

From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2018 1:44 PM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus note

Happy Friday!

This morning as I sat and watched the wind blowing through the trees outside the window, I was struck by the inaccuracy of the weather app on my phone and the information available on the web. According to those sources, it was slightly cloudy, 71 degrees, and without wind. The stark difference in what I was observing and experiencing in comparison to the reports, was a vivid reminder of the importance of our experience in understanding the world around us – including our world of work. I readily admit that I like reports (some might say this is an understatement) and rely heavily on data for informed decision-making. I also have a deep appreciation for the importance of context, institutional knowledge, and changing conditions that serve as additional core elements of informed decision-making. Today however, I am reminded of the importance of critical thinking amid the data and context. It is an affirmation that it is always important to ask – “does this make sense?” After my first 90 days at Cuesta, I am still asking lots of questions and learning through your responses. Thank you for the incredible welcome and support as I strive to understand the intricate details of what makes Cuesta College this unique and exceptional student centered institution.

Campus Safety Report

If you haven't had an opportunity to review the Cuesta College [2018 Annual Security Report](#) I encourage you to do so. The report contains the crime incident reporting required by the Jeanne Clery Act which highlights the safe educational environment of Cuesta College, but it doesn't stop there. The Cuesta College Police Department included an easy to read, how-to manual in support of an informed and active campus community. The report includes emergency procedures, a campus resource guide, and information on sexual assault that is pertinent to our entire campus community. The *2018 Annual Security Report* demonstrates the Cuesta College Police Department's commitment to education, safety, and service.

Accreditation

Among the quality practices set forth in the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges is the implementation of a regular cycle of review to support continuous quality improvement. The Cuesta College [Integrated Planning Manual 2017](#) identifies October as the launch month for Institutional Program Planning and Review (IPPR). As your program or service area engages in the annual or comprehensive review process, you are ensuring that Cuesta College reflects the Standards in our cycle or review, revision, and allocation processes. Over the next eighteen months, the Accreditation Steering Committee will be seeking examples of improved outcomes realized through the Institutional Program Planning and Review process. As you identify increased effectiveness or improved trends in outcomes in your IPPR, sharing those results as evidence in support of our Institutional Self Evaluation Report is a wonderful way to highlight your program.

Guided Pathways

Congratulations to Lara Baxley who joins Heidi Webber to serve as Guided Pathways faculty co-chairs. Cuesta College is among a small group of finalists being considered to join Bakersfield College in the Program Pathways Mapper Pilot. If selected, Cuesta will be one of ten colleges working collaboratively on the

development of a technology tool to support student decision-making within the Guided Pathways framework.

If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.
Milton Berle

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.

Superintendent/President



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From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Friday, August 23, 2019 11:59 AM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus note

Thank you all for a great start to fall 2019! I have enjoyed the events and opportunities to welcome students that the last two weeks have provided. There is such positive anticipation that marks the beginning of a new academic year and it is great to have 2019/20 officially underway.

Accreditation Our external evaluation team visit is scheduled for **September 28 – October 1, 2020**. The Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) has begun to make its way through our participatory governance process and is available for review online on the [accreditation webpage](#). A link is provided on the site to facilitate feedback to the Accreditation Steering Committee and writing team. An iterative writing process is being used that provides multiple opportunities for input throughout the editing phase.

Connect @Cuesta There was an over capacity crowd for the three Connect @Cuesta events, but solutions were found that allowed all to participate. Connect @Cuesta was the first launch of areas of interest as a means of grouping students for a college activity and a step into guided pathways. Thank you to the faculty and classified professionals that made this a successful launch activity for incoming students!

Enrollment Early reports show our FTES to be aligned with fall 2018. This is a measure of success given the two important influences of our move from the high-low-high pattern of enrollment facilitating stability under the old funding model and the impact of AB705 which reduces the number of students required to take sequential levels of mathematics and English. Sections are still being added to accommodate waitlisted students and provide opportunity for late start students.

