

AD-HOC DIVERSITY COMMITTEE REPORT ON STUDENTS, Oct. 1, 2009

Subcommittee Members: Sharon Cabaniss, Professor, Mathematics Department
Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President,
Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM)
Merith Weisman, Coordinator, Center for Community
Engagement

The SSU Senate Ad Hoc Diversity Committee was created in May 2008 “to assess Diversity on campus in terms of race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment and sexual assault), sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability, medical condition and covered veteran’s status (as articulated in the University’s Non-Discrimination Policy⁶³¹). ... The charge to this committee will be to engage in a comprehensive review of the history and current status of Diversity at SSU at all levels, including (but not limited to): curriculum; faculty, staff and student activities for recruitment and retention and graduation or promotion; institutional programs; funding sources, and administrative support. It is also recommended that the committee expand its scope to include socio-economic status. This committee will report its findings to the Senate as part of a coherent, articulated Diversity assessment with prioritized recommendations for action. The recommendations would include targets, implementation strategies, time-lines and funding benchmarks.... The committee ... will assess and recommend targeted actions meant to resolve the concerns regarding the full scope of diversity issues at SSU.”² This report will use the word *diverse* to include all of the categories listed in the charge. Sources include University documents, various websites, personal emails and interviews, Senate resolutions, Open Forums, and many others as indicated. All are listed in the Footnotes or Appendix. [Note that terminology used in demographic data reflects the actual reports quoted.]

This report focuses on two important aspects of diversity as it pertains to students: recruitment and retention with a short preliminary discussion of curriculum. **Below are the major findings followed by several recommendations for various aspects of recruitment and retention.**

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A.** Initiate whatever process is necessary to bring permanence to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) position by Spring 2010. Permanence will empower this position to make critical decisions with regard to the management of the diversity programs within SAEM. Further, permanence will allow the Vice President to advocate for change regarding these programs within the rest of the University community.

¹ <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/policies/non-discrimination.htm>

² <http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/Ad-HocDiversityCom.html>

- B.** Restore funding to SAEM at all levels such as advising, career, counseling and psychological services, Disability Services for Students (DSS), Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), University Support and Preparation Services (USPS) and Campus Life as outlined in the entire report. Of particular importance is the necessity to provide more resources for Outreach and Recruitment.
- C.** Request that the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) work closely with SAEM to help implement the relevant recommendations in this report and work with both SAEM and academic departments to help improve advising, which is critical to retention efforts.
- D.** Designate one person to coordinate diversity efforts with designated individuals in Academic Affairs, SAEM and Administration and Finance and have an open search process to fill the vacancy. According to the SSU Educational Effectiveness Review Portfolio³ prepared for the Fall, 2009 WASC visit, “The Division of Academic Affairs has adopted several diversity related initiatives. First, it will create 50% time base faculty position for an Inclusive Excellence Coordinator. Once the Diversity Strategic Plan [of the President’s Diversity Council] is in place, the coordinator will help implement its initiatives and serve as a member of the PDC. The coordinator will also develop a series of professional development workshops for faculty, such as how to incorporate multicultural competence into the curriculum.” However, it seems as of Fall 2009 that this effort has been postponed.
- E.** Delegate responsibility and allocate funding to the appropriate division for the design of on-going training for all faculty and staff on issues of diversity, “difficult dialogues,” and multicultural competency and ensure that it is implemented. [This may be done by the new position mentioned in item *D.*]
- F.** Continue training students in the residential community regarding cultural sensitivity.

RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH The data presented in this section of the report is based on information available from various SSU and CSU departments as indicated in the footnotes. Often different terminology was used for the same group, such as “Native American” and “American Indian” or “Hispanic” and “Latino.” Another difficulty was in obtaining comparable data. For example, one official SSU webpage provides data on the ethnic diversity of the SSU student body along with the ethnic diversity of the entire college-age population of its six-county service area. A more accurate comparison would be with the college-age population which is UC/CSU eligible. One of the recommendations below is to improve the data collection in order to set realistic

³ http://www.sonoma.edu/aa/portfolio/ee_review/EER_Final/7-Diversity.pdf, page 13

recruitment goals. Finally, SSU needs to decide if it wants to reflect the state's ethnic CSU eligible demographics or its six-county service area CSU eligible demographics.

The first two components for increasing the number of diverse students at SSU are increasing the number of applications from target populations and, more importantly, increasing the percentage of students who enroll at SSU.

1. According to the SSU "2008–2009 Recruitment Plan"⁴ 16.6% of all students admitted to SSU actually enroll. The percentage for White students is 18.9%, but that for African Americans is 12.7%, Latinos is 14.1% and Asian American/Pacific Islander is 9.2%. [0 "American Indians" [Native Americans] were admitted.] The Recruitment Plan has two pages devoted to "Diversity Recruitment" with many excellent programs that Admissions is involved in. Especially notable are the community engagement programs with Roseland University Prep (RUP) and the University Center at Elsie Allen High School.

There are several other outreach activities funded by federal grants obtained by University Support and Preparation Services (USPS) of SAEM which attract a diverse range of students including the Precollege Programs Academic Talent Search, Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science. Upward Bound operates in four counties.⁵ There is also the NASA Outreach Program which has links to RUP and the Spanish immersion school Cali Calmecac in Windsor. Although these programs are mostly aimed to encourage young people to attend college in general, they have a definite positive impact on SSU outreach. The newly established MESA (Math, Engineering Science Achievement) program in the School of Science and Technology is also reaching out to some area high schools and the community colleges. Other programs like the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Outreach Program to local high schools have been discontinued. When this program was dropped by the CSU Chancellor's Office a few years ago, EOP applications dropped also.⁶ "Programs operated by USPS serve underrepresented students (direct support for 377 SSU students, grant aid and outreach) in the amount of \$2,643,960 per year at no cost to the General Fund."⁷ The USPS webpage gives more detail on these programs.⁸ Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) recently obtained "Project METEOR funded by the Women's Education Equity Act for \$790,000 which prepares underrepresented women in the hard sciences."⁹ They also "have the EAP [Early Assessment Program] which assists underrepresented students in preparing for college entry without remediation (program not specific to underrepresented students)."¹⁰ The Office of Admissions and Student Recruitment also has "a partnership through the Chancellor's Office with the Parents Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) that serves our local Latino families and also

⁴ SSU "2008-2009 Student Recruitment Plan," Office of Admissions and Student Recruitment

⁵ 08/26/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM.

