SIPI

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2
CHARTING A COURSE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
DR. SHERRY ALLISON

SIPI's policies and procedures provide an institutional perspective on many important issues for college management and governance. They also provide a context for action and thoughtful decision-making. Specific procedures for the implementation of a policy may be included as well; therefore, one may see the phrase "Policy and Procedure." However, it is important to note the difference between a policy and a procedure. A "policy" is the overarching rule to be followed; while a "procedure" is how this rule (policy) should be implemented and documents the process that will be followed to carry out the rule in the day-to-day operations. Several important college documents contain many of SIPI's policies: Faculty Handbook, Catalog, and Student Handbook. Very soon we will have a new Catalog, Student Handbook, Code of Student Conduct, and Residential Student Handbook.

It is important to note that any person on campus can recommend a policy; however they must follow a set procedure to ensure quality assurance and that shared governance principles are upheld. Policy development at SIPI can follow one of two paths. There is a process for academic policies and another for non-academic policies.

Academic policies at SIPI are forwarded by the various Department Chairs to be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. They are then forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee before being recommended for final approval by the President and sent onto the Board of Regents for concurrence.

Non-academic policies are deliberated by the President's Cabinet. They can be forwarded to this body by a Standing Committee or through the Vice President of Academic Programs, Vice President College Operations, or the Director of Housing and Recreation. With the recent addition of the Director of Student Services, the policy development process will need to be updated to replace the Director of Housing and Recreation with the Director of Student Services as well as adding the Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness and Planning. All non-academic polices flow through the appropriate Vice President or Director to the Presidents' Cabinet for review and comment prior to forwarding it to the President for final approval and onto the Board of Regents for concurrence.

SIPI's policies serve as statements of principle for well-informed decision-making and drive the conduct of College activities. Procedures are issued by SIPI's President or designated person to set forth action steps required to carry out a college policy and/or a standard method for implementing actions.

We are currently considering the best method to disseminate policies to ensure that all students, Faculty and Staff have access to them. One suggestion has been consolidating all policies onto our website for easier reference.

POLICIES ARE A "GOOD THING" BY VALERIE MONTOYA (CONT. ON PG. 3)

Policy is a set of principles designed to influence decisions and actions within a college. They establish rights and responsibilities, provide consistency across units, enhance understanding, and reduce institutional risk. Policies are developed within the context of management philosophies and help to clarify and communicate guidelines to all personnel. SIPI has adopted a shared governance model that establishes roles and avenues for students, staff, faculty and administration to provide input to the policy development. For example, while policies are approved by the SIPI President with concurrence of the Board of Regents, they are reviewed by either the President's Cabinet with representation across the campus; or, the Academic Affairs Committee which often initiates or reviews academic-related policies subsequent to a review by the Curriculum Committee.

ON SIPI AND POLICY
BY JOLENE MANUS

The procedures for creating policy at SIPI are a recent renovation that needed to be addressed as identified by the college's most recent Higher Learning Commission comprehensive site visit.

Many departments at SIPI were conducting official business practices as practices and not as formal policy. Since the site visit, SIPI has been on a fast track toward implementing updated policies and procedures amid its continuing self-study. The self-study, in which staff and faculty across the campus are involved, requires us to examine the college's policies and procedures and provide analysis on the effectiveness and efficiency of policy implementation.

Policy, in the world of educational business, is necessary to provide structure for standard operating procedures which in turn aide SIPI's decision making process. The intent of this newsletter is to inform on SIPI Policy and to answer questions such as:

◊ What is policy and why is it important?

◊ What is the process of creating policy?

◊ Where can one locate SIPI Policies?

SIPI is unique in several ways including the fact that SIPI is both an institution of higher education and a government funded post secondary institution. While certain policies have been created by SIPI for institutional needs, SIPI also adheres to federal government policies.

An example of certain complications can be found from being a federal funded college and part of the Department of the Interior and the expectation that we adhere to government policy within hiring processes.

While most higher education institutions follow similar processes as SIPI, with the entire process of hiring, an added layer in hiring for SIPI is the government background check. SIPI Human Resources must work through the Office of Personnel Management who must access the FBI fingerprint database. If there are fingerprint issues for a prospective employee then there will be a delay in hiring. Other personnel policies guide the selection process as well. General policies that SIPI, as a federal institution, abide by also include; information, technology, safety, equipment, disposal, travel, procurement, records management and budget.

