

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH
STUDENT FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2005-06 Academic Year
Meeting #3
Thursday, May 4, 2006
12:00 p.m.
USU-224

Members Present: Billoo, Cape, Glumm, Hata, Latter, Mariano, Merryfield, Pollock, Robinson, Tinoco, Wheeler

Members Absent: Hood, Okahana

Staff Attendees: Eckhous, Gleason, Hernandez, Sanchez

Guests: Dave Edwards, Joe Baclig and Mike Barker, University Student Union; Stan Finney, Geological Sciences; Robert Chi and Sophie Lee, Information Systems

1. Welcome and Introductions. Vice President Robinson, chair of the committee, called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. Robinson welcomed attendees and asked that they introduce themselves.
2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes. The agenda for the May 4, 2006, meeting was approved (11-0-0). The minutes of the February 15, 2006, meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously (11-0-0).
4. Time certain: 12:15 p.m.: Request for One-Time Increase in Category I University Student Union Summer Fee. Barker presented the background of the USU summer fee. It was initiated in 1972 at \$7; in 1997, the fall and spring USU fees were increased, but not the summer fee. The USU serves 3,000-4,000 students every day and holds many ASI and university offices. The USU has 30 full-time and 100 part-time employees. In April, 2006, the challenges of the low summer fee were recognized.

Edwards said that the request for the increase to the USU summer fee from \$7 to \$37, beginning summer 2007, is because of the significant drain on USU finances caused by the existing low summer fee. The USU has annual expenses of \$3.7 million, with \$741,000 in self-generated revenue. The difference comes from student fees. In the last five to six years there has been a continued deficit. Chart A in Attachment 3 reflects revenues versus expenses, with deficits running since YRO began. While the USU does generate some additional revenue during the summer months, summer revenue is much less than during the fall and spring semesters. Summer students attend by choice – summer attendance is not university-mandated. Enrollment Services has a target of a two-and one-half percent increase in enrollment over the next several years. Ultimately, the fees of the fall and spring students are subsidizing the summer students. They are running a \$500,000+ deficit, \$750,000 more than the summer. The financial impact of a \$30 per student increase would generate roughly \$300,000. It is understood that the USU will still have to increase revenue.

Tinoco asked why the expenses are so high; are there a lot of students currently using services or is the USU over-staffing for a few students coming in to the USU? Edwards said that the USU scales back operations in the summer; there are fewer services available and shorter operational hours. The additional money would allow for increased opportunities for student use of the USU.

Tinoco referred to Chart B in Attachment 3. She pointed out that there would still be a deficit after the fee increase, and said she would like students to get more services if they are paying more. She asked if alternative revenue resources would permit this. Edwards said that they will be helpful in the long term. The USU has a plan to increase services, hours, concerts, etc. Some of this may be done at a low cost.

Latter said he felt it worthwhile to explain why a referendum is not needed. Eckhous said that normally, when there is any change in a Category I fee, a referendum is required. In this case, the chancellor recognized that when the college went to YRO, and students would be paying student fees to the university (instead of UCES as previously), there would be a need to increase fees. Other fees also were increased. The chancellor granted an option of a one-time adjustment for all student fees impacted by YRO. The SFAC received similar one-time increases to support university operations during the summer months.

Robinson said that the USU did not request this one-time adjustment several years ago when YRO began. The fee before the SFAC is the USU's one-time adjustment that to a Category I fee that does not require a student referendum.

Wheeler said that there is a large amount of subsidizing being done in the summer, as fall and spring students subsidize summer students. He said it would be prudent to balance out the fee burden.

Wheeler moved to approve the fee increase. Glumm seconded the motion.

Robinson asked how the new fee level would compare with that of other CSU campuses. Edwards said that after the increase, ours would still be among the lowest.

Mariano asked what the buying power of \$7 in 1972 would be today. Latter said that \$7 was the allocation of the amount of money to pay off the original bonds for the construction of the USU. It was debt coverage and not dedicated to summer. Edwards said that, as mentioned on page two of the Summer Session Fee Proposal in Attachment 3, the \$7 summer fee would have to be more than \$33 to have the same buying power as it did in 1972.

