

Student Fee Advisory Committee Chair Report, 2000-2001

The 2000-2001 academic year was an especially challenging one for SFAC. The Committee had to evaluate an unusually large number of budget requests, and the amount of permanent funding requested greatly exceeded the amount available. These circumstances led to budget hearings and budget deliberations taking up most of winter and spring quarters. In addition to the budget process, the Committee's Services Assessment Team completed its inaugural year, reviewing five student services. General Committee tasks also included deliberations on the final year of the increased Ackerman Student Union Fee, compiling campus budget priorities for the Council on Student Fees, and creating guidelines for the newly established Contingency Fund. While this year's Committee accomplished a great deal, it has suggestions to help next year's Committee be even more effective.

Members: While the Committee has made several suggestions on how to improve SFAC's structure and procedures, the fact remains that a committee is only as effective as its members are committed. In order to be a successful institution, SFAC must have members who are able to devote an appropriate amount of time to the Committee. They should be able to attend weekly meetings, come prepared, and do the subcommittee work required of them in a timely fashion. SFAC also needs its full membership of four undergraduates, four graduate students, three administrators, and one faculty member. This year's Committee did not have the benefit of a faculty perspective and it is crucial that next year's SFAC not go without one. The Academic Senate must appoint a representative to the Committee before Fall Orientation. Lastly, members should stay in regular contact through the SFAC listserv. The Committee often uses the listserv to draft documents, so members need to have regular access to e-mail, preferably with the ability to send and receive attachments.

Orientation: Fall Orientation introduces SFAC members to Committee procedure, the budget process, and each other. Members also get to meet the various administrators with whom the Committee usually works. Orientation would be a good place to advertise SFAC's availability to these administrators as a source of informed student opinion. Several members of this year's SFAC volunteered to represent UCLA students in focus groups, employee search committees, and system-wide taskforces. Next year's Committee may want to make fulfilling such opportunities a more regular function.

Old Subcommittees: In addition to general Committee work, SFAC members have undertaken various subcommittee duties. However, next year's Committee will not continue some of this year's subcommittees. The Marching Band Taskforce, which sought funding sources for UCLA's Marching Band, has completed its assignment and will not be continued. The Child Care Advisory Board, which oversees Child Care Services, and the Scholarship Resource Committee, which advises the Scholarship Resource Center, no longer require regular SFAC representation. Both of these services can request periodic representation from SFAC members through the ad hoc advisory function. The SFAC Web Page Designer has already redesigned and updated the Committee's web page at www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/sfac. Student Affairs support staff will be responsible for future maintenance of this page. The two subcommittees that will continue are the Student Affairs Budget Review Team and the Project Review Group. The position of Vice Chair/*Daily Bruin*

Contact / Student Health Advisory Committee Liaison will also continue. The continuing subcommittees and position will be described in the attached Continuity Reports.

New Subcommittees: SFAC has proposed three new subcommittees for the 2001-2002 year. One new subcommittee would revise the Guidelines for Registration Fee Funding. This document was last revised in spring of 1999, but is in need of updating and clarification. This year's Committee began the process, but was unable to finish after the extensive budget deliberations. The Committee has left a draft of the Guidelines for next year's SFAC to continue. This year's Committee was able to complete an addition to the Permanent Budget by Organization, which gives the account number, unit name, and a general description of all the services currently funded by the Registration Fee. This document should prove helpful in revising the Guidelines. Another new subcommittee would review User Fees and User Fee Policy. This subcommittee would evaluate both currently assessed and potential fees for service. It would also represent student opinion on upcoming changes to the University's User Fee Policy. A final new subcommittee would review SFAC's Stipend Policy. The review process will be described in the attached Continuity Reports. While the Student Affairs Budget Review Team requires two undergraduates and two graduate students, and the Project Review Group requires one undergraduate and one graduate student, the new subcommittees have no set delineations of membership. Nevertheless, each subcommittee should have at least one undergraduate and one graduate student member.

Services Assessment Team: During the 1999-2000 academic year, SFAC established the Services Assessment Team (SAT) to assess how successfully various student services ascertain and meet the needs of students. The team consists of the four undergraduate and four graduate student members of SFAC. Although SFAC advises the Chancellor on issues related to student fees, the SAT evaluates units that provide services to students, regardless of fund source. The SAT has taken up the role formerly filled by the Student Services Committee (SSC). The SSC disbanded in 1997, leaving students with no formal method of giving input on a wide range of campus services. During the 2000-2001 academic year, the SAT completed its first review of five student services: The Financial Aid Office, Student Psychological Services, The Office of Residential Life, Graduate Student Support, and The Community Safety Office. The SAT recommends that future SFACs only review four services each year, so that each service can have an undergraduate and graduate student reviewer.

