

**Minutes of the Study Session of the Board of Trustees  
San Mateo County Community College District  
January 9, 2013, San Mateo, CA**

**The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.**

**Board Members Present:** President Helen Hausman, Vice President Karen Schwarz, Trustees Richard Holober, Dave Mandelkern, Patricia Miljanich (arrived at 6:25), and Student Trustee Bailey Girard

**Others Present:** Chancellor Ron Galatolo, Executive Vice Chancellor Jim Keller, Skyline College President Regina Stanback Stroud, College of San Mateo President Michael Claire, Cañada College President Larry Buckley (arrived at 7:30), and District Academic Senate President Diana Bennett

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**DISCUSSION OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

None

**MINUTES**

It was moved by Trustee Mandelkern and seconded by Vice President Schwarz to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2012 meeting of the Board. Vice President Schwarz asked that the minutes be amended to state that Trustees Holober, Mandelkern and Schwarz were the Board members present at the initial closed session of December 6. Trustee Mandelkern asked that his statement, under "Statements from Board Members," be amended to delete the reference to a new office being held by Assemblyman Rich Gordon. With these corrections, the motion carried, all members voting "Aye."

**STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Jeanne Back read a letter, dated January 8, 2013 and signed by Bob Riskin, Secretary/Treasurer of the Citizens for a Green San Mateo, requesting that the Board work with Citizens for a Green San Mateo to resolve the issues around the existing lawsuit filed by the group. A copy of the letter is attached to the official minutes of records.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL ACTIONS: CHANGES IN ASSIGNMENT, COMPENSATION, PLACEMENT, LEAVES, STAFF ALLOCATIONS AND CLASSIFICATION OF ACADEMIC AND CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL (13-1-1A)**

It was moved by Trustee Holober and seconded by Student Trustee Girard to approve the actions in Board Report No. 13-1-1A. The motion carried, all members present voting "Aye."

**Other Recommendations**

**ADOPTION OF DISTRICT ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR 2013-2014 (13-1-1B)**

It was moved by Trustee Mandelkern and seconded by Vice President Schwarz to adopt the calendar as presented. The motion carried, all members present voting "Aye."

**STUDY SESSION**

**UDACITY – MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCs) (13-1-1C)**

Chancellor Galatolo said there are many people who cannot come to a campus at a given time to take a course or who simply prefer to take courses online. He said online instruction is not a new concept, but Udacity's delivery method is new in that it takes into account human cognition and integrates the textbook into the course. Courses offered by Udacity currently can be taken at no cost to the student. Udacity is interested in developing a partnership whereby they would offer credit courses at an affordable price.

Chancellor Galatolo said the recently passed AB 1456 (Student Success Act of 2012) requires community colleges to have a common universal placement exam. There is currently a 70% failure rate statewide for those who take math and English placement tests. Udacity potentially could improve students' ability to pass the tests by offering preparatory instruction. In addition, Udacity could assist faculty in designing remedial courses. They might also help reduce waitlists for courses and offer simulated lab courses.

Chancellor Galatolo said that on January 15, Governor Brown will hold a press conference announcing a partnership between Udacity and San Jose State University to deliver credit courses. He said that, hopefully, the District will at some point participate in the partnership to address the broader needs of students who want to pursue alternative means of learning.

Chancellor Galatolo introduced Sebastian Thrun, co-founder of Udacity. Dr. Thrun said that on June 16 of last year, Governor Brown called him to brainstorm ways to help students in need. Since then, he has worked to better understand how to help these students. At the upcoming press conference, San Jose State University and Udacity will announce an agreement to develop a pilot program focusing on math classes that students must complete to succeed in college.

Dr. Thrun said that 17 months ago, he was a professor at Stanford University and a Vice President at Google. He decided to offer one of his Stanford classes online and sent an email announcing that the course would be free, students would be graded the same as Stanford students taking the course in the classroom, and the homework assignments would be the same. The response was overwhelming and, while the online class did not eventually take place, it garnered considerable publicity. Stanford subsequently developed the Coursera platform for online delivery and other institutions developed systems as well. The New York Times called last year "the Year of the MOOC."

