

**Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (AFAC)**

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 19, 2023**  
**10:30am – 12:00pm**

Documents available in [box](#)  
[AFAC Duties](#)

**I. Consent Calendar – Chair Eaton – 10:30am – 10:35am**

- A. The Agenda
- B. [September 19 Meeting Minutes](#)

**Action:**

- The agenda and September 19 meeting minutes were approved as presented.
- AFAC Analyst will update the Senate website accordingly.

**II. Chair’s Report – Chair Eaton – 10:35am – 10:50am**

- A. September 28 and October 12 DivCo Meetings

The Chancellor joined the October 12 DivCo meeting to discuss the ongoing campus financial systems issues, which he confirmed are being addressed. Chair Eaton, CAPRA Chair Mitchell, CoR Chair Tao, and At-Large Member Khatri are members of a Task Force who drafted a memo to the Chancellor, which emphasized the administrative burdens on the faculty and inquired about a plan moving forward.

Discussions were held regarding the radical reductions to instructional support and the TAS budget, as well as the hiring freeze for new faculty. Members shared their concerns about how classes will be taught with less TAs and lecturers without replacing the faculty that were lost.

- B. September 29 Shared Governance Retreat

Member Yarra provided the following updates from the Shared Governance Retreat:

- A faculty survey was conducted, and the results revealed that many faculty do not feel that the Administration communicates and collaborates effectively with the faculty.
- Discussions were held regarding faculty hiring and required resources. There will be three new faculty hires this academic year, which is significantly lower compared to previous years. There are no plans to hire additional faculty until new programs are established.
- Discussions were held regarding student enrollment and methods to effectively increase enrollment numbers.

C. October 6 BOARS Meeting

This item was not discussed.

**III. Consultation with Director of Admissions Dustin Noji and Senior Associate Dean and Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education James Zimmerman – 10:50am – 11:20am**

A. Enrollment Management Working Group and Enrollment Targets

Senior Associate Dean and Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education James Zimmerman also serves as Special Assistant to the EVC/Provost for transfer initiatives. He focuses on creating academic pathways for strong California Community College (CCC) students to matriculate to UC Merced. He has been able to articulate course-by-course pathways for many majors, so that CCC students are aware of exactly what courses they need to complete to satisfy the entrance requirements for all majors at UC Merced. AFAC and UGC have been involved in reviewing transfer criteria and identifying unintended barriers. Several required courses for acceptance into UC Merced have been removed because they are not offered at CCCs. Special Assistant Zimmerman would like to partner with a larger and more diverse set of community colleges throughout the Central Valley and Southern California to acquire more transfer students. He currently works with both the faculty of current majors and those who are proposing new majors to ensure that the transfer pathways are clear and understandable.

Director Noji shared a PowerPoint presentation, available [here](#), regarding the establishment of an enrollment management plan. The Enrollment Management and Strategic Marketing Committee is comprised of three subcommittees charged with admissions, marketing communications, and retention. Special Assistant Zimmerman, Director Noji, and Chair Eaton are members of the Admissions Subcommittee, which is tasked with reviewing students' life cycle from the moment they enter UC Merced through to their graduation. They review areas that pertain specifically to admissions including policy, recruitment yield, and implementation of selection criteria to reach UC Merced's goal of 15,000 incoming students.

Director Noji interviewed former Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE) Sarah Frey regarding specific recommendations for supporting enrollment growth, both from recruiting new students and retention. He will share information from the interview at the November 16 AFAC meeting. The Admissions Subcommittee's main goal is to increase yield. The Office of Admissions conducts three cycles simultaneously, so while the team is focused on 2024, they are also looking at yielding the classes of 2025 and 2026. Director Noji plans to revise areas within the current admissions process to help meet UC Merced's 2024 enrollment target by increasing the ability to admit well qualified students that have the potential to be successful.

A member inquired about the status of CAL-GETC. Special Assistant Zimmerman responded that Cal-GETC refers to the General Education transfer requirements for both

students matriculating from a CCC to CSU and to UC (two different sets of requirements). There is a State Government mandate in place to align the two to have the same General Education transfer requirements for those matriculating to both a CSU or a UC. Special Assistant Zimmerman is currently working with the CCCs to create a curriculum for students matriculating to UC Merced and believes it to be a great recruitment tool. Associate Director of Admissions Lubers noted that CAL-GETC is slated for Fall 2025.

