

Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (AFAC)**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 1, 2022
2:00pm – 3:00pm****I. Chair's Report – Abbas Ghassemi – 2:00pm – 2:05pm****A. January 27 DivCo Meeting**

Chair Ghassemi shared the following updates from the January 27 DivCo meeting:

1. VC/CFO Kurt Schnier attended the DivCo meeting to provide an update on UC Merced's financial system. There have been several communications transmitted to the faculty about decreasing ticket backlogs. VC/CFO Schnier continues to address faculty's concerns regarding staffing and the financial system.
2. Senate Chair Westerling updated the Council on the campus cyber infrastructure. He also updated members on the publishing of the new payment procedure for UC Merced cluster with no lead time so faculty were unable to account for it in their budgets. There was debate on who should cover the costs and whether it is retroactive. Chair Westerling asked CoR to explore this issue.
3. The allocation of funds from the McKenzie Gift was also discussed during the meeting. UC Merced received \$1 million dollars from the McKenzie Scott gift. The plan would be to allocate \$250,000 a year over the next four years for instrumentation grants, professional and student support initiatives, etc. This year, funding was allocated for all Spring 2022 Senate faculty grant proposals, as well as faculty development and student research and travel grants. The Senate will also set up student awards for service.
4. EVC/Provost Camfield attended the meeting to discuss the effects of COVID on student learning. Learning loss was reflected in students' lower grades in Fall 2021. He feels that students are not receiving the best education that they would be receiving if they were meeting more regularly in person, especially with labs. UGC was asked to rectify this problem in the short term.
5. EVC/Provost Camfield is also working on an analysis of Unit 18 lecturers and discovered heterogeneity across the campus. In some programs, it would be fairly easy to move Unit 18 lecturer lines to Senate faculty lines; however, in other programs where Unit 18 lecturers teach many more student credit hours than Senate faculty, it would be very challenging to replace the lecturer lines with Senate faculty lines. While Unit 18 lecturers cost the campus less for instruction, the opportunity cost is very high

B. January 7 BOARS Meeting

The January 7 BOARS meeting focused on the comprehensive review on the viability of

the criteria for the tenure summary report matrix. Members discussed what should be included in the report. There were also discussions regarding whether geographical factors should be considered if comprehensive review is to be conducted. Further discussion will take place at the February 4 BOARS meeting.

II. Consent Calendar – 2:05pm – 2:10pm

A. The Agenda

B. [October 15 Meeting Minutes](#)

Action:

- The agenda was approved with one minor revision: revise “SNS” to “SSHA” in the title of Item IV. Consultation with SNS Associate Dean for Student Services and Academics, Anne Zanzucchi (completed 2/1).
- The October 15 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

III. Update on the [Proposed Senate review of the Academic Activity policy](#) - Member Eaton – 2:10pm – 2:25pm

Member Eaton reported that the proposal for full Senate review of the Academic Activity Policy was approved and that members of DivCo were very supportive of the idea. Member Eaton shared a report that he drafted, available [here](#), which includes a series of questions that could be sent to Senate Committees and School Executive Committees as part of their review. AFAC members discussed the series of questions and suggested minor revisions.

Chair Ghassemi reported that, after the February 10 DivCo meeting, a member had asked him if he had comparative analysis with sister institutions. Member Eaton included a note in his report and explained that he has a grant from the Student Loan Law Initiative, based at UC Irvine and UC Berkeley, and has been in continuous discussions with the faculty there. There is currently no comparative analysis, and Member Eaton recommended adding a question in the report to ask the faculty if they think other institutions should be asked to gather equivalent data so that a comparative analysis can be conducted. Director Radney clarified that only UC Merced and UC Davis have had a federal program review and are aware of this issue. Member Eaton noted that there are other UC campuses aside from UC Merced and UC Davis that have been impacted by the Federal aid glitches and suggested to include a question about this in the series of questions for Senate review as well.

A member recommended including a question in the report to ask that the Registrar not purge Canvas before they ask for the last day of attendance because the member was reported to the Dean for not being able to answer the question. Member Eaton noted that this type of feedback is exactly what he needs to try and reduce administrative burdens and that he will include it in the report.