Power outage A quick reminder of the power outage scheduled for Sunday, August 25th from 6:00 AM – 6:00 PM. As we move into the infrastructure projects portion of Measure L, construction alerts are taking on a new level of importance. The infrastructure projects will impact campus operations and alerts will provide detail to facilitate planning and minimize disruption as much as possible. Please note that our Bond Team works diligently to schedule upgrades and repairs with the least disruption and works directly with those most impacted to formulate solutions. Your patience is appreciated as we make critical upgrades to our power system and roofs!

College governance College Council and the Planning and Budget Committee have already had their first meetings of the year. You can keep up to date with agendas, minutes, and related documents through myCuesta, Sharepoint, and through this [link](#)!

*The most I can do for my friend,
is simply be his friend.*
Henry David Thoreau

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President

From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2019 12:30 PM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus note

The theme of conversation across Cuesta this week was the speed at which this semester is progressing! Today marks completion of the first third of the term and brings a glimpse of autumn hues to the trees on campus. I'm enjoying the need for a sweater on evening walks with the dogs.

Accreditation Preparation continues for our external evaluation team visit on **September 28 – October 1, 2020**. The Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) is available for review online on the [accreditation webpage](#) and you are encouraged to provide input throughout the iterative review and revision process.

Strategic Plan 2020-2023 The [Cuesta College Integrated Planning Manual 2019](#) calls for development of an updated Strategic Plan during fall 2019. A draft is being developed by the Strategic Planning Committee with the intent of incorporating the metrics of the new Local College Vision Goals, adopted by the Board of Trustees to provide alignment and clarity of institutional measures.

Guided Pathways The GPIT (Guided Pathways Implementation Team) continues great work toward realization of areas of interest at Cuesta College. GPIT leaders had opportunity to learn and engage with other faculty leaders at the recent ASCCC Academic Academy in Long Beach and returned with renewed inspiration! You can learn more on the [Guided Pathways](#) website and catch up with minutes and related documents through myCuesta, Sharepoint, and through this [link](#).

Coffee with Jill Thank you for the creative suggestions for naming the coffee and conversation hour. Todd Frederick won the coffee and mug for the very direct, winning name! The first *Coffee with Jill* events were very well attended, thanks for spending time with me and for the great questions. I look forward to the next scheduled *Coffee with Jill* on November 13 & 14 – details to follow.

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.
Mark Twain

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President



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From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Friday, October 25, 2019 9:44 AM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus note

Promise Day was a fabulous introduction of Cuesta College to our local high school seniors. The energy in the gym was contagious and the students were still enthusiastic as they loaded into the buses to return home. Thank you to the wonderful team that made the event possible!

Accreditation The external evaluation visit is now less than a year away, scheduled for September 28 – October 1, 2020. The Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) is making its way through our participatory governance process a Standard at a time and is available for review online on the [accreditation webpage](#). You are encouraged to use the link provided on the site to provide feedback to the Accreditation Steering Committee and writing team. Your careful reading and input are critical to the iterative writing process.

Construction Alerts The Cuesta College Bond Team has updated the format of construction alerts making it easier to identify projects that may impact your area(s) of campus. As work on the fiber connection, roofs, and roadways continues, the newly revised alerts will provide information at-a-glance with visuals. Thank you for your patience as the campus upgrades continue!

Transfer Over the past year, I was a fellow in the UC Davis Wheelhouse. This intensive professional development program for community college CEOs required considerable reading and homework in preparation for the three convenings on the UC Davis campus. Last month, Cuesta College's pursuit of a transfer CSU partner was presented as a case study by Dr. Matthew Miller, Harvard School of Education, and me. It was exciting and very valuable to share our challenge and journey with 17 colleagues from across our system. In particular, it was encouraging to receive feedback from leaders who understand the context of both student transfer opportunity and the SCFF. Later the same day, Gardner Institute announced their research, to be released in 2020, on transfer as a social justice imperative. I am hopeful that this national work will advance our efforts to increase access to transfer for our graduates.

