

TWO NEEDS

The business of this college, of EVERY college, is to support students and teachers in the classroom. All of us -- faculty, administrators, classified employees – all of us want the college to be successful. Success includes what happens in the classroom and what happens surrounding the classroom.

As a teacher, I see two major areas of need that must be addressed in order for me to do the best job possible in the classroom.

We must all pay attention to Communication and Marketing.

COMMUNICATION: Campus personnel are not doing a good job of talking to each other—or listening to each other:

1. An administrator told me, “I don’t know what’s going on in the divisions. There’s no communications center to disseminate information from administrators or divisions to each other. How can we support each other – or even understand each other—if we don’t have information about each other?”
2. A faculty member told me, “Administrators look at you as you speak, but interrupt you to tell you how it’s going to be –despite what you think. They only pretend to listen.”

A serious example of this is the request for a financial audit made by the faculty union. This was stalled until it was tabled. When there’s nothing to hide, why resist an audit? Communication fell apart on this one.

3. A classified employee told me, “It doesn’t matter if I have any input, because it won’t be listened to.”

In the past three years, three different administrators have mandated three different plans to change scheduling of classes. No research showed a need for change, and nobody being scheduled was consulted or listened to. The result has been constant confusion in scheduling.

Appropriate Institutional Research must be a factor in making decisions. We have to get focused research on internal processes and use it. Everyone benefits when decisions are based on sound reason and evidence—AND consultation with the people involved.

MPC has a history. **RESEARCH DATA** provide clues to that history. New people need to talk to the old-timers, and all of us need to look at the facts – facts gathered by research and communicated to all of us.

4. Nobody here has done a good job of communicating why salaries at MPC are lower than those at all surrounding colleges. Faculty has not had a pay adjustment in eight years. Other salaries rise, but teachers hear, “You’re not worth it.” That’s an insult. That might not be what is meant, but that’s how it seems.

MARKETING:

A second area of need concerns our image. We are not marketing ourselves to the community. If we want to increase enrollment, we need a marketing office. No focused effort exists to recruit students. Demographics indicate that some of our communities consist of older people, while other areas have young, college-aged people. We must target the appropriate areas and reach out to the young people there.

Our image in the community needs polishing. If we want to attract students and donors, we need to market ourselves as a Serious Educational Institution.

Money is all around us.

Recently I lunched with two wealthy ladies – potential donors – who remarked on my teaching at MPC:

One said, “You’re the school that cut out theater and the arts...”

The other laughed and said, “and you drop rubber ducks!”

That’s what people think of us: we throw away culture...and we are silly. That image won’t bring in donations – or students.

I bring up these matters because Dr. Tribley can do something about these needs – and the Board needs to agree.