Dr. Thrun said that, while some others focused on the number of students who signed up for online courses and how this would affect traditional education, he focused on a pedagogy suited to online learning and how it differs from the classroom. He decided not to try to simply replicate the classroom experience by recording lectures. Instead, exercises were recorded and help with the exercises was provided, giving students immediate feedback. This model provides students with time to practice until they feel competent, resulting in a sense of achievement. Dr. Thrun showed an example of one math question, demonstrating that there are different ways of thinking about questions and different creative ways to solve problems. He said that students who fail in math often think there is only one correct formula.

Dr. Thrun said Udacity offers classes in various subjects. In partnership with San Francisco State University, they are now offering remedial algebra, college algebra and introductory statistics. Dr. Thrun said Udacity is combining the best practices of the online world with the new medium. He said he is excited about the medium and, although there is more to be learned about its effectiveness, there is some data showing positive learning results.

Dr. Thrun said Udacity might be able to offer assistance with: reducing waitlists, exam taking, proctored exam solutions, refreshers, and providing classes that will be at least equivalent to the classroom setting in learning effect for many students. High school students would benefit greatly from gaining exposure to community college education, which could drastically enhance their college readiness and reduce their time in college. He said there is much more to education than sitting before a computer and answering questions. Udacity has added a strategic plan for a system that adds human mentoring and supervision and a human helpline. Dr. Thrun said the availability of help is essential and Udacity aspires to have help available instantaneously. He said there will be a charge for credit courses to cover the cost of these additional services.

Dr. Thrun introduced his colleagues, Clarissa Shen and Stuart Frye, who provided brief statements about their professional backgrounds and how they relate to their work at Udacity. Dr. Thrun said he, Ms. Shen and Mr. Frye were available to answer questions from the Board.

President Hausman asked if there are subjects that do not lend themselves to online learning. Mr. Thrun said areas that do not lend themselves well are physical exercises, subjects that are highly discussion focused, and upper

division classes. He said that at times a blended model can be used. Trustee Mandelkern asked if any of Udacity's classes have been offered in a blended format. Ms. Shen said the blended format has been used in the high school system where teachers have used Udacity as supplementary to their classroom instruction.

Trustee Holober asked about the status of Udacity's offering of college-level credit courses within the California State University System. Mr. Thrun said that at the a press conference which will be held tomorrow, a pilot program between Udacity and San Jose State University will be announced. For the pilot, an outside firm has been hired and individuals will specifically evaluate assessed outcomes. The assessment is not based on performance on a final exam, but rather on whether students understand the subject matter to the extent that they can apply it in similar situations. The pilot will also evaluate different ways of interacting with students, e.g., peer groups, mentors, email reminders, etc.

Trustee Holober asked Dr. Thrun whether Udacity provides technical assistance to faculty or whether it creates the curriculum and provides the instruction. Dr. Thrun said that in some cases, Udacity has invited instructors to do the entire class and in some cases, Udacity has done the entire class under the oversight of the instructor. He said the instructor is always authorized to be in charge of the course syllabus and what will be learned. Dr. Thrun said that not every great classroom teacher is great in this medium and Udacity works with instructors to provide training. He said the constant rule is "students first."

Trustee Mandelkern asked if Udacity will provide an instructional design methodology and an authoring tool set to outside instructors or if Udacity staff will build all course content. Dr. Thrun said Udacity has a draft version of an iPad based system that everyone could use. However, he would not advise offering only this as an authoring tool to design classes; he would recommend heavy involvement of Udacity's instructional designers. Ms. Shen said Udacity can surround the instructor with a production team. She said they have had a year of experimentation and have learned much about what works and what doesn't work.

Trustee Miljanich asked about students who do not have access to technology. Ms. Shen said many charter schools that have become engaged with Udacity have mentioned this and have provided hours of access in a lab environment as well as support. She said the Gates Foundation is also offering some scholarships to students who are considered disadvantaged. Dr. Thrun said there is also widespread use of smart phone-based learning. Mr. Frye said Udacity staff is trying to be creative in thinking about ways to close the digital divide.

