Admissions and Financial Aid Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 15, 2018
3:00-4:30pm
KL 232

I.   **Chair's Report – Catherine Keske**
A. ASUCM representative Stacey Ascencio was absent.
B. Chair Keske welcomed today's guest, UCEP Chair Anne Zanzucchi.
C. Chair Keske attended the inaugural BOARS meeting (Oct 5) and reported on the following BOARS discussion items:
   a. The utility of the SAT and ACT. UCB is currently reviewing and analyzing data to determine their usefulness. It is expected that there will be an update on this topic at a future BOARS meeting.
   b. Chair Keske was very proud to announce that UCM has had the same Admissions Director since the campus opened.
   c. Library holdings and contract negotiations with Elsevier. This issue does not fall under the direct purview of AFAS but it does affect students and faculty. The UC has not reached an agreement for access to Elsevier to provide library holdings. The contract will expire in December 2018. If it is not successfully re-negotiated, students will not have access to some publications starting in 2019. Librarians are prepared to use inter-librarians loans.
   d. Implementation of the 2:1 Transfer Agreement and Guaranteed Pathways for transfer students continues to be discussed across the system. Under the UCOP-CCC MOU, students who complete one of the UC pathways and achieve the requisite 3.5 GPA will be guaranteed a place within the UC system. These guarantees will be in place for students beginning Community College in fall 2019. BOARS is analyzing data related to the required minimum GPA and how raising it would potentially affect enrollment for some majors (e.g. BIO, CSE). Professor Keske has discussed this topic with the CSE faculty and would welcome a meeting with the BIO program. This situation will affect student enrollment. BOARS is considering requiring different GPAs for the heavily populated majors.
   e. Chair Keske articulated, on behalf of the Provost and the faculty, that UCM will need to be more strategic with enrollment management for the two most popular majors in light of the Transfer Agreement. This is perceived as a sign that UCM is growing and evolving.

   Questions/Comments
   a. AVC Orcutt understands that BIO and CSE are impacted. She encourages stakeholders to have a conversation about implications of the campus not meeting its overall enrollment targets. The application pool is not diverse enough to support enrollment in other majors. Thus, decisions will have a financial impact on the campus.
   b. There is a shortage of computer labs for some majors, e.g., CSE. Another concern is that, for some majors, a GPA of 3.7 or 3.8 is not a predictor of student success within CSE. Thus, we need to figure out the right path for student success. The hope is to help the students identity their educational paths while taking enrollment numbers into consideration.
   c. Dean Dumont and AVC Orcutt have had several conversations about creating additional pathways in the Natural Sciences to increase the array of academic opportunities for students.
   d. Challenge: There are no large Community Colleges within our geographical radius. This will highly likely impact the campus's recruitment efforts and subsequently the 2:1 Transfer Agreement.
   e. A consideration would be to identify ways to encourage transfer enrollment. A possibility would be to explore how UCM differentiates itself in ways that would encourage enrollment. How do we attract students from areas where students can access other institutions?
   f. Director Radney suggested that the campus develop some scholarships for transfer students from outside the region.

D. UGC Update (10/11)
a. Centralized First-Year Advising is now being offered to all freshmen. Chair Keske met with CSE faculty to discuss advising as it is a critical aspect of transfer, enrollment management, and retention.

   Action: VPDUE Whitt has been invited to attend the November 5 or December 10 AFAS meeting.

b. UGC reviewed a large number of CRFs.
c. Mental Health Services. The number of health crises is increasing and there is only one psychiatrist for the entire campus. From an Admissions perspective, it is important for staff and faculty to be aware of this issue, especially during recruitment activities. Systemwide Senate Chair May brought up the issue of lack of medical services on some campuses, including UCM. Chair May is committed to filling this void.

   Per UC policy, campuses must have one mental health counselor for every thousand students. AVC Orcutt attended a systemwide meeting where this topic was discussed. The President of Student Affairs National Committee was present at the meeting and reported that the number of mental health cases continues to rise.

d. Undocumented Students Working Group – A UGC member has agreed to serve on this workgroup.

II.   Articulation System Stimulating Inter-institutional Student Transfer (ASSIST)[1]
      ASSIST is a tool that was developed several years ago. It is a computerized student-transfer information system that displays reports of how course credits earned at one California College or University can be applied when transferred to another. Three years ago ASSIST was scheduled to be updated. However, due to issues with vendors there have been multiple major delays. As a result, access to accurate articulation between campuses has been severely hindered. It is important to note that all UC campuses have been very concerned about the delays of the project and several multiple completion dates not met. Admissions staff are hopeful that the new system will be available to the public by May 2019.

   As of 9/13/18:
   a. The current ASSIST website displays transferability information up to and including 2016-17.
   b. This fall, the UC system Admission Directors worked with the Office of the President to devise a temporary solution and provide 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 articulation agreements per major and campus. In the interim, prospective transfer students have been advised to work closely with their counselors in order to confirm the transferability status of any courses not listed on ASSIST.

