

Diversity Council Action Items for Chancellor Fox

April 17, 2008

At its Winter Quarter 2008 meeting the UCSD Diversity Council considered numerous issues and reports and recommended several action items. I will specify the suggested action items then supplement them with background and rationale.

1. The Diversity Council asks Chancellor Fox to explore the creation of a regional council of the chief officers of San Diego region higher education institutions, including community colleges and universities. This group should meet regularly to discuss common interests, including matters related to faculty, staff, students and related procedures and issues. Numerous dimensions of these concerns would clearly be relevant to questions of campus diversity.

Background:

Professor Henry Powell, former divisional chair, future systemwide chair and member of the Diversity Council, along with Council community representative Ms. Adela Garcia, had an extensive and productive meeting with the President of Southwest College, Dr. R.K. Chopra, on matters concerning diversity and particularly concerns over junior transfer requirement to UC and CSU campuses. In his report to the DC, Professor Powell felt there was an obvious need for better communications between heads of institutions and that this would have a significant impact on making UCSD, specifically, more aware of community needs when it comes to preparing students for admission to our campus. After hearing of similar cooperative entities working between certain departments and faculties across the UC system, the DC further felt, given the uncertain times brought on by the states budget crisis, but also due to the ongoing commonality of interests between the UC, CSU and CC institutions, a high-level mechanism to improve communication and share ideas would be mutually beneficial.

2. Related to the first action item, but more specific to the concerns of transfer students from regional community colleges, the Diversity Council strongly recommends a thorough evaluation of the mechanisms by which juniors are directed/advised to qualify for UC, and particularly UCSD, admission.

Background:

One outcome of Professor Powell and Ms. Garcia's discussions with President Chopra, was the identification of inconsistencies and at times contradictory specifics of

preparation/qualification programs such as TAG and IGETSI. There are too many vague or confusing elements of these paradigms that make it hard for high school councilors and community college staff to interpret with precision and assurance of outcome for some students. A specific glaring failure of these structures is properly advising/preparing students for transfer admission to our School of Engineering.

At our meeting, CDO Sandra Daley described another paradigm to prepare community college students for UC admission called University Link. This program focused on ten area community colleges (8 in San Diego County, 1 in East Los Angeles, and 1 in Imperial County). The program included campus visits and targeting students in the biological and behavioral sciences. Interactions included advising and focusing on the specific expectations and skills needed for UCSD admission. A more intensive addition to this basic program was Summer Experience, which brought a number of community college students to campus for four weeks for intensive course work and mentoring by peer advisors. Statistics for the years 2001 -05 revealed a remarkable success rate for these programs.

Attrition rates for junior transfers who were admitted through TAG/IGETSI programs were 13 14%. Transfers who took advantage of University Link had an 8% attrition rate, and those who also attended Summer Experience had a 4% attrition rate.

The Diversity Council was impressed by these numbers and felt that a wider consideration of how community college students are advised and prepared for UC eligibility would be worth further exploration. The DC agreed that improving these mechanisms would have a positive and wide-ranging effect for increasing student diversity at UCSD.

3. Chancellor Fox should encourage the sharing of data across campus offices that relate to diversity at all levels of the campus. The Diversity Council notes that there have been numerous studies of campus climate (collected from students, faculty and staff), as well as relations with community colleges, that have not been read or interpreted for a better sense of an overview or interconnected relevance. Identifying and collating this data may provide some vital and revealing information for the current and future state of campus diversity.

Background:

The Diversity Council has noted, over the course of many meetings, how often studies are done that provide new pictures of small segments of campus life. While the DC has often felt that initiating new, narrowly targeted surveys would be valuable, we have also come to the realization that a lot of data already has been collected that has not been collated with a sense of integration in order to connect wider and related areas of

concern. Identifying, bringing together and interpreting this growing body of information would preclude duplication of efforts and lead to hitherto unrealized insights.

Sincerely,

Robert Cancel

Chair

UC San Diego Diversity Council