I attended the Scorecard Advisory Group meeting at the Chancellor's Office in Sacramento on Monday, October 27. These meetings have proven to be quite interesting, although I am frequently reminded about how slow the bureaucracy is.

If you recall, my first meeting a year ago was quite a heady experience. The letter I had written to Chancellor Brice Harris suggesting improvements to the scorecard based on its year 1 appearance became the agenda at that meeting, and the committee agreed that all those improvements should be implemented. Then the year 2 scorecard came out, and very few actually got made. But things take time at the Chancellor's Office. At the meeting yesterday, we went over changes to the year 3 scorecard, and almost all of my suggestions have been implemented. Included in those changes are (1) the addition of the demographics of the six year cohort; (2) a better explanation of the difference between the six year cohort and the current student demographics that appear on the profile page; (3) the inclusion of the prepared/unprepared student ratio in the college for the six year cohort; and (4) the addition of the n's that give rise to the percentages on the tables.

Two other topic areas from my initial list are in the pipeline for inclusion, but probably not ready for presentation in this year's scorecard: (1) a method for conveying to scorecard readers the very small numbers of students who are represented on the scorecard (for example, the people on MPC's scorecard sum to a maximum of 6% of our students in the first year of the cohort, leaving 94% of that year's student population unaccounted for); and (2) a method of reconciling the percentages on the completion pages with the percentages in the metrics (most districts in the system currently display the impossible relationship of having more people finish than getting halfway there).

That took up the morning. In the afternoon, several new topics were raised:

Revisions to the CTE category were discussed. While the rest of the pages are based exclusively on first-time students, the decision had been made to allow for previous students to appear on the CTE pages. Going through the data, Ryan Fuller at the Chancellor's Office found a number of students on the CTE scorecard who were counted as successes because they previously attended community college long enough to appear transfer-ready, but who did not earn an appropriate CTE-related outcome during the course of the six years in this cohort. We agreed that this paints a false picture of CTE success. We decided to exclude those prior achievements for those students, which will have the result of making it appear that CTE success has dropped in future years compared to the first two years of the scorecard. Systemwide, this artifactual decrease will be in the 3-4% range.

We also discussed adding apprenticeships to the scorecard. While relatively few colleges do apprenticeships, those who have them tend to have a lot of them; it is an important part of their student populations, and an important category of successes currently absent from the scorecard. One interesting problem is that some

apprenticeships appear to take longer than six years to conclude, which creates difficulties regarding the six year window for the cohort.

The skill builder metric was discussed in detail. Skill builders are people who come for a couple of courses, and leave apparently satisfied without earning a certificate. The classic example is someone who needs a couple of accounting classes to get a raise and promotion. He/she takes the classes, gets the raise and promotion, and has no need to come back afterwards for more classes. The proof of the category is that wages increase significantly after these students leave their colleges, and it turns out that we can easily track that increase in wages through Social Security Number-based databases. Initial work on this population had been done by Ryan Fuller this past year, using the goals checkoff list filled out by all entering students. For this presentation, the population was further broadened to include people who behaviorally look like skill builders from their course-taking patterns (meaning passing a couple of courses and then leaving). The addition of these behaviorally-determined entrants into the group more than doubles the size of the group, but that addition appears (at least to me) to wash out the results a bit – I think because the behavioral definition allows for the inclusion of "traditional" students who stay a semester or two and then drop out. Nonetheless, this remains a promising direction to go, and will result (when all the bugs are worked out) in a new category of students for the scorecard, and the appropriate shifting of those students from apparent failures on the scorecard to successes.

On a closely-related issue, we briefly discussed again the Chancellor's Office's normal usage of only behavioral (course-taking) data to categorize students, and the complete discounting of any attitudinal data for that purpose. Before I was invited to the committee, a previous member had persuasively argued that attitudinal data are meaningless and should not be used. On the other hand, like most research psychologists, my career was spent uncovering the links between attitudes and behaviors; I know that attitudes can be powerful predictors of behavior. If the check-off list doesn't work, it is better to fix the list than to continue to reject the idea of using questionnaire data to analyze course-taking behaviors. Vice Chancellor Patrick Perry, who is responsible for the scorecard, indicated that the Chancellor's Office will be working on a revised set of questions based on categories he now knows to be relevant.

Lastly we discussed first-generation college students. There was no resistance in the group to adding this demographic variable to the current student profile section of the scorecard. This is also a work in progress, as until recently we had not been capturing that particular information, and where we currently capture it is not in a location that students are required to fill out.

I look forward to continuing on the Scorecard Advisory Committee; it's been fun and fruitful work.