   Considerations:
   - The solutions have required substantial additional workload at all campuses.
   - At UC Merced the goal is to complete updates for all 114 California Community Colleges by November 16, 2018.
   - The temporary solutions do not offer the level of service a properly operating ASSIST site would provide.
   - With an emphasis of increasing transfer enrollment into UC campuses the delays are of major concern.

   Action: Director Ruiz requested that Chair Keske, as the BOARS representative, report to BOARS that Admissions is pleased that this project is moving forward and that it is imperative that the new ASSIST be completed and made available by the indicated deadline.

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[1] UC Systemwide 2017-18 and 2018-19 information by campus and major: UC Admissions website
UC Merced most current completed articulation agreements by community colleges: UC Merced articulation agreements
ASSIST Resource Center: https://resource.assist.org

III.   **Consent Calendar**
   - A. The agenda was approved as presented.
   - B. The September 17 Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.
   - C. The revised UGC and AFAS Conflict of Interest Policy was approved.
        Action: F. Paul will notify UGC.

IV.   **Consultation with Dr. Anne Zanzucchi, UCEP Chair and Member of Transfer Task Force (TTF)**
   Report: UCEP considers systemwide policies, systemwide courses and the (dis)establishment of systemwide programs and educational policies writ large. Last May, UCEP wrote a memo to Academic Council advocating for permanent augmentation of state funding for student mental health support services. Council endorsed the memo, adding that the UC would benefit from a coordinated initiative focused on faculty training.

   UCEP and BOARS tend to collaborate because students' experiences are comprehensive and involve various parts.

   Last year, the Transfer Task Force produced a report in collaboration with the leadership of the CCCs. The report and the MOU with the CCCs have a shared goal: to propose guarantees that strengthen the preparation and diversity of transfer students, and to be responsive to increasing CA Community Colleges transfers. There are existing processes for transfer students. The CCCs and the CSUs have the Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT), under which students who meet the CSU's minimum eligibility requirements are guaranteed priority admission to a CSU campus, though not necessarily to a particular campus or major. The UC is assessing how it can factor the ADTs. Last year, there was a proposal for an Associated Science Degree program for Physics and Chemistry. The program required a high level preparation and the completion of a large number of courses. This was an attempt to appeal to students who may not identify the UC as their place of transfer.

   Much of UCEP's work and conversations also revolve around diversity and equity with regard to transfers.

   Chair Zanzucchi is interested in reviewing and analyzing data in meaningful ways (e.g. summer melt). This is particularly important for low income students as it is the population where melt is most prominent. This might be an opportunity for campuses to explore ways to be more strategic with regard to retention.

   The TTF has several workgroups. Chair Zanzucchi is involved in the Advising Innovations and Communications group. She provided the following highlights of ongoing discussions within the TTF.
   - Establishment of Guiding Principles of the TTF's work.
   - Increase student participation within the 2:1 transfer agreement.
   - Clarification of pathways and opportunities to transfer students. How do we reduce the complexities and make the pathways to the UC more accessible and interesting?
   - Incentivize applications to multiple campuses.
   - Balance enrollment to work with current capacity within majors and total capacity of the campus.
   - Maintain comprehensive review and local authority over admissions.

   Several proposals are being considered at UCEP, including a minimum 3.5 GPA for the Transfer Pathways. This 3.5 GPA is being considered because it stabilizes transfer enrollment and increases major preparation without disrupting campuses' resources. Additionally, this minimum GPA was considered for the Associated Science Degree. The other proposal is the Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) agreement. One model is if an applicant is guaranteed admissions and is not under one of the pathways with a minimum GPA of 3.5, the applicant must apply through a TAG agreement to one of the four campuses. This can be helpful in terms of communications and outreach. TAG students would pay one fee and would be able to apply to four campuses. This is called the four-pack proposal.

   Questions/Comments:

- Encouraging students to apply to four campuses could inflate the number of applications for students that may not intend to come to a campus and it also increases workloads of Admissions staff. It is unclear if resources will be allocated to ensure Admissions has the capacity to handle this influx.
- At UCM, the consequences may not be favorable and could affect the academic quality of students. Admissions staff is concerned about the challenges that lie ahead.
- Director Radney noted that the campus has a Transfer Scholars Program which guarantees a minimum of $40K in aid for qualified transfer students for over two years. Under this program, Financial Aid made 191 offers and yielded 28 students. UCM is the only campus in the UC system to do multi-year offers. Under the Fiat Lux Program, students are guaranteed $80K over a period of four years.
- Director Ruiz shared the following considerations.
    o 3.5 is a fairly high GPA.
    o We need to know the culture of the campus with regard to Transfers. Do we want transfer students? If it is a priority for the campus, we need to convey the message to campus stakeholders.
    o Some think that transfer students have an unrealistic expectation of time to degree. We need to discuss expectations.
    o An analysis of data related to transfer students data that are being denied at UCM and accepted by other institutions would be an important topic to address with IRDS.

