

# MAR 07 '06 MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## the Bulletin

### **MCC Thunder Day**

On April 11, buses full of East Valley high school students will arrive at Mesa Community College to explore the campus and learn about MCC academic programs. Students can attend career seminars, student panels, and department demonstrations. Kathleen Perales, Coordinator of Recruitment Services, said it's a day to showcase MCC and spark an interest in MCC among future college students.



*East Valley high school students learn about MCC at Thunder Day*

"The students will get a feel for college life—that is the essence of what Thunder Day is about," Kathleen said. "We are helping them envision themselves here at MCC."

This is the second year for the program. The previous Thunder Day program drew more than 300 students from 10 schools and Kathleen expects about the same turnout for this year's event. She said her department received numerous positive comments about the last event and several high schools told her they were saving their bus allowance just for Thunder Day.

Faculty, student services, and MCC staff are all involved in making this year's event a success. The program offers career seminars in business, education, pre-health professions, computer technology, and counseling. Students can also participate in activities on the center lawn, such as the Firefighter Agility Test or exercise science demonstrations in fencing, yoga, and aerobics. A special presentation for Spanish-speaking students is also planned.

MCC student ambassadors will host campus tours. High school students also have the opportunity to meet with advisors and register for Fall 2006 classes. All participants receive a T-shirt (courtesy of Wells Fargo) and end the day with lunch on campus.

Kathleen encourages MCC employees to get involved in Thunder Day.

"It's a day when every employee represents MCC," Kathleen said. "Go out of your way to welcome students. It's our day to shine. We're showing the best of the best."

For more information, contact Kathleen at 654-7751.

### **MCC Forum on Academic Freedom**

A flurry of faculty emails prompted MCC English faculty member Eddy Webb to suggest an open forum on "Academic Freedom and Arizona Senate Bill 1331." The forum, presented by the Center for Global Tolerance and Engagement, alerted students and staff to a bill concerning alternative coursework and materials.

MCC faculty member Debra Campbell served as moderator. Bill Mullaney, English instructor at Chandler-Gilbert Community College, opened the forum with an explanation of how this bill may have been in response to a situation that occurred in his class.

Bill said after nine weeks into the semester, a student objected to reading Rick Moody's novel, "The Ice Storm," on moral grounds. Since Bill had clearly presented the reading requirements on the first day of class, he said nine weeks into the class was too late to object. The student filed a formal grievance, which was denied. The student's mother inundated state legislators with complaints, which may have resulted in Bill 1331.

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continued from page 1

The bill reads, in part, that colleges “shall adopt procedures by which students who object to any course, coursework, learning material or activity on the basis that it is personally offensive shall be provided without financial or academic penalty an alternative course, alternative coursework, alternative learning materials or alternative activity.”

MCC philosophy faculty Barry Vaughn, a member of the Faculty Executive Council, voiced concern that the wording was very broad and open to interpretation.

“As (the bill) stands, a reasonable interpretation on the part of any student is that you could demand of your professor any alternative assignment based on personal, moral, religious, or sexual grounds ...” Barry said.

If a student didn’t believe in evolution, for example, the bill could even be interpreted as the right to demand a biology class without evolution in the curriculum. Barry said, “the core of higher education is about exposing people to new and different ideas.” They don’t have to agree with those ideas, but if they don’t read the materials, they can’t engage in critical evaluation, which is essential to higher education.



*"The core of higher education is about exposing people to new and different ideas",  
Barry Vaughn*

Many students stepped up to the microphone and agreed that if a student objects to preserved specimens in a biology lab, for example, or nude art models, they should have the maturity to choose a different career path or drop the class and sign up for another. Further discussion ensued about the definition of academic freedom.

Dean of Instruction Rodney Holmes said he has dealt with probably 20 situations like this in the last 10 years.

“We do what the bill asks,” he said. “That’s why during the first week of school, you go and listen to what is said, and then take another class. I tell faculty to make sure to tell students the first week what you are about ... There’s a lot of provocative education happening. It’s just part of the world.”

Status of SB 1331: The bill passed the Higher Education Committee and awaits the Senate Rules Committee and further stakeholder meetings. MCCC

CD lobbyists are actively working to defeat the bill. To read SB 1331 and track its progress, go to:<http://www.azleg.state.az.us/> and put the bill number in the search box.



## Global Learning Initiative sparks discussion

Activities that promote global learning and intercultural education are a regular part of the MCC experience for students, faculty, and staff. Last fall, Shereen Lerner, Chair of the Cultural Science Department and professor of anthropology, and Andrea Greene, Dean of Research and Planning, invited the campus community to participate in a discussion on global learning at MCC. The goal: to create a comprehensive and systematic plan for the myriad activities taking place on our campuses.

“MCC offers a broad range of activities relative to international and global learning – study abroad programs, faculty abroad exchanges, student-faculty forums, the Center for Global Tolerance and Engagement, and an academic certificate in global citizenship to name a few,” said Shereen. “Our objective was to pull all those activities together, add a much-needed curriculum component, and develop a focused strategy that supports the diversity and international awareness goal articulated in MCC’s strategic plan.”

Over seventy employees representing all areas and employee groups engaged in the discussion through a series of meetings and email distributions lists. The result: a draft strategic plan for global learning at Mesa Community College.

