



Merritt College Counseling Department

Counselor Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2003

Meeting convened at 10:10 a.m. In attendance: Blackwell, Zielke, McLean, Shriver, Pantell, Wong, Allen, DeCoursey, Scurry. Guests: Debra Jacks, Alice Freeman, Jan Carlson.

- 1. International Student Advising** Jan Carlson presented on issues affecting international students. Most important issue is that int'l students must take (and complete) 12 units, not just enroll, and must be full-time (12 units or more) at one school (or at least one district). Can take units over 12 at another district. Must enroll in Fall & Spring semesters; Summer not required. Can take any course to achieve 12 units, including PE or activity. When first arrive, students on I-20 visa status; shifts to F-1 after 1 year. After transfer, 4-year school is organization of record for issuing visas. Jan is at Merritt last Monday of each month, from 10 to 3, advising int'l students.
- 2. Financial Aid** Alice Freeman presented on financial aid issues and requirements. March 3rd was last day to file for General Cal Grant but Community College Cal Grant deadline is in September. Can still apply for 02-03 Cal Grant but no work study left. Pell Grant criteria similar to BOG fee waiver but evaluated on case by case basis. Students qualifying for financial aid must register for 12 and complete 10 units each semester; if student drops courses to fall below 10, may have to return aid. Withdraw units ("W") count toward limit of 90 unit maximum to be eligible for fin aid. However, many students take many ESL classes and approach 90 unit max before taking core classes. Fin aid will evaluate on case by case. Students must take courses listed on their ed plan; if take other courses, they're dropped. Counselors can plan for future courses by noting several options ("this course or this course"). After discussion, agreement reached that Fin Aid Office won't hand out qualifying petitions until after 2nd week of each semester (to get through busiest time when counselors unable to create ed plans).
- 3. Artic Report** Discussed clarification of High School Concurrent Enrollment policy from Howard Perdue. Letter under Perdue's and VP of Instructions' signature will be going out to all high schools shortly. Other issues noted in Artic Report of this date, posted on Counselor Web Site.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.