Chair Zanzucchi closed her report with the following thoughts:
a) The expectations for transfer students are very high and are partly related to the idea of preparation if students are from another institution. We need to see some level of preparation.
b) We can re-examine our TAG agreement in light of what we might learn from analyses of the data.
c) UCEP also wondered if campuses have an inviting culture for transfer students. In December, Alfred Herrera, Assistant VP for Academic Partnerships and Director of UCLA's Center for Community College Partnerships, will meet with UCEP to discuss general practices.

AVC Orcutt suggested inviting AVP Herrera to UCM to provide advice related to student success, retention.

Action: F. Paul will follow-up with UCEP Chair Zanzucchi on future consultation with Dr. Herrera.

V. **Consultation with the Office of Admissions**
    A. Selection Criteria First Year

    The UCM Index is used to establish students' eligibility. In the past, eligibility was established based on SAT or ACT scores and GPAs. Based on these scores, students would qualify for UC as being in the top 12.5%. In 2012 the Index was recalibrated with the removal of the Subject Tests and the UCM Index was established. Since then, IRDS worked on a selection index which takes into consideration many factors (e.g. GPAs, test scores). When reviewing freshmen applications, Admissions staff assess whether students are eligible using the "Scoring Index Parameters" (Part A is "Academic Index and Rigor Score"; Part B is "non-academic factors"; and Part C is the human read of the applications). The selection criteria blend in Parts A, B and C of this scoring index. With the changes to the SAT, data analyses have revealed that the UCM Index is no longer a valid indicator.

    Action: AFAS discussed and endorsed the selection criteria for first-year students, available here:
    https://ucmerced.box.com/s/ixxaysp6sqn03xc6zr1jiwzq1uj4f8w9

The GPA value is weighted and capped – GPA is based on a 4.0 scale. If it is an honors, an AP or a College level course taken in the sophomore or junior year, students receive extra points. GPA's weight is 4.5 (up to 47.4% of the points could be derived from GPA). A student can earn up to 75.95% of the weight under Part A.

Comments:
- UCB is considering no longer requiring the SAT or ACT. Locally, Admissions will run some forecasts. Chair Keske welcomes feedback on those forecasts so that she can discuss with BOARS. She noted that it would be helpful to know how, if at all, test scores affect admissions. Chair Keske will raise this topic at a future UGC meeting.
  - Director Ruiz will provide an update in January.
- The Academic Performance Index (API) considers factors such as income level of parents, number of children on low or reduced meals. API was important in the past but it was discontinued and replaced by the CA School Dashboard.
- Low performing schools will be discussed at a future AFAS meeting.
- IRDS conducted a study a few years ago to identify the factors that contribute to student success. Identifying factors that contribute to student success would help the campus adapt its selection criteria.
- Chair Zanzucchi related that, since there is an ongoing systemwide discussion about student success; rather than gathering data, AFAS could generate questions about SAT data.
- A member noted that historical data showed that multi-lingual students tend to score lower on SATs, especially non-native English speakers.

Action: Chair Keske will report on this topic at the November 5 BOARS and the November 8 UGC meetings.

VI.   **Discontinuance of Chemical Sciences, Environment Chemistry Emphasis**
   a. Policies and Procedures for Discontinuing Emphasis
   b. Consultation with Faculty and Office of Admissions
   c. Students Catalog Rights
   d. Next steps

The emphasis was discontinued last academic year without any consultation with key stakeholders. AFAS and the Office of Admissions then shared their concerns, including the impact on students, challenges for admissions staff, litigation risks.

Members discussed the need for a four-year advance notice when changes are made to programs in the future, to allow for admissions preparations and to allow students to complete their degree.

Action: Admissions staff will be invited to attend the November 8 UGC meeting to discuss this topic.

VII.   **Strategic Enrollment Management**
Members discussed the need for strategic enrollment management, specifically, enrollment in the BIO and CSE majors. The latter is facing challenges including shortage of lab space and unpreparedness of students. A CSE faculty member reported to Chair Keske that CSE 30 is a critical indicator of students' success and performance. The program recently revised its prerequisites and course sequencing to help identify early signs of students' success.

Biology covers several disciplines in the Natural Sciences, thus it would be helpful to invite relevant NS faculty present when the discussion of the program's enrollment takes place.

AVC Orcutt noted that she is scheduled to meet with NS faculty in the near future and will report back to AFAS.

The CSE professor of record would like to follow-up with the Registrar office once the mid-term grades are posted to identify trends of students enrolled (e.g. are the students from a particular high school or a community college?).

The Registrar's office can generate those reports and IRDS can help identify characteristics and similarities (low income, high school, GPA etc.)

Admissions and AVC for Enrollment Management welcome any strategy that better serves students and help them be more successful.

Another area that needs improvement is the change of major process. How do we ensure the process is smooth?

Action: Chair Keske will discuss this topic with members of UGC and request some guidance from the VPDUE.

Minutes prepared by Fatima Paul
Attest: Catherine Keske, Chair