

Senate Forum

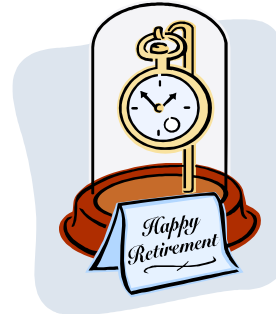
Volume XVIII, Number 2, Spring 2003

A publication of the Academic Senate, California State University, Fullerton

Making CSUF an Even Better Place: Alternatives to Whatsits and Tchotchkes

By *Helen Jaskoski*

My recommendation offers an alternative to the mementos now distributed for faculty longevity. I thought I had collected the full complement: a pen-&-pen set, a clock, and a glass elephant. The pen set and clock had some utilitarian promise, but failed to perform. The pen holders fell off the little marble slab a few months after the presentation ceremony, so I phoned the president's office to inquire about maintenance. A curt referral to a local trophy company led to an offer of a couple of double-sided sticky squares. The solution didn't look long-term, but anyway turned out to be irrelevant as the



left-hand holder filled with gelatinous goo leaking from the pen. Unwilling to invest more time and money, especially in view of persistent encouragement to get on-line and be

electronic, I threw out the pens and gave the slab to Goodwill, envisioning some child constructing a Hobbitt tombstone. The clock is nice looking, but has never worked. At one point, it ran backwards. In any case, after a jeweler's futile attempt at corrective action, I'm seeking a museum for pre-digital appliances to which I can make a donation. The elephant, closest to the ideal of art for its own sake, may paradoxically end up being the most functional; it will probably become a hostess gift to my son's girlfriend's uncle's widow, a lady I have never met but who, I am told, maintains a collection of carved elephants.

Continued page 2

Inside this issue

- 2 **What Has Your Academic Senate Done for You Lately?** *Lee Gilbert*
- 4 **And the Rooster Said, “___-a-Doodle-Do!”** *Sandra Sutphen*
- 5 **What Are You Guys Doing to My E-mail?** *Mike Parker and Dick Bednar*
- 8 **Cultural Corner: Ese Gesto** *Lydia Vélez*
- 9 **The Economics of the University: A Tale of Two Curves** *David Wong*
- 14 **Community Voices: Replies to the Senate Forum** *Barry Mednick, Gerald E. Gannon, Jack Bedell, Kathy Brzovic, Jerome S. Arkenberg, Maryalyce Jeremiah*
- 16 **Shaping the Student Body** *Judith Anderson*

The issue seemed trivial until my husband received, six months after retirement, a package containing a curved piece of glass about eight inches high and a foot long with his name and the dates of his service engraved on it. What this thing is called I don't know, but it is an object of unparalleled pointlessness: awkward, ugly, fragile, and hazardous. As my own retirement draws nearer and with it the possibility of getting one of these whatsits, I cannot help but entertain the thought that we could have used the money spent—however much or little it was—in other ways.

Therefore, in the spirit of improving campus life and morale, here's what I would like the administration to do for me, should I become eligible for further keepsakes, and for every deserving faculty member. After computing the cost of buying, engraving, boxing, and sending the article, deposit the money in a CSUF Foundation fund for English department student scholarships, and give me a receipt that I can present to the IRS to document my donation to a bona fide educational enterprise. It would be (and would have been) a solution for me, but it may not please everyone. Having

bleating from speakers in the bookstore, that could make CSUF, in the words of the invitation to submit this piece, “an even better place to teach and learn.” ❧

Helen Jaskoski has been on the English/Comparative Literature faculty since 1970. She has published widely on multi-ethnic American literature and is working on studies of post-colonialism and anti-imperialism in literature and a set of poems about current ground zero, her home town of San Pedro.

What Has Your Academic Senate Done for You Lately?

By Lee Gilbert

One of the suggestions to come out of the breakout session on the *Senate Forum* held as a part of Faculty Day was to include in each edition a summary of recent Senate actions and a preview of pending items on the Senate agenda. By so doing, we hope to keep the community better aware of the issues the Senate is dealing with and to encourage more active participation by all members of the community in Senate meetings.

Recent Policy Actions

Recent Senate meetings have seen the usual mix of policy proposals, degree proposals, and course proposals. On the policy side, we approved a draft policy on on-line distance learning which seeks to bring the approval of on-line courses and programs into line with the way “regular” courses and programs are approved. In addition, several policies coming out of the Graduate Education Committee were approved. These included policies on the composition of departmental graduate committees, the staffing of graduate courses, and guidelines for culminating experiences in graduate programs.

What exactly is a “tchotchke?”

Main Entry: **tchotch-ke**

Pronunciation: 'chäch-k&, 'tsäts-

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Yiddish *tshatshke* trinket, from obsolete Polish *czaczko*

Date: 1971

: **KNICKKNACK, TRINKET**

Merriam-Webster On-Line Dictionary
www.m-w.com

the choice is what counts. I think that anyone who has lasted 25 years or longer at CSUF and is eligible for one of these tchotchkes should have that choice: receive the designated item or have the donation made. This is a minor matter, but one of those things, like not having music

New Degree Programs, Courses

Following review and recommendation by the Senate's Graduate Education and Planning Resource and Budget Committees, the Senate also approved two new degree programs. The first of these is a Master of Public Health, an interdisciplinary program designed to prepare public health professionals to draw on knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines to define, critically assess, evaluate, and resolve public health issues. The second marks a "first" at CSUF, a joint Ed. D. (with UCI) in Educational Leadership designed to develop professionals prepared to apply critical skills of analysis, inquiry, research, and evaluation to both practice and policy in K-12 education. Course approvals included a variety of courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level. The Senate also approved a name change for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, henceforth to be known as the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures.

