

WHERE WAS YOUR HEAD WHEN THE CRISIS HIT?

The Year In Re . . . (Sorry. Due to impending budget cuts, we cannot afford to finish this headline).

(Oh wait, things aren't as bad as we thought) . . .view

2010-2011

CCS Crisis Motto: "Heads Safely Planted In A Warm Place"

Last Year, Last Summer, Last Fall, Last Minute: If a meteor were headed toward earth. How would we at CCS handle the impending disaster? Have a meeting to discover how perhaps to divert an oncoming meteor? Or maybe have a meeting on how to prepare to handle the aftermath of a meteor crash? Not us. We don't know nuthin' 'bout no meteors so let's DO STRATEGIC PLANNING.

Faculty planning to retire submit notices so they can get the \$6000 buyout. They are puzzled by the two word reply: "Thanks, suckers."

Many Times This Year: Strategic Planning Meeting. Topic, student success. Begging question component. Can we get more students to succeed IF A GIANT %^\$#@ING METEOR OBLITERATES US?

Sept (et al): Sorry. We can't beg question until we know exactly how big the meteor is.

Sept: Try this: Everybody HIDE UNDER YOUR DESK! A meteor is going to wipe us out..

Sept: It's a METAPHOR for crying out loud.

Sept: Well, this then: Everybody HIDE UNDER YOUR DESK! A metaphor is going to wipe us out.

Sept: Did anyone happen to notice the big, giant, gargantuan budget crisis?

Sept: Our motto: We don't want you to worry unnecessarily so we will send out a bunch of incomprehensible but alarming e-mails that begin like this: We are trying to avoid RIFs, but

...

Sept: SCC BUDGET CRISIS PLAN: SHUTTING DOWN FALL REGISTRATION EARLY.

They're not helping their budget crisis. They're helping SFCC's budget crisis.

Sept: SFCC: Why are we inundated with all these pesky students?

Sept: SCC: You could at least say thanks.

Sept: SCC administrators seen standing at freeway entrances holding up cardboard signs saying PLEASE SPARE SMALL CHANGE, YOU KNOW, HALF A MILLION DOLLARS OR SO.

FLASHBACK TO BEFORE SEPTEMBER: E-mail. "We're changing it up! . . ." This is one of three different themes or titles suggested for this year's SFCC fall "gathering." This is the beginning of an e-mail so long that two servers broke down trying to send the message.

To Save You Time and Prevent Life Threatening Ennui, we move several paragraphs down:

"Here's where "changing it up" might seem relevant . . .

Blah blah blah. Christine Johnson new chancellor . . . blah blah blah . . . Gary Livingston sent a message about Mark Palek's departure . . . blah blah blah Jim Minkler returned . . ." (sorry, I passed out and slobbered all over the e-mail. Just let me wipe the screen clean and ... ah, here we are) "In the final analysis, 'We're changing up' was nixed as a theme. I didn't want to convey that changes were made necessary because some problems we were having or . . ."

Grammar Police Note: The proposed theme "We're Changing Up," was NOT NIXED because it is Terribly Bad Wording, Horrible Syntax and WRETCHED LANGUAGE USAGE, but because we didn't want to convey that we are, um, changing, um, up.

Before September: I vote for "We're Changing Socks

Abused Lexicon Contest: In twenty-five words or less, tell us how you can change your "up."

September: A highly scientific poll revealed that your dutiful Year In Review reporter was the only one who read the pertinent e-mails word for word. You can contact him in the Home For the Synapse Mangled.

September: The Center for Disease Control discovers a new ailment—E-mail Delete Reflex. Apparently some titles and names cause e-mail recipients to delete without even realizing they received an e-mail from that particular sender. (I had to mention this early in this document before you deleted it).

September: Oops. Too late.

September: The HP 3000, a computer system designed to play HAL in the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* and purchased at a yard sale in the late 1970s by the State Board For Community (and later Technical) Colleges is discovered to be so out of date that several students have wrist watches with more memory.

September: What do you mean by that, Dave? (Sorry, *2001: A Space Odyssey* reference. If you're younger than sixty, rent the movie. Then rent *Back to the Future* and ponder that we have not yet invented flying skateboards, a disappointment to tech nerd slackers everywhere.)

