

To the Faculty Senate

I am speaking on behalf of Diana Kyle, who is the chair of the Institutional Research Committee. She couldn't be here today, so I would like to make a report to the Senate concerning some of the IRC's concerns about research on campus.

As an institution coming off of accreditation warning, Fullerton College is working diligently to foster a climate of data-driven decision making and planning. This was the basis of the recent instructional program review cycle and it seems, according to the evaluations completed by the IRC, to have been a very successful way for programs to conduct their self-studies.

It is the sense of the Institutional Research Committee that a great deal of the success of the instructional Program Review was due to the data available from the Office of Institutional Planning and Research. The IRC is concerned that the next round of program review, of the Administration and Operations along with Student Services and Support, will not have the same access to data and will therefore be at risk of producing self-studies of less use in the data-based decision making and planning cycles.

In the immediate present, Individual departments' needs for access to data and support from the Office of Institutional Planning and Research have an effect on success and retention at both the internal and external levels. Programs need to monitor the success, retention, persistence, graduation rates, etc. of their students. The only way to get this data is through the Office of Institutional Research. This is a serious concern. Moreover, access to reliable data is consistent with the strategic master plan of the District and the directives of the accreditation team.

It is the sense of the IRC, that as the demand for decisions based on empirical data has increased, the availability of the empirical data has decreased. This means we cannot make data-driven decisions as we evaluate the directives of the education plan, strategic plan and self-study processes. These processes require immediate access to research data.

The IRC supports the College President in securing access to data on campus by filling the administrative position of Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. This is a permanent, on-campus position that was vacated by the death of Dr. Ken Meehan. Since the position was lost by attrition and not cut, re-filling this position is not dependent on November elections. The IRC strongly suggests that budgeted money be released to fill the position as soon as possible.

As a subcommittee of the senate, the IRC requests that the faculty senate take action on this issue. The committee would suggest that:

The senate exec present the concerns formally to the president and discuss the solution to this need.
The senate as a whole drafts a resolution requesting that the president fill the position as soon as possible.
The senate send a letter to the president with the president stating our position.

The IRC would like to have a response in writing from the president by November 14th so the response can be distributed to the senators and discussed by them before their last senate meeting of the semester.

The concern of the IRC is that, absent this action by the senate, the researcher position may be moved off campus. Since our campus has a need for local data and support, a researcher based at the district would not serve our needs.