

STUDENT FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2008-09 Academic Year
Meeting #5
Friday, May 15, 2009
8:30 a.m., USU-205

Members Present: Robinson (chair), Chavez, Denila, Hata, Kearney, Soni, Swetland, Thyden, Troutner

Members Absent: Bustamante, Rice, Taylor, Yutrzenka

Staff Attendees: Eckhous, Gleason, Sanchez

Guests Present: Cecile Lindsay, Kristina Randig, Simon Malcomber, Henry Wu

1. Welcome and Introductions. Vice President Robinson, chair of the committee, called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.
2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes. The minutes of the April 10, 2009, meeting were reviewed. Chavez moved, Soni seconded, to approve the minutes; the motion passed unanimously (9-0-0).
3. Time Certain: 9:00 a.m.: Request to Adjust Commencement Fee: Randig said that an increase to \$45 (from \$40) is being requested because the revenue from commencement will not continue to be enough to cover the expenses of the nine graduation ceremonies. Deficits from past commencements have been absorbed by Academic Affairs. Other CSUs have commencement fees as follows:

Bakersfield - \$40	San Diego - \$55	Dominguez Hills- \$35
San Luis Obispo - \$50	Northridge - \$47	Los Angeles - \$30
Channel Islands - \$45	San Bernardino - \$60	Chico - \$28
Fullerton - \$115		

The variations in the fees are due to the scope of the services provided, as well as the facilities available.

Troutner asked if commencement programs would be sold. Lindsay said they were sold for \$3 in the past, but this year they will be free. Instead of one version of the program for all colleges, each college will have its own, smaller version. Savings to the campus will be approximately \$12,000. Denila asked how the number of programs to be printed is determined. Lindsay said the number is based on numbers from past years. Programs are placed on the graduates' chairs and are available at tables around the venue.

Thyden asked how long the \$45 fee is expected to be sufficient to cover commencement costs. Randig said that a projection had only been made for next year.

Robinson asked if students pay extra for the diploma covers they receive. Lindsay said they do not.

Kearney said that some departments have celebrations for their students. Lindsay said the president is committed to having one large celebration per commencement ceremony. Kearney asked if the department celebrations pull students from the larger celebration. Lindsay said that does not seem to be the case; the campus celebration is very well attended.

Soni inquired as to the possibility of saving money by holding the commencement ceremonies in The Pyramid. Lindsay said that The Pyramid is too small for the larger colleges, and there would be added costs to having more than one venue. Lindsay noted that 80,000 persons are expected to attend the ceremonies this year, the largest ones having 11,000-12,000 in attendance.

Swetland said she would prefer if the fee was assessed only to those students who attend commencement. Lindsay said the fee is also for diploma processing and added that there are fixed costs associated with the ceremonies. Randig added that if a system to identify who did attend was possible and was put in place, more costs would be incurred.

Kearney said there should not be separate department celebrations. Lindsay said it might be better if the departments had their celebrations before the commencement ceremonies.

Troutner asked how the deficit is subsidized. Lindsay said Academic Affairs has had to absorb it, but cannot continue to do so. Kearney asked if the \$45 fee will help pay back prior year deficits. Lindsay said it will not.

Soni asked if there is any way to reduce costs with the diplomas and diploma covers. Lindsay said that the president has required that diploma covers be given out, which has increased costs. Randig said they will check with vendors to see if there can be some savings. Lindsay said that diplomas are produced by Academic Affairs.

Denila moved, Hata seconded, to approve the request to adjust the commencement fee to \$45.

Swetland said that perhaps more money can be raised on the day of commencement.

Troutner said selling the programs would be a good idea. Lindsay said that will be discussed.

Chavez asked if there has been any effort for fundraising, perhaps in finding sponsors. Soni suggested that Lindsay speak to the vice president for University Relations and Outreach about this.

Hata said that the Alumni Association sells flowers as a fundraising tool. She added that the Forty-Niner Shops venues are open during commencement. Lindsay said the university has a good partnership with the Shops; they have been very helpful in the past.

The motion passed (8-0-1).

4. Time Certain: 9:15 a.m.: Request to Establish Fee for Biological Sciences 427:

Malcomber said the requested fee would be for Vascular Plant Systematics (BIOL 427). The fee would be used for new technology that allows students to identify plants using DNA data. It would be a new fee for this course. The technique has been used for two years, but funds have been exhausted.

Swetland asked if the department will be supplementing the funds received from fees. Malcomber said it would be; additional funds will pay for additional aspects of the course. The fee is for the long-term strategy for providing the technology.

Soni said that many fee requests come from Biological Sciences, and asked if there is a way to look at the needs of the department in a comprehensive manner. Wu said that there are several reasons for so many fee requests; such as 1) the department has stopped receiving general budget support; 2) over the past five years, the department has had many new instructors, who introduce new ideas, methods and techniques. Eckhous added that the department has been very responsive; it has lowered fees and refunded unspent fees. She added that it is doing an excellent job of spending just what is needed. Hata said that the department does do comprehensive planning

Swetland asked if BIOL 427 receives IRA funds. Malcomber said they are not allowed to receive IRA funds. Hata said courses have different criteria, and if no IRA funds are received, the department may need course fees.

Robinson asked how many students are in BIOL 427. Malcomber said the course is offered in the spring and has 28 students.

Kearney asked if the department receives lottery money for this course. Malcomber they have received some funding for larger pieces of equipment.

Kearney said some degrees cost more than others, and she is concerned that this may discourage some students from majoring in those areas. She dislikes the idea of putting the cost on the students in those majors.

Soni moved, Thyden seconded, to approve the fee request for BIOL 427.

Chavez said that because of cuts to the general fund, the university is finding that more course fees are needed. He asked that if the economic situation improves, will the fees remain in effect. Robinson said that each year this committee looks at surpluses, and it can recommend that fees be cut.

Troutner said that BIOL 427 is one of two similar biology classes, one with a fee, one without, and asked if there are more students in the course without a fee than the one with a fee. Malcomber said both courses are over-enrolled with long waiting lists.

The motion passed (8-1-0).

5. Future Meeting Dates: Gleason said that Attachment 4, the Proposed Meeting Schedule, is tentative and reflects this year's schedule of meetings on the first Fridays of most months. Two dates are tentative for May 2010.

Robinson said the schedule will be firmed up in the future. This committee usually does not meet in the summer, but ASI is asked each year for a list of students who are available to meet, should the need arise. Chavez will inform Gleason of who is chosen to represent ASI should there be need to schedule a summer meeting.

Robinson thanked the members of this committee who are finishing their terms for their service.

6. Old Business:

Swetland inquired as to the status of a report on the Beach Learning Referendum. Robinson said there will be a report after the president makes his decision. Swetland requested that Chavez and Denila prepare the BLR report and present it to this committee at the October 2009 meeting.

Soni suggested that when department representatives (faculty and ASMs) come before this committee, members would be better informed if a student in that department was invited to comment. The committee felt this is a very good idea; it was suggested that these students be invited by the committee, not the requesting department.

7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Sanchez, Student Services
(These minutes have not been approved.)