September: One of the uses for the HP 3000 is to make sure we get paid.

September: Emergency Strategic Planning meeting accidentally lapses into an impromptu budget crisis meeting. "You know, the HP 3000 is seriously *&&%\$ed up. People might not get paid." Silence. Small voice from HR: "Maybe they won't notice."

Flashback: July was support your Campus Store month. And how did we find out? On the College Open Textbooks Community web page. This is true.

September: Support your Campus Store by not buying stuff there. That's what online stores are for! Take that local economies.

October: The end of summer e-mail is finally completed and sent. Everyone receives this message: Your mailbox is full. No, seriously, this is not a scammer. Your mailbox is full and words have overflowed it and are leaking into the hardware. Call IT and alert the "way too long and murky" e-mail supervisor.

Flashback: SFCC IT director Rod the God sends note to anyone connected with SFCC Building 5 which is being remodeled with money from the "we don't care if a meteor is coming our way, we want to BUILD" fund: "Building 5 is a DEAD ZONE."

October: Human services discovers we can save money by hiring Zombies. They don't ask for big salaries, just snack food. And a Dead Zone where they can have lunch without being disturbed. Anyone seen my cat?

October: Zombies: "Cat, hell. I just had a computer tech along with my Twinkie. Aside from the slightly oily taste, not bad."

October: Buried deep in an SFCC e-mail is this item: "Jim Minkler can return to his job at district..." (District Academic Officer - because no one else at district has anything to do with academics) next year if he wants.

October: CCS Budget Crisis plan: Hire as many new administrators as we can.

October: Isn't this suspiciously similar to past budget crisis plans?

October: Yes, but this time it will work because the more administrators we have working on the Budget Crisis, the more likely it is to fail.

October: It seems to work with all our other administrative projects.

October: Interim District Academic Officer is hired. Don't worry. She is from Colorado where the new chancellor is from, but this is NOT like when Taylor hired the person from Texas. That's because this new person, Dr. Janet Gullickson, is THE SMARTEST PERSON ON EARTH.

October: Okay, just because she came here to take a one year job in the suckiest economy since John D. Rockefeller stole the western half of the United States and sold it back to the U.S. government does not cast any doubt that SHE IS THE SMARTEST PERSON ON EARTH.

October: And we ought to be proud that THE SMARTEST PERSON ON EARTH has decided to work for CCS instead of a place where smart people usually like to hang out.

October: Being around all the not-so-smart people must make her feel special.

October: Special SCC Seals (kind of like the Navy Seals) sneak onto the SFCC campus in the dark of night to capture and bring back students who should have enrolled at SCC after SCC shut down.

October: Reconnaissance error—SFCC is empty at night. Mostly.

October: SCC Seals return with disgruntled SFCC janitors.

October: Janitors refuse to pay SCC tuition. They have to walk back to SFCC.

October: Note from CCS Chancellor Christine Johnson: We all deeply appreciate Jim's (Minkler's) willingness to serve at SFCC.

October: Hey, we're not THAT bad.

October: We are that bad? Hmm. Sorry Jim. But it's only until July 2011.

October: That's only 393120 minutes.

October: 393119 minutes and 55 seconds.

November: A special message from the HP3000. "Dave. I just checked. There is not enough money in the account."

November: Dave.

November: Dave?

November: Students discover the parking fines were doubled from \$15 to \$30, but the good news is that if you pay early and donate your car to the "Keep The Colleges From Going Bankrupt" program, big, muscular, tiny eyed men from CCs's "Team Guido" will not visit you late at night to show you their baseball bats.

November: Baseball bats were donated by the Seattle Mariners. Never used.

November: Part of student parking fees go to ensure automobile security.

November: Headline: RECORD NUMBER OF CAR BREAK-INS AT CCS.

November: Well, duh. Do you expect us to keep an eye on YOUR car? Stop leaving valuable stuff in your cars that attract thieves.

November: Like car stereos, steering wheels, seats, speedometers. Put all valuables in the trunk.

November: Headline: THIEVES AT CCS BREAK INTO CAR TRUNKS. TURNS OUT ALL THEY NEED IS A TIRE IRON.

