

IVC-CTA Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE...

**The
Covid-19
Semester**

**2020-22
E-Board**

**Congrats
for Tenure**

**Congrats
to Retirees**

SEVEN DAYS: IVC FACULTY, COVID-19, AND THE TRANSITION TO ONLINE

MICHAEL HEUMANN, ELIZABETH KEMP, AND XOCHITL TIRADO

On Friday, March 13, IVC's Board of Trustees passed a resolution effectively closing the campus down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This resolution called for IVC's administrators to develop provisions for "alternative educational program options such as online delivery of educational services." Soon after this meeting ended, Dr. Garcia sent an email to the IVC campus community announcing the campus closure and telling faculty that all classes that could convert to online should do so immediately. We faculty were given until March 19 to make this conversion, at which point we were expected to resume the teaching of our courses virtually.

This was a seemingly impossible task: to convert hundreds of class sections to online in less than a week. But it had to happen, we all knew it had to happen—and so we set to work making it happen.

The first order of business was training. In-person training began on Saturday, March 14 and continued to Wednesday, March 18. Over a hundred faculty took advantage of a variety of different trainings that were all led by a team of trainers who deserve extra kudos: Temo Carboni, Melody Chronister, Joe Henderson, Kevin Howell, Elizabeth Kemp, Dixie Krimm, Cerise Myers, Kathy Rodriguez, and Xochitl Tirado.

The topics of these trainings included everything from beginner technology skills to Canvas training to video recording techniques to ConferZoom to Starfish and beyond. These general training topics, however, hide what was really going on in the training: lots of one-on-one help guiding faculty to redesign their classes to online modality. Just as each faculty member's teaching style is unique, so too were their training needs. Some needed just a refresher course or needed to learn how to use a tool they had not used before but really needed to use to make their course work (Zoom is the obvious example here). Others needed a lot more help. Some faculty had never used computers before to teach, either in the classroom or via Canvas. And suddenly they are being asked to teach entirely online. Talk about jumping head-first into the deep end of a pool!

However, it was not enough just to learn how to use a tool; faculty also needed to apply that learning in a way that would make their newly-online classes effective.

[Continued on next page]

SEVEN DAYS (CONT.)

After all, it is one thing to learn how to use, say, the modules tool in Canvas, but how do you turn that tool into an extension of your educator self so that your students can go to a module and learn the same information that they would normally get in a classroom? In an online environment, it is not wise to just copy/paste your lecture notes. You need to break that material into chunks for easier digestion, add graphics or videos to help engage your students, and add your own personality to all of this material so that it is still you who is guiding them along in the way that you intend.

Now repeat this process with all the other tools that faculty needed to use to get their classes going: discussions, quizzes, assignments, ConferZoom, announcements, groups, and so on. Additionally, a lot of faculty teach multiple courses, meaning that these tools had to be applied in different ways each time, thereby compounding the problem.

All of this learning and planning and developing required time—a lot of time—but time was not our friend. Even those faculty who were familiar with Canvas or who had taught online before were forced to spend hour upon hour at the computer getting things ready. It was far more time-consuming for those who did not have this experience.

Further, some disciplines provided their own unique challenges—challenges that go far beyond simply learning a computer program. This is especially true with hands-on classes like Science labs, Art, Music, Welding, and many of the CE (CTE) programs. How, for example, does a Biology student dissect a frog online? They certainly could not assign students to go find a frog, kill it, and cut it apart. Instead, many science faculty relied on a mixture of lab simulation software like Labster (which allows students to complete virtual lab assignments, including dissections), demonstration videos made in the

science labs or at home, and Zoom class meetings where faculty can go through lab assignments with students in real time. Without a doubt, learning Labster and creating videos is as time-consuming as learning Canvas—if not more so.

Other “hands-on” disciplines faced similar challenges, but most areas were able to find solutions to their dilemmas that allowed instruction to continue. But not every discipline could “get by” with online instruction; for some, it was impossible. Take POST. None of the police academy training could be done online; hence, when the campus went dark, so too did the POST program. It wasn’t until well after Spring Break that the program was able to return to on-campus instruction with a revised training schedule (that had to be approved by the state authorities) and a revised approach to teaching. Because social distancing rules are still in place, however, the number of students allowed in a single classroom was reduced; as a result, where POST usually only used two classrooms, now they had to use eight classrooms—with one instructor per classroom. This has caused significant logistical problems, but the faculty and students alike are figuring out this “new normal” and the current students are projected to complete their training in August.

It wasn’t just teaching faculty who were forced to completely rethink their jobs in a few days; counselors and other non-teaching faculty also faced severe challenges. While counselors regularly use Banner, DegreeWorks, and Starfish for counseling appointments, developing education plans, and completing graduation audits, the switch from on-campus to off forced counselors to (among other things) check out laptops with VPN (Virtual Private Network) access so they could access Banner, DegreeWorks, and other programs from home; not only learn Zoom

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SEVEN DAYS (CONT.)

but link Zoom to Starfish (with limited training available in how to do this); create Google voice accounts and link them with their personal phones; and be available for mandatory weekly check-ins (again, via Zoom).