Cuestonian The Cuestonian has returned to a grateful campus! I have heard such wonderful expressions of appreciation for this first edition of the Cuestonian from many of our campus community members. I enjoyed the opportunity to peruse both the paper and [online](#) versions and thoroughly enjoyed my meeting with two engaging reporters yesterday afternoon. Thank you Cyrus Saatsaz for leading this committed group of student journalists.

College governance A reminder, you can keep up to date with agendas, minutes, and related documents through myCuesta, Sharepoint, and through this [link](#)!

The smallest deed is better than the greatest intention.
John Burroughs

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.

Superintendent/President



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From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 1:43 PM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus Note

The fall semester isn't over yet - I just spoke with a group of students enjoying the beautiful sunshine outside of the Success Center while prepping for their *next* final. It was inspiring to see their engagement and hear bits of their collaboration as they fine-tuned their readiness. The students assured me that they were looking forward to the break!

Strategic Plan 2020-2023 Last evening the Board of Trustees received an overview of the Cuesta College 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. Dr. Mark Sanchez highlighted the alignment of the local college Vision for Success goals, Guided Pathways plan, Educational Master Plan, and numerous operational plans which facilitates review of the same metrics as our work to increase completion continues. The Strategic Plan is available [here](#) and will be added to the college plans page soon.

Guided Pathways The Board of Trustees approved the Scale of Adoption Self-Assessment (SOAA) following a presentation by our Guided Pathways Co-Chairs. The 21 page document is a comprehensive assessment of Cuesta's progress in the implementing of Guided Pathways. I encourage you to review the [SOAA](#). It is an elegant snapshot of the work completed, in-progress, and planned for future terms. I am proud of the work of the GPIT and college toward full implementation. The core leaders of our Guided Pathways effort are doing an outstanding job of maintaining intense focus on students in planning and campus engagement!

Construction Alerts Remember to check the construction alerts for details on the planned power and tech outages. Next week will no doubt hold some challenges for us, but the upgrades to our campus services will be worth the short-term interruptions. The [Construction Alerts](#) are linked [here](#) for those who may have missed the email announcements.

Cougar Athletics Due to an unprecedented number of serious injuries, the women's basketball program has been suspended for the season. The difficult decision was made in coordination with the student athletes, league coaches, and the CCCAA. I look forward to seeing Coach Barba and the Cuesta Women's Basketball Team take the floor next season healed and healthy!

Founding Faculty Original, and long-time chemistry instructor, Joe Brundage, recently passed away. Mr. Brundage was hired in 1965 to start a chemistry program and was noted as being really hard, but also the best teacher ever! Joe retired in 2003 after serving as division chair. A lovely tribute that includes his teaching awards is available [here](#).

College governance A reminder, you can keep up to date with agendas, minutes, and related documents through myCuesta, Sharepoint, and through this [link](#)!

Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.

Helen Keller

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.

Superintendent/President



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From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2020 1:29 PM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus note

Congratulations! Our spring semester start was incredibly smooth, positive, and productive. If you haven't been watching our enrollment closely, you may have missed that we moved ahead of spring 2019. In fact, our recent report to the Chancellor's Office predicts that we will exceed our FTES target by more than 100. This is important and encouraging news as the full implementation of the SCFF approaches. Continued growth of enrollment is foundational to our ongoing sustainability and fiscal health, even in light of the revised funding formula.

Promise Champion San Luis Obispo High School senior Katie Cole proudly shares her decision to attend Cuesta College and the advantage of the Cuesta Promise in *Expressions*, the SLO High journalism publication. You can read Katie's opinion piece [here](#). I can't wait to meet Katie on campus next fall!

Future Students Cuesta College automotive technology hosted a competition that drew five local high schools to campus today. The students competed at eleven stations that tested their expertise, then enjoyed the famous Engineering Technology bar b que! Winning students will take home Snap-on Tools and bragging rights. Across the campus in 5401, are high school students engaged in the Career Strategist Workshop co-hosted by Cuesta College and SLO Partners. Students engaged in sessions on LinkedIn profiles, resumes, interview, and job search skills followed by mock interviews. Gayla Jurevich, Regional Director, Employer Engagement, Business Entrepreneurship, and John Stoke Chair Engineering and Technology, are commended for their planning efforts that brought these potential future students to campus.

