STUDENT FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

A-239 Murphy Hall

Monday, March 4, 2013

**Attendees Present:**

Graduates: Meg Babakhanian (Chair), Alison Winje, Randy Mai, MaryTheresa Pendergast

Administration: Kathleen Copenhaver, Associate Registrar

Christine Wilson, Director of the Graduate Student Resource Center

Nancy Greenstein, Director of Police Community Services

Faculty: Kym Faull, Semel Institute professor

Ex-Officio: Rebecca Lee-Garcia, Academic Planning and Budget

SFAC Advisor: Marilyn Alkin, Special Assistant – Student Affairs

**Attendees Absent:**

Undergraduates: Darren Ramalho, Jas Kirt, John Joanino, Mallory Valenzuela

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

**Handouts:**

* Agenda for March 4
* Draft minutes from February 25
* Call letter for 2012 temporary funding
* SFAC temporary request worksheet
* Student user fee policy
* Guidelines for implementing the SSF portion of the UCLA Student Fee Policy
* UC SHIP letter sent by students
* Budget forecast summary

**Approval of Agenda:**

* A motion was made by ***Kym Faull*** and seconded by ***MaryTheresa Pendergast*** to approve the agenda. This vote was unanimous.

**Review of the Minutes:**

* A motion to approve the 2/25/2013 minutes as amended passed with 2 abstentions.

**Transcript Fee/User Fee Guidelines:**

* ***Rebecca Lee-Garcia*** reported to the committee that Sonia Luna in APB had not been aware of the transcript fee increase which is who she asked in APB. Sonia might not have been aware because the fee goes through POSSSE and not through Sonia. ***Kathleen Copenhaver*** let the committee know that to her knowledge, the transcript fee has never been subject to SFAC approval. It is put through rigorous internal review, and then sent to APB for further review. It is then sent to the POSSSE committee for approval.
* ***Christine Wilson*** recalled reviewing a transcript fee increase on a previous year’s SFAC committee. ***Marilyn Alkin*** suggested that the fee had been sent to SFAC not for approval, but to inform the students.
* Chairperson ***Meg Babakhanian*** will ask AVC Monroe Gorden and Glyn Davies for clarification regarding the process of approving transcript fees, and why it was not sent to SFAC. She pointed out that the transcript fee appears on a list of fees under SFAC’s purview, and that this was only brought up after students contacted the committee to ask why they were presented with a fee increase. Referencing the list, ***Kathleen Copenhaver*** pointed out that the document did not specifically mention the Registrar’s office. There was some disagreement over interpretation of the document.

**Call Letter Discussion**

* Points of discussion included:
  + Offering temporary funding vs. permanent funding
  + Not including medical benefits in funding requests
  + Clarifying that only units who currently receive funding from SFAC are eligible to apply
  + A clear definition of what SSF funding can be used for, beyond attaching the policy
  + Using a standardized form that units would fill out to eliminate disparities like the ones the committee saw during the unit review
  + Asking organizations to prioritize when they are submitting requests from multiple units, but still including all of the requests.
  + The audience for the letter (Vice Chancellors/Deans vs. Directors)
  + Whether or not SFAC will consider funding temporary staff positions, and for what length of time.
  + Including instructions for Vice Chancellors and Deans to pass on to their units.
* ***Christine Wilson*** stated the opinion that offering an opportunity for permanent funding would allow a greater degree of prioritization for the leaders of organizations whose units are funded. It would give them the opportunity to be more flexible in funding (and possibly de-funding) units.
* ***Nancy Greenstein*** argued that offering temporary funding offers that flexibility to the students and to the committee. She felt that considering the current budget climate, it would be the more strategic option.
* There was some discussion about offering a combination of temporary and permanent funding. ***Christine Wilson*** pointed out that many units have received temporary funding for the same positions and programs year after year, and she reminded the committee to be mindful of house of cards they were building with temporary funds.
* ***Kathleen Copenhaver*** asked which units SFAC units currently receive permanent funding from student fee funding. ***Rebecca Lee-Garcia*** told the committee she keeps a list, and will send it out to the committee. The concern is primarily about growth (staff positions) being funded through temporary funds.
* ***Christine Wilson*** made a motion to send out a call letter for temporary funding requests. ***Kym Faull*** seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
* The committee discussed whether or not to have units include anticipated shortfalls due to increased benefits costs in their temporary requests. ***Christine Wilson*** pointed out that putting out a temporary call letter implies that SFAC will be funding the increased benefits cost, so there may not be a point in asking units to include those in their requests. ***Kathleen Copenhaver*** said it may be beneficial for SFAC to know what those costs are, and that the units should include them in their requests.
* There was some discussion over whether or not units will be able to accurately predict the exact benefits costs of new staff members. It is possible to use a percentage of salary that will generally hold true, but what each person’s benefits actually cost varies greatly, and you cannot know the real cost of their benefits until after you hire them because it is based on their choices and personal circumstances.
* ***Christine Wilson*** pointed out that since the committee is deciding whether or not to fund benefits increases not on a case by case basis, but across the board, benefits increases should not be included in temporary funding requests. The committee came to a consensus about having temporary requests for staff positions include the benefits costs associated with that staff member. Units should not include requests to mitigate general anticipated shortfalls from increased benefits costs in the 2013/14 fiscal year, as SFAC will be reviewing these increases separately.
* The committee came to a consensus about accepting requests from both departments that currently receive SSF fees and departments that do not.
* The entire committee drafted and reviewed the call letter for funding requests.
* There was some discussion about how offering only temporary funding seemed to be predicated on the assumption that SFAC was going to decide to fund benefits cost increases. It was noted that the committee still needs to vote on this when all members are present.

**Adjournment:**

* Meeting was adjourned at 12:00PM