Although all counselors are trained in certain programs like DegreeWorks, this does not mean that all counselors are tech-savvy. Hence, gaining the necessary skills to simply get their new VPN laptops working from home was difficult; add to that learning new tools like Zoom and Google Voice, dealing with non-stop emails (that, in the early days, often contradicted each other), and attending non-stop Zoom meetings resulted in a great deal of mental and physical stress.

Counselors were not the only ones dealing with all manner of stress; the whole situation was stressful for everyone. On top of all the stresses related to our jobs, we were also dealing with the stress of our regular lives suddenly being overturned. We were all suddenly going into lockdown, people (including family and friends) were starting to lose their jobs, grocery stores were being swarmed by vultures trying to buy the last rolls of toilet paper, and children were suddenly at home all day and in need of additional attention and direction. Other issues that we were suddenly forced to deal with included not having adequate technology or internet access at home, a lack of information and support for faculty from administration (in the minds of many faculty at the time—things have improved since), and concerns about student access to technology and their Canvas skills/knowledge. Two months on, many of these stresses remain.

In spite of all these challenges, in spite of the short window of time to learn and apply so much information, and in spite of the stress that came from all of this, faculty adapted, worked their asses off, and got their classes ready to go by

Thursday, March 19—less than one week after the call came to close down the school. In that time, most faculty spent hour after hour converting their course to an online format: creating modules and assignments, posting videos, communicating via email to their students, and much, much more. As a result, classes continued, and students continued to learn and advance.

We are proud of how our students have responded to this crisis. Many students have had to deal not just with the online switch and the technology problems that came as a result (especially for those students who relied on IVC computer labs to finish their homework), but they have also had to deal with economic problems (lay-offs for themselves or their family members), logistical problems due to the closing of the border, and the personal problems that inevitably result when an emergency hits. Through all this, the students have met these challenges with grace, determination, and hard work, and we salute them for it.

We are proud also to be part of such a dedicated, hard-working group of faculty who stepped up when needed. This wasn't about money, either. During the training, faculty never asked about compensation or what was in it for them; they worked hard because it was the right thing: for our students, for the college, for the advancement of education.

Finally, we want to salute the faculty who are retiring at the end of this semester. Those faculty did not coast into retirement by doing the bare minimum; they willingly stepped up to do what was best for their students.

We want to thank Daniel Gilison, Norma Nuñez, and Ed Wells for providing significant help in the writing of this article.

WELCOME TO THE 2020-22 CTA EXECUTIVE BOARD

MARY JO WAINWRIGHT

Congratulations to the new CTA Executive Board: Norma Nunez, President; Suzanne Gretz, Vice-President; Ed Wells, Treasurer; Paige Lovitt, Recording Secretary; Xochitl Tirado, Corresponding Secretary; and Lisa Solomon, Faculty Representative. I want to thank these faculty members for being willing to serve their fellow faculty members as union representatives. IVC faculty need strong union leadership, and I believe you have a good board who is well equipped to handle the challenges ahead.

Norma Nunez has over 25 years of service to IVC and has served previously in union leadership as treasurer, faculty representative and now vice-president of the union. She has served on many shared governance committees and really has a good grasp of the big picture at IVC and how it works. She has never been afraid to speak up and ask the tough questions, and that's what you need in a union president. She has held a coordinator position for years which gives her important administrative skills which are also very important to juggling all the different facets of being union president.

Suzanne Gretz was president of the union for over 3 years when I first started at IVC, and accomplished many important goals. She almost doubled union membership and gained approval of a contract in 2007 that is the foundation of the many rights IVC faculty now enjoy. She also created the PAC. More recently she served as lead negotiator for the 2017-2018 contract. She knows the law and the contract and will provide valuable knowledge and support to Norma.

Ed Wells has been treasurer for eight years which provides important continuity on the board. He

has handled chapter finances with integrity and provided invaluable support to me these last six years. He has years of administrative experience in the POST program and has served as an Academic Senator as well.

Paige Lovitt has previously served on the Executive Board as corresponding secretary and is a strong advocate for faculty rights. She also has years of service on many committees and as an Academic Senator.

Xochitl Tirado, is well known to you as both an English professor and as DE Coordinator. She has done an incredible job as DE Coordinator and will do a great job with the union website and newsletter, as well as continuing to be a strong advocate for faculty.

Lisa Solomon served previously as union vice-president and lead negotiator and brings knowledge and experience to her role as faculty representative. She has also served on many campus committees. Lisa has advocacy in her blood and I know will fight for the rights of faculty.