⁶ 09/05/09 Email from Bruce Peterson, Associate Director of EOP

⁷ Various email correspondences received by Sharon Cabaniss, Professor, Mathematics.

⁸ <http://www.sonoma.edu/usps/>

⁹ 08/26/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM.

¹⁰ 08/26/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM.

offers admissions to these students that meet the CSU admissions criteria.”¹¹ An article in the February 2, 2009, *Sonoma State STAR* by Matt Rice reported “the Seawolf Passport Program (SPP), new in fall 2009, . . . targets participants in programs such as Upward Bound and Academic Talent Search. SPP guarantees these students admission and was developed to help give low income, first generation students the opportunity to attend SSU.”¹²

Recommendation: Continue to work on a plan to increase the number of admitted ethnic minority students who enroll at SSU by providing ongoing support and adequate financial resources to programs such as those mentioned above in order to help them continue and expand. Additionally, programs similar to some that have been dropped, such as the EOP Outreach Program to local high schools, should be reinstated. Additionally, the Center for Cultural, Gender and Sexuality (CCGS) could be used for recruitment by having the director meet with potential students and perhaps involving the ethnic student clubs. Faculty should be encouraged “visit one of the low-income or ethnic neighborhoods . . . [and] spend time developing relationships with parents of students that we wish to attract.”¹³

2. In 1999-2000 SSU had two full-time recruiters.¹⁴ In 2002 or 2003 they were changed to “full time Records Specialists that participate in part-time recruitment activities in addition to their processing duties during the months of September through November and February through April. We do not have [solely] dedicated recruiters that focus on student recruitment full-time all year round.”¹⁵ The “2008-2009 Recruitment Plan” shows no recruits from high schools in the city of Vallejo, which is in SSU’s service area, and more than half of Vallejo is comprised of people of color. However the eligibility of students in this area would need to be more closely examined also. Additionally, one SSU outreach program Project Quest, designed to recruit more minority teachers in Vallejo was discontinued in 2006. The School of Education Teacher Diversity Project was replaced by the Science and Mathematics Teacher Recruitment and Retention Initiative: SMTRI. The outreach effort by Extended Education with the new Liberal Studies degree in Napa County is an example of a program which may enhance diversity in the student body. The fact that it is “Self Support”¹⁶ may inhibit low-income students from participating, but financial aid is available.¹⁷ In their most recent recruitment plans the Student Outreach office plans to send recruiters to all service area high schools who sent three or more ethnically diverse students to SSU in Fall 2009. However, they were not able to obtain funding to help bring interested students to visit SSU. Also, because of

¹¹ 04/24/09 Email from Gina Geck, Associate Director, Office of Admissions and Student Recruitment

¹² http://www.sonomastatestar.com/home/index.cfm?event=displayArticle&ustory_id=cc63818a-691e-420d-917b-a7a579be8716&page=3

¹³ 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

¹⁴ Sonoma State University “Student Recruitment Plan Fall 2000” by Gustavo Flores

¹⁵ 09/01/09 Email from Mack Olson, quoting Gina Geck, Associate Director Office of Admission & Student Recruitment

¹⁶ <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/policies/selfsupport.htm>

¹⁷ 07/21/09 Email from Sandra Harrison Feldman, Coordinator Liberal Studies Napa Valley and “NapaBA Demographics”.

funding cuts, recruiters will not be able to visit all of the out-of-area schools which sent such students.¹⁸

Recommendation: SAEM should be given resources in order to have full time recruiters so that recruitment programs can be expanded. In addition, the University should fund visits (estimated at \$20,000/year) by interested students from the areas mentioned above. “In order to create and sustain new markets – reaching [low-income, ethnically diverse] populations that historically have not enrolled at Sonoma, it takes repeated visits and follow-up... This is a process that takes four to five years, at least.”¹⁹ In particular, recruitment efforts at high schools in Solano and Napa Counties could be increased. Programs that reach out to that area, such as the Teacher Diversity Project and Project Quest should be reinstated and/or supported. Additionally, SSU should help publicize the Napa program and the proposed extension into Solano County. (Note that this report does not take a position on whether or not Solano County should be part of the SSU service area. The report is based on the fact that at this time, Solano County is part of the SSU service area.)

3. According to the SSU Strategic Plan website²⁰ while 23.4% of the “college-age population” of the SSU six-county service region is Hispanic/Latino, only 10.6% of SSU’s population is of that ethnicity.²¹ And the Hispanic/Latino population is projected to grow to 37% in the next ten years.²² The SSU website only provides information on overall population statistics. However, if one were to look at the UC/CSU eligible high school graduates, the number of qualified students drops dramatically.²³ If SSU continues to recruit statewide and desires to reflect the state’s ethnic composition, the percentage of potential Hispanic/Latino students is even larger. Looking at the CSU statewide statistics, 24.2% of all CSU students were Latino in 2007.²⁴ According to the SSU Strategic Plan website,²⁵ 6.0% of the “college-age” SSU six-county region is African-American and 2.6% of SSU’s student population is of that ethnicity.²⁶ In 1994, 3.5% of the students at SSU were African American.²⁷ Recently SSU has had success in recruiting African-American students from Southern California. According to Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, “we have success with King-Drew High School, West Angeles Church of God and Christ and

¹⁸ 08/31/09 Email from Gustavo Flores, Director of Admissions and Recruitment

¹⁹ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

²⁰ <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/strategicplan/draft4.shtml>

²¹ <http://www.sonoma.edu/university/> (Note that the percentages differ from those reported in other references. Perhaps they are based on different years or on averages.)