Campus Enrollment Cap and Master Plan

Most recently, the topic of enrollment growth has been front and center on the Senate's agenda. The immediate impetus for this discussion was a visit by Jay Bond to the Senate on October 31 to bring the Senate up-to-date on the on-going review of the proposed new master plan for the campus. Included in the revised master plan for the campus is a proposal to raise the enrollment cap (set in 1962) from 20,000 to 25,000. Following Jay's presentation to the Senate, the master plan and enrollment cap increase were addressed by the Senate. Discussion took place over two meetings and culminated in the approval in February of a resolution in support of the revised master plan including the proposal to raise the enrollment cap of the campus.

Upcoming Business

In the pipeline at this point are several significant policy proposals including

- Draft policies on intellectual property rights as they relate, among other things, to courses and related materials developed by faculty members. We anticipate that the committee will issue two draft policies, one relating to copyright and the other relating to patents.
- A draft e-mail policy, which addresses, among other things, questions of privacy, university access to faculty/staff e-mail accounts under certain circumstances and general guidelines on the appropriate use of e-mail.
- Revisions to UPS 210.001 Recruitment of Faculty to allow non-tenured faculty to serve on departmental search committees.
- A proposed new emphasis in Teacher Induction in the Master of Science in Education with a Concentration in Secondary Education.

As always, the Senate extends an open invitation to all members of the community to attend our meetings and to weigh in on any issue of interest and/or concern. We value your input! ☺



Lee Gilbert came to CSUF in the fall of 1970. He has served in a variety of capacities including chair of the Department of Modern Languages & Literatures and Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs in H&SS. For the last four years, Dr. Gilbert has been a member of the Academic Senate Executive Committee.

And the Rooster Said, “____-a-Doodle-Doo”

By Sandra Sutphen

My field is emergency management, and I am a regular participant in the Orange County Emergency Management Organization, a group of city, county, and state officials who meet on a monthly basis to share information. In January, I attended an amazing presentation about the threat posed by Exotic Newcastle Disease, a deadly virus that is sweeping through (and destroying) the poultry farms in Southern California, particularly in Riverside and San Bernardino counties.



I have friends who rescue fowl—chickens, ducks, geese—and I felt compelled to share what I’d learned. I knew they knew a lot already; they had told me how worried they were for their pets. But I’d learned some facts new to me about how the disease is spread. It was “discovered” in a backyard in Compton among “game birds,” the euphemism for fighting cocks. Conducting fights is illegal in California, but raising fighting cocks is not. (Go figure.) I put all this information in an e-mail to them, and hit “send.”

I got back a peculiar message: “Outlook can’t deliver this message because it contains an attachment and attachments breed viruses.” Or some such; I’m reciting from memory. But, thought I, there is no attachment. Okay, I’ll send it again. The same message appeared. When I got home, I tried to send it again through Netscape (don’t ask me why),

forgetting that even though I wasn’t using Outlook, I was still using the Exchange server. I called the Help Desk, thinking that the return had something to do with the address of my friend. I called my friend, but he said he was getting mail just fine. Ah, well, the Help Desk would help. And it did.

My e-mail was blocked because I used the word “cock” in my message. Everyone was very apologetic (see Mike Parker and Dick Bednar’s article on page 5). Certain words are unacceptable. I can understand that; I’m not real keen on getting sleazy e-mails myself. I asked: “What are those words, and why don’t we tell the campus what they are so that we can avoid using them?” I was told that would be too helpful to those nasty perverts off-campus who are bound and determined to send us dirty e-mail. “Why can’t we at least tell the campus what is happening?” I asked. Too revealing to those slime bags who will then find ways around our blocking protocols. “But, why did I get this stupid message about some ‘attachment’ when I hadn’t used an attachment?” Okay...that can be changed. And it is. Now, when your e-mail going off-campus is blocked, you get a message telling you exactly which word you used that triggered the censor.

I’m not content, however. First of all, the decision to censor has never been widely discussed by the campus as a whole. Instead, Information Technology has responded to some unknown number of folks who get offended when they see a “dirty” word or picture. Second, I think IT suspected we wouldn’t like censorship so they invented this “story” about “attachments.” That suggests a calculated plan to manipulate me, and that really bothers me. And finally, even though I can send dirty words to anyone on campus when I’m using Outlook, I still can’t send them off-campus, and I think that inhibits my ability to express myself creatively. (Yeah, well, that’s what I’m calling it, anyway.)

So, that's part of what is going on. Others may have had similar experiences, but because we've never had a full-blown discussion, we really don't know. Perhaps these experiences will trigger that kind of discussion. ↻



Sandra Sutphen, professor of political science, is immediate past chair of the CSUF Academic Senate. She is currently director of the Faculty Development Center.

“What Are You Guys Doing to My E-mail?”

