

COUNCIL ON STUDENT EXPERIENCE
ANNUAL REPORT
2009-2010

To the Irvine Divisional Senate Assembly:

I. Council Operations

Dick McCleary, Professor of Criminology, chaired the Council on Student Experience (CSE) in 2009-10. The Council met eight times during the academic year. Attending regular CSE meetings were twelve elected faculty members, the Associate Dean and Assistant Dean of the Division of Undergraduate Education (*ex officio*), the Librarians Association of the University of California, Irvine (LAUC-I) Representative, the Director of the Teaching, Learning & Technology Center (TLTC), the Director of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Director of Research and Evaluation in Student Affairs, two representatives from the Association of Graduate Students (AGS) and one representative from the Associated Students of University of California, Irvine (ASUCI).

I. Divisional Issues/Policies

A. Discussion on Final Draft of Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), Criteria for Review (October and November, 2009)

Last year (AY2008-09) CSE was charged with proposing criteria for the first stage of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Reaccreditation review. CSE members agreed that in order for learning standards and outcomes to be successfully assessed by WASC, UCI needs to have an explicit Mission Statement that is easily spotted and/or easy to find on several UCI websites, including the Chancellor's website. After reading the new draft proposal to WASC, CSE is satisfied that steps are being implemented to define and circulate an explicit Mission Statement. CSE also discovered in the first draft review that individual departments needed to define and promote learning outcomes for majors, and that the strategic plans for learning outcomes of each major, department and School should be tied into UCI's Mission Statement. The Division of Undergraduate Education provided departments with guidance on how to identify and promote learning outcomes. CSE is satisfied that the issue of learning outcomes has been addressed in the second draft.

B. Diversity Charge (October, 2009)

The Special Senate Committee on Diversity was disbanded in June, 2009, and the Council on Student Experience (CSE) was selected to regularly address issues of diversity for students. CSE decided not to convene a CSE subcommittee on diversity; rather, the council will routinely deal with the charge at most, if not all, of its meetings. CSE's diversity charge is to promote student diversity and equity in general and in particular in reference to underrepresented student populations, including women and racial/ethnic minorities, as well as gay, lesbian, and transgender individuals, and individuals with disabilities. The goal of CSE for AY2009-2010 is first to determine what the campus climate is for diversity students at UCI. Once CSE has a handle on which

issues it needs to manage, the council will outline goals and objectives to help deal with obstacles that diversity students regularly encounter at UCI.

CSE heard from under represented minority groups, the Muslim Student Union, Anteaters for Israel, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Association, and students with disabilities. Each organization has its own set of special needs. However, one common theme that arose is that faculty need to be more sensitive to these students. Faculty need to have an understanding of disabilities, of academic freedom when it comes to composing syllabi and structuring lectures concerning the Middle East and religion, and regarding references made which assume that the student audience is heterosexual. For AY10-11, CSE might want to think about making a formal statement that encourages sensitivity training in faculty.

C. Undergraduate and Graduate Housing to Report to CSE through Student Affairs (October and November, 2009)

One charge of CSE is to “Consider and review formally as needed those programs of the Office of Student Affairs and the Division of Undergraduate Education that affect the University experience of UCI students.” Currently, undergraduate and graduate student housing issues are handled unevenly; undergraduate housing activities are dealt with administratively, through Student Affairs, while graduate student housing decisions are made through a subcommittee of Graduate Council, a senate council. Because it is under CSE’s purview to promote learning and quality of the student experience (both undergraduate and graduate) and in the interests of fairness and efficiency, CSE requests that the Graduate Student Housing subcommittee be disbanded and that both undergraduate and graduate student housing issues be dealt with through the same mechanisms; i.e., administrative committees convened by Student Affairs. Student Affairs would then report on activities of both undergraduate and graduate student housing to CSE.

D. Improving Response Rates and actual measure of teaching on student teaching evaluations (October and November, 2008)

Because the response rate for teaching evaluations is so low, CSE was asked by the Academic Senate Council to consider ways to improve the response rate and to examine suggestions offered by the Council on Academic Personnel related to other ways of evaluating teaching besides teaching evaluations. One problem noted by CSE with evaluating teaching is that faculty receive no training at the beginning of their careers on how to teach effectively and how to use teaching evaluations to improve teaching. Some faculty are not aware of the importance of encouraging students to fill out teaching evaluations. This point needs to be emphasized in all departments. CSE members support using third party faculty evaluators but primarily CSE members prefer the idea of providing the following three incentives for students to fill out teaching evaluations. First, faculty/instructors could offer students one or two points in the course for filling out teaching evaluations. Two, faculty/instructors could allow students to see evaluations filled out by other students in the class only after the student have

filled out the evaluation. Three, faculty/instructors could appeal to students by discussing the importance of using teaching evaluations to improve the course. These three suggestions were not well received by UCI Cabinet and therefore have been withdrawn. CSE looks forward to finding ways to determine if specific material has actually been taught by instructors and how that information can be conveyed on teaching evaluations. The issue is not about teaching style and popularity of teaching but about teaching the content material itself. For this reason, each department or major will have to establish its own measures for determining the degree to which course material is taught and learned by students

E. Launch Report

The Council on Student Experience was asked to review the Launch proposal for a second time following a discussion of the proposal at the November, 2009 Cabinet meeting. Cabinet members had several comments ranging from observations of inaccuracies to questioning the entire purpose and reasoning behind writing the Launch Report.