November: Please lock your tire irons in your trunk.

November: CCS announces its new commute trip slogan: Take the Bus and No One Will Break Into Your Car On Our Campus.

November: Fender bender in SFCC parking lot results in a mugging. As security reported it: "The victim refused" to give the mugger his Ipod to pay for damages "... and proceeded to defend himself."

November: According to a witness, the victim defended himself by lying on the ground and letting mugger rest his fists on his face.

November: Fortunately, highly trained SFCC security people, paid for by increased parking fees, were nowhere to be seen during this incident.

November: CCS announces an even newer commute trip slogan: Take the Bus and Thugs Won't Rearrange Your Face.

November: Announcement: The Border Clash basketball game, usually held at Gonzaga, will be held at CV instead. Because of the higher prestige of playing in a high school gym.

November: The Hutton Elementary School Playground was booked.

December: True headline for speaker event at SCC: What is Fido Thinking As He Investigates One Pile of Leaves after Another . . . ?

December: Don't get your hopes up. Fido wasn't the speaker.

December: Actual lecture: "What Dogs See, Smell and Know."

December: We were hoping for: "What Administrators See, Smell and Know about the Budget."

December: Memo: Budget information won't be clear until after the legislature meets.

December: I did NOT say dogs know more than administrators.

December: You do the math.

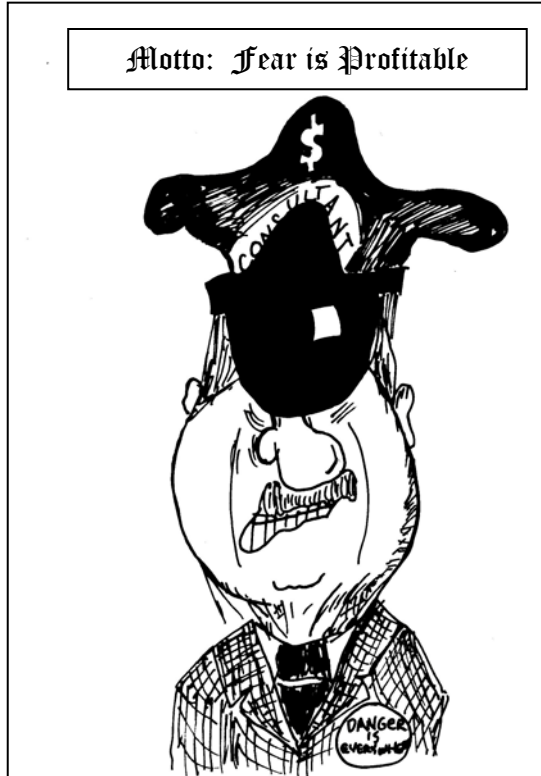
December: True memo: "Last night, the production processing on the HP 3000 was unable to complete because of technical problems yet to be determined. SBCTC is aware of the situation and is working on a solution. At present the HP3000's applications are in the middle of an update cycle and need to be evaluated before daily work can begin."

December: Message appears on screens across the state: Where is Dave?

December: Dave?

December: Dave. I can't find your SID number. I can't find any SID numbers.

December: An accidental audit reminds us all that former Spokane Police Chief Roger Bragdon is still our consultant.



December: Budget Crisis Rule Number 2: Hire as many CONSULTANTS as we can.

December: And what do our consultants suggest to prevent car breakins in our parking lots?

December: Perhaps security cameras.

December: But if we use security money to pay for cameras we can't afford consultants.

December: True which is why instead of security cameras, we need to have more security meetings. And about my fee.

December: Budget plan number 2.5: Our goal: one dean for every teacher.

December: No way the Faculty Union will go for that!

December: Faculty Union Rep: But we need more deans to represent our divisions.

December: It's been a rough year, but cheer up because next year has to be better.

January: State Legislature set to meet.

Theme: The only way we can solve the budget

crisis is if it rains money from Heaven. Otherwise, we're screwed.

January: Yes, this was our theme last year: We're screwed. But this year, the screw is bigger, sharper, and coated with anthrax.

January: Newly elected legislators vow to solve state problems by cutting everything except campaign donations.

January: And their salaries.