By Mike Parker and Dick Bednar

Sandy provides us a provocative article recounting her adventure with e-mail filtering. Although it's clear from her article that Information Technology is “doing things” in regard to e-mail, you may be wondering what is going on, why, and what we are doing about it. It is also an opportunity to look seriously at the complex issues surrounding unwanted e-mail and spam, unwanted web advertising (including pop-ups), network and computer hacking, message attachments that allow viruses, worms, Trojan

horses, and distributed “denial of service” attacks, to be placed on your computer and do their damage¹. Of course, standard criminal activity using computers—such as theft and identity theft—are in the news every day.

The Internet, with all the world's networks, is probably the most complex system ever created. The technological problem with complex systems, however, is that they have emergent properties—that is, properties and effects that cannot be anticipated by the inventors. For example, when Alexander G. Bell invented the telephone he thought that the phone would be a good way to alert telegraphers that a message was on the way! He never dreamed that it would change the culture and the way we communicate. Network computing and Internet have produced unintended effects as well: a wired world, virtual sex, on-line auctions, e-commerce, and cyber-crime. None of these was anticipated when the defense industry and universities created the Internet.

It is generally agreed that these sorts of vulnerabilities will continue as new products/versions/technologies are introduced with bugs only uncovered later. With the goal of providing an environment of learning, research, and productivity in mind, CSUF IT is focused on an ongoing assessment of system vulnerabilities.

For example, the SQL Slammer worm, exploiting vulnerability in SQL Server 2000 that was discovered and patched by Microsoft six months ago, flooded the Internet with traffic and infected thousands of Internet database servers the weekend of January 24th. The memory-resident worm caused what is known as a Denial of Service condition on many of these machines causing many segments of the Internet to come to a grinding halt, especially in the United States and South Korea. Victims of the worm included Bank of America, whose customers were not able to withdraw cash from 13,000 ATM machines, Continental Airlines,

1Primer: The Dark Side of E-mail

Active attacks may modify files—change an e-mail message, change budget information. Often active attacks do not require password break in. They are hidden software that one unwittingly lets into a computer. The extensive use of e-mail makes them propagate well, perhaps infecting millions of machines per hour. These can also be used in denial of service attacks where the hacker takes over infected computers and has them all contact a specific web site and server at a particular time. As hundreds of thousands of messages arrive at once, the server cannot handle them and crashes.

Viruses are strings of computer code that attach themselves to another computer program. Once attached, the virus installs itself in memory and replicates using the computer's resources and is unwittingly sent to other computers. Macros or scripts, the most common type of virus, were originally designed as mini-programs to tell a word processor or spreadsheet to automatically do something. Viruses use the same technology to manipulate a computer and to replicate themselves on other connected computers. Recently polymorphic viruses, which change their form so that anti-virus software cannot identify and remove them, have been created. It has been mathematically proven that new viruses can be devised that any existing level of anti-virus software would be unable to stop.

Trojan horses are programs that secretly install themselves and watch the computer's activities—waiting for something to occur—watching the keyboard buffer waiting for a credit card number and then sending that number to someone. *Back Orifice* (a play on Microsoft's *Back Office* software) allows a remote user to take control of a computer, look up information, or run programs, or collect passwords and user names.

Worms are completely separate programs that can be programmed to do damage to a computer and to transfer themselves to other computers. One type can be sent as an attachment to an e-mail message that looks up all the addresses on a computer and e-mails itself to the rest.

whose entire reservation system was brought to a standstill, J.P. Morgan Chase, and 200 developers at Microsoft itself.

Last June, when the vulnerability was detected and released and the Chinese exploit code surfaced, the CSUF IT began to take steps to mitigate our exposure to attack. Our first step was to block direct off-campus access to Microsoft SQL 2000 servers. This first step had little to no impact on campus users because our users have no need to connect to on-campus SQL servers remotely. Our second step was to alert appropriate system administrators to the issues and the availability of a Microsoft security patch. Primarily because of our first step, the campus did not have a single instance of infection. Not a single instance!

“Can’t somebody STOP this stuff?”

Information Technology receives desperate pleas almost every week asking, “Can’t somebody STOP this stuff?” The reasons given for action are familiar: Unwanted messages consume valuable network and server resources. Getting rid of unwanted messages takes up precious time, which detracts from the time available to surf the Internet looking for jokes and cool things to forward to others on campus. (It may even reduce the amount of time available to do “real work.”) Forcing employees to open messages with pornographic content may be construed as creating a “hostile workplace,” which would present a liability to the University. Opening pornographic

Continued next page



Michael Parker, Chief Information Technology

Officer, has served as a member of the Academic Senate from 1976-1980 and from 1996-present.

messages might be construed as improper activity which could lead to disciplinary action. And, finally, many people find unwanted messages truly distressing and are begging for relief.

The campus quandary centers on how we should attempt to reduce the number of unwanted messages, especially those that are offensive to so many people and create liabilities for the institution. Recently, IT began experimenting with a feature of our antivirus gateway software that allows us to create primitive filters. So far, we've created about a dozen, based in each instance on pleas from individuals. (We'd reproduce them here, but that would make this issue of the Senate Forum truly a collector's item!)

