

September 3, 2014

Facilities Updates:



This fall, students arrived to enjoy the benefits of the Dorm Modernization project, which began in October of last year. The Ash Street Dorm Phase 1 project is complete with the exception of remaining items on the punch lists developed as Phase 1 of the project wrapped up. The project included modernizing bathrooms, desk and counter areas, electrical wiring, and painting. The exterior of the dorm complex was also modernized with the removal of outdated concrete work, installation of artificial grass, and painting.

The project also included installation of new swipe door locks, replacement of old security cameras, and remodeling of the dorm supervisor apartment.

Phase 2 of the project is underway, replicating much of the work done in Phase 1 in the remaining dorm rooms at the west end of the Ash Street dorm complex. Phase 2 is expected to be complete by the end of the fall term if not sooner.

Over the summer, the District also explored a new construction financing method for the STEM facility which will be located east of the Children's Center, adjacent to the Ash Street dorms. This project will include four modular buildings which will house two classrooms-labs and several offices. The District has selected Seward L. Schreder Construction Company to develop a Pre-Construction Services Agreement as the next step in this project.

Budget Update:

The **2014/15 state budget** was signed by the Governor on June 20, 2014 marking the 4th consecutive year the budget was passed on time. The statewide budget package assumes total state spending of \$152.3 billion, an increase of 8.6% over revised totals in 2013/14 (www.lao.ca.gov). General Fund appropriations total \$108 billion, an increase of \$11.7 billion (or 12.1%) compared to the budget passed in June 2013. 2014/15 is projected to end with \$2.1 billion in total reserves for the state.

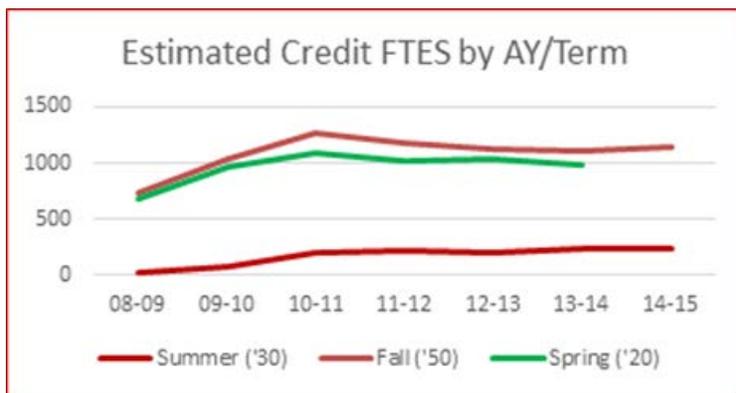
The state budget is conservative and is intended to make progress toward reducing state debt. The budget also includes a plan to address the \$74 billion shortfall in the California State Teachers Retirement program (STRS). The plan is designed to close the shortfall in 32 years by increasing the contributions to the STRS program from the state, employers, and employees.

The 2014-15 West Kern CCD budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees on September 10, 2014. The budget proposal will reflect additional funds in areas such as Deferred Maintenance and Instructional Equipment. The state budget includes a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) of .85% and the Board of Trustees has approved this adjustment for all employee groups. The budget has been built to maintain base funding of 2,540 FTES. The Access Committee will be focusing on effective enrollment management strategies to support the District's base funding and to prepare for any future growth funds that may be available in the coming years.

Student Services Updates:

Enrollment:

Enrollment is stable with FTES, as of the end of the first week of classes, at about 3% over the enrollment at census in fall 2013. We expect some shifts as students adjust their schedules during the first couple of weeks in the term. We have developed a new, prototype report which depicts estimated FTES and, as a result, next year we will be able to report FTES as compared to the same day in the prior year.



