



SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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SCC C board contemplates cafeteria improvements *College will also introduce 10 Blendflex courses in fall 2017*

The big news at the January 12 meeting of the Seward County Community College Board of Trustees was the addition of its newest member Casey Mein, but the board also handled a robust agenda focusing on projects in progress. Mein was sworn in before the meeting, and will complete the unexpired term of former trustee Sharon Hobble, who resigned in December.

Early retirement requests were submitted and accepted from Saints Bookstore employee Lynn Gerstenkorn, maintenance/courier Von Armstrong, and custodian Tina Cota, along with the personnel report. Open positions at the college currently include diesel technology instructor, KSBDC Associate Regional Director, nursing clinical instructor, security and safety officer, part-time/on-call counselor, and assistant volleyball coach. The athletic director position, which remains open, closed its application period Sunday.

Dates for the 2017-18 academic year were presented and unanimously approved. Classes for the fall semester (2017) will begin Aug. 15, with the semester/winter break set for Dec. 22 through Jan. 1, 2018. The calendar is currently viewable on the sccc.edu website, by following links through the "About Us/Board of Trustees/Jan. 12 meeting" tab.

In a unanimous vote, the board agreed to name the Industrial Technology Division's corrosion education lab in honor of R.M. "Bob" Speck, who played a key role in the creation and funding of the program at SCCC. Speck has been a member of the National Association of Corrosion Engineers (NACE) for 50 years, teaching for half that time at the Gas Capitol Rectifier School sessions at SCCC.

Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Todd Carter presented an update about the college's continuing efforts to develop industry and public partnerships. Among them are projects and/or agreements with Lewis Automotive, the Society for Protective Coatings, OneOK, Black Hills Energy, 4-H/K-State Extension, First Christian Church of Liberal, JCAPS, Seward County Health Department, Sharp McQueen Law Office, National Beef Packing, Seaboard Foods, the county of Seward County, Southern Pioneer Electric, Fellowship Baptist School, TAP Academy with Wichita State University, Baker Arts Center, Liberal Police Department, Fort Hays State Accelerated Education degree, John T. Smith and Associates, Fort Sam Houston Medical Education and Training campus, Health Information Technology with Neosho Community College, Corrosion Technology with Dawson Community College, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

"These aren't all of them," Carter said, "but the list reflects our efforts as an institute of higher learning to expand our scope of influence and collaboration."

Carter also explained the college's continuing work to develop and offer BlendFlex courses that will offer students multiple options for course completion: classroom instruction, often called "face-to-face," hybrid, and online. Currently, 10 courses are being developed as BlendFlex options: English Comp I and II, developmental psychology, public

speaking, college algebra, macro- and micro economics, engine repair, introduction to corrosion technology, and cathodic protection.

“The idea is for students to be able to adjust their courses if life interferes,” Carter said. “Work schedules or family circumstances often cause scheduling problems, and we want students to be able to keep up, and work at their studies no matter what might change during a semester’s time.”

The interest in flexible options grew from concerns about student retention, Carter said.

“Last year, we lost 47 students, and the reason was lack of flexibility in our curriculum. We have had to take a real, hard look at investing in delivery methods that help students persist in their studies through completion.”

To facilitate FlexBlend courses, each division will need a classroom that contains lecture-capture technology, at an estimated price of about \$50,000 per classroom.

“Everything’s moving to a digital model, including textbooks, assignments, even the delivery of instructor teaching,” Carter said. “Our challenge is to adapt while still maintaining content integrity.”

Vice-President of Student Services Celeste Donovan reported that the semester was off to a good start despite the interruption of an ice storm on the final day of staff development and instructor preparation. Dorm contracts are close to 200 for the semester, which is slightly under capacity.

College president, Dr. Ken Trzaska, presented updates on facilities improvements, starting with proposed changes to the cafeteria and snack bar areas in the student union and the Industrial Technology student lounge area.

“We want to be a little more innovative in what we offer to students, and we’ve been meeting with and discussing the issue with Great Western Dining” he said. “They’ve offered us a formal proposal that combines a 10-year contract with the creation of a C-store model at the Industrial Tech cafe area, so that students and community members can access a grab-and-go type menu with soup, sandwiches, coffee, a study corner — something that will enhance the space there.”

The main cafeteria, meanwhile, will see some enhancements with a more appealing atmosphere and expanded options for meal prep, like a pasta bar, stir-fry station, and improved dessert options. The plan will be presented formally in March for board action.

The next board of trustees meeting is set for Feb. 6, 2017. Agenda information will be posted through the college website at sccc.edu.