

Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
February 12, 2010
Minutes

Present: Bruce Cooperstein, Raoul Birnbaum, Faye Crosby, Chris Edwards, Andy Fisher, Juan Poblete, Bakthan Singaram, Donald Wittman, Amy Weaver (NSTF), Alex De Arana-Lemich (SUA), Alma Natalia De Castro (SUA), Tammi Blake (ASO)

Absent: Robert Singleton (SUA)

Guests: AVC Michelle Whittingham, Associate Director Michael McCawley, Executive Director Pablo Reguerin, Director Holly Gritsch de Cordova

Announcements

Chair Cooperstein briefly reported on the February 2 joint Chancellor's Advisory Board and Senate Executive (SEC) and the February 9 SEC meeting. Topics discussed include the budget, outsourcing child care, the EVC search committee and the upcoming Senate meeting. There was also a lively discussion with members of the UC Gould Commission.

Pre-consult discussion on Bridge

From an ethical standpoint, some CAFA members do not support participation in the Bridge program a requirement of admission for EOP AbyE students. The persuasion value of the program would be more effective than requiring students to engage in it.

Campuses, systemwide, are utilizing wait lists, CAFA will consider what we want to do with Admission by Exception (AbyE) in terms of the lists; most Bridge students come from AbyE. The added value may be that although they did not start in same place, they perform at similar levels to other non-Bridge students. A different way of looking at data would be to average the GPA of EOP students and Bridge students for comparison. UCSC could invite other students with a similar profile to AbyE students who could benefit from the program.

Bridge is a first year program. How does it fit with other academic support services and what are the budgetary ramifications of Bridge being invitational?

As we define our philosophy of admissions, we need to re-conceptualize student services in the context of admissions policy so students are best served in whatever category they are admitted to at the university.

Bridge Consultation

Bridge is a first year academic support program. Retention data show Bridge students struggle in the first and second year but catch up in their third year at UCSC. There is no gap in persistence in graduation. CAFA is looking at the goal of Bridge from a value added perspective. The program was reduced in 2003 when "learning communities" were adopted.

The average GPA for students coming into the program is available. Once here, test score information and access to high school data on specific courses is available.

EOP Executive Director Pablo Reguerin and Learning Support Services Director Holly Gritsch de Cordova said the goal of Bridge is to have a program that creates opportunity for first generation students from underperforming schools and any changes will affect diversity on campus.

EOP students are not achieving at same levels as the non-EOP cohort. Student Affairs is launching a Bridge Redesign Committee and would like to make Bridge an EOP scholars program by requiring some students who are AbyE and EOP to participate. CAFA raised their concern about the inappropriateness and ethical challenge of Bridge being conditional to admission when other students who look the same don't have that requirement and asked why a program that requires students to participate would be better than one that invites them? Since no admission offers have gone out yet there still could be time to do this as an invitation style program. Director Gritsch de Cordova said the concern is that retention may decline with a voluntary program. Both would prefer a mandatory program and asked if students would choose to engage in a voluntary program?

CAFA reviewed two years of data and looked at the goals of the program, the cohort being served and what the success markers are. The committee is considering extending the program and presenting it as all but required for all underachieving students. If the experiment doesn't work it could be corrected later.

Executive Director Guillermo said the key with the program being required is that engagement with support services is maintained through advising. There are also issues with "gates" to majors so more discipline related content is critical to the student's academic development. Information will be gathered to develop Bridge best practices in the future.

Post consultation

CAFA is not prepared to make a decision on the Bridge program at this time. Some members feel that requiring a certain cohort of students to do a program is unfair and insulting to under-privileged students, others believe Bridge should be required because students might not engage with it otherwise. Another suggestion would add self-selecting EOP students to get a wider cohort.

Non Resident Tuition Return-to-Aid Proposal

CAFA discussed a proposal to formally request the administration to set aside a percentage of non-resident tuition income to support the campus Regents Scholarship program. Currently there are three non-resident scholars; Financial Aid would like to continue their support and to support future non-residents. The proposed set aside would help all scholars by increasing permanent funding for the program. CAFA unanimously endorsed the proposal.