One of these filters was designed to block certain graphic messages advertising products to create a large male body part. Unfortunately, the same terminology was being used by a respected faculty member to communicate about Newcastle disease among large roosters in San Bernardino. (Think of a common name for rooster.) The software had not been configured correctly to inform the sender of what triggered the filter, so it was impossible to modify the message into one that would go through. That configuration issue has since been fixed.

This whole thing is not going to be resolved quickly or easily. In addition to balancing enough issues to make Solomon offer to take a sword to our e-mail system, there are limitations on what the technology can achieve, especially if there are limits to how much the University can spend on this issue.

Technology in this area is imperfect. Several tools are currently being used, and we're experimenting with a number of others. First, every message into and out of the University is scanned against a list of about 50,000 viruses.



Dick Bednar has been with the campus for 30 years, with a career that includes Business Finance, instructional computing, data networks, office automation, email, Internet connections, micro, mini, and mainframe

computing, telephone systems, wiring, and voice recognition. He is now orchestrating another upgrade to the campus network infrastructure and searching for ways to prevent unwanted email.

We don't allow them in because we can't afford the havoc that they cause internally. We don't let them out because that creates a liability for the University.

Information Technology receives desperate pleas almost every week asking, "Can't somebody STOP this stuff?"

Second, any attachment that can "execute automatically" is blocked. These include

programs (*.exe files), scripts, and command files. This step protects against new viruses that have not been added to the antivirus database yet.

Third, mail from known SPAM sites is rejected. These are mostly e-mail hosts that are configured incorrectly and permit unacceptable behavior. There is a tiny chance of incorrect rejection, so each time a message is rejected, the sender is informed of the reason and how to remedy the situation.

Finally, Microsoft Outlook is configured not to open certain types of attachments because they have the potential to do damage before antivirus software can examine them. Ordinary Word, Excel, or picture files are not blocked.

What we'd LIKE to do, and what prompted Sandy's experience, is to block all unwanted messages while passing through all messages that people should receive. Once we have a

solid effort going to reduce unwanted and inappropriate e-mail, we will consider our options with regard to controlling those annoying "pop up" windows that appear on web pages.



Our University is taking the same steps to mitigate the unwanted aspects of Internet use as other institutions in America, and the task is not going to be quick, easy, or without inconvenience. We will be asking for advice from the Academic Senate as well as from administrative groups and legal counsel. ✍

Cultural Corner

ESE GESTO

Lydia Vélez

Solo nos falta un gesto que se trague
los horrores y el llanto de esta tierra.
Y entonces les pediremos a las brigadas
más antiguas que fertilicen las siembras
en los ojos estampados de muerte o soledad,
porque aunque la palabra oficial cierre las puertas
con cadenas de sones y tertulias,
no habrá paz para ese hombre montado
en la silla de mandar,
no habrá paz a menos que las talas
revienten de frutos en las montañas boricuas
o en las favelas del Cristo de Sal en Sao Paulo

No es posible bostezar con la calma del profeta
ni arrellanarnos a contar los chismes de las tías.
Con qué valor mirarnos a los ojos y decir
sin pestañear, que todo está bien,
que cómo no, hasta luego,
ya me esperan

Lydia Vélez is assistant professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. In addition to numerous essays and poems, she has published two volumes of poetry, Memoria de escribanas and Osadia de Los Soles Tuncos/ Daring of the Brief Suns.

THAT GESTURE

Trans. Angela McEwan

All we need is a gesture that swallows up
the horror and weeping of this land.
And then we will ask the oldest brigades
to fertilize the plantings
in eyes imprinted with death or loneliness,
because even though official statements close doors
with chains of tunes and orchestras,
peace will never come to that man
who sits in the chair of power,
there will be no peace unless the furrows
burst with fruit in the puerto rican mountains
or in the shanties of Cristo de Sal in Sao Paulo.

It is not possible to yawn with the impassivity of the
prophet
nor gather to retell old gossip.
How dare we look ourselves in the eye and say
unblinkingly that everything is okay,
that of course, see you later,
they're waiting for me now.



On the Economics of the University: A Tale of Two Curves

By David Wong

The university is clearly a productive enterprise (firm) like any other in the wider society. It differs from other enterprises only in its objectives, the way that it is funded, and the specific constraints under which it operates. Given this, the university can be analyzed by the same techniques used to analyze other business firms.

My objective is to construct a simple model of the economics of the university and to use it to analyze in a purely qualitative way some of the major issues that the university is facing at this time. Quantitative analysis requires numbers, and since I have none, I can only indicate the type of numbers that we need to analyze and evaluate critically the university's operation. Although I do not disagree with Aristotle's observation that we are all political animals, let me say that my motivation in writing this note is purely academic, which I hope will not be taken to mean irrelevant. As I will indicate below, there is plenty of politics in this academic note on economics, but it is not my intention to discuss political points unless they have something to do with the economics of the university.

A Model of the University

As a state university, Cal State Fullerton is assumed to be seeking to maximize the number of students that it educates. This means that the university leadership is actually seeking to provide the citizens of the state with maximum access to higher education, which is its charge, and hence there is no principal-agent conflict between the political goal-setters and the

university leadership. The university is also assumed to maintain a high quality of education in all of its educational programs.