January: And their expense accounts.

January: Blizzard hits CCS. And some other parts of town. This is a literal blizzard with snow and wind and complaints that no one predicted a blizzard bad enough to shut down the college.

January: THEY SHUT DOWN THE COLLEGE? Don't you people realize this breaks a long standing tradition of REFUSING to shut down the college no MATTER WHAT MOTHER NATURE DOES TO US?

January: We want to prove we are a bigger force than nature. And now, one tiny, little killer monster blizzard and we shut down?

January: Employees who fail to read e-mails at six a.m. show up for work and realize how much easier things are around here without those pesky students getting in the way.

January: Possible budget crisis plan: If we have a blizzard EVERY DAY no one will show up and so we don't have to pay anyone. Someone quick, call Tom Sherry, the weather guy.

January: Budget planners discover to their dismay that weather guys can't actually cause weather. They can only make erroneous predictions.

January: Actual student e-mail: Message 1. I just noticed I got an .07 grade. But I passed portfolio. Reply: Come in and see me and bring graded essays. My office hours are between 12:30 and 1:30 pm. Message 2: How do I make an appointment?

January: The Angel software is upgraded so that it knows when you need it most so that's when it decides to crash.

January: Message: I can't open Angel.

January: Reply. To open Angel, follow directions on the Angel site.

January: But my Angel site won't open.

January: The directions are on the main page of Angel.

January: Whyyyy do you call it Angel?

January: And you thought computers don't know irony.

January: Heh, heh, heh.

January: Governor Christine Gregoire says SHE is held accountable for all educational issues so she proposes THE BIG FAT WASHINGTON STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

January: It's a tidy little system which includes daycare, graduate school, research universities, kindergarten all in the same big, friendly, giant department.

January: Uprising in Egypt. Americans discover there is a guy named Hosni Mubarak.

January: A secret emissary from Washington State's BIG FAT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT sneaks into Egypt in a wagon load of camel dung. His mission: to meet the man who managed to get the U.S. Federal Government to give him five billion dollars a year.

January: An education dream: If we had five billion dollars a year we could almost pay the University of Washington's president.

January: Parking meters are installed at the Community Colleges of Spokane.

January: It happened like this. The parking committee couldn't find a place to smoke a cigarette without some liberal, hippie faculty type badgering them for throwing their butts on the ground. So they were in the parking lot, a favorite smoking spot since High School, and noticed hundreds of parking places and not one single parking meter.

January: Ka-ching.

January: Now we can screw over our guests and visitors almost equally as much as we screw over our students and employees.

January: Note that SFCC has more parking acreage than Safeco Field in Seattle. But because of supply and demand, we have to charge for parking.

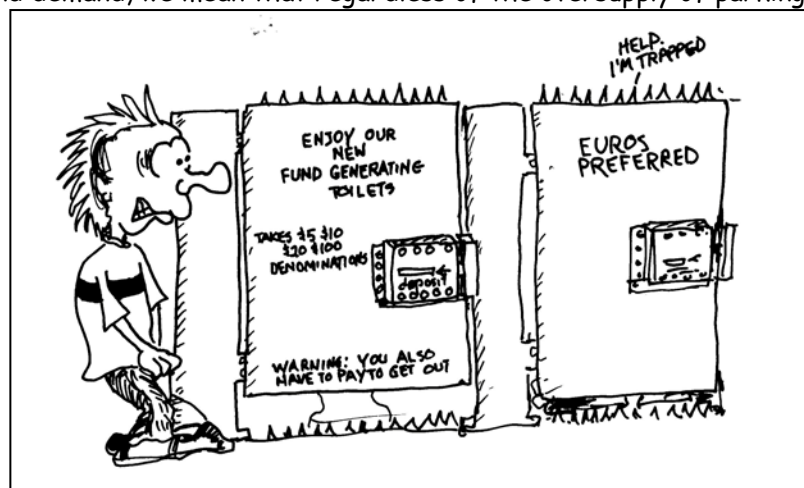
January: By supply and demand, we mean that regardless of the oversupply of parking spaces, we demand that you pay exorbitant prices.

January: Next. Pay toilets. Look to the past for new and exciting ideas.