The motion passed unanimously (11-0-0).

Biloo arrived at the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

5. Time Certain: 12:30 p.m.: Request to Establish a New Category III Fee for Geology 110. Finney said that Geology 110 is a new lab course which will fulfill GE requirements. Several hundred students take the standard introductory geology course each semester.

The department wants to make it more exciting and has developed this course that will study natural disasters, such as tsunamis, earthquakes and landslides. Sixty percent of class time will be in the classroom, 40 percent in the field. Students need to be transported to various sites and that is best done by bus. Another geology course has bus trips, so the department has experience conducting them.

Merryfield asked if provision has been made for the rapidly increasing cost of fuel. Finney said that a 15 percent increase in the cost of fuel has been projected. Eckhous said that the original estimate of the course fee was \$73, but it has been increased to \$90 after factoring in the rapid increase in the price of fuel.

Robinson asked when the course would be offered. Finney answered that it will be offered fall and spring semesters. Robinson asked if the fee will first be charged in spring 2007. Finney said yes, depending on how plans progress.

Wheeler asked if the department would have to come to the SFAC if the fee was increased. Robinson said we are asking them to inform this committee if there is movement in the range. Our approval would be for a range; they are just required to inform us.

Tinoco asked if students have expressed an interest in this class. Finney said that while they have not requested this specific class, courses in environmental geology are very popular and similar courses at other universities are very popular. The subject matter is timely and a good way to draw students into science.

Cape moved to approve the request. Wheeler seconded. The motion passed unanimously (11-0-0).

6. Time certain: 12:45 p.m.: Request to Establish a new Category III Fee for a Computer Proficiency Exam Fee.

Chi said that a new exam has been designed for students who want to waive the MS Office course requirement. Previously, an exam was administered online by students purchasing a pin code for \$35. The online fee has been raised to \$47. The department believes that the online test is not an efficient way to evaluate student proficiency. The test which the department has developed works very well and can determine a student's competence much better than the online test. It is also much cheaper, at \$20 per test.

Merryfield asked what current cost of the test. Lee said the current fee is \$47. Wheeler asked if the department is paying the cost. Lee said the students are paying.

Wheeler asked if the students will be purchasing a pin code. Chi said they will not. Robinson asked why not. Lee said the department decided not to use them because it's not an efficient process.

Tinoco asked if students avoid having to enroll in IS 233 by taking the test. Chi answered yes. Lee said every student has to pass proficiency, either by passing IS 233 or this test.

Mariano asked if the test has been sample tested. Lee said it has been for a few months; there is a website with questions. Lee added that the Help function can be used during the exam.

Billoo asked if the transition has been made from the purchased online test to our own. Lee said yes, and the department has been covering the expenses. Merryfield said the budget shows that the department has also been absorbing the cost of administration, etc.

Wheeler asked how the fee would be collected. Chi said that in the future, the fee will be collected through online payment or by a check to the department's Foundation account.

Eckhous said course fees are typically charged when students enroll. Since this is a user fee, students would have to pay the cashier or by mail-in payment.

Wheeler asked if allowances would be made for students with financial hardship. Robinson asked if financial aid would cover this fee. Chi said it is possible; it will have to be presented to CBA administration.

Hata pointed out that students would have the option of taking IS 233.

Mariano said that sometimes students have the tendency to sign up for lots of exams and would like to give them the benefit of the doubt.

Billoo motioned to approve the fee request; Mariano seconded. The motion passed unanimously (11-0-0).

3. Informational Fee Actions: Eckhous reviewed the various fee changes in Attachment 8, "CSULB Student Fees Activity Report." EO 740 fee actions that require this committee's approval are those that are requested above an existing range. However, there are fee adjustments that aren't increases above the range. The SFAC is informed of these. There have been a number of fee reductions, including those in the departments of Film and Electronic Arts, Biology and Chemistry. Criminology field trips have had their fees go to the top of the range, due to the increases in fuel costs.