Each spring, the SAT chooses at least four units to review the following year. In 2001-2002, the units to be reviewed are: the University Library, The Career Center, The Arthur Ashe Health and Wellness Center, and The Center for Student Programming. The SAT sends these units a Self-Study questionnaire to complete over the summer. During the following fall and winter quarters, the SAT reviews the Self-Study responses, conducts site visits to the unit, and meets with unit representatives. During spring quarter, the SAT submits reports to SFAC with recommendations on how the student services might be improved. SFAC forwards these reports to the Chancellor, the unit, and the student governments. The reports are also submitted to the five-year reviews of the appropriate Vice Chancellors. One year after each report is completed, the SAT conducts a follow-up meeting with unit representatives to discuss the implementation of the recommendations and prepare a final report.

Next spring will be the first time that the SAT has to simultaneously submit reports on the current year's units, complete follow-ups on the previous year's units, and choose the

following year's units. However, this year's Committee has revised the SAT founding documents to make the process easier to follow. The revised Charge, List of Units to be included in the Services Assessment, Self-Study, and Timeline are all attached. The SAT process would also benefit from members taking responsibility for units with which they are familiar. Members should follow the schedule outlined in the timeline, because it allows plenty of time to discuss, complete, and get feedback on each step of the process. SFAC should also make an effort to get USAC and GSA more involved in the SAT process. This year's Committee requested recommendations from the student governments on which units to review, but received no suggestions.

Ackerman Student Union Fee: After a steady loss of income from ASUCLA, the Chancellor increased the Ackerman Student Union Fee from \$7.50 to \$51.00 a year. The increase began in the 1997-1998 academic year and will continue through 2001-2002. Because the fee was assessed without a referendum, SFAC is consulted each year to recommend to the Chancellor whether the fee increase should be continued in the following year. This year SFAC recommended that the fee increase be continued in its final year, because the Association would be too adversely affected by the loss of revenue. ASUCLA has indicated that it can stay financially healthy after the sunset of the fee, and will not likely seek student support beyond the original level of \$7.50.

Contingency Fund Guidelines: In 1999-2000, SFAC established a Contingency Fund for emergency maintenance of student fee-funded facilities or other unanticipated needs critical to the welfare of students and the delivery of student services. The 2000-2001 Committee drafted Guidelines for the use of these funds. The draft has been sent to the Chancellor for approval. Next year's Committee should expect his response.

Council on Student Fees: The Council on Student Fees (CSF) consists of the SFAC/RFAC chairs from all the UC campuses and meets once a quarter. This year, the Council worked with the University of California Student Association to compile a list of unfounded priorities for each campus. UCLA's priorities included funding for deferred maintenance of student fee-funded facilities, allocations for all Registration Fee-funded units to cover non-salary price increases over the past ten years, and programmatic enhancements for Registration Fee-funded units. This year, CSF also attempted to compile comparisons of all the SFACs and RFACs. This information is still being collected, but will probably be very helpful in next year's Stipend Policy Review.

Budget Process: This year's Committee underwent an especially long budget process. This was largely due to the high volume of requests and the limited amount of permanent resources, but partly attributable to a breakdown in the budget process. The SFAC call letter, which invites the units to make budget requests, needs to be much more specific. SFAC may want to consider a call letter more similar to APB's list of questions to consider when evaluating proposals. Many of the budget proposals and presentations did not sufficiently demonstrate the needs expressed or include information appropriate to their requests. In particular, the student organizations and Center for Student Programming need to work more closely together in preparing budget requests and presentations. The student organizations also need to have a scheduled place in the budget hearings. This year, the students were included at the last minute.

While many of the budget proposals and presentations left SFAC with questions, far too many of these questions arose during budget deliberations. SFAC members need to thoroughly consider each proposal before the unit's hearing, so that they can have their questions answered before deliberations.

During this year's budget process, the issue arose of a disparity between Registration Fee-funded services for undergraduates and those for graduate students. While undergraduates make up two thirds of the campus population, a disproportionately high amount of Registration Fee-funded services seem to be exclusively for undergraduates or designed with them in mind. SFAC did not have time to sufficiently investigate this matter, but suggests that next year's Committee be aware of it. The Permanent Budget by Organization List, along with the service descriptions should prove a useful resource. In general, SFAC members need to have a clearer concept of where our Registration Fees are going, and where we want them to go.

Reggie Allen
SFAC Chair 2000-2001