Whilst dissemination of "SIPI Policy Development Status" may take some time, it is important to state that SIPI Leadership does communicate, to all SIPI faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders, policies that have been sanctioned. Hard copies of Academic and Non-academic SIPI Policies can be found in the President's Office. Electronic access of SIPI Policies is being decided upon. As with all documents coming to life through processes here at SIPI, evaluation of policies will also be in a cycle of timely evaluation. With strong SIPI Leadership, and committed SIPI employees, the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute is rebuilding and applying policies for a successful work and higher education environment.

Be connected and be aware of the national scene at the

CONNECT WITH FEDERAL POLICY ISSUES

American Association of Community Colleges' website.

Check out the 2013 Federal Public Policy Issues at :

http://www.aacc.nche.edu/newsevents/News/articles/Pages/01162013_1.aspx

◊ The Pell Grant program

◊ The Higher Education Act (HEA) Reauthorization

◊ The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization

◊ The Carl D. Perkins Act Reauthorization

◊ Domestic Discretional Spending: Protecting Federal Investment in Community Colleges

◊ Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA)

◊ Student Borrowers

◊ Nursing Education at Community Colleges

◊ Immigration/The DREAM Act

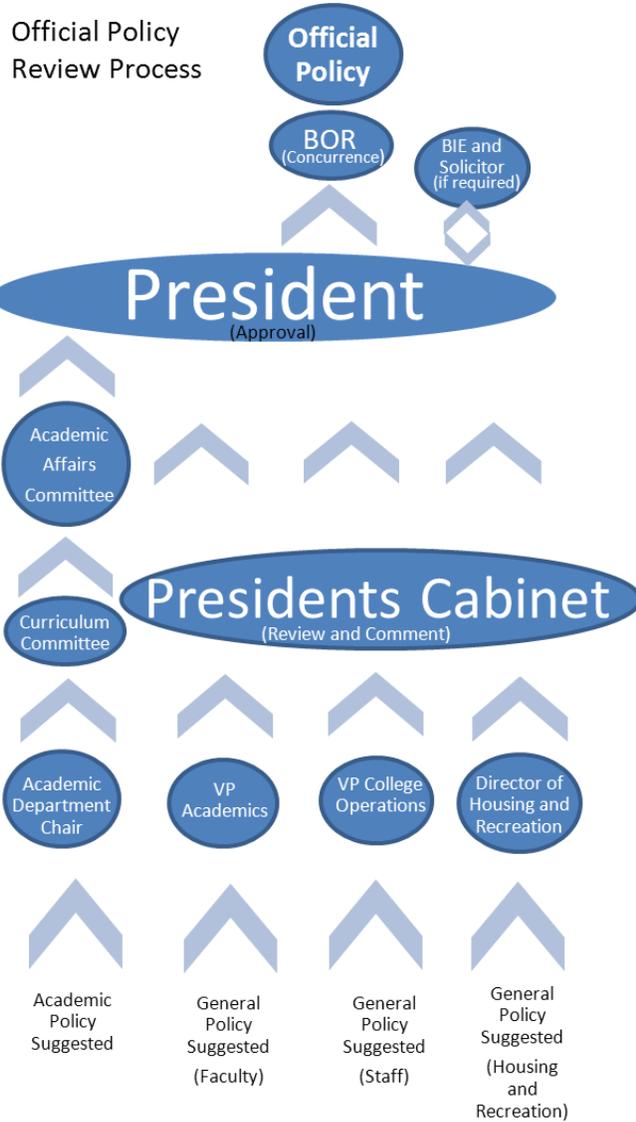◊ Transfer/Articulation and Federal Policy

Dr. Allison works with Student Senate and SIPI staff as discussion continues on revisions to the Senate Constitution and

"With strong SIPI Leadership, and committed SIPI employees, the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute is rebuilding and applying policies for a successful work and higher education environment."

Student Leaders from Tribal Colleges & Universities converge on the Hill

SIPI'S OFFICIAL POLICY REVIEW PROCESS, APPROVED 1/31/2011

Official Policy Review Process

Official Policy

BOR (Concurrence)

BIE and Solicitor (if required)

President (Approval)

Academic Affairs Committee

Presidents Cabinet (Review and Comment)

Curriculum Committee

Academic Department Chair

VP Academics

VP College Operations

Director of Housing and Recreation

Academic Policy Suggested

General Policy Suggested (Faculty)

General Policy Suggested (Staff)

General Policy Suggested (Housing and Recreation)

POLICIES BY VALERIE MONTOYA (CONT. FROM PG. 1)

Sometimes, when a policy is derived from laws or regulations, a review by the Solicitor's Office becomes part of the process to determine the legal sufficiency of policy documents. Since a policy is broad in nature, it is often necessary to develop procedures which are more detailed and describe the actions required to carry out and implement a policy once it is formally adopted. Ultimately, policies and procedures are advantageous to an institution. They are a "good thing."