²² <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/strategicplan/draft4.shtml>

²³ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

²⁴ http://www.calstate.edu/as/stat_reports/2007-2008/feth01.htm (Note that efforts to obtain the statewide statistics on the percentage of college age Hispanic and Latino youth were unsuccessful.)

²⁵ <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/strategicplan/draft4.shtml>

²⁶ <http://www.sonoma.edu/university/> (Note that the percentages differ from those reported in other references. Perhaps they are based on different years or on averages.)

²⁷ *Student Demographics, Fall 1987 – Fall 1994*, Institutional Research 12/94

Young Black Scholars of Los Angeles. Each year, we get students from these groups... Sonoma participates in the CSU Super Sunday program that works to increase the percentage of African-Americans attending. Our partnership with West Angeles is a result of these efforts. [It] is the largest black church in California ... Sonoma is now the preferred CSU for West Angeles.”²⁸ Recently SSU hosted the Young Black Scholars Weekend, attracting 53 high school students from Los Angeles, several of whom indicate interest in attending SSU.²⁹

Recommendation: In addition to the Recommendations under #1 above, a strategic plan for recruitment with a goal of getting closer to the actual ethnic composition of the 6-county service area, or even the UC/CSU eligible population, should be developed. Additionally, if SSU continues to recruit statewide, those numbers must be increased further. Programs and efforts such as those mentioned above and in #1 should be strengthened and given adequate resources. (Note that if one wants to use only the demographic of UC/CSU eligible students then the SSU Institutional Research office would have to compute the statistics of *all* UC/CSU eligible individuals in the 6-county service area. This would include high school graduates over an extended period of time plus eligible students in the Service Area’s community colleges.)

4. At this time SSU gives out 400 academic scholarships ranging from \$250 to \$3000 per year.³⁰ However, this year the SSU Foundation is making no endowment distributions so the scholarship fund may be reduced.³¹ The scholarships are based on academic achievement, not financial need. Outreach programs such as the PIQE program mentioned in #3 above do not offer scholarships. However, EOP freshman students can apply for the CSU Future Scholars Program which is first-generation and needs-based. Additionally, “LSS offers \$48,000 per year in grant aid to Low-Income, First-Generation and underrepresented students...[The] Yes We Can Scholarship Fund (two four-year full [scholarships]) specifically target[s]... underrepresented individuals.”³²

Recommendation: The University community should discuss how to increase the availability of scholarships to low-income students such as those mentioned above. Additionally, SSU should explore implementing “recruitment” scholarships to attract a more diverse student body. The Office of Student Recruitment staff believe that “we could get an even greater commitment from the students in these types of programs [like PIQE] if we can support them with scholarships as well.”³³ The Development Office, the Scholarship Office and the Senate Scholarship Subcommittee should help develop a plan to increase these types of scholarships.

²⁸ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

²⁹ 04/27/09 Email from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President SAEM

³⁰ <http://www.sonoma.edu/Scholarship/>

³¹ 09/25/09 personal interview with Sara Golightly, Scholarship Coordinator

³² 08/26/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM.

³³ 04/24/09 Email from Gina Geck, Associate Director, Office of Admissions and Student Recruitment

5. Socioeconomic status can be reflected in financial aid statistics. In 1994 53% of full-time undergraduates were determined to have financial need.³⁴ This number dropped to 47% in 1999³⁵ and then to 39% in 2007.³⁶ These figures indicate that fewer low-income students are attending SSU during this time period. This does not correspond to the number of low-income households in the 6-county service area or in the state as a whole. Another indicator of economic status is the percentage of students receiving Pell grants. According to an online article Sept. 15, 2009, *Newsweek* reported³⁷ on “the percentage of undergraduates receiving federal Pell grants for low-income students. The proportion of students on Pell grants, which are most often given to undergrads with family incomes under \$20,000, isn't a perfect measure of an institution's efforts to achieve economic diversity...[although] many experts say that Pell figures are the best available gauge of how many low-income undergrads there are on a given campus. Pell grant percentages were calculated using 2007-2008 data on grant recipients collected by the U.S. Dept. of Education and given to U.S. News and fall 2007 total undergraduate enrollment collected from the colleges themselves by U.S. News.” According to the *Newsweek* table, SSU had 22% which was the lowest of the 16 CSU campuses reported. (The highest CSU was Los Angeles at 53%.) Again, the ability of low-income communities to prepare their high school graduates to be CSU eligible should be considered here as well.

Recommendation: Financial aid must be available to all qualified students who are accepted. In addition recruiters must be given the resources to make a special effort to encourage and help low-income students to apply in the first place. Have Financial Aid (in Administration and Finance) work more closely with Outreach, Recruitment and Admissions (in SAEM) to help qualified students plan how they can obtain the funding to attend SSU. Implement the recommendations in the Academic Senate 2002 Resolution on increasing the recruitment of low-income students.³⁸

6. Application fee waivers were also investigated. The numbers for first time freshmen are: Fall 1994, 8.69% of enrolled students; Fall 1999, 6.43%; and Fall 2008, 8.14%. The numbers for junior transfers are: Fall 1994, 13.24% of enrolled students; Fall 1999, 11.83%; and Fall 2008, 14.74%.³⁹ [Note that these numbers are not necessarily comparable because the CSU changed the number of requests for fee waivers from unlimited to about three for a student applying to more than one campus.]

