NEW ENHANCEMENTS TO STUDENT SERVICES

> "We make sure we have the most talented faculty possible, to train the best and brightest students and trainees and make an impact in this world. These young adults are so talented, so diverse, so smart and so dedicated to do great things for the world. They are filled with hope and optimism and tenacity."
> -- Chancellor Susan Desmond-Hellmann, MD, MPH, *The Power and Promise of UCSF Economic Impact Report*, June 2010

The Student Academic Affairs (SAA) Team and campus colleagues are working diligently to address two significant challenges that are priorities in the UCSF Strategic Plan (CFR 4.1).

First, SAA is identifying and implementing new ways to better serve the ever-changing needs of UCSF students inside and outside the classroom. Rapid advances in technology provide new opportunities to serve students' needs faster and more efficiently than in the past. New technologies have been implemented to streamline student systems, especially the financial aid and registration systems. The recent creation of an endowment has also enabled the campus to sustain advances made in improving student classrooms. New and more complex health needs of students, especially in the realm of mental health and counseling, have prompted an increase in access to a wider range of health services as well as to enhanced wellness and support services (CFR 2.13).

Second, the SAA team is working with faculty, staff, and students throughout the campus to better coordinate existing programs and design new initiatives that increase the diversity of our students. The establishment of a new expanded partnership with San Francisco Unified School District is a very important component of the effort to strengthen local educational pathways serving P-12 students from diverse backgrounds. By enrolling and graduating more students from underrepresented backgrounds, UCSF will help to increase the diversity of the next generation of health care leaders while expanding access to care in many of California's underserved communities (CFR 1.5).

Each of the new enhancements described below have addressed one or both of the SAA goals for improved services to students and increased diversity within the UCSF student population.

Technology Enhancements
In 2009-10 the **Student Financial Aid Office** introduced a 100% online application process to continuing students for the first time. The office also implemented new software allowing for automated aid awards, eliminating the need for manual and repetitive input. Offer letters are now generated online and available for student retrieval at any time, and electronic signatures were implemented on all promissory notes, allowing students to instantly complete the paperwork from home or school.

Other technological enhancements include the expansion and promotion of electronic deposits for all loan funds, leading to a virtual elimination of paper checks being issued and safer and more efficient distribution of funds to students. Finally, Student Financial Aid is working with the Controller's Office to create and implement a new robust student Accounts/Receivable system that is scheduled to go live in August 2010.

In addition to the technological enhancements, Student Financial Aid hired a new staff member to implement and manage a holistic debt-management and budget-planning program to educate students on ways to minimize debt and explore loan repayment options upon graduation (see the [Student Loan Debt Management and Repayment](#) webpage). The program also provides workshops in conjunction with both individual school intersession programs and as part of the Student Enrichment Series sponsored by SAA (CFR 2.13).

The **Office of the Registrar** significantly improved services in 2009-10 by launching a new web site to provide information to students in a logical, easy-to-navigate format. In the same year, online grade reporting for faculty was implemented. Currently 99 percent of grades are reported online, allowing students faster access to their grades (CFR 4.7). To enable employers to verify degrees of our alumni quickly, the Office of the Registrar implemented online degree verifications through the National Student Clearinghouse. In addition, 30 years of course catalogs were electronically archived. Finally, the Office of the Registrar's implementation of an e-check system for fee payments reached maturity, with 77 percent of students paying fees by e-check.

In addition to the Financial Aid and Registrar improvements, Student Academic Affairs, in partnership with Capital Programs and Facilities Management, upgraded 35 classrooms with new carpet, paint, or flexible furniture. These improvements significantly enhanced the learning experience for our students. Student Academic Affairs also installed modern technology in classrooms, raising every classroom to at least a baseline level of technology for instruction (CFR 3.7). The reliability of equipment and the delivery of support services to instructors were improved and SAA piloted a system to capture lectures electronically and provide these recordings to students (Revised CFR 3.4). A larger-scale deployment of a robust lecture capture system is funded and is in progress (CFR 2.13).

