



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

To: F. King Alexander, President

From: Karen Gould, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Mary Stephens, Vice President for Administration and Finance
Co-chairs, 2009-10 Resource Planning Process (RPP) Task Force

Date: June 30, 2009

Subject: 2009-10 RPP Task Force Specific Budget Recommendations

The purpose of this memorandum is to convey specific budget recommendations that were discussed by the RPP Task Force during this year's process. The following items were judged as high priority and worthy of funding consideration in 2009-10 despite the difficult budgetary climate. The current RPP budget plan described in a separate memorandum dated June 11, 2009, fully contemplates the following recommendations. No additional reductions or actions are necessary to make these permanent base budget changes.

Comprehensive Fundraising Campaign

CSULB is in the preliminary stages of a very important comprehensive fundraising campaign. Particularly in light of the current economy, interrupting the campaign's momentum would set the university back considerably. Building upon the university's past fundraising accomplishments, campaign results will provide broader educational opportunities for CSULB students, increase our endowment, significantly build ongoing annual fundraising efforts, and strengthen our statewide and national reputation. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees mandated that every campus have a comprehensive fundraising effort to further the academic mission of the university. With an expected return on investment of 7:1, the campaign has received broad university support since 2006-07, although it has been funded with temporary resources due to a lack of permanent discretionary funds.

The division of University Relations and Development has developed a very thoughtful budget at \$1.8 million annually and the Task Force recognizes that sustaining such an endeavor will require permanent funding. The RPP Task Force recommends that this \$1.8 million annual funding requirement be considered permanent.

Classroom Maintenance

Initiated during 2006-07 and included in budget plans since then is an enhanced classroom maintenance program, which was funded with the one-time savings from a utility settlement. This program temporarily augmented the regular classroom maintenance budget of the Facilities Management department and provided enhanced maintenance services to university classrooms. Painting of classrooms increased to once every three years, floor stripping and waxing and carpet cleaning doubled to twice each year, and attention to the repair/replacement of chairs, tables, window coverings, floor tile, and white boards increased from twice to three times per year.

Because these maintenance enhancements are so visible and benefit both faculty and students, the RPP Task Force recommends \$500,000 of permanent funding be allocated to this program beginning in 2009-10.

Counseling and Mental Health

Following national trends, CSULB has seen a dramatic rise in both the frequency and severity of student mental health problems. At the same time, budget reductions over time have resulted in decreased staffing and lack of resources to fully meet the mental health needs of our students. This increased demand and decreased ability to meet the service needs of students is approaching a critical level.

Current staffing levels for psychological counseling and mental health are inadequate and result in excessive wait times for appointments and more frequent referrals to off-campus resources. Increasing numbers of students in crisis and at risk of harm to themselves or others affect all segments of the campus community. Phone calls from faculty and administrators with concerns about troubled students have increased 300 percent since the Virginia Tech tragedy. Rates of involuntary psychiatric hospitalization for suicidal behavior and the number of completed suicides on campus have increased over the past two years. National accrediting organizations recommend that colleges have a ratio of one counselor for every 1,500 students. The national counseling center average in 2008 was one counselor per 1,952 students. Currently, CSULB has a counselor to student ratio of one to 4,210 (the CSU average is one to 3,407), far in excess of recommended standards. This is a result of diminished funding over time and the fact that counseling center staffing levels have never recovered from budget cuts in the early 1990s.

The RPP Task Force is deeply concerned about the limited resources available for counseling and mental health and acknowledges that these services are essential for a safe, supportive and healthy learning environment for our students, staff and faculty. During the 2008-09 fiscal year, additional funding was identified to assist with these services. The Task Force recommends that the university allocate \$150,000 in permanent funding to the Division of Student Services beginning 2009-10 to restore critical mental health services. With this funding, the first priority will be to hire additional counselors to provide direct services to students and reduce wait times for appointments.

Disabled Student Services

Disabled Student Services (DSS) is under state and federal mandates to provide specific, direct support services to students with disabilities. The RPP Task Force was briefed on the fact that the cost of mandated DSS services may vary significantly based on the number of students with disabilities who enroll at the university. Due to a 25 percent increase in the number of “higher cost” students (deaf students and blind students requiring Braille) in the last two years, DSS has operated in deficit. For 2008-09, additional funding was identified to assist with these services. The Task Force recommends that the university set aside \$109,500 in permanent funding for potential DSS funding requirements. (DSS has not filled a position that is currently open, Coordinator of the High Tech Center. This is an important position that will be instrumental with the Accessible Technology Initiative, as well as working with visually impaired students. The Task Force recommends that DSS be given the flexibility to hire this critical position in 2009-10). The Task Force recommends that an indexing formula be developed whereby DSS would have the ability to request annual funding based on the number and category of disabled students anticipated during the academic year.

Accessible Technology Initiative

The CSU System instituted the Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI) under Executive Order 926 (January 2005). This system-wide directive provides guidelines, rules and mandates to assist disabled individuals with learning. These priorities include accessibility of the Web and instructional materials and procurement of accessible electronic and information technology. Unlike ADA (American Disabilities Act) which provides physical access for the disabled, i.e. curb cutouts and bathroom fixtures, ATI targets the way people read, write and utilize technology. The campus also is required to meet California State Law, Section 508 standards as it develops or acquires new electronic and information technology resources.

Because all university divisions were impacted by the ATI directive since 2005, essentially working through its requirements as an unfunded mandate on campus, during 2008-09 the President provided an allocation of \$75,000 to support some key actions. With guidance by the ATI Steering Committee, progress has been made in the procurement of accessible instructional materials and in the training of key staff. During this year’s RPP, members of the ATI Steering Committee presented a plan to continue towards full implementation. Knowing the severity of the budget problems facing the campus, the plan was conservative yet would show good faith progress toward meeting the goals of this important initiative. The prioritized funding request for 2009-10 that totaled \$203,000 was well received and supported by the task force. The RPP Task Force recommends that \$128,000 from the university reserves be provided in 2009-10 to support this initiative. As the campus amends its procedures to adhere to these new requirements, an annual funding requirement of approximately \$500,000 should be anticipated across the campus. The RPP Task Force recognizes the fiscal budget and workload impact on both faculty and staff in preparation to achieve compliance by the expected 2012 date.

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