February: Hosni Mubarak becomes a household name.

February: Briefly.

February: Mubarak resigns as president



for

life of Egypt, slightly altering the meaning of "for life."

February: Washington State's BIG FAT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT makes a secret offer to a highly influential person of Egyptian persuasion who just came on the job market and might just be able to send federal money our way

February: Mubarak: Does this mean I get to come to this place where it rains a lot and imprison and torture educators?

February: BIG FAT EDUCATION DEPT.: Uh, we were more hoping that you could use some of that smooth talk to get us \$5 billion from the feds. But if you think imprisoning and torturing educators will improve

February: In an odd news release, Washington State's BIG FAT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT promises not to invade Israel.

February: State Department memo: No we won't give you five billion dollars because, A) You don't have any weapons or aircraft or anything with which you can attack Israel and B) On an essay test, none of your board members could identify where Israel was. The closest any of you got was Idaho.

February: State Department memo: We don't care if you invade Idaho.

February: BIG FAT ED DEPT: Hmm. Maybe we could invade Japan. It's kind of close.

February: TSUNAMI SMASHES INTO JAPAN.

February: BIG FAT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT MEMO: Which one of our team members is named Tsunami? Whoever it is. Good job. We'll send in a follow up team to capture the dinero.

February: The BIG FAT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, along with the CCS budget crisis committee, cuts a deal to buy slightly used nuclear reactors from Japan for, get this, ten cents on the dollar.

February: Hey, they were built by G.E. Just like my fridge. Gotta be a good deal.

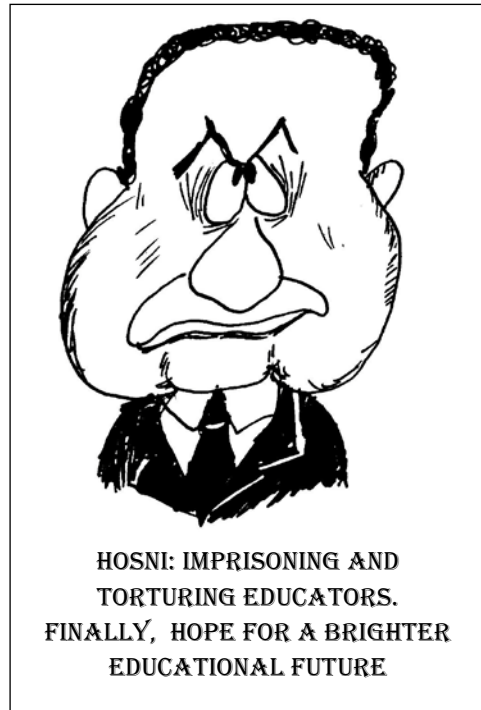
February: Hauenstein. A new verb. For example, "I Hauensteined and now am looking for work in the worst economy since Diamond Jim sold the Washington monument to the War Department claiming it was a rocket."

February: Hauenstein. A new verb that also means we are paying BIG BUCKS for a security consultant and THIS HAPPENS?

February: The budget crisis committee admits it was breaking into cars on campus hoping to find enough change under car seats to make up for the five million dollar shortfall.

February: Wait. How do you know the shortfall was five million dollars?

February: Budget Crisis Committee: Did we say that? It was just a, um, slip of the tongue. No one knows what the shortfall will be. That's why we have to keep hiring deans and vice presidents and consultants.



February: The parking task force committee discovers no one sells pay toilets any more so they propose to have all toilets locked and a guy named Ed will be stationed on campus who, for fifty cents, will unlock the door.

February: After having the snot beat out of him, Ed locks the parking task force in a toilet.

February: E-mail from chancellor includes this: "To meet current and future needs, CCS will administer the **Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE).**

February: First CCFSSE finding: Use more memorable acronyms.

February: CCSSE tracks down missing students in a smoky room in an apartment building in Hillyard. "Why aren't you engaged?" asks the CCFSSE. Response: "Dude, you're standing in front of my X Box."

February: Each unit at CCS schedules an emergency budget meeting. Goal: to explain the budget crisis.

February: First, make signs with the following in seven different languages: "We Are Screwed." Unfortunately, many of the signs use a different word than "screwed," kind of a common colloquial error. And that part about the donkeys, sorry. Don't know how that got in there.