Retention and Enrollment Management:

At the Governance Council Retreat in April 2013, the Governance Council reviewed what we called “the funnel” which showed the number of students we usher through our doors and how the number of students decline as they progress through the Taft College program of instruction. Retention is an important component of enrollment management. Softening demand due to an improved economy, along with growth funding in neighboring districts, are also key aspects to consider when planning for the future. The newly-formed Access Committee will work hand-in-hand with the Student Success Committee to identify enrollment and retention strategies to ensure stable enrollment at the College.

Student Success and Student Equity Plans:

In November 2002 the BOG adopted the recommendations of the Task Force on Equity and Diversity to implement Title 5 regulations requiring colleges to develop a Student Equity Plan. Regulations require that the plan must address increasing access, course completion, English as a Second Language (ESL) and basic skills completion, degrees, certificates and transfer for, at a minimum, student groups who may be disproportionately impacted by college practices, programs or services.

Since 2012, the Student Success Act (SB 1456) has served as the impetus to review and update the student equity planning process. SB 1456 requires colleges to coordinate the development of the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) Plan with the Student Equity Plan to ensure that each college has identified strategies to address and monitor equity issues as well as attempt to mitigate any disproportionate impact on student access and achievement. The College will need to include specific goals/outcomes and action activities to address disparities that are discovered. The College Access and Success Committees, along with input across the campus, will coordinate the preparation of both the Student Success Plan and the Student Equity Plan. The Student Equity Plan must be reviewed and adopted by local governing boards and submitted to the Chancellor’s Office by October 17, 2014. This deadline was chosen to allow colleges time to complete their Student Success and Support Program Plan.

Instruction Updates

ConnExpo Exploratorium:

The ConnExpo (located in the Cafeteria Banquet Room), will provide an area on campus for students to explore several areas of Science Technology Engineering Mathematics – STEM. Each semester the ConnExpo will have an overarching exhibit theme. The different disciplines in STEM will showcase and demonstrate how disciplines relate to the exhibit theme. This will be a living, adaptable, and an activity oriented learning project. The ConnExpo will be open during the cafeteria hours for student exploration as well as occasional use by faculty for office hours, tutoring sessions, or other STEM related activities as needed. In doing so, students will be able to engage with STEM and also see STEM as a possible and exciting career option. This effort is being funded by the Taft College STEM Pathways Grant. Financial assistance has also been received from Chevron through the Taft College Foundation for this project.



Library Remodel Project:



The library saw quite a few facilities developments over the summer. A tutoring area was created outside of the Math and Writing Labs – which re-establishes a general area where students are welcome to come for tutoring. A new instructional room with computers was developed in part to support INCO within the library, and to implement GED in immediate proximity to the tutoring area. A professional development area was created in the former Supplemental Instruction office area. The library now has a book drop located outside the locked doors for convenient book returns during off-hours.

Foundation:

The 5th Annual Rib-Eye Cookout is scheduled for Thursday, October 16, from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the Taft College Quad. The evening will continue its traditional salute to Veterans with recognition of one of the City of Taft's greatest community icon and WWII veteran (to be announced soon!). Fruit Tramp, a Bakersfield-based band, will be the featured entertainment at the event. Tickets (\$20 and \$10 with student identification) are available by contacting the switchboard at ext. 7700.



The Foundation has launched an internal giving campaign, called the **Cougar Impact Fund**. The Cougar Impact Fund was designed to support grants and scholarships to those attending or working for Taft College. A gift to Cougar Impact Fund at Taft College can positively impact students and faculty by providing funding for innovative projects important to the success of those individuals. The funds support the faculty innovation grant program launched in 2013/14, as well as scholarships to students in need of financial or emergency assistance, student club initiatives, and student cost of living support including meal tickets and book assistance. For more information or to participate in the Cougar Impact Fund program, please contact the Foundation at ext. 7936.

Accreditation:

Every six years, California Community Colleges undertake the process of accreditation to evaluate overall educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The process includes an extensive written self-evaluation against four institutional standards, along with a certification of eligibility requirements and certification of continued compliance with Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Taft College is currently developing its self-evaluation and will be submitting the written document to the ACCJC this summer. In fall 2015, the College will participate in a comprehensive visit by an external evaluation team comprised of peers from community colleges throughout the state.