Director Radney recommended that Member Eaton revisit several of the questions within the report based on the updated information that was circulated prior to the AFAC meeting.

Action:

- Member Eaton will make several revisions to the report and send the report to Director Radney for further review and edits.

IV. Consultation with SSHA Associate Dean for Student Services and Academics, Anne Zanzucchi – 2:25pm – 2:45pm

A. [Stop out student, eligibility framework](#)

With the development of a degree completion program on campus, an advisory group of SSHA faculty have developed eligibility guidelines for stop out students to inform admissions processes. The program will be inviting students to join in Fall 2022.

SSHA Associate Dean Zanzucchi and Director of Degree Completion Program Pierick joined the meeting to provide an overview of the proposed Degree Completion Program at UC Merced. They discussed admissions and eligibility criteria, along with the program goals, research topics, policy topics, and recruitment model. The PowerPoint slides are available [here](#).

Chair Ghassemi inquired about the resources required for the recruitment of 80 students into the program and asked about the required efforts of Financial Aid and Admissions once the students are admitted. He also asked about tutoring for students once they begin the program. Associate Vice Chancellor Orcutt clarified that that the grant funded several positions for the program including a director, a recruiter, a transfer credits specialist, a financial aid officer and a marketing person. Several of the positions are embedded within their respective departments (i.e. the marketing position is within Enrollment Management and Communications Department) so that there is always a back-up person to conduct business, if necessary. Dean Zanzucchi added that the program was built from an existing structure and the staffing is supplemental to work closely with the students, especially transfer students. Dean Zanzucchi also clarified that the program is designed to be located in SSHA because SSHA has the most accessible transfer pathways for students if they decide to change their field of study. The program will begin in SSHA with hopes that the other schools will also deliver the program in the future. A member noted the importance of flexibility of administrative processes and admissions to ensure that reenrollment is accessible for students.

Action:

- Dean Zanzucchi requested AFAC's review of the eligibility criteria.
- AFAC Analyst will seek clarification on next steps - whether the proposal requires full Senate review or only AFAC's review – and report back to the committee.

V. Consultation with Director Ron Radney – 2:45pm – 2:55pm

A. [Update on HEERF Funds](#)

Important Note: the PI on the institutional portion of the funds is CFO, Kurt Schnier, and the PI on the student portion of the funds is VC, Charles Nies.

Director Radney shared a spreadsheet with AFAC members, linked above. He reported that the Financial Aid Office received three different appropriations of funds, which amounted to a little over \$73 million. UC Merced also received Minority Serving Institution (MSI) allocations amounting to \$4.5 million. Each of the three allocations include an institutional portion and a student portion. The student portion is considered

emergency student aid funding. It does not count against a student's other financial aid; any HEERF funds do not affect a student's current financial aid.

One of the requirements is to expend some of the funds as marketing to students to inform them that they can apply under special circumstances. A postcard is currently being prepared that will be sent to all undergraduate and graduate students letting them know that funding is available if they qualify under the special circumstances.

A member shared their appreciation for the Financial Aid Office staff and their continuous efforts. A member also asked what the criteria is for receiving the HEERF funds. Director Radney explained that the Financial Aid Office was required to put together an award methodology for how the funds are awarded. Director Radney shared another document that showed that for Fall 2021, Spring 2022, and Summer 2022, students under special circumstances would receive a certain amount of awarded aid. Aid awarded to students for special circumstances is automated for the highest tier; however, the lowest tiers require students to complete a self-certification, and thus, is not automated. Member Eaton clarified that funds from the institutional portion, not the student portion, would be used to assist students with outstanding balances due to early withdrawal.

Action:

- Associate Vice Chancellor Orcutt will share a document with AFAC Analyst to circulate to members regarding the workload in the Financial Aid Offices (completed 2/1).
- Member Eaton volunteered to draft a memo commending financial aid & scholarships and will send it to AFAC Analyst for transmittal to AFAC members.

VI. Informational items will be regularly uploaded on the “Informational Items” AFAC Box Folder: <https://ucmerced.app.box.com/folder/140193076190>

Meeting adjourned at 3:17pm