Let the full cost of providing the specified level of educational quality to N students be given by

$$C(N) = F + c(N), c' \geq 0, c'' \geq 0, \quad (1)$$

where the full cost of educating the students includes a fixed cost component, F , and a variable cost component, $c(N)$. The fixed cost component is the total of the costs of using and maintaining the fixed structures of the university, the classroom and lab equipment, the university insurance, the salaries and benefits of tenured professors and other employees on long-term contracts, the necessary electricity usage, and other overhead charges. The variable cost component includes the salaries and benefits of non-tenured faculty and support staff and the cost of teaching supplies, student support services and facilities, etc. The cost function (1) reflects the organizational structure of the university and the quality of the education that it seeks to provide. Generally, costs rise at a non-decreasing rate with production, and they rise very sharply when plant capacity is approached. University costs can be lowered by restructuring the way things are done and/or by lowering the quality of the education that the university provides to its students.

The total revenue of the university is assumed to be given by the function

$$R(N) = B + r(N), r' \geq 0, r'' \geq 0, \quad (2)$$

where B is a fixed baseline payment from the state and $r(N)$ is the total payment of the state to the university for educating N students plus the tuition fees and charges paid by the students themselves. University revenues rise at a non-decreasing rate as more students are admitted to campus under the present funding formula. (In a purely private enterprise, revenues would

tend to increase at a decreasing rate because of market saturation as more output is sold. However, for a state university with low-priced education, the demand for university places is growing instead of saturating.)

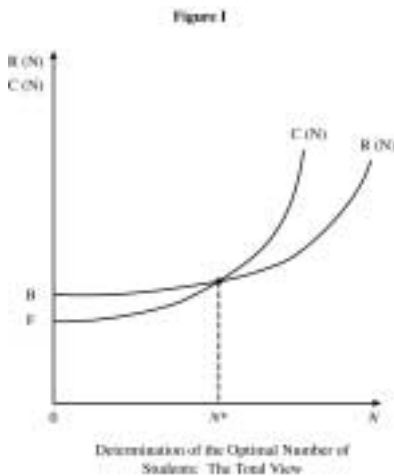
The university is constrained to operate with a balanced budget while meeting its objective of maximizing access without reducing educational quality. This requires the fulfillment of the following condition:

$$R(N) \geq C(N), \quad (3)$$

for all values of N .

The basic problem faced by the university is to select the maximum value of N that satisfies the condition (3). This is the problem of finding the maximum root of the budget equation, $R(N) - C(N) = 0$, i.e.,

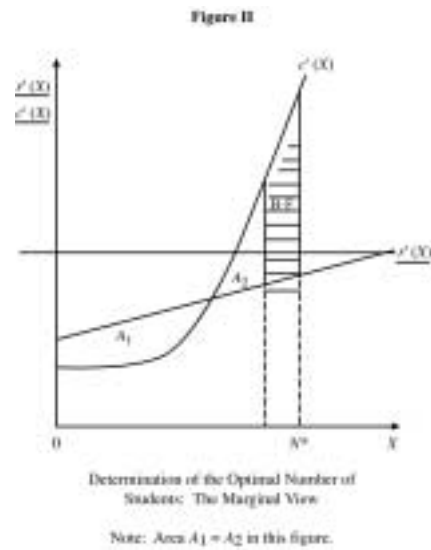
$r(N) - c(N) + B - F = 0$. This solution is illustrated in Figure I. Since both curves are increasing in N , necessarily total cost, $C(N)$, must rise faster than total revenue, $R(N)$, in order to ensure a finite solution. Needless to say, real problems necessarily have real solutions so that total cost must behave as shown in the graph.



An alternative and useful way of viewing the same problem is that the university must select the maximum value of N to solve the inequality,

$$\int_0^N [r'(X) - c'(X)] dX \geq F - B. \quad (4)$$

Condition (4) is entirely equivalent to condition (3) by the fundamental theorem of the calculus. However, it is more convenient for some purposes in analyzing the problems of the university. In condition (4), the function, $r'(X)$, is the marginal revenue (additional revenue) from serving one more student when already serving X students. The function, $c'(X)$, is the marginal cost (additional cost) of serving one more student when you are already serving X students. The integral on the left side of (4) adds up the surpluses and deficits of marginal revenue over marginal cost from 0 up to N . Since marginal cost necessarily exceeds marginal revenue after some point due to the law of diminishing returns, the integral on the left side of (4) must become negative as N increases. However, the right side of (4), which is a definite negative number, sets a limit on the size of the overall deficit. The solution to this version of the problem is shown in Figure II.



Lest we conclude that this simple model is too simplistic, let me say that the position of the $R(N)$ curve in Figure I is determined by politics and economics at the state and system level of CSU. The current crisis in the fiscal position of the state is forcing the total revenue

curve down in the picture, as we all know. The position of the $C(N)$ curve and, especially, how fast it rises, is determined by the internal politics and economics of Cal State Fullerton. I deal with some of these issues below.

Analysis of the Model

Formal analysis of the model, what economists call comparative static analysis, is almost trivial. It gives the following two propositions:

(1) If the revenue curve, $R(N)$, shifts up *ceteris paribus*, then the optimal number of students for the university will increase and if it shifts down, the optimal number of students will decrease.

(2) If the cost curve, $C(N)$, shifts up *ceteris paribus*, then the optimal number of students will decrease; if it shifts down, the optimal number of students will increase.