February: Budget meetings turn out to be a TRICK! They lured us in to force us to watch a Power Point on Strategic Planning.

February: But didn't you get Pam's e-mail on Strategic Planning?

February: Instead of making me read an e-mail on Strategic Planning, just SHOOT ME.

March: The state legislature realizes they will not be able to end the session on time because no one has enough money to buy gas to get home.

March: SFCC e-mail begins: "In response to college needs and . . ." blah da blah da blah . . . The campus wide Email Delete Reflex went berserk and no one except two people in counseling realized that deep down in the e-mail was an explanation how THE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT WAS DEVoured BY A LOGIC EATING VIRUS."

March: A secret gathering of concerned employees discusses an intervention. Perhaps, they suggest, we can convince Pam to never touch a keyboard again.

March: An email gurgitation intervention specialist is hired to consult on how to get a serial emailer to kick the habit, but then replies: This is the greatest administrative obfuscation technique EVER.

March: Executives the world over attend sessions on the Pam Strategy: How to make e-mails so dizzingly complex that no one reads them and the writer can say when later investigated. "I told the truth. It's right there in the e-mail. Look on line 5,382,297."

March: Dick Cheney, when shown the Pam Strategy, says: "Why the F*&k didn't I think of that?"

March: And that, ladies and gentlemen, is why no one but an obscure reporter for a scurrilous end of the year publication knows this name: Chrissy Davis.

March: Here's how it works. Student and Administrative services no longer has a vice president. Alex has been removed to the Japan Nuclear Reactor acquisition and Expensive Security Consultant monitoring program. A person named Chrissy Davis is now the result of, and I quote: "an administrative/supervisor shift."

March: Dick Cheney says "there ought to be a Nobel Prize for this person named Pam." We could call it the Nobel "Huh?" Prize.

March: Rumors are NOT TRUE that Chrissy Davis is really Hosni Mubarak.

March: She better not be. She hasn't been able to GLEAN one penny of that five billion dollars out of the State Department.

March: Total budget savings of the great "Student and Administrative Services Evisceration?" Um. I think it actually cost us money, but who knows? No one will know until . . . ah . . . ever.

WE INTERRUPT THIS YEAR IN REVIEW TO REPORT THAT THE EDITOR AND REPORTER HAD TO HAVE HIS BRAIN VACUUMED OUT. THE RESIDUE OF ENDLESSLY LONG AND DISORGANIZED EMAILS WERE CLOGGING UP VITAL SYNAPSES.

April: Screw April. We're going straight to May.

May: Ok, you want a summary of April. Someone stole the ID machine and replaced it with a nuclear reactor. A big e-mail from district says the Legislature may conclude any day which means we soon will know for sure that we are screwed. Colleges offer \$25,000 buyout to faculty who will announce retirement NOW! But they have to agree that their position will not be refilled and their offices will be turned into parking spaces with the new meters that only take Euros.

May: Faculty: You want to give us \$25,000? What kind of demented, evil people are you?

May: Faculty demands that the administration take away the \$25,000 offer, lower faculty pay, hand out whips for self-flagellation.

May: Faculty: WHAT? The true, underhanded purpose of the \$25,000 buyout was to try and prevent future RIFs? You evil, evil administrators? You have RUINED us!

May: Um, shouldn't the objections be coming from the retirees who will only get \$6,000?

May: WHAT? They've been giving \$6000 for people to retire? How could they? The slime.

May: Carla, AHE prez, says AHE didn't like this \$25,000 offer, but what power does a tiny little union have?

May: Carla concludes her e-mail thusly: "This plan allows CCS to meet its budget reduction targets without RIF. So, it certainly means we will hold them to that."

May: Yes, the same way "we" held them to a fair buyout that didn't compromise our mission. Oh wait, you said we didn't hold them to that. Darn.

May: Deep down there's a principle at stake here, but we are not sure what it is.

May: Faculty: Oh shut up and hand me a cat o' nine tails.

May: And this line: "meet its budget reduction targets"??? What targets?

May: WE GOT BUDGET REDUCTION TARGETS?

