

**From:** Hughes, Jennifer hughesj@smccd.edu  
**Subject:** Decisions Regarding Position Requests, Spring 2016  
**Date:** April 11, 2016 at 6:28 PM  
**To:** Canada Employees canada@smccd.edu

HJ

Dear Cañada Colleagues,

I am writing to provide you with information regarding the positions that have been approved for the spring, 2016 semester. Before doing so, I want to first extend my thanks to those faculty and staff who submitted position requests. I truly appreciated the thought that went into each of the requests and the needs that were identified. The input that I received that informed my decisions is described at the end of this email.

### **Faculty Positions**

After a great deal of thought, I have decided to postpone the hiring of any of the faculty positions requested until the fall, 2016 submission cycle. I know this will be disappointing news to the faculty who submitted requests, and to the faculty as a whole. I don't want this decision to suggest that these are not important faculty positions with documented needs – they are. As a college we need to ensure that we have sufficient full time faculty to provide outstanding teaching and learning, develop and expand programs and services, advance important college initiatives, and carry out the many other professional responsibilities that are necessary for the effective functioning of the college.

Let me share the rationale for my decision. As you know, the Academic Senate prioritized the four positions. Based on the close ranking of the first three positions, it seemed to me that none of the positions stood out or seemed to be significantly more crucial than the others. Even the English position, which received the lowest priority, demonstrated needs in better serving students. The additional input I received from the deans and vice presidents about the faculty requests was similar; there was no clear "front runner." While I could have simply selected one of the positions (and one was the number I was considering for this cycle,) I was hesitant to do so when there did not seem to be a position that clearly rose to the top.

In addition, while there were important needs demonstrated by each of the positions, I did not get a strong sense that any were urgent such that postponing these requests for consideration in the fall would pose significant problems for the departments and the students they serve. If budget projections for next year and beyond are more limited, considering these four and any other positions requested will help ensure that we are making the best decision for the college. We currently have at least one faculty position available to hire in the fall 2016 hiring process since we did not proceed with the Interior Design position approved in fall, 2013. It is my sincere hope that the faculty, especially those who submitted requests this spring will not be so discouraged by this decision that they might not choose to submit requests for the fall cycle.

### **Classified Positions**

There were eight classified positions requested in the spring cycle. A number of factors were considered when determining those positions to approve, including, but not limited to: significant increases in the number of students served; the need for college compliance with federal and state regulations; and the ability to carry out basic college operations. My decisions are described below:

*International Students Program and Services Coordinator (1.0 position) – Approved:* This position will help us meet the needs of our increasing international student population and ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements. Also, there is a need for another staff member to serve as a Designated School Official (DSO), as well as to provide collaboration with the new Silicon Valley Intensive English Program (SVEIP) that will begin in fall, 2016. Lastly, the College's International Students Manager is now involved in international recruitment, which results in the need for additional staff to be available to students. As our international student enrollment continues to grow, the increased revenue we receive from these students offsets the costs of this new position and provides additional revenue directly to the college. This will allow us to provide the necessary infrastructure for the International Students program and meet other institutional needs.

*Alternative Media Instructional Aide II (1.0 position – 50% funded by DSPS funds) - Approved:* This position is necessary to meet the increasing needs of students with disabilities, particularly those who need materials in alternate formats, and to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. Failure to respond in a timely manner to these requests results in students not having the necessary accommodations to do well in their classes and exposes the college to potential liability. We will be able to eliminate two short term positions by filling this position on a permanent basis. Also, as DSPS funding potentially increases, we may be able to shift a greater percentage of the funding for this position to DSPS, thus freeing up general funds.

*Athletic Trainer (.48 position) – Approved:* This position is important in meeting the needs that have resulted from the increase in the number of student athletes at the college, the addition of the women's tennis program, and the regulations set forth by the California Community College Athletics Association regarding mandated medical coverage and safety protocols.

