Discuss how "Academic Excellence" or "Institutional Effectiveness" is defined for MPC.
Accomplishments:
- ✓ Although dialog was not directly focused on this topic, the Academic Senate was actively involved in the evaluation of progress made on 2008-2010 Institutional Goals and on the establishment of the new 2011-2014 Institutional Goals. The new 2011-2014 Institutional Goals state as Goal #1: "Promote academic excellence and student success." Four separate objectives under this goal emphasize the importance of topics such as articulating student success in ways that retain academic integrity and high standards, improving student experiences by supporting instructional quality through efforts to improve, developing and implementing an online learning strategic plan, and implementing ways to be more effective at selecting, hiring, mentoring, and training new faculty and staff. This conversation about the goals stretched over several meetings in the Fall 2010 semester and helped to focus the conversation on academic excellence. We believe that these institutional goals and objectives will set the stage for defining and especially improving academic excellence and institutional effectiveness.

Address Accreditation recommendations on SLOs
- ➢ "Develop and implement a more effective and clearer strategy for integrating SLOs with planning, research and resource allocation efforts. The process should contain an evaluation and improvement component for all educational, academic support, fiscal, technological and human resources."
- ➢ "Complete the process of assessment to guide improvement of student learning"
- ➢ "Complete the process of identifying course-level SLOs and ensure that student information is clear, that SLOs are described, and that students receive syllabi reflective of the identified SLOs
- ➢ "Take steps to ensure that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated SLOs have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes."

Accomplishments:
- ✓ The Academic Senate, in collaboration with AAAG, developed new guidelines for the Program Review Annual Report for Program Review in Academic Affairs. This new Annual Report template represents the last piece of the puzzle in connecting SLO evaluation with the planning and resource allocation process. This connection is commonly called "closing the loop". Since SLOs "live" in program review—because they inform the evaluation of program effectiveness—and program review provides the information to support action plans and resource allocation, the Program Review Annual Report was the obvious place to emphasize this connection. The "Program Reflections" dialog can now be used to directly support action plans delineated on the Program Review Annual Report. Many faculty members appreciate this effort because it represents a "bottom up", or "grassroots" approach to providing rationale for budget-dependent action plans. In the past, cost centers needed to use one of the institutional goals to provide rational for their action plans—a more top-down approach. Now, programs can talk about student learning, record it on the Program Reflections form, and use that conversation about student learning as direct rationale for the action plans. Time has been allotted at the last several flex days for the program reflections dialog, and time is allocated at the upcoming Fall 2011 flex days for this conversation as well.
- ✓ The Academic Senate made a series of three recommendations about SLOs and program review to the administration. We believe that these recommendations represent the final pieces in describing and implementing the SLO process at MPC. The Academic Senate believes that the main task that needs to occur at this time at MPC is that the institution needs to fully engage and participate in the process that has been implemented. The three recommendations are as follows:

- **"Quality" of SLO Dialog** The Academic Senate offers no recommendations on the topic of quality of SLOs or SLO assessment dialog, other than the focus of the dialog should clearly reflect student learning issues. If the administration encounters "concerns" with the quality of dialog recorded on the program reflection forms, then they should confer with the Academic Senate or other faculty-led group on what to do about it.
- **Participation in the Program Reflections Dialog** The Academic Senate recommends that it is the administration's responsibility to ensure that all programs participate in the Program Reflections dialog by deeming the Program Review Annual Reports incomplete without them. Time for engaging in the program reflections dialog is currently provided during flex days.
- **Institutional SLOs** The Academic Senate recommends that MPC's General Education Outcomes (GEOs) serve as MPC's institutional Outcomes. The rationale is that students enroll in MPC for so many different reasons. Some want to complete a program of study whereas others just want to take classes that interest them. Thus, there is no efficient way to establish a set of evaluable institutional SLOs for students who do not engage in our programs and take only random or unrelated courses.

✓ The Academic Senate has also made a recommendation to the MPCTA, the faculty union, on the subject of SLOs in faculty evaluations. The recommendation is as follows:
- **Responding to the Accreditation Recommendation about Evaluations and SLOs** The Academic Senate recommends to the faculty union (MPCTA) that when it comes time to negotiate or discuss faculty evaluation, that there be a clause or prompt about participating in program review. Since SLOs "live in program review, and since program review means evaluating the effectiveness of programs and using the results for improvement, then participating in the program review process implies participation in MPC's SLO process. In this way, MPC can incorporate SLOs into our evaluation without specifically using the term "SLO" and/or implying the use of any student success metrics.

✓ Academic Senate President Fred Hochstaedter presented the complete MPC SLO process from evaluation to planning and resource allocation at the ASCCC (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges) Accreditation Institute on a rainy weekend in March, 2011. The presentation was received very well, maybe even surprisingly well. The audience liked its simplicity, its emphasis on dialog, and its acceptance of qualitative observation at a level equal to quantitative data.

Address Accreditation recommendations on Distance Ed
➤ "Follow through with a plan to design an evaluation process and evaluation tool to provide students an opportunity to evaluate the learning experience specific to online courses."
➤ "Develop clear protocols and strategic goals for distance education learners that meet the institutional outcomes of the college and the ACCJC policy on DE."

Accomplishments:
✓ The Institutional Committee on Distance Education (ICDE) was established to respond to these recommendations.
✓ The ICDE has focused on creating a new district cost center called MPC Online that would fund a faculty distance education coordinator, and an instructional technology specialist. The coordinator will report directly to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
✓ MPC Online has sponsored a few technology software instructional sessions, including an introduction to Camtasia, software that records what a viewer would see on a computer screen to aid in software and computer use training. These sessions have been well attended and well received.