Chair Eaton inquired about the trend for new transfer students. Special Assistant Zimmerman reported 148 transfer students in 2018 and nearly 300 in 2021. The CCCs suffered during the pandemic, and several were down 50% in their enrollments. Many have recovered, but not all, so the current goal is 209.

Chair Eaton noted that the enrollment goal of 15,000 incoming students is unrealistic. Many CCCs have not received a high number of high school graduates, and even CSU enrollments have declined over the past several years. Chair Eaton noted the importance of continuing to aim toward our enrollment targets, but that the goals seem disconnected from what is possible. Chair Eaton also expressed the importance of understanding that even if the minimum GPA admission requirement is set at 2.8, the majority of the students that are admitted to UC Merced have a cumulative GPA well over 3.0. A member noted that many students with a relatively high GPA may be missing a major requirement for the particular major they wish to enter. Special Assistant Zimmerman noted that he is also focusing on conditional enrollment to allow students who may be missing one major requirement to enroll at UC Merced as long as the requirements have been met.

B. Proposed revisions to A by E Review Process (memo is forthcoming)

Director Noji briefly summarized the proposed revisions to the A by E Review Process, which will be discussed in detail during the November 16 AFAC meeting. The revisions include lowering the minimum GPA requirement. He acknowledges that the current A by E review process is complicated, but that it is the best method for considering students who have a GPA lower than a 3.0. The main revision to the review process includes the removal of the human read score that was established in Fall 2021 to enroll up to the 6% A by E threshold, as well as aligning for one more course deficiency while maintaining certain safeguards. These revisions will allow flexibility in accepting students who the readers have recommended as good students.

**Action:**

- Admissions Director Noji's memo and supporting materials are available [here](#).
- Members are to review Director Noji's memo and materials and be prepared for discussion and vote at the November 16 AFAC meeting.

**IV. Proposed Amendment to AFAC Bylaws – Chair Eaton – 11:20am – 11:35am**

Given that AFAC has been asked to review master's degree proposals and

undergraduate/graduate hybrid degree programs from a financial aid perspective, Chair Eaton would like to propose an amendment to AFAC's Bylaws to include in the committee's membership a student representative appointed by the Graduate Student Association (GSA).

The proposed amendment is shown in tracked changes, [here](#).  
A clean version of the proposed amendment is available [here](#).

**Requested Action:** Voting members vote to endorse the proposed amendment to the AFAC Bylaws to include in its membership a student member appointed by GSA.

**Chair Eaton summarized the recommended revisions to the AFAC Bylaws to include a GSA representative in its membership.**

A member noted the importance of feeling comfortable speaking about confidential matters in the presence of the graduate student. Chair Eaton clarified that an executive session could take place at any time, in which the undergraduate and graduate student representatives would not be in attendance.

**Action:**

- Voting members unanimously approved the proposed amendment to the AFAC Bylaws.
- AFAC Analyst will draft a memo to CRE.

**V. Campus Review Items – All – 11:35am – 11:45am**

A. [SNS Proposal for Biology B.A. Degree Program](#)

The proposal was distributed to the Chairs of Senate Committees, the SSHA Executive Committee, and the SoE Executive Committee. The policy governing the review and approval of Undergraduate Degree Programs is available [here](#).

**AFAC, CAPRA, UGC, and SSHA and SoE Executive Committees are lead reviewers.**

**Requested Action:** Identify a lead reviewer. Lead reviewer will send their assessment to AFAC Analyst by November 6, 2023. The proposal and lead reviewer's comments will be discussed at the November 16 AFAC meeting.

**Deadline for comments to the Senate Chair:** Friday, November 17, 2023.

**Action:**

- Member Yarra volunteered to lead the review. He will share his comments with AFAC Analyst by Monday, November 6, 2023.
- The proposal and member Yarra's comments will be discussed at the November 16 AFAC meeting.
- Comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, November 17, 2023.

**VI. Any Other Business – 11:45am – 12:00pm**

Chair Eaton inquired about members' preference for an in-person AFAC meeting. The membership agreed, and the AFAC Analyst will reach out to inquire about which of the two remaining Fall 2023 AFAC meeting dates work best.

**VII. Informational Items** will be regularly uploaded on the “Informational Items” AFAC Box Folder [here](#).