Wheeler asked if it would be likely that fee increases would be reversed. Eckhous said that every year the trust activity is reviewed to evaluate every fee balance. Robinson said the SFAC does this in the fall.

Hata said that the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics should be commended for reviewing costs, projecting expenses and working diligently to monitor their fees.

8. Follow-up on Category III Annual Report: The report was reviewed at the October 14, 2005, meeting. One of the fiscal year-end reports was for a Category III fee, Biology fee II, which had an ending balance of \$17,000; that was suspended. Another area, Art Tier I, II, and III computer lab, also had a large ending balance. Expenses were higher in June 2005 and all funds were expected to be spent. There was an error in the beginning balance of Art Life; the error possibly occurred when a fee was taken out of the trust and

put in the general fund; it will be corrected for the year-end report. There is now a minimal balance.

7. Results of *Daily 49er Newspaper / Dig Magazine* Student Fee Referendum: Robinson reported that the referendum failed. The results will be forwarded to President Alexander. This committee has to consider if we agree with the result of the vote or if we want to send the president a different opinion.

Tinoco moved that this committee support the results of the fee referendum. Mariano seconded the motion.

Wheeler asked how this will affect the *Daily 49er*. Robinson said it would be the same as before. Wheeler asked if the paper is in danger of going out of publication. Robinson said it will probably continue as a four-page paper with AP stories. Robinson thanked the subcommittee for its work on behalf of the SFAC.

Merryfield indicated there was some misunderstanding on campus of the fee request / referendum process. She said that the only reasoned response would be that the results of the referendum are in, and the publications can try again for a fee increase.

Robinson said the university was required by EO 740 to take out advertisements and distribute voter information. The committee was to explain the process, not to support or oppose the fee request. This committee was objective in the referendum process.

Robinson said the *Daily 49er* staff can submit another request to the SFAC or to the ASI; they have options.

Wheeler said the SFAC was a negative PR issue; no one knows about this committee. It seemed too many that the university was sidestepping student opinion; the referendum seemed a means to go around the ASI Senate.

Robinson said it is not this committee's responsibility to present a case for the referendum. It is the responsibility of the group advocating the referendum.

The motion passed unanimously (11-0-0).

Tinoco left the meeting.

The matter of reimbursement for the cost of the referendum was discussed. Robinson said that EO 740 states that the university must bear the cost of the referendum. Student Services bore the costs associated with the *Daily 49er* referendum.

Wheeler moved and Billoo seconded to reimburse Student Services from the university-wide budget.

Wheeler pointed out that the cost of the referendum worked out to \$10 per voter and doesn't include the work of many people.

The motion passed (10-0-0).

9. Chancellor Reed's Decision on Mandatory SOAR Fee: Robinson said that the chancellor denied the request to change a \$50 Category III Student Orientation Fee to a Category I mandatory fee, and to include it as part of the Enrollment Deposit Fee, because current CSU policy places a moratorium on the establishment of any new Category I fees.

Tinoco returned to the meeting.

10. Future Meeting Dates: Robinson said that this committee usually does not meet during the summer months, but the committee should have representatives in place should the need for a summer meeting arise. All student members of the committee, excluding Tinoco, said they would be available in the event a meeting was called during the summer.

Tinoco asked if the new ASI officers will sit on the committee in the fall. Robinson said that would be the case.

Pollock asked how many faculty and staff are members of the committee. There are six. Robinson said all student, faculty and staff members will continue on the committee, with the exception of Pollock, who will be replaced by Shefali Mistry, and Billoo, who is graduating this spring.

Gleason said she will schedule some target dates for meetings and inform the committee.

Tinoco requested that agendas and meeting materials be provided to committee members at least three working days before a meeting. Robinson said that would be ideal, but not all meeting material is received by the Student Services Vice President's Office sufficiently early to prepare it that far in advance of the meeting. Robinson said his staff will try to get the agenda and material to committee members early.

Hata said that if the meetings are set in advance, the departments will be asked to get their materials in a week early.

Tinoco said it is important to work toward transparency.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Sanchez

(These minutes were approved on December 4, 2006.)