February 1, 2017

Dear Board of Trustees:

MJC enrollment is down 300 FTES this spring and we are working diligently to reach our FTES target for 2016/17. I am working directly with the deans to add course sections to the second half of our spring term and to significantly expand the May term offerings. Using a data informed process of enrollment management is time and energy consuming; however, it is our institutional priority and engagement across the divisions is critical to affect the change necessary. To support the expanded schedule, we are increasing targeted marketing efforts to build interest in the additional course offerings and reach potential new students. MJC has greatly enhanced and expanded support services for students which are playing an important role in student retention. Redesign of student support services has greatly enhanced their important work.

I am working with the deans and our Faculty Hiring Prioritization Process Workgroup in redesigning our process to place students at the forefront of hiring decision-making. Our current process was designed to be fair to divisions and maintain our current staffing structure. Unfortunatley, this does not address the barriers to degree completion due to lack of course availability in key disciplines. The redesign of the faculty hiring prioritization process is a challenging step in aligning our institutional capacity with student need, a fundamental element of enrollment management.

Achieving the Dream
MJC is in our second year as part of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) national reform network. As an ATD college, we are part of a growing association of community colleges working to strengthen and build our institutional capacity to ensure that more students complete their college education and have more opportunity for economic success. Last year 17 college employees traveled to Atlanta for the DREAM conference and later this month we have a group of 28 who will attend DREAM in San Francisco. The conference provides faculty the opportunity to hear from and engage with peers from across the US who are in various stages of implementing their own ATD plans. Faculty who attended DREAM last year noted that it was the most valuable professional development that they had ever experienced. National efforts including 15 to Finish, alternative placement mechanisms, first year experience, accelleration, corequisite remediation, guided pathways, and curriculum redesign serve as breakout session topics. I am looking forward to this second opportunity to engage with faculty, staff, and administrators at DREAM 2017.

FTIC (First Time in College)
In summer 2016 MJC launched a new course for first time college attenders. The course is taught by multi-disciplinary faculty and is modeled after the First Year Experience (FYE) as designed by John
Gardner. A group of faculty attended the FYE conference last spring and another large group is attending in March. The FTIC course was developed using a backward design process by a collaboration of faculty seeking to build a student well prepared for success in the college classroom and across the higher education experience. The founding faculty are engaged in revision based on student feedback and their own experience with the course design over the last two terms. This is a wonderful example of faculty leading the way to improve outcomes for students!

Accreditation
Each Thursday the updated narrative drafts are uploaded and made available on our Accreditation 2017 webpage. The writing team meets weekly to review and incorporate suggested edits received from college constituents. Strong input in the development process is leading to increased accuracy of the narrative and enhanced evidence of our statements. I have multiple meetings each week as part of the report development process and I am incredibly pleased with the work of so many involved in the institutional self evaluation process!

I look forward to meeting with you next week.

Warm regards,

Jill Stearns, Ph.D.
President

C: Dr. Jane Harmon, Interim Chancellor