Special thanks to the entire Cuesta team for the extra effort in service to students during the first week of the term. Our grounds and facilities looked fantastic, our police and safety officers were actively assisting with wayfinding, the ASCC was welcoming students, our technology was up and running, and across all of our sites, programs, and services, everyone was working to meet the needs of new and returning students. I was filled with joy on Tuesday evening, when after a long first day, all of the faces in 3100 were still smiling; counseling faculty, classified professionals, students, and even administrators were smiling as the end of the day drew near. Cuesta College has much to be proud of as week one of spring 2020 rolls to an end!

How glorious a greeting the sun gives the mountains!
John Muir

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President



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From: President
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2020 11:46 AM
Subject: Campus Note

This message is released on behalf of the Superintendent/President.

I am in Santa Rosa for the CEO Symposium, the annual convening of California Community College chancellors and presidents. This morning as introductions were made, an incredible number of participants indicated they were in their first year as college CEO. This was the largest group of new leaders I have seen and officially marked my transition to be included among the long serving presidents. The change from my first Symposium eight years ago when the majority of participants had served more than ten years, to today's group that is primarily comprised of leaders with less than five years of experience, is significant. It is early on the first full day of the Symposium and we are actively engaged in designing ways to increase retention of college leaders to ensure stability of our institutions and opportunity for students. The discussion on the SCFF scheduled for this afternoon will no doubt be lively! I look forward to returning on Monday with additional information to assist with our budget planning.

Scholar Athletes Congratulations to the 2019 Men's Track and Field Team and Coach Brian Locher. The Cougars were selected as a California Community College Athletic Association Scholar Team of the Year and will be recognized at the CCCAA conference in April.

Billboards If you have been on Highway 1 or 101 recently, you have zipped past our new Cuesta College career technical education program billboards. These eye catching billboards have caught the attention of our community and visitors bringing lots of positive comments. The Cloud Computing billboard also brought opportunity for our program to have some great press. You can read the article [here](#).

COVID-19 We continue to closely monitor the Coronavirus information from multiple sources. If you want about COVID-19, including preventative tips for spreading diseases, please _____ We are also frequently updating new information on our _____

The important thing is that your teammates have to know you're pulling for them and really want them to be successful.

Kobe Bryant

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President



From: Jill Stearns
Sent: Friday, March 6, 2020 1:04 PM
To: Jill Stearns
Subject: Campus Note

It's a beautiful afternoon in San Luis Obispo County. Everywhere you look there is a view worthy of a postcard or social media post. I'm enjoying the opportunity to have the doors wide open as I work to assist the accreditation writing team to move the draft nearer to completion. When Dr. Jason Curtis shared with the Board the intent to have the ISER ready for their first read in April, the short time frame for verification of evidence became quite real! Thank you for the excellent work that brought forward such a solid report draft. I am impressed with the direct, yet thorough, responses to the Standards that have made their way through the participatory governance process. There is great progress on this significant report for our comprehensive external evaluation.

Hands-on Hero Early Childhood Education student, Carmen Casteñeda is featured in a *We Are the Care* [video](#) on the First 5 SLO County YouTube Channel. Carmen is currently in the capstone practicum ECE 216 course with instructors Michele Gordon Johnson and Katie Mervin. If you haven't heard, Katie and Michele are working closely with SLOCOE and our county high schools to implement ECE apprenticeships in San Luis Obispo County with funding provided by a CCCCCO grant.

COVID-19 We continue to closely monitor the Coronavirus information from multiple sources, up date plans as appropriate, and take action to maintain a healthy campus. Our custodial team is wiping down all surfaces likely to be touched (tables, chairs, desks, doors, handles, knobs, and fountains) with quaternary disinfectant effective against coronavirus and influenza. Handwashing is the strongest recommended practice for reducing risk of illness.

Wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands.
Mom

Warm regards,



Jill Stearns, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President



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