November 13, 2012

1. Good evening. On behalf of the Academic Senate, I would like to thank Trustee Range for providing professional leadership of the Board of Trustees. We will miss his presence from our college. I would also like to congratulate John Pinkerton and Trustee Brady for their election victories. I hope that in the next few years, our Board of Trustees will work together to address the needs of students, faculty and staff here at VVC.

2. Accreditation: last Wednesday, I was asked to speak to the ACCJC visiting team on Academic Senate related issues. I responded to inquiries regarding the increased participation of both full- and part-time faculty on Senate and Shared Governance committees (a 35% increase from last semester), the revival of the Academic Senate newsletter Faculty Forum, and the organizational mindset change faculty have demonstrated in their commitment to VVC via completing of SLO Assessments and contributing to Program Review and the Educational Master Plan.

3. I am also pleased to report that Senate Past President Lisa Harvey, Secretary Leslie Huiner and I attended the Fall Plenary Session in Irvine from November 8-10. We attended session focused on curriculum, basic skills, and changes to Title V, amongst other important workshops. The focus in the general sessions was on the benefits of Proposition 30 passing, which will ideally increase section offerings at VVC, especially for Summer 2012. There were several resolutions passed in the Saturday session involving how we can better serve our students, and how Prop 30 funds will enable the CCC’s to continue to provide excellent education and assist us in serving our students better. I will be sharing the presentations and information to all full- and part-time faculty this week, so faculty can be informed on the latest issues affecting our institution and our state.

4. As I noted in my last report, October 9, 2012, VVC is, comparatively, in great financial shape compared to other community colleges; this fact was made manifest by talking with other community colleges at the Fall Plenary Session. Since Prop 30 will assist VVC in budgetary areas, it is the hope of
the VVC Academic Senate that every effort is made by the B of T and the administration to support students, faculty and staff by ensuring that courses are offered to assist our students in their educational goals. At the Fall Plenary, emphasis was placed on providing our students with the courses they need to transfer or complete a certificate, and how, many times, essential courses are not offered in a timely manner, forcing students to look elsewhere – such as private institutions – to achieve their goals. At VVC, with our substantial reserves and GIC (plus the passing of Prop 30) it is more than possible to maintain financial stability here, while not neglecting the most important reason why VVC exists: student and community service. Since VVC is not a ‘for profit’ institution, students desperately need the funds VVC holds in reserve ‘for a rainy day’. Although we can see a little sun peeking through the storm clouds that have covered us for far too long, it’s still pouring. If we don’t provide students and the community with shelter from this educational hurricane, they will seek it elsewhere.

Thank you.