You have a well balanced board with both counselors and teachers, veteran and younger faculty. There is also a lot of previous union leadership experience on the new team. You have officers with a deep knowledge of the college as well as past union negotiations and this will serve you well as the union enters negotiations for a new contract in Spring 2021. I believe you have elected a team that will continue the tradition of strong union leadership into the future.

OUR UNION IS
STRONG

BECAUSE OUR MEMBERS ARE
STRONG



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MARY JO WAINWRIGHT

Where have the years gone? I really cannot believe I have finally reached this stage of my life. It is a little scary. I have worked full time since I was 17 years old and I am not sure if I can handle having nothing to do, but I'm sure excited about it. Time really does fly. This is the end of my twenty-five-year teaching career, sixteen years at IVC, and the end of my eight years in union leadership, the last six years as your president. I hope you do not mind if I use this last message to you to reflect on my time at IVC.

I will not miss the 120 degrees of August, but I will miss the 70 degrees in February. I will not miss the winds, but I will miss the endless horizon after a rare rain. I will miss teaching the students at IVC, but not grading papers. I cannot say I will miss being union president, but I know I will miss all the people of IVC. IVC allowed me to fulfill my dream of becoming a full-time community college instructor and to share my passion for history with the thousands of young (and not so young) students I've taught over the years. It has been a very fulfilling time in my life, and I will never forget any of it, or any of you.

I want to thank the special people I served with on the union executive boards during my tenure as president. Ed Wells, Treasurer and Dolores Diaz, Recording Secretary served all six years. Eric Lehtonen, Kathy Rodriguez, Melani Guinn, and Norma Nunez each served as VP. Kathleen Dorantes, Leticia Pastrana, and Michael Heumann served as Corresponding Secretary. Jim Fisher and Beatriz Avila served as Faculty Representative. Beatriz Avila, Sidne Horton, Suzanne Gretz, Melani Guinn, Mary Lofgren, Frank Hoppe, David Zielinski, and Javier Rangel all served as negotiators over the years. The support they provided through all the ups and downs, and their hard work, made my years as president successful. I can't thank them enough.

A few special shout outs: I would not have survived without the advice and friendship of Sheila Dorsey Freeman and the encouragement and wisdom of Sidne Horton. Marianne Reynolds,

the CTA Field Representative is the best support any president could have. Beatriz Avila is a rock star. Her intelligence, hard work, and dedication to union principles and faculty rights were inspirational and critical to the successes we achieved these years and I would have ended up in the asylum without her. But the most precious gift she gave me was her friendship. Suzanne Gretz befriended me on my first day at IVC and was always there for me. I would not have been the union president I was without her knowledge, example, and mentorship. She taught me so much and I'll always treasure her friendship.

Finally, the best thing about being union president is that you get to know and work with more people across the campus. The faculty and staff of IVC are incredible and I will never forget any of you. It's been my honor to serve as your union president. I know I leave you in good hands. Just remember, be strong and stay united, pay attention, never be afraid to ask questions, and do your homework. Challenge the status quo, leave a place better than you found it. Cherish the memories and relationships. If you're ever in Grass Valley, give me a call.

Peace and love to all!





**CONGRATULATIONS
TO 2019-20 RETIREES**

Roberta Bemis, *English*
Rick Castrapel, *Math/CS*
Diane Harris, *ESL*
Sidne Horton, *Physical Education*
Nannette Kelly, *Art*
Mary Lofgren, *Counseling*
Rosalie Lopez, *Counseling/Upward Bound*
Ralph Marquez, *Counseling*
Maria Lourdes Mercado, *Counseling*
Norma Nava, *DSP&S*
Bruce Page, *Communications*
Josefina Ponce, *ESL*
Yolanda Romero, *Counseling*
Mary Robin Staton, *Psychology*
Mary-Jo Wainwright, *History*
Cathy Zazueta, *Library*
David Zielinski, *English*

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO NEW TENURE-
TRACK FACULTY:**

Cuauhtemoc Carboni, *Physical Education*
John Clarkson, *ESL*
Melani Guinn, *Communications*
Zhong Hu, *Math*
Michael Kanyi, *Agriculture*
Elizabeth Kemp, *ESL*
Monica Minor, *Counseling*
Barbara Reyes, *Sociology*
Jose Roman, *Industrial Technology*
Cynthia Spence, *English*
Elizabeth Trevino, *Counseling*
Margarita Vizcarra, *Counseling*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO BEATRIZ AVILA,
COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION (CCA) W.H.O (WE
HONOR OURS) AWARD, SPRING 2020**

Beatriz has held numerous union leadership roles throughout her time at IVC. She has been a negotiator for the past four years and lead negotiator for the last two. Her willingness to put in literally hundreds of hours, her talent and expertise with research and attention to detail, and her true dedication to the principles of faculty rights make Beatriz a very worthy recipient of the W.H.O. award. Congratulations, Beatriz!