That is all there is to it as abstract economics. The fun or grief—remember old Thomas Carlyle’s “dismal science”—comes when we discuss the scenarios under which the curves shift up and down, and this is the locus of our everyday life.

Politics, Economics, and Policy

Statewide political and economic forces affect the determination of the revenue curve in a big way. The state of the economy, the governor, the legislature, the board of trustees, the chancellor, the CFA, and lobbyists of all stripes play a role in the final determination of the revenue curve. From all the news reports and the rumors, we are very likely to have a steep reduction in the revenue function of the university in the near future. Even so, we can expect that political pressure will be exerted on the university to maintain or even to increase its enrollment due to very high student demand for higher education. Since this can be done only by a sharp reduction in costs to offset the

revenue loss, there will naturally be severe external pressure on the university administration to cut costs.

Cost is perhaps the subtlest and most unwelcome of economic categories. Sadly, we, as faculty, staff and administrators, are the main costs of the university, which is a very labor-intensive service operation. Cutting costs means cutting our effective salaries, benefits, and other resources available to us for effective teaching and scholarly activities. Although many elements of faculty and staff costs are fixed by union agreements, tenure, and so

forth, redesigning work and job assignments can squeeze more work out of the same resources and thereby lower marginal costs. The polite economic phrase for this is called increasing labor productivity.

However, there are limits to increasing labor productivity and there is another way of increasing the number of students that are “educated” with lower revenues while maintaining overall cost, i.e., to provide a lower quality education. In terms of mathematical economics, we simply rescale the N axis so that the new scale has a smaller unit, i.e.,

$$N = (1 - \alpha)\tilde{N}, \quad (5)$$

where \tilde{N} is the number of lower quality educated students and $\alpha > 0$ is a parameter that reflects the extent of degradation of educational quality. This latter solution is a version of “you pretend to pay us and we pretend to work.” It is often appealing to some pragmatic and “realistic” politicians, administrators, and faculty because it not very easy to detect the adulteration of educational quality (debasement of the currency) in the short term and tough times call for tough measures, and so forth. This is a dangerous solution, but it is inevitable when trying to do more with fewer resources

“The excessive growth of bureaucracy at the university is a telltale sign of the fact that we have grown too big already.”

unless one can genuinely raise labor productivity.

Other avenues of short-term cost savings, such as delaying scheduled maintenance of plant and equipment, reducing precautionary budgetary reserves, and delaying payments of due bills to suppliers of goods and services to the university, are questionable economies and probably also unethical economies in that they force others, who cannot adequately defend themselves, to bear part of the university's cost reductions. Overall, all measures to cut cost will find opponents, some outspoken and some silent, and enforcement of cost-cutting measures will require close monitoring at all levels (monitors will have to be monitored) due to principal-agent relationships at all levels in the complex organization which is the university.

Implications for Policy

Policy discussions at the university should ideally be placed within the context of the above model of political economy so that the proper trade-offs are considered in the formulation of specific policies. I hate to repeat the hackneyed phrase, but there is really no free lunch. I will indicate where I think that some of the existing policy discussions at the university fit into the above scheme.

First, clearly, the proposed master plan is aimed at increasing the plant and equipment at the university. Assuming the existence of proper funding, its implementation will increase the ability of the university to serve more students. This will raise the fixed cost of the university and, if it is a good plan, lower the marginal cost of serving students. We need to examine the plan from both standpoints. What will it do to the fixed costs and how much real reduction in

marginal cost will it allow? Discussions of the impact of the proposed plan on the "quality of campus life" for students and faculty and of the ease of entry to and exit from campus, parking, and so forth are very important elements in estimating the full effect of the master plan on overall university costs. As I said above, costs are subtle and some costs are subjective.

Nevertheless, they are real costs and they have real effects on people's choice and behavior. Some people may not want to work in an environment that they view as ugly and unsafe. Hence, the costs of operating the expanded facilities may rise more than expected if the facilities expansion plan

is unsound. It should therefore surprise no one that budgetary issues and indirect questions about the number of students that the university can serve before the educational quality and quality of campus life begin to decline surfaced in the Academic Senate at its December 6th meeting. Nor should it surprise anyone that questions were raised about the short-run costs due to dislocations, noise, and congestion on campus during the implementation phase of the plan.

Second, consider the issues related to the composition of the faculty and, specifically, the optimal mix of temporary and permanent faculty and their appropriate work assignments. Clearly, these issues affect operational costs and educational quality in a very critical way. They significantly affect the organizational politics of the university and therefore the incentive of faculty to participate in university decision-making, and they raise problems of monitoring the quality of instruction and compliance with university GE requirements and so on. Temporary full-time and part-time faculty have little to gain from participating in university committee work and, even if some of

Personally, as a teacher with almost 30 years experience at several institutions, I think that the educational quality at Cal State Fullerton is not only threatened, it is already in decline!

these faculty members do participate in university work, as some of them do, their perspective is necessarily more myopic than that of permanent faculty. Moreover, many departments treat temporary and part-time quite differently from permanent faculty in terms of teaching assignments and the resources that they receive to support teaching and scholarship.

Finally, let me consider one more trying issue at the university—increasing bureaucracy—to illustrate the tangled tale of the two curves. At first sight this appears to be a pure political issue. However, it is not. Moreover, understanding it is very important for understanding the point at which we have arrived at the university.