The United States Department of Education, Federal Student Aid requires all eligible institutions to develop institutional policies and procedures to administer their Federal Title IV Programs. The Title IV programs at SIPI are the Federal Pell Grant, the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work Study. These policies and procedures help to ensure the college is in compliance with federal regulations. It takes a great amount of coordination to balance and comply with other funding such as tribal funds, state funds, private funds such as the American Indian College Fund and institutional funds. If the college does not properly administer the programs, it can create a liability for the college and funds must be repaid.

My role with the Minority Serving & Under-Resourced Schools Division, Federal Student Aid is to proactively assist the 35 accredited tribal colleges, the Alaskan Native Serving institutions and Hawaiian Serving institutions to stay in compliance with the Title IV programs. I am available to the colleges for technical assistance, audit questions, programmatic questions, monitor reports and data about the colleges. I reach out to the colleges when required or requested. Having worked at a main stream college for 24 years, a tribal college as well as the American Indian College Fund, I have a firsthand knowledge and working relationship with the colleges. It is a role I enjoy and particularly when this helps to make sure the eligible

JOHN GRITTS, FEDERAL STUDENT AID U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & 2013 SIPI OUTSTANDING FACULTY

students can obtain their education.

By John Gritts

Ms. Sheri Redshirt is an outstanding faculty and community member. She represents what is best about SIPI, displaying an authentic spirit of excellence, service and professionalism, while taking pride in who she is as a Native woman. Students report, "She clearly enjoys teaching, it is reflected in her enthusiasm and in her ability to engage us." She works with students to acquire content knowledge, but also helps them to build their confidence and the soft skills that are needed in industry. She is well respected by students who describe her as inspiration and a role model; and as a result many students will go on to pursue higher level college degrees. She believes strongly in service learning and through her sponsorship of the New Optical Image Club she encourages students to volunteer for the Special Olympics and the Lions Club International. She instills in her students the importance of hard work, and encourages them to tackle skills they did not think they could master. She is a member of the Navajo/Diné nation and comes from a family of educators; she shares how important it is to acknowledge the rich cultural background our students possess. She helps students to understand that they can share this cultural knowledge with industry. As a result of this philosophy SIPI students have entered the Transitions Inc. Optical Scholarship competition in 2011 and 2012; they won with multi-cultural videos they have created. It is with extreme pleasure that Ms. Sheri Redshirt has been selected as SIPI's 2013 Faculty Member of the Year.

SIPI is located in the heart of Indian Country, in the center of New Mexico's high-tech corridor. The College was established by a consortium of tribes including the All-Indian Pueblo Council (19 New Mexico tribes), the Navajo Nation, the Jicarilla Apache Nation, the Mescalero Apache Tribe, the Southern Ute Tribes and other southwestern tribes. On September 16, 1971, SIPI officially opened its doors for classes. Today, the College as a federally-operated institution offers advanced technical education and a university transfer degree to students who are members of federally recognized tribes.

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

A NATIONAL INDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE THAT PREPARES NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS TO BE PRODUCTIVE LIFE-LONG LEARNERS, AS TRIBAL MEMBERS, IN AN EVER-CHANGING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT.

COLLEGE PRIORITIES FOR 2013-2015 SET BY PRESIDENT ALLISON

As a National Indian Community College, SIPI's priorities for the next two years (2013-2015) have been established by the college's President. These priorities were shared with staff and faculty on March 1, 2013. SIPI will focus programs, services, and resources on *Student Success*, with a commitment to building a *Culture of Evidence* through reflection, monitoring, assessing, and improving college performance. SIPI is also pleased to announce a name change of its newsletter to "Charting a Course for Student Success" reflecting a commitment to the President's Strategic Priorities.

To promote student success and an effective culture of evidence, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute will:

Goal One: Make learner success the core work of SIPI.

Goal Two: Develop new programs, strengthen existing programs, and recruit students to respond directly to the current and projected demographic and economic trends of Indian tribes, the state in which they are located, the nation, and the world.

Goal Three: Promote the health and economic vitality of Indian tribes and communities through dynamic partnerships, coalitions, and collaborations.

Goal Four: Expand the use of instructional technology to enhance student learning.

Goal Five: Make better use of existing data; create new actionable information and customers for this information to support SIPI's operational and strategic planning efforts.

Goal Six: Provide new and expanded opportunities for faculty and staff development that supports an atmosphere of excellence in academics and student support services.

"What a culture of evidence does is it gets us away from the mindset that we know what is best (without having to collect or evaluate data), based on our own conventional wisdom or experience. The benefit to this is that it forces us to rethink how we do what we do."