

September 17, 2004

To: Jess Bonds, Dean

From: Bruce M. Bodine

RE: Memorandum of Understanding

Members of the court reporting department held the first advisory committee meeting in June, 2004, to discuss the purpose of the committee, decide what input would best aid the department in keeping up to date with the professions of court reporting and captioning, and decide the frequency of future meetings.

The members included all teaching faculty of the department, a former student who has been a working reporter for over 18 years, a former student who is now captioning and has formed her own small business, and the lead captioner at CSU Sacramento. Because of the difficulty of scheduling and bringing all members together at the same time, it was decided that meeting twice each year would be sufficient. Our next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2004.

The first meeting proved to be informative and provided an opportunity for everyone to meet and discuss current trends in reporting and captioning. Because of the physical changes occurring at the college, we decided to postpone further discussion about the program until the department is settled in its new quarters and we know what the space allotment is for the classrooms and the court reporting lab. We all felt that once these elements are known, we will be better able to discuss positive changes in the program, space requirements for new equipment, and possible changes directed at captioning. We don't envision changes at the lower speeds regarding captioning since all students have to build speed on the steno machine first, no matter what their goal happens to be.

The department conducted its first annual student meeting in June, just before the end of the spring quarter. It was decided at that time that this meeting would preface another meeting to be held during the fall quarter 2004 and every fall quarter thereafter. Traditionally, fall quarters are our busiest as far as enrollment is concerned, and we felt that we would involve more of our students if we had future meetings during fall quarters.

A brief survey was given to our current students, asking them to anonymously answer a few questions regarding the program. Since the meeting was conducted during regular class hours, it was decided that the length of the meeting should be kept to a minimum so students could make it to their next class. The students were asked to hand in the surveys at a later time. None were returned from the 34 students in attendance. Because of this, the survey will again be handed out at the next meeting, and time will be allowed for the students to complete the survey and hand it in.

I have discussed with the dean of instruction the qualifications required of a full-time instructor in the court reporting program. We agree that a full-time instructor should possess either a bachelor's degree or a CSR (Certified Shorthand Reporter) license for the State of California.

Our adjunct instructors in the court reporting program meet the requirements as stated by the Court Reporters Board of California. The adjunct instructor must possess either a bachelor's degree, CSR license, an associate degree in a related field with four years experience, or an associate degree from a board-recognized school and completion of the 180 wpm speed level on the steno machine. All of our instructors meet at least one of the above qualifications.

I have had ongoing discussions with the dean of instruction regarding computer equipment needed in the court reporting lab. Again, because of not knowing the space allotment of the new facility, we have not arrived at an exact figure of computers that will fit into the new computer lab. We now know that there will be a minimum of 10 computers set up in the new lab. And there will likely be space available for more than this number. This will be decided very soon and the number of computers will depend on availability, not funding.

To follow up on the program review, I have recently mailed two surveys. The first is a survey to 33 employers around the Central Valley, Bay Area, and Sacramento area. The survey contains 20 questions about graduates from the court reporting program at Humphreys College, teaching practices regarding realtime translation, and program requirements. To date, none have been returned.

The second survey was sent to 34 former students of the court reporting program. These were students that originally attended as long as four years ago. This survey contains questions about the program, realtime translation, captioning and reporting, and reasons for quitting the program. Only one has been returned to date, so no results are available yet.

All the above information will provide insight into the court reporting program at the college and the possible need to make improvements and/or changes. But this process will take more time.