I Welcome

II Approval of Minutes
February 17, (Deeley/Womack) approved without dissent

III Public Comments
1 Professor Barembaum announced his support for resolution S2015.1, stating that it violates the principle of the RSCCD Board Policy of non-discrimination. He further added that a college in Canada has encountered tremendous financial and public relations complications by engaging in such a program. He states, that while the Foundation may legally be separate from the District, it shares the RSCCD name and the perception is that they operate together.

IV AS Executive Board Reports
A President
1 Kudos to Professor Mettler and her representation on the District HR committee. The joint committee language was removed from the AR.
2 PIE update: there were 68 requests from across the campus; rankings will be compiled, submitted to Budget for analysis, PIE will then examine budgetary analysis and forward a list to College Council. VP Satele decided to spend money that does not rollover annually and funded items that were ranked by PIE last year, a validation that the planning and budget process is functioning as it should.
3 Saudi Arabia partnership update: The Chancellor expressed that the action was being taken by the Foundation not the District. As it is coming from the Foundation it does not have to uphold the District mission. Saudi Arabia will allow Jewish members to participate; women can participate but cannot go to the school as it is male only, any member with an Israeli passport stamp is ineligible. Any person involved will work beyond their current contract. The program work on this end would be the creation of curriculum and instructional methods. The Chancellor says that Valencia College in Florida has successfully entered a similar program. The Chancellor could not provide an expected amount of income. If the partnership were to be severed at this point, any money used thus far will not be reimbursed. The Chancellor claims that the Foundation exists separately from the District as the Foundation is a
nongovernmental organization and the District is a governmental organization.

4 College Council has removed the Assistant Dean of Athletics from the PIE prioritization list as the dedicated money for this position must be reallocated towards new Faculty hires.

5 The Board approved the re-designation of top tiered security officers so that they may carry guns. Savings at the District level will be used to fund the approximate $400,000.00 needed for this re-designation.

B Vice President

1 The budget assumptions were approved by the District council March 2, 2015. If there are no changes to the proposed State budget the SCC deficit should not grow next year. SCC is expected to balance its budget next year.

2 Senate Officers and Senator elections will be held after spring break.

C Secretary/Treasurer

No report

D CIC

1 The Council discussed whether 100 level courses contained the necessary rigor to be deemed a course at that level.

2 The biology transfer degree looks promising, the chemistry transfer degree will need to modify unit requirements.

3 Request for more communication between the two colleges yielded in a “have you consulted with the sister campus check off box”.

4 Enrollment management sent out a survey please respond March 13, 2013.

V ASG Report – Vice President of Senate Peter Martin

A The March in March occurred this last week in Sacramento;

   SCC ASG chose not to participate as the ASCCC did not have a set agenda.

B ASG leadership will attend a student conference in Washington DC.

C Townhall March 30-31, times TBA, probably 10:15 to 2:00.

D Movie night will be Thursday, March 26, 2015

E ICC will host Shamrock your world (Club Rush) March 17, 2015

F Spring Event will occur April 13, 2015.

VI Action

First Reading:

A Resolution S2015.1 Faculty Abstention from participation in Programs in Saudi Arabia

Discussion:

Faculty are concerned that because the RSCCD Foundation bylaws cannot be accessed, the power relationship between the Board and Foundation is unclear.

Faculty want to know how much money will be raised.

Faculty agree to the principle of sharing education but do not feel that open agreements should be entered into that violate the larger beliefs of our culture.

Faculty are concerned that the RSCCD name is being used, regardless of the body that is using the name, and that any media attention will be associated with the District.

Faculty are concerned that other donors may opt out so as to not be associated with the Saudi Arabia program.

Faculty members were encouraged to voice their concern at the next board meeting.

A copy of the Algonquin Times was passed out, (Appendix 1) discussing the issue that college encountered with involvement in a similar Saudi Arabia program.

The last resolved was modified to reflect:

“Resolved, That the Academic Senate of Santiago Canyon College directs the Academic Senate President to express to the Chancellor and the RSCCD Board of Trustees a lack of confidence in this agreement and
believes the District should not enter into this or any other agreement that violates the spirit and letter of the District’s non-discrimination policy."

A motion to waive the second reading (Nance/Womack) passes without dissent.

A motion to adopt the resolution by acclamation (Rutan/Sheilds) passes without dissent.

B Resolution S2015.2 (Rutan/Canon)

Creation of an Academic Senate Class Schedule Matrix Task Force

Kudos to all faculty members that constructed the current class schedule matrix.

Faculty are uncertain as to how and why deviations from the current class schedule came to be.

Some faculty argue that the current schedule takes into consideration students that want to take two classes across multiple disciplines.

Evaluation of the matrix is necessary.

Most agree that the matrix works during the day; it is the night schedule that needs attention.

C Support of RSCCD Credit Instructional Calendar 2015-2016

Moved for consideration, in conjunction with the Support of RSCCD Noncredit Instructional Calendar 2015-2016 by Professor Freidenrich (Dela Cusak second)

Faculty asked as to why it takes so long for a calendar to appear for approval when it could be made months earlier.

Faculty voiced concern that Cesar Chavez day was moved into the following month and occurs on April Fool’s Day.

Faculty said a Tuesday start day might be successful.

Faculty pointed out the struggles of classes that meet once a week on Monday.

Faculty voiced concern that Memorial weekend would be during Final’s week.

Faculty asked as to whether intersession is worthwhile; they were told that enrollment and success is strong.

Faculty asked if Flex week could also be held during the last week of intersession.

A motion to waive the second reading (Rutan/Elchlepp) passed without dissent.

The motion passed with one abstention and two dissentions (Nance abstain; Cummins/Womack dissent).