*Shipping and Receiving Clerk (.48 position) – Approved:* This position is necessary to ensure that basic college operations function effectively. This has been a temporary position for over one year. The net increase to fill this position on a permanent part-time basis is minimal.

#### *Other Requests:*

I am also exploring other funding sources, including District innovation funds, to help fund two of the classified position requests, specifically the Instructional Technologist (1.0 position) and the Accessibility Specialist (1.0 position districtwide; .33 funded by each college). The college presidents will be submitting their requests for innovation funds using a process that I shared with you in a recent email. The Instructional Technologist is critical to the implementation of the Online Education Initiative (OEI) including the districtwide migration to Canvas, and to support the faculty's use of instructional technology. In addition, the Instructional Technologist will be able to perform some of the technology related work associated with SPOL, CurricuNet, and TracDat, thus freeing up faculty to focus on pedagogy and assessment related efforts.

*Finally, there are two classified positions that will not be funded at this time. However, I am committed to find ways to meet their needs.*

*Digital Communications Coordinator* - I recognize the importance of creating a robust, mobile-friendly website and social media presence for the college and realize we need to do something about this sooner than later. The website is an important recruitment tool and provides the public and our students with information about the college. In addition, our faculty have increasingly requested help from the Public Relations and Marketing staff to establish and maintain their program and department websites. Thus, while not filling this position at this time, I will be devoting some resources in the short term to make significant headway in these areas.

*Office Assistant II - Puente* – We have a strong Puente Program at the college and I appreciate the help that existing classified staff have provided to assist with the clerical functions associated with Puente. I have already been in conversation with Vice President Lopez and she with the Puente co-coordinators about alternate approaches for meeting the clerical needs of the program.

*The following provides a summary of the information I was able to gather to help inform my decisions:*

I attended the two PBC meetings (March 2 and March 8) at which outstanding presentations were made by those faculty and staff requesting positions. Again, I wish to thank the requesters for taking time to make the presentations and prepare additional materials to present to PBC. Members of the college who attended these meetings provided comments regarding their sense of the strengths and weaknesses of each request. They also had the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification, which helped everyone gain a better understanding of each request. The process adopted by PBC to allow for immediate input and feedback to the presenters works very well and is highly effective.

I subsequently attended the March 10 meeting of the Academic Senate during which the faculty positions were discussed. This was a rich dialogue characterized by excellent questions and thoughtful inquiry. It was clear that the Senate found merit in each of the positions such that prioritizing was not an easy task. As noted in their meeting minutes, the Academic Senate prioritized the positions as

follows: Librarian (#1), Basketball Coach/Kinesiology Instructor (#2), Biology Instructor (#3), and English Instructor (#4.)

I then had an opportunity to discuss all the position requests with members of Cabinet and later with the vice presidents. Deans provided me with more detailed information about the positions in their areas. Again, these were thoughtful discussions about each position in relation to department needs and the needs of the college as a whole. The deans' support of faculty and classified positions to best serve our students was clearly evident. We also discussed the current budget as well as future budget forecasts to determine the number of positions we could support at this time. The latter included a discussion of leveraging a variety of funding sources in order to fill positions.

Throughout the process, I was struck with two important observations:

1. We share a common value and understanding about the importance of considering a host of factors when determining what positions to support. It is a very complex process. Knowing we will never have enough funding to meet all our needs, we need to think broadly in terms of what is best for students.
2. We share a commitment in adhering to established processes to ensure there is ample opportunity for college-wide input and a good deal of transparency in the decision making process, especially decisions that have long lasting impact for the college. The input I have received throughout this process has been invaluable in helping me reach my decisions.

In closing, I again want to thank everyone for the enormous amount of time and energy devoted to this position request cycle. I know that there will be members of the college community that may disagree with my decisions and I do respect that. I hope that this email helps provide an explanation for my decisions. Please know that my door is open. I welcome your comments and feedback.

Sincerely,

Jennifer