



Academic Affairs Success Council
March 14, 2025, 9:00-11:00am / VIRTUAL MEETING
Minutes

MEMBERS	Constituent Group	Present	Absent
1. Ram Subramaniam	Administration	X	
2. Marianne Fontes	Administration	X	
3. Jason Garrett	Administration	X	
4. Ana Gonzalez	Administration	X	
5. Carla Johnson	Administration		X
6. Vanessa Meldahl	Classified	X	
7. Fatima Barron Vargas	Classified	X	
8. Miriam Contreras	Classified		X
9. Maria De Leon	Classified	X	
10. Jess Green	Classified	X	
11. Kelly Locke	Academic Senate	X	
12. Sunita Lanka	Academic Senate	X	
13. Alan Barron	A.S.H.C.	X	
14. Joshua Betts	A.S.H.C.	X	
15. Omar Campos	A.S.H.C.	X	
16. Emily Cruz	A.S.H.C.	X	

Guests: Janet Flores

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:03am.

2. Reading of the Four Pillars of Guided Pathways

The four pillars were read.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Council approved the agenda by consensus.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Council approved the minutes by consensus.

5. The Learning Center Proposal (first reading)

Dr. Fontes and Ms. Flores presented the proposal for the creation of The Learning Center (TLC), which will serve as the centralized hub for professional learning at Hartnell College. Ms. Flores shared that this work began in 2024 – the team studied other institutions, then created a mission statement and goals. Ms. Flores mentioned that “all education environments” in TLC’s mission statement is a very important part, as they want TLC to be able to reach everyone at Hartnell; Dr. Fontes added that the approach is

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for all employee groups to be “teachers.” Dr. Fontes shared that the team agreed that TLC’s goals should be the same as Hartnell’s strategic goals, and they modeled TLC’s values to be aligned with Hartnell’s values. She pointed out the “cultural wealth” value, which is important because we want to utilize everyone’s “collective expertise, lived experiences, and knowledge, thereby increasing every employee’s sense of value and worth.”

Ms. Flores reviewed the dimensions of professional learning principles: 1) Individual, 2) Community, 3) Institutional, and 4) Ecosystem. She added that they do need funding, and they want to engage both the internal and external campus community. Ms. Flores also noted a few of the existing professional learning programs.

The location that is being considered is Castroville Education Center (CEC). This is an ideal location because it is close to main campus, and professional development events can be held at this small center as a retreat site.

The team proposes that TLC be staffed with a faculty lead (with release time, on a 3-year rotation) and a classified lead to collaborate in the creation of procedures, forms, website, and other duties as needed. The team would like to see support from an Innovation Technologist, and eventually, an Instructional Designer. To begin, the TLC staff will report to the VPSSTE or designee (on a 3-year rotation). The team agreed that a 3-year rotation cycle, for the faculty lead and VP/designee, “creates consistency while promoting inclusivity and fostering new perspectives and new energy every three years.”

Dr. Fontes reviewed the proposed budget, which asks to pool existing general funds (e.g., HR has funds for professional development). They will provide more information as it becomes available. Ms. Flores added that travel is often requested, and this will be covered by TLC.

Dr. Fontes concluded the presentation by sharing it has been proven that quality professional learning leads to better outcomes for students. She added that Hartnell’s mission statement (*“Advancing Social and Economic Justice through the Transformative Power of Education.”*) and TLC’s mission statement (*“The Learning Center provides high-quality growth opportunities to transform practices across all educational environments.”*) go hand in hand in pursuing better outcomes for our students.

Dr. Subramaniam advised members that this is an information/sharing agenda item, so questions and comments are welcome. Mr. Campos inquired if the center will be limited to CEC or if there is a plan to spread out to other centers. Dr. Fontes advised that the recommendation is for the “headquarters” to be located at CEC. However, professional learning will be offered online, and they will have team members going to the other sites. Mr. Campos also inquired if students will be able to observe professional development. Dr. Subramaniam explained that professional development is typically for faculty, staff, and administrators to help them learn how to provide better services to students, thus not usually for observation. Dr. Fontes added that they do plan to obtain student input once the professional development has been implemented.

Dean Gonzalez stated that it is good that POCR is mentioned as a professional learning that exists for faculty, but she was curious if that is the only program for online instructors. Dr. Fontes advised that they will start with what we have for online learning, but they plan to expand. Ms. De Leon asked if the professional development is available to everyone. Ms. Flores advised that professional development is

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for all Hartnell employees (faculty, staff, administrators), and she added they plan to have staff as instructors. Ms. De Leon also asked if a new staff position will be created; Dr. Subramaniam advised that they plan to leverage an existing staff position.

Dr. Locke shared that the Professional Development Committee is not an Academic Senate Committee. Ms. Meldahl shared that it is a subcommittee of the Equity Assurance Committee (under HR). Dr. Fontes added that the team has been in communication with the interim VP of HR, Kayla Valentine, who is supportive of the proposal.

Ms. Flores advised that the role of TLC is to support and communicate about professional development, not control everything. The problem right now is that there are professional development opportunities going on, but people aren't aware of these opportunities. Dr. Fontes added that the idea is for these opportunities to be available to everyone – make it equitable for all. Dr. Subramaniam added that nothing is set in stone regarding the center, so we can make it into whatever will best serve our campus community and thus serve our students. Dr. Locke added that she appreciated what Ms. Flores mentioned because she receives numerous notifications from Academic Senate and California Community Colleges, and she would like to see a central space that announces these professional development opportunities.

Ms. De Leon asked about student workers' professional development. Dr. Garrett advised that there is a workgroup developing a student worker retention program; this includes an element for student workers to attend mandatory training during the time that Hartnell employees are attending our Student Success Conference. He added that this would be a natural opportunity for us to provide our student workers with training and track progress from the learning center.

Dr. Subramaniam asked the students for their takeaway from this presentation. Mr. Barron stated that he thinks this is amazing. Dr. Subramaniam advised the students to tell their friends that the professional learning center is for Hartnell employees to be trained to do their jobs better in order to provide better services to students. Mr. Betts asked if there will be some way to track the progress and effectiveness of professional development. Dr. Fontes advised that TLC will have the ability to track progress since it will be a centralized hub, and she added that this will shift and evolve as needed. She stated that there will be an opportunity to see this proposal again when there is a 2nd reading. Also, note on your calendars that they will present their proposal at the upcoming Get Connected Forum on Thursday, April 10, 2:30-3:30pm in Steinbeck Hall.

6. Closing Comments/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Next Meeting(s)

April 11, 2025

May 9, 2025

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