As the university, like other firms, expands beyond its optimal scale, coordination of its many operational activities becomes much more difficult and its costs shoot up rapidly. Economists refer to this phenomenon as diseconomies of scale, and point out that there are definite limits to organizational growth. In an attempt to grow beyond their

optimal size, firms build up complex bureaucracies to monitor and control lower-level units in their organization—centralization replaces the autonomy of lower level units in the organization and costs continue to mount because of incentive problems and principal-agent problems at all levels of the organization. I hate to point out to my colleagues that tenure and other types of employment security schemes create what economists call moral hazard problems and thus reduce work incentives for employees with secure jobs.

Participation in university decision-making leads to a desire for the university to do well and is therefore an important mechanism for ensuring that the moral hazard problem does not get too severe. Over-centralization of

decision-making and excessive bureaucratic tampering with the rightful autonomy of lower level units such as departments and colleges only exacerbate the moral hazard problem and eventually lead to worse—apathy and even to malevolence and sabotage. Under these conditions, the cost curve shifts up and up and up. The excessive growth of bureaucracy at the university is a telltale sign of the fact that we have grown too big already.

Cal State Fullerton should seek to be the midwife of a new CSU in Orange County. Perhaps El Toro is a wise start of the inevitable process of devolution and new campus creation. I personally think that El Toro is a good idea and the sooner it becomes an independent CSU campus, the better will the citizens of Orange County and California be served. Cal State Fullerton should be satisfied to be mere midwife in this process.

Conclusion

This note is a purely academic exploration of the very simple economics of the university. I don't claim to know the specific facts and figures for Cal State Fullerton. I am sure that my more informed colleagues will set me straight about the facts and figures. However, I believe that I have shown that

- Cal State Fullerton is just another productive enterprise like any other firm.
- Cal State Fullerton can and should be analyzed by the standard techniques used to analyze other firms in business and economics that have proven their value.
- Such an analysis is useful for the proper formulation and critique of university policies.
- The major problems facing the university should be viewed from this larger and more unified perspective for a proper appreciation of the relevant trade-offs.

We should not dismiss the allegation that Cal State Fullerton is currently above its optimal size out of hand because we think that growth

is good and that greater access and diversity are good. I am not disputing the principle of greater access for a diverse student body as a social goal, but should they all come to CSUF as it is presently constituted or is likely to be constituted in the near future? Assuredly, the answer is no! The campus is overextended.

Personally, as a teacher with almost 30 years experience at several institutions, I think that the educational quality at Cal State Fullerton is not only threatened, it is already in decline! Statistics on SFR (Student-Faculty Ratio), the number of smart classrooms, and the massive computerization of our overall operation aside, the current students are receiving a lower quality education than previous generations of students because it has become very expensive to educate them and we are cutting the costs of educating them properly. We do not do this because we don't care, but, hey, when more guests arrive at the feast than we anticipated, we have to add more water to the soup. If you doubt me, ask your mother! It's God's truth, man! ☞



David C. Wong is a professor of economics. He has taught at Cal State Fullerton since 1981. He has served as department chair, and is currently serving on the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate. He specializes in applied economic theory.

Senate Forum

The Senate Forum is a publication of the Academic Senate at California State University, Fullerton. It is designed to stimulate discussion, debate, and understanding of a variety of important issues that the Senate addresses. Individuals are encouraged to respond to the materials contained in the Forum or to submit their own contributions.

Diana Wright Guerin (Editor-in-Chief), Child & Adolescent Studies; *Lee Gilbert*, Modern Languages & Literatures and Chair, Academic Senate; *Sandra Sutphen*, Political Science and Director, Faculty Development Center; *Kathy Brzovic*, Business Communication; *Dana Loewy*, Business Communication

Community Views

In the last issue of the *Senate Forum*, the Editorial Board invited perspectives on three issues that were raised in the first volume of the *Forum* in 1986-87. We present below a sample of the replies we received.

Q: Should the Academic Senate take formal positions on political issues?



No. The Academic Senate's bylaws limit discussion to matters involving university operations. Exceeding this limitation wastes the Senate's time.

Does anyone care about the Senate's political opinions? Even debate on issues which affect the school but which are beyond the control of the Senate (i.e., the state budget) is useless. If the Senate took an extreme position on a popular topic, would anything change? Of course not.

Political discussions have their place on the campus, but that place is outside the Senate. ☞

Barry Mednick, Department of Information Systems & Decision Sciences

At the present time, I do not think the electorate votes an individual onto the Senate with this objective in mind. I suspect Senate members are voted on with the idea they will be concerning themselves primarily with campus issues. Thus, it would be very presumptuous for the Senate to believe it represents the faculty on political issues of national or international scope. ☞

*Gerald E. Gannon, Department of Mathematics
Member, Academic Senate*

If you want to lose your credibility, comment about everything, especially if it gives you an opportunity to foist your views on those already doubting your wisdom, such as non-academic types in the public. ☞

*Jack Bedell, Department of Sociology
Member, Academic Senate*

Should the Senate really never ever take a position on any political issue whatsoever? Think about this: Suppose one of our librarians were to be arrested, prosecuted, and jailed for informing one of us that our library records have been subpoenaed by the FBI. Suppose the government searched faculty offices and computer files without probable cause. In other words, suppose the government passed a law that violated the Bill of Rights, that undermined our right to a speedy and public trial, to liberty, to legal representation, to free association, to freedom of information, to freedom of speech, to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure. Might such a law affect “university operations?” Might Senators find that freedom of thought and of expression are “campus issues?” Might liberty be the one concept that is in fact “about everything,” that is universal, that is the university’s reason for being? Would we, should we, take a stand? Read the U.S.A. Patriot Act at www.bordc.org. Then consider where you stand. ❧

Kathy Brzovic, Business Communication

Q: What is the role of part-time faculty in the academy?