Recommendation: Determine why the percentage for students with Application Fee Waivers is lower than the percentage with financial need in #5 above. Also, determine if financially needy students are offered waivers or help with deposits to attend the University and live in the Residential Community.

³⁴ “COMMON_DATA_SET_1994 Financial Aid” Report

³⁵ “1999 SSU FINANCIAL AID” Report

³⁶ “2008 SSU FINANCIAL AID” Report

³⁷ <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/masters-west-economic-diversity>

³⁸ http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/res_recruit_underrep_group.html

³⁹ 05/12/09 Email from Jane McGrew, Information and Documentation Specialist, SAEM

7. According to the Assistant Vice President of SAEM, “Looking at the CSU housing rate for 2007-2008, Sonoma State is in the middle of the ranking for rates.”⁴⁰ However, several individuals have raised attention to the fact that the residence halls at SSU are prohibitively expensive for many students, particularly those on financial aid. See, for example, “Feedback from Open Forum for Students 11/19/08” in the Appendix. This issue was also raised by students, faculty, lecturers and staff at the Diversity Open Forums held during Spring 2009.⁴¹ Also, the least expensive (older) dorms are only open to freshmen and sophomores. To illustrate the impact of this, please note that the Roseland University Prep (RUP) Summer Experience overnight program was discontinued because the RUP Scholarship Fund could not afford to pay for the dorms and organizers felt it was unfair to have students see how nice the dorms were and then tell them they could never stay there.⁴²

Recommendation: The University community should examine ways that are allowed under current CSU regulations to help subsidize dorm rooms upon request for all students who qualify for financial aid. This is especially practical in the current period when the dorms are not full. Also, the least expensive options should be available to all students.

8. An additional crucial area for increasing diversity, both ethnic and socioeconomic, of the SSU student body is to recruit and accept transfers from community colleges. The Fee Waiver data cited above indicates a greater percentage of junior transfers may be low income. In 2000, SSU had a goal of enrolling 1000 new transfer students in Fall 2000.⁴³ More recently the actual number of “Transfer Enrolled” is substantially less than that with 491 in Fall 2004 and 521 in Fall 2008.⁴⁴ The decision by the University not to accept such transfers from outside the 6-County service area in Fall 2009 will seriously hurt diversity efforts on campus because there is a more ethnically and economically diverse pool of students statewide.⁴⁵ Additionally, this decision will especially have an adverse impact on some smaller majors. It also runs counter to a new “initiative to increase the number of community college students transferring to the state's four-year universities [launched by] the heads of the University of California, California State University and California Community Colleges” in February, 2009.⁴⁶

Recommendations: The University should encourage students from community colleges to apply to SSU and provide advising and scholarships for them. In addition,

⁴⁰ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁴¹ “Feedback from Open Forum for Students 11/19/08” is in the Appendix. The transcripts for the Spring 2009 Forums are included in the Open Forums Report submitted to the Academic Senate on October 1,

⁴² 05/11/09 Email from Prof. Lynn Cominsky, Chair Physics and Astronomy and Director NASA Education and Public Outreach

⁴³ Sonoma State University “Student Recruitment Plan Fall 2000” by Gustavo Flores

⁴⁴ “This data is from the California Department of Education, graduates 2007-2008, the latest available.” (Chuck Rhodes)

⁴⁵ http://www.cpec.ca.gov/Agendas/Agenda0906/DR_diversity.pdf

⁴⁶ http://www.sacbee.com/state_wire/story/1598671.html

transfer students should not be forced to stay in the most expensive dorms if they want to live on campus.

9. Another area for recruitment which might increase diversity would be for SSU to participate in programs to recruit veterans. According to an August 6, 2009, article in the *Press Democrat*, under a subheadline on page 5 “GI BILL: Few veterans attend Sonoma State University,” reporter Guy Kovner reports that “Sonoma State University has five students certified under the Post-9/11 bill and expects about a dozen to be enrolled by the time classes start Aug. 26. SSU has only 45 veterans in a student body of 8,500, said Sean Johnson, Associate Registrar.”⁴⁷ [See Recommendations under RETENTION item 5.] One of the challenges to recruiting veterans in the SSU service area is the fact that “veterans fare much better than the average citizen.”⁴⁸ When SAEM “attempted writing a grant for Veteran’s programming...[t]he ‘Needs’ [veteran’s economic need] section of the grant was not competitive.”⁴⁹ However, today SAEM has two staff devoting significant time to veterans affairs work along with one work study students. This compares favorably to four years ago when there was only one work study student working on their own. The Outreach and Recruitment office plans to participate in several veterans’ events this year.

Recommendation: The University must provide support to SAEM so that staff can continue to participate in existing programs and explore new programs that may help attract veterans to SSU and provide financial aid to those who qualify.