ACCJC's Guide to Evaluating Institutions includes questions that can be used to spark dialogue when developing the self-evaluation. These questions may also be used by the external evaluation team when visiting the College. Here are some of the questions as related to institutional planning:

- To what extent does the institution understand and embrace the notion of planning?
- Does the College have a planning process in place?
- How is planning integrated?
- To what extent are institutional data available and used for planning?

These are great questions to discuss in your team meetings, or with your colleagues in other departments. If you want more information on the accreditation process and your role in it, please contact Dr. Eric Bérubé, Accreditation Liaison Officer, or Dr. Dena Maloney, Superintendent/President. Both would be happy to meet with you and your team regarding the process.

Strategic Plan Development:

Taft College continues to move forward in a planning process which is not only aligned with accreditation standards but will help our college become even stronger and more effective in serving students.

Last year, the College completed an updated Educational Master Plan (available on the campus website under *About Us*). The plan included broad recommendations for Taft College for the next ten years. This year, after reviewing and updating the College's vision, mission, and values, we will be developing a three-year Strategic Action Plan, which will identify those recommendations of the Educational Master Plan we want to tackle first.



Staff participating in a Mission, Vision & Values Exercise at the 2014 Welcome

A Strategic Action Plan Steering Committee is being formed which will oversee the development of this plan. The Strategic Planning Committee of the Governance Council forms the core of this committee. You will be hearing more about the direction and timeline for this project; however, our goal is to complete the plan and present it to the Board of Trustees for approval sometime in early 2015.

New Employees

Taft College welcomes the following new employees hired since last November:

Faculty:

Nancy Artiga, QFS Basic Skills Counselor; **Michael Jiles**, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Administration; **James May**, Associate Professor of Physical Science; **Karen Ziegler**, Director of Counseling/Student Success Counselor; **Janis Mendenhall**, DSPS Coordinator; **Stacie Rancano**, STEM Program Manager/Counselor

Management:

Amber Anderson, Director of Admissions & Records; and **Agnes Eguares**, Dean of Instruction – Grants

Classified:

Manuel Aguirre, Skilled Maintenance Worker; **Heidi Archibald**, Information Systems Secretary; **Nicole Avina**, EOPS/CARE Sr. Secretary; **Rachel (Taylor) Belden**, STEM Outreach Activities Coordinator; **Elisha Geier**, Bookstore Clerk; **Gustavo Gonzalez**, Computer Support Technician II; **Rebekah Horton**, Math Tutor/Learning Assistant; **Kristi Lopez**, Career Exploration Pathway Advisor; **Jessica McKnight**, Bookstore Clerk; **Barby Morse**, TIL Life Skills Aide; **Rachel Reyes**, Mail Clerk; **Stephanie Spencer**, TIL Weekend Support.

2014 Upcoming Events

September:

- 10 Board Meeting – Budget Study Session @ 4:00 p.m.; Closed Session @ 5:00 p.m. & Open Session at 6:00 p.m. (Cougar Room)
- 11 9-11 Remembrance @ 9:00 a.m. (TC Quad)
- 17 Constitution Day – 10 question quiz from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (Cafeteria)

October:

- 8 Board Meeting – Closed Session @ 5:00 p.m. – Open Session @ 6:00 p.m. (Cougar Room)
- 6-10 ASB Breast Cancer Awareness Week
- 16 5th Annual Foundation Rib-Eye Cookout – 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. (TC Quad)

November:

- 10 Veteran's Day Holiday
- 12 Board Meeting – Closed Session @ 5:00 p.m. – Open Session @ 6:00 p.m. (Cougar Room)
- 27-28 Thanksgiving Day Holiday

December:

- 10 Board Meeting – Closed Session @ 5:00 p.m. – Open Session @ 6:00 p.m. (Cougar Room)
- 19 End of Fall Semester