



## Merritt College Counseling Department

Counselor Meeting Minutes  
March 9, 2009

Meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. In attendance: McLean, Scurry, Zielke, Khoo, Allen, Pantell, Mendez, Ilarde, Ciddio, Burks, Tissot, De Coursey, Discua, Coplan. Intern: Bettencourt.

- I. **DSP&S** Tissot, De Coursey, and Ciddio gave presentation on things to look for and consider when determining to refer student to DSP&S. Among these:
  - Transcripts: lots of starts & stops; lots of “Ws”; taking a limited or minimal load for a number of semesters; avoidance of or low grades in English and/or critical thinking courses; repeated failures in higher level courses
  - Assessment: significant discrepancy between English and Math assessment scores (either way) or between Reading and Writing in English scores
  - Just don’t seem to be able to “get” college level courses
  - Difficulty w/ completing forms (of any kind, and particularly complex ones like financial aid)
  - Difficulty articulating ideas or organizing thoughts (not to be confused w/ difficulty w/ communicating in English such as for English language learners)
  - Dropped out of middle or high school for no discernable (or vague) reason. If wondering about past history, ask student if they were ever in “Resource” classes (avoid Special Ed or other similar labels)
  - Not a native English speaker but seems to have difficulty expressing self or mastering native language
  - Discrepancy between how presents self (sharp, takes obvious pride and care) and history of poor performance in school or vice versa (presents poorly or acts immature)
  - Says they “blank out completely” or “freeze” when faced w/ test. Also says they need to re-read chapters continually to get even the smallest concepts or material
  - Ideas for those who struggle w/ test-taking: talk w/ instructor and try to troubleshoot; see DSP&S for accommodations (Kurzweil reader, books on CD, extra time, distraction free environment); practice presentations in front of a mirror; practice making own exams (on own or in study group) to get in mind of test author
  - Referral to DSP&S: consider LRNRE 295 (two six-week classes in which students assessed for learning disability--regular start and late start classes --and can refer to Chabot, DVC, and Department of Rehabilitation [but only if already in DSP&S at Merritt] if our classes full; be watchful about language when discussion w/ student: talk about learning styles, “wiring” differences, have to be above average just to be in college, learning disability assessment a real service--would be very expensive on outside
  - If student not provided accommodations they qualify for (note taker, tables/chairs, etc.) and get poor grade as a result, refer to DSP&S counselor for troubleshooting
  - If seeing a DSP&S student and creating SEP, recommend that they review w/ DSP&S counselor
2. **Transfer Report** Ilarde reported on revised Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP) w/ Holy Names, UC Berkeley, Mills, & CSU EB. Will be finishing revisions and publishing eligibility and procedure information on Transfer Web Site.
3. **New Business**
  - Pantell reported on revised Computer Literacy Credit by Exam policy now on web site
  - Pantell reported on revised COPED 450 procedures now on web site
  - Introductions and welcome to Johnny Burks, part-time counselor now working w/ MAP

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.