RETENTION The third major component for increasing the number of diverse students at SSU is “(c) Increasing the percentage of students who remain at Sonoma and graduate – retention.... **retention begets recruitment.** Our first emphasis must be on the quality of the experience of students that are enrolled at the University.”⁵⁰

1. Once students are at SSU, retention is a major issue. According to the “FTF 2000 - 2008 Campus 8-Year Graduation & Retention Rates” report (see Appendix), after the second year only 63% of enrolled Freshman are still at SSU. Of these, 64.7% of White students remain. However, only 52.4% of Blacks, 59.4% of Hispanic/Latinos, 60% of Asian or Pacific Islanders, and 46.7% of American Indians [Native Americans] remain. For freshmen entering in 2000–02 the average 6-year graduation rate was 55% for Whites, 41% for Blacks, 47% for Hispanic/Latinos, 48% for Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 58% for American Indian/Alaska Natives.⁵¹

Recommendations:

a. Academic advising plays a crucial role. The funding for Advising in the Student

⁴⁷ <http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20090806/ARTICLES/908069863/1349?Title=-Pretty-good-deal-for-vets>

⁴⁸ 08/26/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM

⁴⁹ 08/26/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM

⁵⁰ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁵¹ http://www.sonoma.edu/aa/portfolio/ee_review/EER_Final/App1-ummary_Data_Form.pdf (graduation rates 3-year average 2000–02)

- Affairs and Enrollment Management division, which has suffered dramatic cuts recently, must be increased so that an adequate number of advisors can be available.⁵² In 1994 there were two Academic Advisors, three Career Advisors, four EOP Advisors, and one Test Officer. In addition there were five managers and 7.5 support staff. In 2009 there were a total of five EOP and Undeclared Advisors and one Career Advisor, hired in June, along with two managers and two support staff for all four programs. Meanwhile, the undeclared population has more than doubled since 1994.⁵³
- b.** For faculty advising departments should also follow the set of standards as outlined in the *Sonoma State University Best Practices for Academic Advising* compiled by the Student Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate in 2005.⁵⁴ The University should provide funds to SAEM to organize workshops on Advising, and faculty should be encouraged to attend to update their advising skills and obtain the latest information.⁵⁵
- c.** In addition to academic advising, faculty should be encouraged “to personally mentor low-income or underrepresented students...[and to] volunteer to advise one of the student groups [faculty advisor]”⁵⁶ to mention just a few possible activities for faculty. The Center for Community Engagement offers faculty resources for directing and supporting students in their community work outreach activities.⁵⁷
- d.** Entering freshmen students should be encouraged to enroll in courses that promote and enhance retention, such as such as the Hutchins Interdisciplinary Lower-Division Program (LIBS 101, 102, 201 and 202), Freshman Year Experience (University 150) and First Year Experience [Freshman Seminar], University (102). The Freshman Interest Groups, which include a freshman seminar course, are another excellent means to increase student retention. Data from Hutchins and First Year Experience show they have a significantly higher proportion of students who stay at SSU (retention) and graduate.⁵⁸ The data for University 150 is inconclusive at this time.⁵⁹ Students have attested to the fact that the University 238 Leadership class offers them opportunities to become more involved in the University.⁶⁰

⁵² 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁵³ 08/12/09 Emails from Joyce Chong, Managing Director Advising, Career & EOP Services

⁵⁴ Sonoma State University Best Practices for Academic Advising,
<http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/AdvisingBest.html>

⁵⁵ 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁵⁶ 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁵⁷ <http://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ap/ocbl/> (Center for Community Engagement)

⁵⁸ “Univ 102: First Year Experience Seminar,” *First Year Experience Guide for Success* by Velásquez-Andrade, E., Freund, C., and Boyer, B. (2004) and Hutchins Program “Freshman Retention Rate” in 2006 *Program Review*

⁵⁹ “Assessment Results First Year Experience at Sonoma State University 2006-2007”

⁶⁰ 08/29/09 Email from Chuck Rhodes about the Young Black Scholars Weekend.

- e. There must be well-funded majors for Juniors and Seniors to pursue. If students see that upper division courses they need for graduation are only offered once every two years or are cancelled unexpectedly, they may not want to chance staying for the last two years of college at SSU and will go elsewhere.
- f. In Spring 2009 the President appointed a Student Retention Task Force to look into the retention issue “to address improving the retention and graduation rates of the University. Chaired by the Dean of Science and Technology, the task force was charged by the Provost to investigate the many factors that go into retaining our students from year to year and to make recommendations for improving retention and graduation rates of our first-time freshmen.”⁶¹
- g. The Retention Task Force should take up the issue of Community College transfer students and how to support them.
- h. Special programs on campus aimed to help low-income and ethnic minority students need to be supported and augmented. For example, the EOP Summer Bridge program has had to go from five-weeks to just one-week.⁶² Several factors have affected this program such as stagnate funding from the Chancellor’s office for the last 20 years, divisional budget cuts and the increase in fees charged to the program for services. The University should instead be helping to subsidize this program which is proven to help with retention of those students during their college careers.
- i. The EOP program has not grown in proportion to the rest of the University. There were 507 EOP students out of 6364 total⁶³ students in 1994, 473 EOP out of 7080⁶⁴ students in 1999 and 456 EOP out of 8921⁶⁵ students in Fall 2008.⁶⁶ Thus the percentage has decreased from 8% to 5% during the last fifteen years. On the positive side, “Because of new procedures, EOP had the largest class ever during the summer of 2009”⁶⁷ In an extensive 2003 report “First Generation, Low-Income Undergraduate Students at Sonoma State: Factors and Characteristics Supporting Their Academic Achievement” by Prof. Elisa Velasquez-Andrade et al⁶⁸ the first Recommendation states that “a major source of strength reported by all participants was the support they felt by the EOP program, itself.” Positive statements about EOP were made several times by students attending the Fall,

⁶¹ http://www.sonoma.edu/aa/portfolio/ee_review/EER_Final/App6-2008_Req_Inst_Rev.pdf

⁶² 05/12/09 Email from Bruce Peterson, Associate Director of EOP

⁶³ Student Demographics, Fall 1987 – Fall 1994, Institutional Research 12/94

⁶⁴ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/enr94_05.shtml

⁶⁵ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/enr94_05.shtml

⁶⁶ 04/27/09 Email from Bruce Peterson, Associate Director of EOP, to Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM (EOP figures)

⁶⁷ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁶⁸ “First Generation, Low-Income Undergraduate Students at Sonoma State: Factors and Characteristics Supporting Their Academic Achievement” by Prof. Elisa Velasquez-Andrade et al

2008, diversity forum as a positive aspect of diversity at SSU (see Appendix). As the 2003 Report recommended and this report reiterates, EOP needs more support from the University.

