I attended the Fall 2012 State Plenary in Irvine with representatives of all community colleges. The following is a description of what I gained from the event.

**Thursday, Nov 8, 10:00 am – 11:45 Avoiding Unintended Consequences: Implementing Prerequisites**

Title 5 regs adopted March 2011 threw out statistical validation for implementing prerequisites. AS has taken the following position: “Prerequisites will increase student success if applied prudently.” While there is nothing requiring us to implement prerequisites, the general feeling I got from this session was that legislation seems to imply a need for it, and AS believes that it is better for faculty to do it than to be told to do it later. There was a question about whether the enhanced ARCC report will affect the need for implementation of prerequisites. The response was that the ARCC report is tracking student success, so (presumably, the speaker implied) those colleges who don’t implement them will have lower success rates. This was totally unsupported. As a rep from a college who does not have many prerequisites and who still manages to maintain consistently higher than average transfer rates, I spoke up to the group. I stated that our college had dropped prereqs due to a loss of diversity in our classes, not due to too much work in implementing them. I expressed my dismay that the AS had already taken a strong position not only in favor of prereqs, but presenting them as a guarantee of student success. It puts colleges who do not implement prereqs (and who are doing well in areas of student success) at an extreme disadvantage. We’re managing to transfer students and confer degrees, and our own AS does not support us. It was clear to me that the unintended consequence not being addressed was the disproportionate impact on students of color and of low socioeconomic level.

**Thursday, Nov 8, 1:45 pm – 3:00 pm Orientation for New Delegates**

Here I learned all about parliamentary procedure and how to engage in the process of resolution writing, amending, and voting.

**Thursday, Nov 8, 3:15-4:30 pm Update on Accreditation**

One of the first things addressed was a question asked at our own campus: are colleges expected to assess 100% of all courses? The response, stated as a “rumor” because nothing is really defined from the ACCJC, was that we are expected to plan for 100% assessment, but that perhaps slightly under may be acceptable for the Oct 15 deadline (which is already past). The presenter went through the rubric descriptors for proficiency and discussed each one. It is hard to know how one will be assessed: one
visiting team member mentioned that she served in 2009 and in 2011 and her training was not markedly different even though the standards have changed and more colleges have gone on sanction. Presenters stressed the following: to date, colleges have not been sanctioned due to SLOs, but that’s going to change due to the proficiency deadlines.

Very good slide from presentation shows the shift in the reasons for sanctions over the last year:

Clearly, the work that faculty have been doing in the area of SLOs and the work that colleges have been doing in the areas of planning and governance is paying off. The highest sanctions are in the areas of Board governance and Fiscal Stability.

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**Top Deficiencies Causing Sanctions**

(ACCJC Newsletter, June 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges on Sanction</th>
<th>Program Review</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Internal Governance</th>
<th>Board</th>
<th>Financial Stability or Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009 Sanctions (n=24)</td>
<td>71% (17)</td>
<td>92% (22)</td>
<td>46% (11)</td>
<td>46% (11)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2010 Sanctions (n=19)</td>
<td>68% (13)</td>
<td>89% (17)</td>
<td>42% (8)</td>
<td>58% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011 Sanctions (n=21)</td>
<td>19% (4)</td>
<td>71% (15)</td>
<td>24% (5)</td>
<td>67% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2012 Sanctions (n=28)</td>
<td>21% (6)</td>
<td>71% (20)</td>
<td>18% (5)</td>
<td>71% (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Friday, November 09, 2012  8:30-10:00 am Emerging Policy Issues in Pre-transfer Mathematics**

**Presenters:** Beth Smith and Phil Smith

This presentation was given in hopes of allowing discussion over a very controversial issue in Mathematics statewide: Statway, a.k.a. Statpath. This issue centers on differing beliefs held regarding what kind of Math students (either STEM or non-STEM) need in order to graduate and whether it is advisable to create pathways allowing non-STEM students to skip Intermediate Algebra by taking a course designed to prepare them for Statistics. There were several arguments:

I. **Argument:** Math classes teach more than just Math, but teach analysis, language and critical thinking. It’s not just Math for Math’s sake. The B.A. requires Quantitative Reasoning, so we have to consider the meaning of that. Math has wider connections beyond calculation, and we see this in the language. The point of GE is to provide a foundation for students to apply to many other fields.
   a. **Response:** not all Math faculty agree that these skills are foundational. We’re faced with much pressure from communities and society to get these students to pass, do we really have the luxury of discussing this?
   b. **Response:** There is no luxury of discussion because we are bound to what the CSUs and UCs will accept.
   c. **Response:** The UC has said it’s up to us to determine the prerequisites for courses.
d. Response: True, but that doesn’t mean they have to accept our determination. They can (and do) reject our course for transfer if they don’t like our prerequisite. We have no control over this at all.