Charles Jones, District IT Support Technician, asked Dr. Thrun how he envisions this educational method looking five years from now. Dr. Thrun said he believes there will be much more access. He said high school students will be able to work at their own pace and take college classes earlier. They also will be able to take classes that foster readiness, leading to larger numbers of students attending college and graduating earlier. He said there might be more emphasis on the part of faculty on upper division classes as opposed to remedial courses.

Trustee Mandelkern said Udacity's course content seems quite linear and asked if it is adaptive to build in remediation or advancement. Dr. Thrun said this is a problem and the next step is to work on making it nonlinear. Ms. Shen said Udacity has experimented in larger classes by providing links to additional content.

President Hausman asked Dr. Thrun if he sees students using Udacity and traditional education simultaneously. Dr. Thrun said he does see this. Chancellor Galatolo said students might use Udacity to both prepare for a uniform placement test and to take the test. He said this could be a segueway into traditional community college classes. He said another possibility is for students to take undergraduate classes through Udacity and upper level classes in a classroom setting. Ms. Shen said she does not believe online courses will ever completely replace classroom learning but students may not need to spend four years on a campus. President Hausman asked when Udacity expects to achieve its goals. Dr. Thrun said it has achieved goals already, as it has had almost one million signups and has issued approximately 70,000 certificates.

Executive Vice Chancellor Keller asked if the course material is available in different languages. Dr. Thrun said it is not currently language specific but nothing would preclude this and it would not be difficult to do.

Trustee Holober said the District has worked over the past few years to develop online courses which have been growing. He asked how Udacity's offerings would fit in with this. Chancellor Galatolo said the District has put time, effort and money into online education, led by Vice Chancellor Jing Luan and Distance Education Instructional Design Coordinator Peter Bruni. Chancellor Galatolo said the District is looking for the best delivery model and, if the Board supports the Udacity model and the team believes in it, he believes the transition to this type of platform can be made. He said this is a fundamentally different way of teaching in that it is more dynamic, takes human cognition into consideration, and supports the use of cohorts.

Skyline College President Stanback Stroud said Udacity could offer instructional technology resources for those instructors who are interested in online teaching and said community colleges teachers deserve these resources. She said the hybrid model is attractive and noted that a high percentage of instructors already use technology to support their courses. President Stanback Stroud said there are fundamental questions to explore, such as students not being able to tell if there are prerequisites for the courses. Dr. Thrun agreed that this is a problem and said there are various ways to explore correcting it.

Trustee Mandelkern said he is interested in Udacity's pedagogical model and instructional design philosophy. He asked Dr. Thrun to compare and contrast Udacity's approach with that of Kahn Academy. Dr. Thrun said Kahn Academy's approach traditionally has been lecture based. He said that Kahn explains material better than most and students can watch the lessons many times. He said that what Kahn has not done traditionally, but is doing more now, is to offer exercises.

Vice Chancellor Luan said he believes it would be a significant advantage for the District to become an early adopter of the technology advantages Udacity can offer. He said the services of Udacity can also be helpful in international education because orientation to college for the outside world has often been stopped by a lack of technology support.

College of San Mateo President Claire said he is pleased that Udacity is starting with a developmental math course because he believes this is an important investment in a community college system. He asked if Udacity has taken students who have learning disabilities into account. Dr. Thrun said Udacity needs to consider this more and make adjustments as it analyzes data about where students are having problems. Ms. Shen said Udacity's approach to math is to offer multiple approaches and to value students' intuition.

Trustee Mandelkern said that while engaging content is an important element of learning, a learning management system (LMS) is also needed. Dr. Thrun said Udacity does this with tools such as a tracking system and a transcript management system. Ms. Shen said that while Udacity's expertise is in online learning pedagogy, it tries to make it as easy possible for teachers to integrate into their current LMS systems.