- j.* Also mentioned at the Fall Diversity Forum was the fact that if the residential community were less expensive for EOP and other financially disadvantaged students, more students who live further away could also attend and stay until graduation.
- k.* The SSU Children's School offers another important program for low income students because it offers subsidies for the children of qualified students. However, at this time they need more space in order to meet the growing demand for child care.⁶⁹ "The Children's School has spaces for 45-50 children of SSU students, most are 'income eligible' or low income and pay nothing or next to nothing (grant from CDE/CDD). We can only accommodate half of the applications (sometimes fewer); the waitlist has over 150 names now, a mix of students both low income or not and staff and faculty."⁷⁰ The University should make it a priority to provide more space, perhaps in vacant dorms without an exorbitant rent rate.
- l.* The role of a Center for Culture, Gender and Sexuality (CCGS) is very important for retention of a diverse student body because it can address the needs of women; ethnic minorities; and Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender and Queer (GLBTQ) students. The University should implement the Senate Ad Hoc Task Force on Diversity's recommendations regarding the (CCGS)⁷¹ that were endorsed by the Senate's Student Affairs Committee and the Academic Senate. Additionally, the University should subsidize the rent for the Center so that funds that are allocated to it are primarily used for direct student support. In the 2009-10 academic year the University provided only \$30,000 to the CCGS, all of which must go to pay rent to the Student Union.⁷² SAEM has released one staff person to work 50% of their time in the Center and eight students have volunteered to help this year.
- m.* Support services must be available to help students in times of crisis so that they do not drop out. For example, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is severely understaffed⁷³ and may not be able to provide such support when needed. CAPS must receive adequate resources to meet the needs of an expanded student body, especially in currently stressful economic times. At this time they are four counselors below the national standard.⁷⁴ Additionally, it was mentioned at some of the Diversity Forums that there needs to be an impartial person to

⁶⁹ May, 2009, meeting of the SAEM Strategic Planning Committee

⁷⁰ 09/28/09 Email from Lia Thompson-Clark, Director, SSU Children's School

⁷¹ CCGS Senate resolution <http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/CCGSrecoms.html>

⁷² 09/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM

⁷³ 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁷⁴ Reported by Student Affairs Committee liaison to Athletic Advisory Council on Sept. 10, 2009.

whom students, faculty and staff can go with problems that do not rise to the level of legal discrimination. The CSU has a system-wide *ombudsman* who “is an impartial and confidential resource for seeking to address University-related problems, complaints or concerns. The Ombudsman works collaboratively with academic and general staff to help create a campus climate where matters raised are investigated and resolution is facilitated.”⁷⁵ Perhaps SSU can institute a similar resource for the University community.

- n. Give priority to funding effective programs and services that assist in the recruitment, retention and graduation of a diverse student body (e.g., the McNair Scholars, the Lewis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP), and Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA)). At this time, LSAMP has adequate funding and support, but the year-old MESA program is barely able to survive for a second year because of a lack of University support.⁷⁶ Research and implement other effective programs as campus funding and priorities allow. Faculty should be encouraged to help students qualify for the CSU Pre-Doctoral Program by introducing them to the program and helping them fill out the applications.

2. Disability Services for Students (formerly Disabled Students Services) reports they had an average of 224 registered students per semester in the 1994–95 academic year, 369 in 1999–2000, and 372 in 2007–08.⁷⁷ Note that Learning Skills Services also provides academic support to these students.

Recommendations: Determine why the number of students utilizing DSS services has remained fairly constant during the last eight years while the campus has grown from 7080 in Fall 1999 to 8921 in Fall 2008.⁷⁸ Additionally, a study should be made to see if financial aid needs to be provided for students who cannot afford to pay for private testing to qualify for DSS services if they had not been tested or qualified in high school.

3. Another program to help low income, ethnic minority, and students with disabilities is Learning Skill Services (LSS). LSS is funded by federal grants and has consistently served 350 students each year at least since 1999.⁷⁹ This is at the same time that the student population at SSU has grown from 7080 in Fall 1999 to 8921 in Fall 2008.⁸⁰ The LSS program “turns away, on average, 75 applicants each year (with no active recruiting). If we recruited or more actively advertised[,] we would be turning away many more.”⁸¹ Clearly, many students who could use these services are not able to.

Recommendation: If the University could offer more support to LSS in terms space, the staff could apply for additional funding from the federal government to support another

⁷⁵ <http://www.csu.edu.au/division/plandev/ombudsman/>

⁷⁶ Various email correspondences received by Sharon Cabaniss.

⁷⁷ “DSS Statistics” and 05/14/09 Email from Lisa Wyatt, Director CAPS and DSS

⁷⁸ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/enr94_05.shtml

⁷⁹ 05/12/09 Email from Matt Benney, Executive Director University Preparation Services

⁸⁰ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/enr94_05.shtml

⁸¹ 05/12/09 Email from Matt Benney, Executive Director University Preparation Services

150 low-income and diverse students for projects in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) areas, Allied Health fields, English as a Second Language (ESL) and other specializations.⁸²

4. Sexual harassment and sexual assault is another aspect of diversity. The “Campus Climate Toward Diversity 1998 – 2007 Trend Analysis”⁸³ offers much insight into the issue of sexual harassment by comparing four different years, 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007. They administered a “*Campus Climate Survey* [which] was designed with the Office of Civil Rights to gather information about experiences of discrimination on campus.”