II. Argument: The requirement right now is - Intermediate Algebra before Stat, so long as Int Alg has Elementary Algebra as a pre-req. Many Accelerated programs do not meet that requirement, and CSU/UC won’t take it. Students want to take the class that gets them to the transfer level. Unless the UC/CSU approves our innovative approaches, we won’t have any students in these classes.
   a. Response: We are developing roadblocks that prevent people from achieving an education that they could achieve if they only had a Math pathway that worked for their needs.
   b. Response: One faculty’s Roadblock is another’s Key Foundation.

III. Policies and standards – see powerpoint on Academic Senate web page, dated 11/16/12.

IV. The presenter was clear on what is in the purview of the Senate and what is not. She stated that we do not articulate policy to the university; universities will always get to make those calls. She stressed that we need to maintain trust between our two systems to honor our transfer agreement. We also do not micromanage discipline curriculum. Resolutions are not designed to dictate to discipline faculty what and how to teach. We can encourage discipline faculty to talk about this topic, and we can facilitate needed policy change based on discipline consensus

Friday, Nov 9, 10-12:00  Area B meeting

The colleges from Area B met to discuss resolutions and disciplines.

Friday, Nov 9, 2012. 2:30-3:45  Developing Effective Faculty Evaluation Processes

What role do SLOs play?

ACCJC III.A.1.c states that “Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated SLOs have as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in reproducing those outcomes.” In Fall 2008, AS passed a resolution stating that AS would work with ACCJC to clarify the intent of III.A.1.c while affirming opposition to using SLOS in undermining collective bargaining.

The following issues were raised:

I. Facing up to the unpleasant task of giving an unsatisfactory evaluation causes some evaluation processes to be lighter than desired
II. Role of professional plans – when are they warranted, and at what point in the process should they be implemented?
III. Lack of training for faculty in conducting evaluations, and the request for a senate paper that advises the development of training
IV. Unions need to support the faculty who are conducting the evaluation with the same effort as the faculty being evaluated. All colleges reported this as being a problem that increased frustration in the evaluation process.
Friday, Nov 9, 4:00 – 5:00pm  Disciplines List Hearings

SMCCCD gave testimony on three disciplines: Chicano Studies, Teacher Education, and Health Education.

Saturday, Nov 10, 8:20 am – 2:00 pm  Plenary session voting.

This was my first experience with parliamentary procedure and I learned a lot to bring back to my own Senate. One element that I will definitely bring back is the use of Consent Agenda to approve noncontroversial items. This is a time-saver and preserves all faculty’s voices in the provision of pulling any item off the Consent Agenda to be voted by the entire body.

Overall Impressions:

In the midst of it all, I was fully energized and excited by the intense collaboration evident at the State Plenary. Stepping back from all the dizzying activity, I can see the strengths of our Senate as well as our weaknesses. Our strengths are in our numbers and in our commitment. We work doggedly in pursuit of integrity of teaching and learning, and we are quick to point out when we have been wronged. However, our weaknesses lie in our tendency to react and respond rather than lead the way. Right now, I see our Senate reacting out of fear to the dictates of the Student Success Task Force, to the budget, to the ACCJC, and to the UCs and CSUs. We spend more time bristling and complaining at the pervasive negative view of community colleges rather than actively working to disprove it. We are easily manipulated and words are put into our mouths. There are no task forces charged with deepening dialogue among the stakeholders of higher education. I would like to see our Senate enjoy stronger leadership that can mend fences between CCs, UCs, and CSUs and align education towards the goal that we all have – student success. I hope it happens in my lifetime.