Trustee Mandelkern said that if Udacity's method is to be used for mathematics, it will need an entire series of courses that layer and it will need to be managed. He said that while the existing LMS probably could be used, it is also necessary to have enough content pieces to make it coherent. Dr. Thrun said the problem will be solved as the system evolves and that one year from now, the math curriculum will be much more coherent. Ms. Shen said that rather than making the curriculum prescriptive, Udacity would like to work with teachers to determine the correct sequencing of courses.

Trustee Holober asked if Udacity has developed ways to deal with cheating. Ms. Shen said there are multiple approaches. Udacity's platform includes online proctored exams using webcams to capture students taking the tests. Students can also go to a testing center to take a proctored exam. Chancellor Galatolo said he believes the vast majority of students take online classes to achieve skills in order to succeed. He said if a student gets a degree through cheating and applies for a job, it will become quickly apparent that the student does not have the competency necessary to succeed. Chancellor Galatolo added that most instructors do not routinely check the IDs of students in their classes to verify that the registered student is the one attending the class.

Trustee Miljanich said young people today are more comfortable with technology and a platform like Udacity's has the potential to positively change education. She said that what community colleges do is affected by what is happening at the elementary and high school levels. She said it is not possible for most teachers to provide

opportunities to all of their students who learn at many different levels. Dr. Thrun agreed and said that when students fail to understand the material, it affects their self-confidence. He added that if students are required to repeat a class, it is most often presented in the same way and does not consider differing learning styles.

Trustee Mandelkern asked Dr. Thrun what his vision of the business model is. Dr. Thrun said the course content is free because Udacity believes in providing access to basic materials for everyone. However, he said services such as mentoring and proctoring incur a cost and will be charged to students as tuition. He said the cost per student will not be high, particularly if a large number of students enroll in a class. Trustee Mandelkern asked whether it will be Udacity or the District that charges students for the services. Dr. Thrun said the right amount of tuition to charge and the details regarding collection can be worked out. He said he is very confident that Udacity can offer classes for at least the same level of tuition being charged now, without any government support. He estimates that the cost will be \$40-\$60 per student per class.

Chancellor Galatolo said he is concerned about how the Accrediting Commission will perceive this, particularly in light of their inability to see progressive change as a means of enhancing teaching and learning. He said he believes the Commission will eventually catch up but could, in the short term, put the District's accreditation status at risk. Chancellor Galatolo said he believes the strategy that might work best is to create a groundswell of interest, with many students participating and data showing it is an effective means of teaching and learning. Dr. Thrun said Udacity has strong support from Governor Brown and the U.S. Department of Education and there is momentum to move ahead. He said that if a large number of students report positive experiences, it would be difficult to say it is not working.

Trustee Mandelkern asked Dr. Thrun if he has learned of any advantages of having a massive number of students taking a class as opposed to a small class. Dr. Thrun said one advantage is economy of scale. He also said large numbers of students can participate in a global discussion forum allowing students to pose questions. He said students more often than not become instructors as they answer the questions. He added that the time it takes to find an answer is strongly correlated with the number of students participating. Ms. Shen said students benefit from exposure to all of the different points of view. Mr. Frye said there are social and emotional benefits as students interact with others and feel they are not alone.

Jim Petromilli, Coordinator of Distance Education and Technology at Skyline College, asked if Udacity has worked with anyone in the flipped classroom model. Ms. Shen said Udacity has supported high schools that are doing this.

Trustee Miljanich said she is very interested in pursuing this discussion for a variety of reasons and asked what the next steps will be. Chancellor Galatolo said this was a presentation and question and answer session only. At the upcoming Board Retreat, there will be further discussion and a request to get direction from the Board.

Vice President Schwarz said she has learned a lot from the discussion. She said her goal in being involved in public education is to offer options and alternatives to students and she believes working with Udacity could be a wonderful opportunity to do this. She said it would be a wonderful challenge for the District to take on at the beginning and to pursue and learn more. Dr. Thrun said that if the focus of the debate is on the benefits to students, almost all obstacles will go away. He said he believes a CSU coalition of the Chancellor's Office, professors and unions is close. Chancellor Galatolo said the community college system has a very different Chancellor's Office and Accrediting Commission and it will be more difficult to achieve a coalition.