The table on page 5 of the report indicates “the percent of respondents who report they never or rarely experience the sexually harassing behaviors listed on campus or during campus-related activities. There is surprising consistency [over the four comparison years] on the items. The majority of respondents [reported] never or rarely experience[ing] these harassing behaviors. However, at least 20% of the respondents *sometimes* or *often* experience the following behaviors: sexually suggestive stories, jokes, or humor; seductive remarks, including attempts to establish a sexual relationship despite discouragement; sexual remarks, including discussion of personal or sexual matters; body language such as staring, leering, or sexual gestures; and physical contact of a sexual nature.”

According to campus Police Services⁸⁴ there were four reported “Forcible Sex Offenses” in 2004, five in each of 2005 and 2006, and eight in 2007 “On Campus”, in “Residence Halls” and on “Public Property.”

Recommendations:

- a. Implement the Senate Ad Hoc Task Force on Diversity’s recommendations regarding the Center for Culture, Gender and Sexuality (CCGS)⁸⁵ that were endorsed by the Senate’s Student Affairs Committee and the Academic Senate.
- b. Create a campus Advocate position which can serve as the informal source of support and advocacy for students in crisis and ensure that this person is available outside of normal working hours and able to be consulted on an as-needed basis.
- c. Delegate responsibility and allocate funding to the appropriate division to create and coordinate programming and services for women students (see the Appendix A of the Recommendations regarding the CCGS⁸⁶).
- d. Delegate responsibility and allocate funding to the appropriate division to coordinate programming and services that address sexual violence on campus and in the Residential Community.

⁸² 05/12/09 Email from Matt Benney, Executive Director University Preparation Services

⁸³ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/annual_reports/2006-2007/CampusClimateTowardDiversityTrends2007.doc

⁸⁴ <http://www.sonoma.edu/ps/home/jeanneclery.html> and <http://www.sonoma.edu/ps/home/jeanneclery.pdf> (police statistics)

⁸⁵ CCGS Senate resolution <http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/CCGSrecoms.html>

⁸⁶ CCGS Senate resolution <http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/CCGSrecoms.html>

5. The “Campus Climate Toward Diversity 1998 – 2007 Trend Analysis”⁸⁷ reports that respondents to the 2007 Campus Climate survey “self-identified their sexual orientation. The percentages for heterosexual were 89% for students, The remaining 11% ... were either bisexual, gay male, lesbian, queer, or unsure. This is higher than the 10% generally reported for the population in the U.S.” Several tables in the report indicate that many on campus perceive or receive discriminatory behavior based on sexual orientation for each of the four years reported. In October 2008, the Academic Senate passed the ”Resolution Condemning Hate Crimes Against Members of the Campus Community” in response to “recent acts of vandalism against faculty colleagues.”⁸⁸

Recommendations: All of the recommendations in item 4 are applicable. Also, the University should actively support and publicize the SSU Safe Zone program whose mission is “To develop and maintain a network of informed faculty, staff and students who will be visibly supportive of students, staff and faculty who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning; who will work to support the SSU policy of non-discrimination based on sexual orientation; and who will foster a campus climate where, regardless of sexual orientation, anyone may feel safe, supported, respected and affirmed.”⁸⁹ The University should also support the Queer - Straight Alliance student group and hire someone to be responsible for coordinating the Safe Zone program. That individual should be able to facilitate staff and faculty “undergo[ing] an extensive training program before displaying the sticker.”⁹⁰

6. The University maintains a special web page for veterans⁹¹ but does not seem to have any special programs on campus at this time. However, Extended Education is planning to begin an outreach program to Solano County which would target US Veterans to finish their BAs.⁹²

Recommendation: The University needs to explore ways to take advantage of recruitment and retention programs for veterans offered through the CSU. As mentioned in #10 under “Recruitment,” SAEM has tried to qualify for some programs and found Sonoma County veterans do not qualify for the “needs” requirements. Perhaps future applications should address the “needs” of the entire six-county SSU service area.

7. At the Fall 2008 Student Diversity Forums (see Appendix) several students mentioned the importance of student groups such as the BSU (Black Scholars United) and MeChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan) as providing a “comfort zone.” Several also mentioned the importance of the diversity months as providing a forum for the entire

⁸⁷ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/annual_reports/2006-2007/CampusClimateTowardDiversityTrends2007.doc

⁸⁸ <http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/ResVandalismF08.html>

⁸⁹ <http://www.sonoma.edu/safezone/>

⁹⁰ “Response to the Ad Hoc Committee on Students”, August 31, 2009, by Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

⁹¹ <http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/veterans/>

⁹² 07/21/09 Email from Sandra Harrison Feldman, Coordinator Liberal Studies Napa Valley and “NapaBA Demographics”.

campus. There is also a new student group on campus, SPARC: Student Parent Action Resource Club, which is geared toward students who are “in CalWORKS, SSI, disability, or are a low-income student who has children...”⁹³ This group hopes to become an official student group in Fall, 2009.⁹⁴

Recommendations: Continue to support a wide range of student clubs and activities. Delegate responsibility and allocate funding to create and coordinate programming and support for the ethnic heritage months (Black History Month, Raza/Native American Month and Asian Awareness Month) and other programming that supports and celebrates cultural diversity and multicultural understanding. Reach out to involve the local and SSU campus communities in these activities. Schools and Departments should consider having an activity related to the different special months. The newly launched Disability Week is another example of an activity that Schools and Departments could complement with their own activities, given enough notice. When a School or Department is having an activity open to the public that touches on diversity issues, publicize it throughout the campus. Additionally, update the list of University programs and initiatives in support of diversity prepared for the WASC report.

8. Scholarships are important for Retention (see #4 under Recruitment) as is ongoing Financial Aid (see #5 under Recruitment).