Student Academic Affairs Websites

In an effort to continuously enhance the effectiveness of student services, Student Academic Affairs (SAA) launched eight new websites in April 2010. The goal of the redesign initiative was to create functional, accessible, user-friendly, student-focused websites for all of Student Academic Affairs (CFR 2.13).

Highlights include user polls, multimedia content, departmental calendars, up-to-date forms and brochures, expanded search features, as well as campus-wide resource listings. Student Academic Affairs looks forward to continuing the expansion of web-based services and information as an integral feature to serving students.

Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP)
In October and November 2007 the Council of Vice Chancellors of Student Affairs and the Council of Graduate Deans expressed their interest in exploring a UC systemwide perspective for graduate student health insurance. In response, then Executive Vice President, Katherine N. Lapp, convened the UC Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP) Workgroup in August 2008. The committee's charge was to undertake a fresh examination of the structuring of graduate student health insurance at the University of California. The University (including UC Hastings College of the Law) had 11 separate insurance plans for approximately 40,000+ insured graduate and professional students. The plans varied substantially by campus with respect to benefits, premiums, administrative oversight, and cost containment.

The Workgroup was co-chaired by Joseph I. Castro, Vice Provost for Student Academic Affairs at UC San Francisco (CFR 1.3) and Jeffery C. Gibeling, Dean of Graduate Studies at UC Davis. The workgroup's recommendations were threefold: to contain costs, increase benefits, and stabilize GSHIP plans. Hewitt Associates, a consulting firm that has a dedicated operation to higher education, was retained to assist with the actuarial analysis. The committee met from October 2008 through June 2010 and distilled its findings into ten recommendations that resulted in a number of changes that are responsive to the stated goals.

First, a University-wide policy has been implemented that requires proof of health insurance coverage as a non-academic condition of enrollment for all University graduate students, consistent with its earlier action for undergraduates. The University has purchased "best in class" contracts for medical, dental and vision coverage from vendors with strong services and financial guarantees within each line of coverage rather than consolidating these services with one vendor. The University self-insured the medical plan, fully-insured the dental and vision benefits, and contracted for administrative and marketing support.

Augmentations to benefits include a systemwide insurance plan to cover dependents and an optional extension of health insurance benefits upon completion of the degree program or during an approved leave of absence. Lastly, students who study/conduct research at a UC campus other than their home campus will be allowed to seek care via GSHIP throughout the state of California and abroad. These structural changes to GSHIP resulted in a 10.7% reduction of the GSHIP fee for UCSF students for the upcoming 2010-2011 academic year. Annual increases in insurance premiums for UCSF students have been up to 10% more or more each year prior to this major change (CFR 2.13).

Mission Bay Student Resource Center
The student population continues to grow at Mission Bay. By fall 2010 there will be over 700 graduate students assigned to academic programs and approximately 300 UCSF graduate and professional students living in campus housing. With the addition of new

laboratory space and with the new hospital opening within the next five years, the number of students on that campus will grow exponentially in the next ten years.

The mission of the Student Resources Center at Mission Bay (SRC) is to add value to the quality of student life at Mission Bay and aid in the recruitment and retention of students (Revised CFR 1.2). The Center is projected to open in early 2011 and will house the office of Student Services at Mission Bay and the Graduate Student Association (GSA). The SRC will provide a highly visible and accessible center that promotes UCSF student services and student participation in diverse co-curricular programs and events. The Center will also deliver support and resources for student-initiated activities, provide on-site support for the GSA and other student groups, and serve as a center for organizing and delivering academic and career development programs and community building events (CFR 2.13).

