



September 19, 2016

President’s Waypoint: “If only I were the new SBCC President, I would ...!”

Before moving to Santa Barbara, I spent time reading Noozhawk, EdHat, and other blogs having articles on the College. The SBCC articles were one thing, but I was also interested in the comments that followed the articles. It was easy to see that there is a lot of interest in the College and lots of people had ideas about what the College ought to be doing. This gave me the idea to pursue these ideas more directly, asking “*If only I were the new SBCC President, I would ...!*” I also wanted to learn about perspectives related to College's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. I developed a related survey and sent it to faculty, staff, students, and community members on July 1st, my first day on the job.

The survey response was way beyond expectations. As you can see from the “Survey Participants” table below, I received 675 total responses with 69 from faculty, 42 from staff, 135 from students, and 429 from community members. Clearly, there is a lot of interest in SBCC in this community!

Survey Participants

<i>Survey Participant</i>	<i>Response</i>
Faculty	69
Staff (classified and managers)	42
Students	135
Community Members	429
Total	675

I conducted a thematic analysis, reading and coding every response. While this was a labor intensive process, I wanted to read personally every response, which was very valuable to me. I think you’ll find interesting the top six responses in each category, which I have presented below. They are honest and unvarnished, so some things we will like and others maybe not so much. In any case, we can learn from the responses if we are open to do so.

Top Six Responses to “If only I were the new SBCC President, I would...!”

<i>Top Six Survey Responses</i>	<i>Response</i>
1) Restore State-Funded Adult Education	163
2) Find the Optimal College Size	125
3) Improve College Service	88
4) Listen to Faculty, Staff, and Community	45
5) Connect with the Community	43
6) Deal with Student Housing	33

Top Six Perceived Strengths for SBCC?

<i>Top Six Survey Responses</i>	<i>Response</i>
1) Faculty, Staff, and Administration	167
2) Broad Program Selection	113
3) Beautiful Location	89
4) Pathways to Careers and Higher Education	45
5) Quality Instruction	36
6) Outstanding Reputation	36

Top Six Perceived Weaknesses for SBCC?

<i>Top Six Survey Responses</i>	<i>Response</i>
1) Neglect of SB in Favor out of District Revenues	122
2) No State-Funded Adult Education	72
3) Terrible Parking	64
4) Unbridled College Growth	55
5) Focused on “Junior College”/Transfer Mission	47
6) Lack of Housing	44

Top Six Perceived Opportunities for SBCC?

<i>Top Six Survey Responses</i>	<i>Response</i>
1) Reconnect with the Community	69
2) Bring Back the Community’s College	68
3) Restore State-Funded Adult Education	66
4) Offer Certificate/Vocational Programs	48
5) Develop New Programs	28
6) Build on SBCC Foundation’s Promise	28

Top Six Perceived Threats for SBCC?

<i>Top Six Survey Responses</i>	<i>Response</i>
1) Unbridled Growth	76
2) Lack of Community Focus	67
3) Poor Community Relations	59
4) Lack of Housing	58
5) Poor Community Perceptions	42
6) Loss of Community College Mission	41

In the end, there was some excellent information collected from the survey. No, it is not scientific, but it certainly provides compelling qualitative input to our decision making processes. It is also helpful in our communication efforts to correct misconceptions. For example, our growth peaked in 2009-10 and has been declining ever since. I would appreciate your thoughts and feedback on the survey results sent directly to me and not to the “All Campus” email list! ;-)

Together forward,