CSE members state that there is enough anecdotal evidence to indicate that a significant number of high achieving undergraduates are either unaware of graduate school opportunities or unprepared for graduate school. CSE does not agree that in depth data analyses on the current climate regarding graduate school preparedness nor an assessment of the usefulness of specific recommendations is necessary. Such assessments would be cumbersome, inefficient, and costly at this point. Nevertheless, CSE understands that most of the recommendations put forth in the Launch cannot be implemented at this point due to the anemic budget situation. CSE also noted that the recommendation regarding the McNair Grant, a grant from the Department of Education to assist historically underrepresented students, is now moot because new campuses have not been called to apply for the grant this year. The only recommendation that CSE would like implemented in the development of a website (Recommendation 10):

The Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) should be responsible for developing a webpage that integrates all the information about current services and programs to inform and prepare UCI undergraduates for graduate and professional programs. The LAUNCH committee is preparing an outline and listing of the relevant information to use on this webpage. Links to the webpage should be posted where students are likely to see them, such as on the Registrar's page. Other sites that should post this link include Graduate Division, Student Affairs and each School's home page.

Currently DUE does not have the resources available to design this webpage; however, a unit from Student Affairs may be able to develop the webpage so long as sufficient time is given to complete the task. The webpage will include the actual information from the Launch Report. A portal will be set up on a number of UCI websites. The portal would then link to the Launch Report website. Portals should appear at the UCI course registration website, DUE, Graduate Division,

and on all of the School websites. CSE will continue to oversee the implementation of this website in Academic Year 2010-11

II. System-wide Issues/Policies

A. Education Abroad Program (November, 2009)

CSE was asked by the Senate Cabinet to review the final report of the joint Senate-Administration Task Force on the Education Abroad Program. Because of the current fiscal crisis at UC, EAP is in the process of transitioning from a central funding to a student fee based budget model. Some CSE members reported that the overall recommendations of the Task Force are a move in the right direction for more efficient planning of what is an *academic* program that has not had the academic oversight it requires or deserves. While they are necessary and will provide a much needed increase efficiency of UCEAP operation, the increased reliance on student fees to fund EAP programs and the varied way that campuses are able to distribute the central funds that are still provided both have the potential to cause inequity in access to EAP programs and a loss of programs overall in a time when UCI would like to see an increase in participation. Other CSE members reported that the mission of Study abroad for 50% of students may not be realistic or appropriate because study abroad is not necessarily the best academic course to follow for many students. Therefore, using a student fee based model that may vary widely among students is a pragmatic solution in this fiscal climate especially since for most students, study abroad is a luxury option rather than an academic right.

B. Online Learning Instruction

CSE members commented that although grant money will be available for the design and development of online/remote instruction, cost will be considerable compared to the status quo. One member noted that online courses are the most successful when there is sufficient peer to instructor interaction; however, the labor commitment from the instructor vastly surpasses instruction of in-person courses. Some CSE members stressed that in person encounters with the instructor are necessary for students so that basic concepts can be explained; the teaching of difficult concepts to students by email or through archival material is much more challenging and time consuming than teaching in person because constant feedback from the student is needed for the instructor to modify explanations. If UC were to expand online and remote instruction, the administration should ensure that there is a restriction on the number of online courses a student can attend and the best course designs would consist of a hybrid model which exploits in person and on line learning depending on the course material and desired learning outcome. Finally, CSE members emphasized the importance of maintaining academic honesty for online courses. UC needs a well defined system for examinations for these courses, such as centralized testing centers where students can drive to the nearest campus and take tests in a proctored setting.

III. New and/or Continuing Business

A. Revise Appendix II based on information obtained from Student Grievance Hearing during AY-10

- B. Write Recommendations to Faculty regarding sensitivity toward students from diverse backgrounds. Continue to monitoring Student Diversity on Campus
- C. Monitor Progress of Simplicity Software program and edit senate regulations (see May 2010 minutes) for reporting Academic Dishonesty
- D. Follow up on the effects of tuition increases on students and their parents.
- E. Evaluate Revisions made to student disciplinary processes (Dormitorio)

CSE Members

Faculty Members	
Loretta Livingston	Arts
Liane Brouillette	Education
	Business
Farzin Zareian	Engineering
Joyce Keyak	Health Sciences
Kimberley Lakes	Health Sciences
Gail Hart	Humanities
Lichun Bao	ICS
Sara Frey	Physical Sciences
Ilona Yim	Social Ecology
Kristin Peterson	Social Sciences
Richard McCleary	Chair, Social Ecology
Ex Officio	
Sharon Salinger	Dean, DUE
Rudi Berkelhamer	Associate Dean, DUE
Manuel Gomez	VC Student Affairs
Nancy Minear	Director, Student Affairs
Consultants	
De Gallow	TLTC
Said Shokair	Dir. UROP
Representatives	
Bob Johnson	LAUC-I
Tania Asef	ASUCI
Vanessa Vaughn	Student Athlete
Rod Fleming	Director, Parking and Transportation
Dana Roode	ICS
Elizabeth Bennett	Registrar
Edgar Dormitorio	Office of Judicial Affairs, Office of the Dean of Students
Analyst	
Michelle AuCoin	Council Analyst