

Debra Hills-Beckwith for Part-Time Faculty Officer-at-Large

I am running for Part-Time Faculty Officer-at-Large. I have been an adjunct professor in English as a Second Language (ESL) at Cuyamaca College since 2015 and I believe my experience would be valuable to the Academic Senate.

I approach education through a lens of assets-based teaching and research that emphasizes inclusion and the dismantling of barriers found at all levels of education, especially those that impact traditionally marginalized communities. My pedagogy emphasizes educational equity by meeting students' affective needs and using strategies that are culturally relevant and sustaining. For example, in my classroom I utilize translanguaging – a practice that allows students' full use of their linguistic and cultural repertoires – as a means to increase student engagement and achievement. Students are often involved in group work, within these groups, students are allowed to use their primary language (L1) in addition to English to complete class work. The expectations of assignments do not change, but the path to completion does. By allowing students access to their linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge, my goal is to remove barriers and lower affective filters to allow students to learn, and thrive, in a supportive classroom environment.

This work is reflected in my doctoral dissertation entitled, "Translanguaging in Community College ESL: Exploring a Rubric for Teaching during the Covid-19 Pandemic", which focuses on developing translanguaging as an equity-based teaching rubric for higher education. I designed the rubric as a lens for applying a critical examination of restrictive language policies and investigating how teachers understand and can utilize equity-based teaching strategies within linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. Additionally, I have participated in the implementation and design of the current Accelerated ESL curriculum, which is aimed at meeting the goals of California Assembly Bill 705 through the application of the core principles of the California Acceleration Project (CAP).

My participation has included the development of the department's curriculum, supporting my colleagues by sharing self-created teaching materials, and volunteering my time, as able, to support the department's goals. Moreover, I have served Cuyamaca College as a member of the Student Success and Equity Council (SSEC), helping to reimagine and implement new orientation practices for adjunct faculty. Currently, I serve as a member of the Teaching and Learning Committee. Overall, my work advocates for strengthening continuity standards for student support within K-20 education and developing effective professional learning opportunities for educators that meet the challenges of diverse classrooms. As an educator, I believe strongly in creating and maintaining an institutional climate of educational excellence. This is something that involves everyone, from students, staff, and faculty, to collaborating with Grossmont College and the communities our district serves. In simple words, success and excellence take a commUNITY.