The Proletariat’s Proletariat

“Was there ever any domination which did not appear natural to those who possessed it?” So John Stuart Mill may have been referring to the Great Divide between full-timers and part-timers. We understand the concept of unequal pay for equal work—after all, we’re the “proletariat’s proletariat.” But must we suffer the petty indignities and slights of institutionalized discrimination and condescension that reinforce this Great Divide?

Though exceptions exist among individuals and departments, institutionalized slights such as lack of inclusion in university directories and schedule of classes, departmental and university websites, exclusion from university and departmental meetings and committees and lack of voting rights (and



remember that many part-timers are of longer university tenure and more committed to the university than many full-timers), lack of adequate office space, hand-me-down electronic and telecommunications equipment, and other discriminatory slights simply contribute to the perception that part-timers are throw-away day laborers and not the career professionals that we are—and additionally hurt the educational experience of our students who are paying the same fees whether they are taught by part-timers or full-timers.

When some full-timers assert that “it is not a right to teach at a university; it is a privilege” we must remember that in our capitalist system every job is a privilege, not a right, and yet we recognize the role that institutionalized discrimination plays in the loyalty and job performance of all employees, and legislate against it. We ask merely that you treat us as you would any other member of the teaching profession, including your fellow full-time faculty members. ❧

Jerome S. Arkenberg, History Member, Academic Senate

Q: Should the Academic Senate posture less and focus more?



The Senate deals with many issues that are pertinent and important to the University. However, many times these issues go beyond the broad scope and deal with the minutiae. It is my opinion that some of these smaller issues could be handled in committee, leaving more of a visionary mission for the Senate. Although I agree that issues dealing with the academic mission of the University belong in Senate debate, I would like to see more broad based, “How can we improve the University for generations to come” insights discussed there. We have so many wonderful minds there, and I believe they should be challenged more along the lines of the University at large. ❧

Maryalyce Jeremiah, Athletics Member, Academic Senate

Shaping the Student Body

By Judith Anderson

Enrollments are at an all-time high on our campus. We anticipate an even greater demand for a Cal State Fullerton education in the foreseeable future. **What principles and values should guide our university decision-making as we attempt to meet our mission at the same time we may be reaching our enrollment capacity?**

This was the overarching question posed to participants in a university planning retreat that was sponsored by the University Planning Committee on January 23, 2003. Approximately 70 individuals from various campus constituencies (students, faculty, staff and administrators) participated. These groups included the University Planning Committee; President's Administrative Board; Academic Senate Executive Committee; Planning, Resources & Budget Committee; Council of Deans; and the ASI Executive Board. The goal of this meeting was to begin a discussion regarding the campus community's active role and responsibility with issues related to recruitment and enrollment of students.

President Gordon set the tone for the retreat by affirming the value of having large broad-based campus-wide planning discussions to assist in determining the direction, priorities, and strategies for the campus in the coming years. He also reaffirmed the importance of information-based decision-making.

Institutional Research and Analytical Studies provided participants with information about our student body as well as economic and demographic trends of the Southern California region. Specifically, information provided included: (1) the current shape of the student body and trends to the present; (2) factors that contribute to the success of our students and; (3) our regional and demographic context. Participants agreed that a shared set of factual information was critical for meaningful discussion regarding enrollment strategies and for



Judith Anderson, Executive Vice President, provides leadership for governmental and community relations, and public affairs. She facilitates university-wide planning and the implementation of institutional mission, goals, and strategies.

thoughtful future decision-making. This "data portfolio" is available at <http://www.fullerton.edu/analyticalstudies/universityplanning.asp>

So, what were the principles and values that emerged from a day of lively dialogue and exchange? As you might imagine, with 70 individual participants, at least 70 different perspectives were voiced during our day together! However, consensus was reached around at least five principles and values that address our mission as a university, and our commitment to maintaining student access and providing quality education for our students:

- Maintaining affordability and access to a high-quality education
- Enrolling academically prepared students
- Furthering a sense of community on our campus
- Maintaining our engagement with and service to the regional community
- Keeping the richness of diversity (ethnic, age, gender, etc.) that the campus has come to represent

For a more complete description of the discussion questions, as well as preliminary recommendations and suggestions that came from the day-long retreat, please access the February 2003 UPC Bulletin at:

<http://www.fullerton.edu/evp/planning.htm>

What comes next for the university as we continue to grapple with our mission and our mandate to provide access at the same time as we face the realities of limited resources? Later this spring there will be a university-wide community forum. The UPC hopes that all members of the university community will participate. Each of us has an opportunity to help shape the conversation that will inform decisions affecting students and our campus in the years to come. ❧