D Support of RSCCD Noncredit Instructional Calendar 2015-2016

See above

Second Reading:

None

VII Summary Reports Discussion

VIII Discussion Items

A Accreditation Discussion: AS Vice President Craig Rutan and Joyce Wagner

Postponed.

IX Moved to adjourn (Deeley/Womack)
Why are we in Saudi Arabia?

Jack Wilson

Last spring, the citizens of Jazan in south-western Saudi Arabia were treated to a most gruesome sight. Dangling from a crane in full public view and across from the campus of the University of Jazan were the headless bodies of five Yemeni nationals. They had been beheaded and "crucified" by Saudi authorities; their heads had been placed in sacks and tied to their bodies. According to Amnesty International, the beheadings and "crucifixions" took place in front of the university where students were taking exams.

Just a few kilometers away, Algonquin College was preparing to open up its Jazan Campus. Given the state-sanctioned barbarity of the regime in which the new campus is opening, one might fairly ask how appropriate it is for a publicly funded, taxpayer-supported Ontario institution such as Algonquin to be doing business abroad with distasteful regimes, especially if the regime's values run contrary to the values we hold as Ontarians?

"Distasteful" partners

Indeed, this was the gist of the question posed by an external member of the Algonquin College Board of Governors in early 2012 when it was first proposed that the college would partner with the government of Saudi Arabia to deliver a millwright program at an all-male school. The governor questioned how comfortable the college was supporting an institution that excluded women. The then chair of the Board of Governors, sensing the discomfort of the other board members, suggested that it would be appropriate at some later date to discuss overseas partners whom the Board might find, in his words, "distasteful."

Ministry complicity

Fast forward eighteen months, and the college is now committing to a deeper partnership with a regime that by all measures runs contrary to three of the college's oft-touted core values of "caring, integrity and respect." What is more, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities seems to be complicit in encouraging such arrangements and is poised to sign off on an agreement confirming the college's partnership with Algonquin's new Jazan Campus.

By any reasonable measure of basic human rights, how can the government Saudi Arabia not be deemed distasteful?

Gender apartheid

Would not the fact that women and men are segregated in most aspects of public life, the equivalent of gender apartheid, be reason enough? Would not any state that denies basic political rights to half of its population be more deserving of our contempt than our business?

Under Saudi law, women are denied the right of self-guardianship, meaning that they must be represented in court by men, and in cases of divorce, they may easily lose rights to their home, children, and finances. In general, women are prevented from doing many things common in other societies. Women are not permitted to mix with men in public places, such as mosques, shopping malls, dining areas, hospitals, and schools, nor to drive or to travel outside of the country without a male chaperone. Women cannot vote. Furthermore, under Sharia law, one man's testimony is equal to that of two women.

Religious intolerance

But it does not stop there. There is the blatant denial of religious freedom. According to a report from the US Department of State, religions other than Sunni Muslim are specifically prohibited from being practiced freely, and in fact, Saudi law provides for anyone who converts from the state sanctioned religion to be executed. The same
Local Lines

report states the Saudi government has subjected Muslims who do not adhere to the government's interpretation of Islam to political, economic, legal, social, and religious discrimination. Non-Muslims have faced harassment, detention, and death. Although the Saudi government has revised some school textbooks, many Arabic and religious textbooks still contain overtly intolerant statements against Jews and Christians as well as intolerant references by allusion against Shia and Sufi Muslims and other religious groups.

Homosexuals at risk
And what about sexual orientation? According to the International Gay Alliance, Saudi Arabia is one of the most homophobic states in the world. In 2002, three men were executed for homosexual practices. In 2010, Amnesty international reported that a 27-year-old Saudi Arabian male was reported to have been sentenced to 500 lashes and five years' imprisonment by a court in Jeddah for the criminal offence of homosexuality.

State executions
And what of the regime's application of capital punishment and use of state sanctioned death? According to Amnesty International, the regime has already performed 47 state killings in 2013. It is also one of the few countries along with North Korea, Iran, and Syria that allows for public executions. In the case of the Jazan crucifixions as with many executions, the "confessions" of the accused are often extracted through torture, intimidation, and coercion.

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of crimes armed robbery, apostasy, drug smuggling, kidnapping, rape, witchcraft, and sorcery.

And let us not forget what happened to Canadian William Sampson who was imprisoned and tortured for two years and seven months, forced to sign a false confession before he was released, and who died of ill-health and a broken man in 2012.

Support for human rights abuses abroad
Finally, it should be noted the Saudi regime has had no problems suppressing human rights beyond its own borders. During the Arab Spring of 2011, the people of the tiny nation of Bahrain who called for democratic reform were met with a brutal crackdown by the nation's authoritarian monarchy, supported by hundreds of Saudi soldiers in dozens of armoured personnel carriers. And the Saudi authorities were only too happy to provide financial backing to the Egyptian military after its coup against the democratically elected government of Mohammed Morsi.

Time to withdraw
Last month, the Ontario legislature out of concern for freedom of expression and inclusion passed a motion critical of the proposed Quebec charter of values. This is the same Ontario government that is supporting Algonquin as it does business with a regime with well-documented serious human rights abuses.

Therefore, until there are clear guidelines governing what the minimum standards of human rights ought to be for those countries with whom publicly-funded Ontario institutions seek to do business, the college should either voluntarily withdraw from Saudi Arabia or the Ministry ought to intercede on behalf of all Ontarians and cancel the partnership.

(Side note: repeated requests of the senior college administration concerning the conditions attached to the agreement have been stonewalled. The union, on behalf of concerned faculty, explicitly requested whether any college employees would be barred from participating in Jazan based on gender, religion or sexual orientation. The college would neither confirm nor deny such conditions were part of the agreement.)

Saudi armoured vehicle and soldiers en route to Bahrain
(courtesy of flickr)