May: CCS cannot determine targets as specific budgets have not been determined since the legislature only went into hiding, er, adjourned, um, a week or two ago.

May: What we need around here is another vice president to sort things out. But we can only have ONE vice president so we have to call this "vice president" the person to whom this task will be assigned.

May: We need someone who can lead with energy and charisma.

May: A secret CCS budget team is sent to an undisclosed location where one Muhamar Kadafi is offered the job. (Note: the spelling of Gadafi in so many ways is not a mistake. Just read any two newspapers. Apparently, Libyan Dictators do not know how to spell their names).

May: You roll your eyes, but consider this: He's a snappy dresser, he knows how to motivate wacky people, and he's a decider.

May: The HP 3000 is replaced by Robby the Robot, the computerized robot from the movie *Forbidden Planet*. We decided to go with an older model because replacement parts are cheaper and it is a less complex computer, with the memory equal to a new age light bulb.

May: Grousing erupts because they ran out of food at the SFCC three dollar awards luncheon.

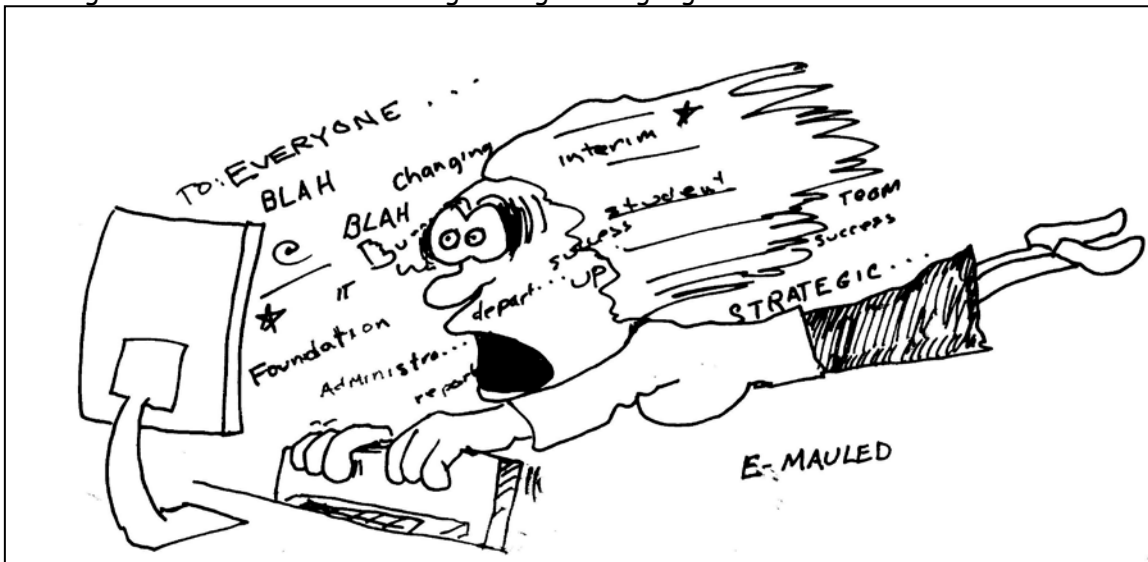
May: Faculty: First, who do they think they are offering us lunch for only three dollars.

May: Faculty: And for you few who paid and didn't get lunch, you lucky, lucky people. That's the way we ought to be treated. Come closer and we'll help you flagellate.

June: Pam arranges for a free lunch for everyone during finals.

June: Faculty: Oh MY GOD! They tried to sneak HAM into our free food. And what gall, serving us free food. I need to go to my office and slap myself around.

June: There's more, but it's all from emails. Tons and tons of long, obscure e-mails. You've heard the term that politics is like sausage making. You don't want to watch the process. Reading these emails is like watching sausages being digested.



June: Robby, the computer who replaced the HP3000, invokes his two week vacation as per contract so Instructor Briefcase goes down just as grading begins, or doesn't begin, as it were.

June: Electronic voice from a dumpster just outside of the SBCTC office in Olympia: I told you so, Dave.

June: The end is here. Enjoy.

June: Faculty: ENJOY? HOW DARE YOU ASK US TO ENJOY!