Investigate metrics used to evaluate institutional and program effectiveness to achieve the following objectives:

- ➢ Become better educated about the benefits and problems inherent in the various kinds of data.
- ➢ Be able to talk calmly about metrics and data.
- ➢ Discover whether these metrics can tell us anything important about MPC.

Accomplishments:
- ✓ Well, this seemed like a good idea at the time, but the Academic Senate President failed to follow through in bringing various types of data to the Academic on a regular basis, or even an irregular basis. Other things always seemed more important for the agenda. As our students would say, this was an "Epic Fail".

Investigate ways to increase communication with the adjunct faculty to achieve the following objectives:
- ➢ Improve representation on the Academic Senate
- ➢ Attain greater participation in shared governance activities for those adjunct faculty that are interested
- ➢ Attain a greater diversity of perspective in dialog on academic and professional matters

Accomplishments:
- ✓ An adjunct faculty member is participating in the review and revision of the adjunct faculty hiring procedures
- ✓ Currently two adjunct faculty members serve on the Academic Senate
- ✓ What else am I forgetting here?

Examine, recommend changes if appropriate, and disseminate information in the following areas:
- ➢ **Hiring**
  - Full-time tenure track faculty hiring procedure (this one is almost done)
  - Adjunct hiring procedure
  - Equivalency processes (this one is almost done)
  - Associated board policies on faculty hiring and equivalency
  - Interview techniques?

Accomplishments:
- ✓ Reviewed and carefully considered the proposed full-time faculty hiring procedures at Academic Senate meetings from Sept 16 to November 2. The proposed procedures were developed over the last several years by an Academic Senate subcommittee. These procedures were shared with AAAG as part of the review process.
- ✓ Approved the full-time faculty hiring process and presented them to the board, where they were eventually accepted as well.
- ✓ Convened a sub-committee to review and potentially revise the adjunct hiring processes. This committee consists of three full-time faculty members and a part-time faculty member. Two representatives from Human Resources are participating as well. A draft of proposed part-time faculty member hiring processes is expected in Fall 2011.

- ➢ **New Faculty Orientation and Mentoring**
  - Faculty Handbook
    What should this document include?
    - Information on program review
    - SLOs
    - Basic Skills info
  - Board Policy on Faculty Duties (currently includes "checking mailboxes regularly")
  - Mentoring program
    - o Training for mentors

     o What information is needed by new faculty members?

Accomplishments:
- ✓ A first draft of an explanation of SLOs for the faculty handbook was presented at the final Academic Senate meeting of the year.
- ✓ Suggestions for small revisions were made, and was endorsed by the Academic Senate.

> **Program Review**
- • This one was recently revised, so we don't want to revise the process
- • Perhaps we could encourage training on how to make the existing process as useful as it possibly can be.

Accomplishments:
- ✓ Please see the discussion under SLOs
- ✓ The issue of training was not addressed

Accomplishments not identified in the Goals and Objectives envisioned at the beginning of the year

Flex Days
- ✓ The Academic Senate continued to plan the flex day events and evaluate their effectiveness. Sarah Mawhirter gave the keynote event at the Fall 2010 flex days and it was generally well received. Much discussion ensued on how to increase the prestige of presenting the faculty keynote. Plaques, a more highly esteemed name, and even faculty voting were all ideas that we discussed.
- ✓ The Spring 2011 flex day focused on mental health issues brought to the classroom by students and how faculty might most effectively deal with them. Representatives joined us from College Living Experience and the County Behavioral Health Unit to give breakout session presentations. Had To Be Productions performed a touching and emotionally draining play that portrayed the experiences of veterans and those they interact with upon returning home. Perhaps the most moving experience of the day was the panel composed of MPC veteran students who told their stories of success and challenge. The flex day in general received very favorable evaluations and was viewed as a great success.

Board Policy
- ✓ The Academic Senate continued to review and often revise board policy, especially those policies involving various aspects of curriculum. The Academic Senate is fortunate to have a former Curriculum Advisory Committee chair, as well as other knowledgeable and interested in the way curricular matters are described in board policy.
- ✓ The Academic Senate reviewed the following board policies and returned them to PACC:
    o BP 3010 Program Curriculum and Course Development
    o BP 3105 Pre-requisites and Co-requisites
    o BP 3110 Course Repetition
- ✓ Upon invitation of the Academic Senate, members of the MPC Board of Trustees attended an Academic Senate meeting and engaged in dialog about the Academic Senate's role in formulating board policy. The conversation reinforced the good relations between the board and Academic Senate and improved understanding of their mutual roles in shared governance of the college.

PASS
- ✓ The Academic Senate heard an excellent report on the evaluation of the PASS program from Kim Shirley. The evaluation detailed retention and SLO results from a set of basic skills students who are engaging in our basic skills courses.

"Student Success"

✓ The Academic Senate President gave a presentation about the politicization of "student success", illustrating how funding agencies like the Gates Foundation and Lumina, as well as various governmental and quasi-governmental agencies have a laser-like focus on completions, which may not be the best metric of "student success" for students at the college level.

✓ The laser-like focus on completions as a metric of "student success" has prompted calls for incentivized funding for the CCCs where colleges would be funded based not on number of students attending, but the number of completions or other similar metrics.

✓ The Academic Senate is worried about these performance-based funding plans because of the potential for erosion of academic quality and integrity. In an incentive-based system, it would be very easy for faculty members to pass more of their students.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Hochstaedter
MPC Academic Senate President