

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 28, 2004
To: William Watkins, Chair, Enrollment Policy Group
From: Jolene Koester, President
Subject: Recommendations of the Enrollment Policy Group

I have received the Final Report and Recommendations of the Enrollment Policy Group. First, let me express my appreciation for the work of the Enrollment Policy Group over the past two years as you have collected and analyzed data, prepared recommendations, solicited input from the campus community, and prepared this final report. As you are aware, enrollment pressures are expected to continue to escalate at CSUN and system-wide in the coming years. The development of effective enrollment policies and strategies is of critical importance to CSUN, especially in the context of a declining resource base. I am pleased to accept your Final Report and Recommendations, which delineates a range of potential strategies for controlling enrollment, while maintaining our core values of access and quality. Some of the strategies described in your report have been implemented during the period in which the committee deliberated; others are under consideration by various groups on and off campus; and, still others must be carefully studied. The following are my specific responses to each of the Group's recommendations.

Recommendation #1: The University should continue its long-standing commitment to access and quality.

The University's commitment to both access and quality is central to our mission as a comprehensive regional university. Declining absolute and relative State resources challenge Cal State Northridge's ability to fulfill its longstanding commitment for admission to all CSU eligible students. As the campus makes shorter term enrollment decisions and develops long-term enrollment management policies, it is essential that there is a common understanding of the relationship of access and quality to resources. Access defined as admission to the university is hollow unless we can assure that classes and support services are available for all enrolled students. To maintain quality, we must assure that enrollment does not exceed our capacity to provide support services as well as classes. Therefore, strategies for achieving access and quality must always be considered in the context of available resources.

Recommendation #2: The University should continue its efforts to acquire resources to support enrollment demand.

Your report acknowledges that adequate resources are essential to provide classes and support services for the students we admit. We will continue to coordinate our advocacy efforts for State dollars with the CSU Chancellors Office. Augmenting resources through private sources has been - and will continue to be - a priority of my administration. Private sources of funds, such as corporations, foundations, and individual donors, enhance the excellence of our programs and facilities. State funding is - and will remain - the resource that supports enrollment demand, and will continue to be essential for preserving access.

Recommendation #3: The University's current FTES capacity should be assessed in conjunction with the Campus Physical Master Plan review process currently underway.

This is an appropriate and timely recommendation. The Master Plan consultative process, just recently underway, is working to plan a physical campus capable of working for 35,000 FTE students. The higher FTES (35,000) functions as an enrollment ceiling for a two to three decade window. Higher annual enrollment targets must be accompanied by appropriate marginal rate funding for enrollment increases in order to assure access and quality.

Recommendation #4: Campus impaction should be pursued only after less restrictive enrollment management strategies have been maximized.

(See comments on recommendation #10 below)

Recommendation #5: The enrollment management strategies in use in 2002 through 2004 should continue at this time.

To manage enrollment to available resources for the 2005-06 academic year, current enrollment management strategies will be refined.

Recommendation #6: An enrollment management plan for CSU Northridge should be developed. and

Recommendation #7: A high level University-wide committee should be established.

Academic Affairs is currently preparing projections for enrollment growth related to the campus physical master plan process. Various initiatives are now underway – those related to the Graduation Rate Task Force, the General Education Task Force, and recently begun conversations on becoming a more learning centered university. All will have tremendous impact on CSUN's enrollment planning for the new and longer term. Our new Provost begins his formal work with us August 1st and I anticipate that he will need a period of time to learn and understand our unique enrollment issues. These and other emerging efforts will inform our enrollment management planning. Therefore, I am

delaying any formal action on recommendations #6 and #7 until such time as we have closure on some of the aforementioned issues. In the interim, enrollment policy and planning recommendations will be made to me through currently established bodies and practices. Specifically, shorter-term enrollment management decisions will continue to be made to me by the Provost who works with the Vice President of Student Affairs and appropriate staff within Academic and Student Affairs. The University Planning and Budget Group (UPBG) will serve as our internal consultation body for any longer term enrollment policy changes. And, finally, as per CSU Board of Trustees policy, we will consult appropriately on any longer term policy changes with an external group, representing the community we serve, the Community Enrollment Advisory Group. The membership of this group includes local school districts, community colleges, the business community, and other community organizations. Each of these groups reflects the diversity of the communities that we serve, and together they provide a broad perspective on these essential issues.

Recommendation #8: Recommendations concerning policies and practices that could have a small to moderate impact:

Your report presents several strong recommendations, some of which have already been implemented, and some of which are in development or under consideration. We have already implemented most of the recommendations regarding document submission. Last fall, I approved a policy recommended by Faculty Senate to limit course repeats. Academic Affairs has already asked all academic departments to develop advising plans. In order to reduce the number of units in our general education program, the faculty through the Senate, must recommend these changes. I urge you and others supportive of this recommendation to work through the governance process to assure that this recommendation becomes reality. The CSU Board of Trustees recently approved an action to create a system-wide core and campus-specific transfer degree program that should greatly increase coordination with community colleges. There are several other remaining recommendations. I am asking the Provost and the Vice President of Student Affairs, according to their area of responsibility, to consider the other recommendations offered that may have “small to moderate” impact.

Recommendation #9: Recommendations concerning policies and practices that could have a moderate to large impact:

We have already implemented some of the recommendations delineated in this section, including “enrollment access and eligibility” and a requirement that transfer students complete all lower division general education requirements prior to admission. The signing of the Compact between the CSU and the Governor, once again offers the possibility of CSUN moving to year round operations. CSUN also already has in place the fee mechanism to offer programs off campus where there is sufficient demand or warrant.

Recommendation #10: Recommendations concerning policies and practices that could have a large sustainable impact:

We will consider impact of the freshmen class and/or the entire campus only when it is clear that enrollment could surpass the resources necessary to assure authentic access and therefore, quality. And, CSUN will participate in any CSU Systemwide matters that assist us in matching resources to students to assure quality.

cc: Linda Bain
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