Trustee Mandelkern asked Academic Senate President Bennett if the Academic Senate has looked into MOOCs in general and Udacity in particular. Professor Bennett said the Senate has started discussions. Udacity attended the December Senate meeting and is scheduled to come back in March. She said there are mixed reviews and there were suggestions to form a task force and possibly conduct a pilot program. Professor Bennett said the Senate recognizes that the platform is not for everyone but it could provide a resource to support faculty.

Trustee Holober said the focus should remain on student outcomes and student success. He said his comment regarding cheating applies to both in person and online learning as he believes in accountability and rigor in all cases. However, he said this is a technical issue. He said his concern is that this is new and unproven. He said he

has an open mind and it could be exciting to participate at the beginning and benefit as early adapters. Trustee Holober said he is impressed with the presentation by Udacity, but would like to follow the District's due diligence process and look at other providers.

President Hausman thanked Dr. Thrun and his team for an enlightening presentation. She said the Board will look forward to further discussion at the Board Retreat.

Trustee Hausman introduced Cañada College President Larry Buckley who arrived late due to car problems.

**RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION**

President Hausman said that during Closed Session, the Board will consider the personnel items listed as 1A, 1B and 1C on the printed agenda.

The Board recessed to Closed Session at 8:35 p.m.  
The Board reconvened to Open Session at 9:30 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION ACTIONS TAKEN**

President Hausman announced that at the Closed Session just concluded, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the personnel items listed as 1A, 1B and 1C on the printed agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Trustee Miljanich and seconded by Vice President Schwarz to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried, all members voting "Aye." The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Submitted by

Ron Galatolo, Secretary

Approved and entered into the proceedings of the February 27, 2013 meeting.

Karen Schwarz, Vice President-Clerk

January 8, 2013

Board of Trustees  
San Mateo Community College District

Re: Citizens for a Green San Mateo Lawsuit

Dear Trustees:

Citizens for a Green San Mateo (Citizens) is a group of Hillsborough residents deeply concerned about the loss of over 200 large-growth trees that were cut down by the District's contractor two years ago. The tree-cutting eliminated the dense green buffer that had existed for decades between the College of San Mateo campus and our adjacent Hillsborough neighborhoods. Citizens tried to negotiate with District staff for appropriate mitigation for the loss of the trees, but when that failed, there was no choice but to file a lawsuit to obtain relief.

The San Mateo Superior Court has now ruled that the District violated the California Environmental Quality Act when it failed to conduct environmental review before cutting the trees. The Court has ordered the District to study the impacts of the tree-cutting and to adopt mitigation for the loss. Judge Cretan noted that "considerable mitigation" is possible. In the meantime, demolition and construction of the roadways, parking lots, lighting structures and paths in connection with the North Gateway Project are now stayed by the Court.

Now that the Court has ruled, we ask the Trustees to work with our group on an appropriate mitigation plan. We do so for three compelling reasons. First, it makes no sense for the District to continue to spend taxpayer money on litigation when a non-litigation solution is close at hand. The Superior Court has thoroughly considered the District's legal positions and has found them meritless. Second, given the injunction against the construction of critical phases of the North Gateway Project, prompt resolution is in the District's interest.

And third, there is now a renewed opportunity for the Board of Trustees to work with Citizens to find a mutually acceptable resolution of our respective needs and concerns. The College of San Mateo and this Board pride themselves on being good neighbors, often speaking about the close proximity of the campus to the Town of Hillsborough and the City of San Mateo. The spirit of neighborly cooperation is sorely needed now. Citizens applaud CSM as a major asset to the community that educates and enhances area residents. It is time to put this litigation aside, find a solution, and co-exist as compatible neighbors.

We invite the Trustees' personal involvement in resolving this issue with us and look forward to meeting with you.

Respectfully submitted,



Bob Riskin, Secretary/Treasurer  
Citizens for a Green San Mateo