Recommendations: In addition to the recommendations mentioned above, the Committee should also consider the proposal to allocate scholarships based on financial need as well as scholarship and propose ways to do this. The recent financial problems of the SSU Foundation should be carefully monitored by the Scholarship Committee and the Senate Budget Committee to ensure that scholarships to students are not adversely affected, especially any scholarships based on financial need.⁹⁵

9. Another important area of diversity is that of women in the sciences, particularly in the physical sciences, mathematics, computer science and engineering. According to a study in 2005–06, 41% of all School of Science and Technology majors were women⁹⁶ while 64% of the entire student population was female in Fall 2005.⁹⁷ For the physical sciences, mathematics, computer science and engineering the percentage dropped to 34%.⁹⁸ The School supports many activities to attract more women to these fields including ongoing support for the SSU Women in Computer Science Club (WICS) and annual support to the Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) Conferences whose goal is to encourage more middle school girls and young women to take more math and science in

⁹³ 02/05/09 Email from Sheila Katz, Assistant Professor, Sociology

⁹⁴ 07/22/09 Email from Sheila Katz, Assistant Professor, Sociology

⁹⁵ <http://www.pressdemocrat.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090719/OPINION/907179881&Title=PD-EDITORIAL-Dubious-loans&template=printpicart>

⁹⁶ “Data on SST Majors Fall 2005, June 2006” submitted by Sharon Cabaniss, Professor in Mathematics to Dean Saeid Rahimi of the School of Science and Technology June, 2006.

⁹⁷ https://www.sonoma.edu/aa/ir/enr94_05.shtml

⁹⁸ “Data on SST Majors Fall 2005, June 2006” submitted by Sharon Cabaniss, Professor in Mathematics to Dean Saeid Rahimi of the School of Science and Technology June, 2006.

high school. The School of Social Science, Pre-College Programs and University Outreach also support EYH. The Mathematics Department awards 10 memberships in the Association for Women in Mathematics to students annually.⁹⁹

Recommendations: The University should continue to support activities such as those mentioned in #9 above and not charge large fees for groups such as EYH to use University facilities. Additionally, faculty should be encouraged to help women students qualify for the CSU Pre-Doctoral Program and other special programs to encourage women to pursue post-baccalaureate studies in these fields. Since the Women's Resource Center has been very important for support to women in science programs in the past, the University should implement the Senate Ad Hoc Diversity Committee's recommendations regarding the Center for Culture, Gender and Sexuality (CCGS).¹⁰⁰

CURRICULUM ISSUES WHICH ESPECIALLY IMPACT RETENTION OF STUDENTS

One of the Committee's charges is to review curriculum. The Open Forum Report addresses this extensively and makes several recommendations. In addition, there are some examples of best practices which can be singled out at this time that relate to Student Retention.

1. Both the University 102 First Year Experience [formerly Freshman Seminar], including Freshman Interest Groups; the University 150 Freshman Year Experience courses; and Hutchins Lower Division courses have multicultural and diversity learning objectives and/or topics in their curriculum. This is an excellent way to introduce freshmen to many topics and issues they may never before have encountered. Additionally, instructors hired to teach these courses are expected to have experience teaching a diverse student body and experience with multicultural and diversity issues ranging from ethnicity to sexuality to disabilities. The University 238 Foundations of Leadership course and the "SAEM Student Leadership program engages a higher portion of students of color in leadership roles that produce a greater retention rate."¹⁰¹

Recommendation: Maintain and support these and similar courses and programs.

2. "In order to introduce new students to Sonoma State and to provide a real perspective on life here, [student] orientation [conducted before classes start] includes a segment on diversity and the campus climate.... Presentation Goals ...allow students the opportunity to explore how they are both similar or different from their peers...[and]Generate some constructive dialogue and provoke initial exploration of diversity issues...[This will] provide a foundation for future discussion of diversity at Sonoma and explore what they want their experience to be while enrolled on the campus."¹⁰²

⁹⁹ 07/23/09 Email from Marybeth Hull, Administrative Coordinator, Mathematics Department

¹⁰⁰ CCGS Senate resolution <http://www.sonoma.edu/Senate/Resolutions/CCGSrecoms.html>

¹⁰¹ 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM

¹⁰² 07/20/09 Email from Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Interim Vice President SAEM

Recommendations: Maintain and support these and similar programs for Orientation and during the academic year. Find a way to follow up with students who do not take a University 102 or 150 course and who are not in the Hutchins Program. Reach out to transfer students with similar programs. The University needs to develop and support ongoing efforts to provide students with multicultural competence training opportunities from orientation through graduation.

NOTE: There are other programs that the Ad Hoc Diversity Committee is gathering data on, but at this time they are still under investigation. There has been a serious problem obtaining data from the past due to a CSU policy of shredding all materials, including annual reports, dated prior to 2001. For example, the Committee was unable to obtain Recruitment Reports prior to 2000. Additionally, there are certainly more programs on campus that have not yet been mentioned since the Committee was not aware of them at the time of this report. However, this report and additional information will be available on the Committee's website at <http://www.sonoma.edu/senate/adhocdiversity.html>.

SUMMARY

In his February 13, 2009, letter to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice-President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM), wrote that SAEM “has consistently taken a greater hit during budget cuts and these funds have not been restored to previous levels during better times. SAEM provides many of the retention-based programs....Conversations must concentrate on not only how can we attract a diverse population but how can Sonoma retain and graduate ...low-income students. This requires resources, [not] just fiscal but [also] a commitment of faculty and staff in student success.”¹⁰³

APPENDIX

1. “FTF 2000 - 2008 Campus 8-Year Graduation & Retention Rates” Report
2. ” Feedback from Open Forum for Students 11/19/08.”

¹⁰³ 02/13/09 Email to the campus from Chuck Rhodes, Assistant Vice President, SAEM