The plan includes vision and mission statements and defines six goals:

1. Infuse global competence into the pedagogy and curriculum of the college
2. Increase student, faculty, and staff awareness and sense of inquiry regarding complex global issues through college extra-curricula and co-curricula programs and services
3. Prepare MCC students to participate in the world marketplace

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continued from page 2

4. Develop partnerships with international colleges and universities
5. Collaborate with the external community to develop and expand cross-cultural programs
6. Coordinate college-wide programs that integrate by global learning curriculum, co-curricular activities and events, and international education programs and services.

The implementation of MCC's global learning initiative will be aided through participation in Shared Futures: General Education for Global Learning, a curriculum and faculty development network project sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities

(AAC&U). MCC is one of only sixteen institutions nationwide invited to participate in the project. The grant is led by Shereen Lerner and Gail Mee, Vice President for Academic Affairs.

“With this grant we intend to bring focus to our many international activities, define what we mean by global competence, and more fully integrate global learning into the life of the college,” said Gail.

A strategic conversation on global learning will be held March 23, 12:00-2:00 p.m. in the Elsner Library, Southwest Reading room. A copy of the draft Strategic Plan for Global Learning at Mesa Community College is available online.

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## Foreign Film Offerings

Fascinating opportunities await foreign film buffs in the coming months. MCC's International Education department and the Center for Teaching and Learning collaborated to present this spring's foreign film series titled “Social Patterns in Cultural Settings.”

This month's selection features an Indian film, “Sancharam,” which means “journey” in Hindi. The film will be shown on March 8, International Woman's Day, followed by a discussion with the director of the film, Ligy Pullapally. Sancharam is a sensitively drawn same-sex love story that shows local customs and offers beautiful cinematography. Pullapally, a lawyer as well as a filmmaker, has been recognized for her work as an advocate on women's issues. This is a joint project between MCC's International Education department and the Women's Studies program.

Next month, the Japanese film, “Shall We Dansu,” will be followed by a discussion led by Emi Ahn, MCC Japanese Language faculty. This 1996 Japanese film about a middle-aged workaholic who signs up for dance lessons was recently remade into the American film, “Shall We Dance,” starring Richard Gere and Jennifer Lopez.

MCC's International Education Director Ida Mansourian said the goal of the film series is to provide the opportunity for the viewer to better understand the social patterns of specific cultures in comparison to the American culture. In “Shall We Dansu”, for example, the character has to hide his dance lesson because it is not the social norm for a man to take a dance class in the Japanese culture.

“Watching a foreign movie is a window to another culture, providing a glimpse into that culture,” said Ida.

The spring film series not only allows students to gain a better understanding of different cultures, but also provides a chance to hear from a faculty member who represents the culture. Each semester, the International Education department and CTL will select a different theme for the film series.

\* *Sancharam*: March 8 in the Navajo Room from noon-2:30 p.m. and 7-10 p.m., discussion led by Ligy Pullapally.

\* *Shall We Dansu*: April 21 in LB 145 from noon to 2:30 p.m., discussion led by Emi Ahn



## Table Talk: Play God

What if the MCC Center for Global Tolerance and Engagement created a universe and nobody came? That certainly wasn't the case during their February Table Talk, "Play God, Fix the World." More than 100 students and faculty packed the MCC library community room for a chance to take part in a social experiment attempting to solve the problems of humanity.

Moderator Tom Shoemaker directed student participants to gather on one side of the room to represent "God," a corporate body, whose first act was to select an original name by which they would be known and worshipped. They chose "Pat."

Tom Shoemaker announces a revelation from "God"

Faculty (plus some extra students) gathered on the other side to represent the human race. The human race came up with a list of problems and submitted questions for Pat.

Adding another interesting component to the event was the "Evil Demon," played divinely by MCC Philosophy faculty Barry Vaughan, who wandered between the groups. The experiment used a Manichaeian system, meaning good and evil powers were absolutely matched, but with limits. The demon also chose the name "Pat," creating some confusion throughout the universe.



Tom Shoemaker announces a revelation from "God"

A good hour of lively interaction between humanity and God took place, with revelations, miracles, and prophet appointments. Patrice Nango, Religious Studies faculty, said she enjoyed the interaction and rabble-rousing between participants.

For Barry, playing the demon was "all of the fun with none of the guilt."

In the end, Tom declared the end of humanity and told participants to look on the Center's website for a posting of Pat's "scripture." He plans to organize another Play God event next fall, and asked participants to email comments to him, which will help him tweak the event so it runs even smoother next time.

### Upcoming Center for Global Tolerance and Engagement events:

March 7, 10:30-11:45 a.m. "Speedy Gonzales: Negative Anglo Stereotype or Latino Cultural Icon?"  
David Ramirez, Deputy Public Information Director, City of Phoenix.

April 4, 3-5 p.m. National Issues Forum, "The Media and Diversity,"

#### Table Talk:

March 30, 1:30-2:45 p.m., World Music DJ.

April 20, 1:30-2:45 p.m. US and Them.

#### Kefir's Corner:

March 22, noon-1:30 p.m. The Sights and Sounds of World Music.

April 19, noon-1:30 p.m. The Minority View.

For more information, visit <http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/dept/d34/cgte/>