

Amazingly, ACCJC is a private institution that wields sweeping authority over taxpayer-funded public educational institutions, yet it is essentially a loose canon, handing down arbitrary directives from which there is no appeal. Its lawyers, for example, claim it is not even subject to state laws in California. Like an offshore investment company in the Cayman Islands, ACCJC in their view should be able to operate beyond public view and outside the boundaries of external control. Ironically, ACCJC under Beno wants to hold colleges "accountable" by means of SLO's, but it fails to apply the accountability standard to itself. □



# Beyond MOOCs: CSM's live, face-to-face, dynamic projects invigorate teaching and create community

by David Laderman, Vice President, CSM Academic Senate

Whenever I read or hear the term "MOOC," I can't but help think of that crazy scene in Scorsese's *Mean Streets*, where a fight breaks out in a pool hall because one crook calls another crook a "mook," and none of them know what the term means, but it doesn't matter: the fight breaks out anyway.

There's a lot of banter out there (and in here) about MOOCs, and I get the feeling both sides don't really know what it means, but pretend to. We know, of course, what the acronym stands for, and what the thing itself is. But what does it mean, for the fate of education and, therefore, culture itself? I personally have a hard time believing all the utopian hype coming from those pushing MOOCs as just the right antidote to our education woes. On the other hand, I'm not entirely opposed to incorporating some form of MOOCdom, if it can truly enhance academic success for students (real success, not the bottom-line, superficial, disposable kind). Perhaps most troublesome is the sensation that MOOCs are, indeed, a sensation, a foregone conclusion, a train heading our way, whether we like it or not (and whether it wrecks or not). To control, or be controlled by, the MOOC; that is the question.

In the spirit of that question, let me shift gears by highlighting some incredibly exciting things going on here at CSM: dynamic, student-centered pedagogical projects. Such face-to-face live interactive encounters embody, to my mind, much that is beyond the narrow MOOC scope.

When our Academic Senate President, James Carranza, first asked me if I'd be interested in being his VP, I remember his talking points that swung me round: let's focus on what we do and what we have control over; let's invigorate our teaching, concretely; let's create vital community across campus. Thanks in part to good timing (Measure G, Prop. 30, basic aid funding), and key administration support, the past few years have seen much fruition in this regard. No doubt, challenges remain, and need to be addressed (such as influencing the whether and how of MOOCs). In addition, the AFT workload survey will likely guide us in resolving existing problems. But let's take a moment to look on the bright side.

1. **Honors Project:** If accepted into the program, students earn honors credit for transfer courses of their choice by co-enrolling in a cross-disciplinary seminar. In an academically intense, round-table setting, each student develops his or her own advanced research project. The collaboration and intellectual depth are truly impressive. Instructors across the curriculum too collaborate, guiding students to successful completion of their projects. Each term culminates in a colloquium showcase, where the Honors Project community comes together to celebrate all achievements.

2. **Puente Project:** After several years on hiatus, Puente is back at CSM, and it's a true benefit for all concerned. Like the Honors Project, the goal is to help students successfully transfer by foregrounding collaboration. Open to any student interested in Latino literature and culture, the program hinges on integrating English instruction, counseling and mentoring in a distinctly proactive and supportive way.

3. **Reading Apprenticeship Program:** This innovative new wing of professional enrichment aims to train and support faculty, staff, and administrators with proven strategies for increasing students' reading skills. This program will create learning activities that faculty across the curriculum can utilize to improve their students' independent reading endeavors and, therefore, student success.

4. **SoTL, Remixed:** Thankfully, we've been able to hire two professional enrichment coordinators to revive our SoTL Center (Center for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning). One full-time and one adjunct instructor will work together to intensify transfer support, create inspiring SoTL activities, and infuse Basic Skills instruction. All of this is geared toward enhancing, in a hands-on way, our pedagogy and scholarly growth.

5. **Human Rights:** For the past few semesters, several dedicated faculty and students have helped raise global and ethical awareness by putting on Human Rights Day, featuring guest speakers and other informative "happenings" combining art and politics. Such human rights actions bring the big picture onto our campus, broadening the meaning of "community" in community college.

6. **Program Review, Remixed:** Thanks to several enthusiastic and visionary faculty members, program review has been revised and improved: not just the form, but more importantly the process, the dialogue. Administration and faculty will be collaborating and communicating more directly through program review, so as to improve our institution's role in fostering student success.

7. **Transfer Reception:** For the first time, at the end of this spring, CSM will hold a transfer celebration event. Stepping Up: A Transfer Tribute will feature music, food, stories, networking and a warm send-off for all transferring students.

These highlights are mere samples of the kinds of fantastic educational experiences going on across our campus. Apologies, and a big thank you, to those who engage the spirit of these projects in your own way, but did not get mentioned.

Now, the MOOC lobby might say, hey, we applaud these activities, we don't aim to displace them, we only aim to supplement them. Let's do what we can to make sure that's how it works. ■