Office of Career Planning and Development/Graduate Division Internship Program
The [Graduate Student Internships for Career Exploration (GSICE) program](#) is the first internship program in the nation geared toward placing basic science graduate students into internships in both traditional and non-traditional scientific fields, including biotech/pharmaceutical industry research, business relating to science, patent law, science policy, and science education (CFR 2.13). The internships offer full-time placement for a three-month period and occur year round (fall, winter, spring, and summer academic quarters). The student interns are senior-level doctoral students from UCSF all trained rigorously in the basic sciences. Internships are project-oriented designed for the advanced capabilities of a PhD-level student.

UCSF/San Francisco Unified School District Partnership
The San Francisco Unified School District's (SFUSD) new strategic plan has articulated the charge of the UCSF/SFUSD Partnership: "To close the achievement gap by eliminating the predictive power of demographics. For far too long demographics, specifically the socio-economic, linguistic, and racial backgrounds of children have often been closely correlated to their success in school." UCSF also recently approved its own strategic plan, which calls for a greater and deeper engagement with the K-12 community. The UCSF/SFUSD Partnership is an opportunity to operationalize the goals expressed in each of our respective strategic plans. The Partnership has a two-fold purpose: 1) to support SFUSD students and educators by harnessing the clinical, educational and research resources of UCSF; and 2) to prepare the citizens of tomorrow and expose them to health sciences careers.

The Partnership will focus on science education, college readiness and clinical services via intensive work with five schools within the southeast sector of San Francisco. The program serves a pre-school program, two elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school. Proceeding in this way will enable UCSF to create a deep, meaningful partnership with children and families who live within the same "neighborhood" of the city.

The SFUSD strategic plan calls for serving "students and their families more effectively." This will mean developing a more engaging science curriculum; it will require addressing the physical and mental health needs of students; and notably, strategies will be implemented to engage the families of students in helping students meet their educational goals. This process of learning will inevitably transform both organizations for the better and lead to a deeper and more meaningful partnership.

Student Aid Initiative
UCSF is a recognized world leader in health sciences education. This excellence depends on sustained quality in clinical, research, and educational programs. Without the ability to retain top students, the ability to retain faculty is also jeopardized. Unfortunately, the cost of the exemplary education provided by UCSF is rising. Student fees continue to increase dramatically and private and public peer institutions offer more generous financial aid than UCSF has been able to offer. As a result, growing numbers of top candidates decline UC in favor of competitors with better aid packages. The rising costs are also affecting the university's service mission. Increased debt levels require students to pursue high salary jobs, fewer graduates can afford to work with underserved populations, and finally, fewer graduates will pursue academic career paths.

It is important to note that these rising costs may hamper efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented minority students. Fee increases adversely affect low-income, out-of-state, and international students. Top candidates of diverse backgrounds are courted by peer institutions offering better aid packages. In order to sustain excellent health science education—of which diversity is a vital part—the University is launching the Student Aid Initiative (CFR 1.5, 2.13).

Professional and PhD/Master's students are the top priority for support. The next priority are trainees (postdoctoral fellows, residents**,** clinical fellows) and certificate programs**.** Scholarships and fellowships are the highest priority. The secondary priority are awards that do not fit in the scholarship and fellowship categories, including funds awarded to students and fellows to recognize specific academic achievements, and to support academic endeavors such as summer research opportunities.

The University is placing an emphasis on building an endowment, however some donors will restrict gifts to current operational use. The majority of gifts will go to specific schools, departments, and programs, with some institution-wide funds as well. While these funds are being raised, a concurrent lobbying effort is underway to reduce or maintain current fees and secure governmental support for education.

The initiatives described above are examples of the concerted and ongoing effort in recent years to enhance the student experience at UCSF through improved student services and support. Technological advances in Student Financial Aid and the Office of the Registrar, coupled with information-rich and user-friendly websites, have made the transactional and business functions of student life less burdensome. At the same

time, improved and more affordable health insurance and health services have been realized and direct student services and activities will soon be implemented at the Mission Bay site. These enhancements support and improve the learning environment, contribute to achieving the stated learning outcomes, and lead to improved retention and well-being of UCSF's diverse and talented student population (Revised CFR 1.2, Revised CFR 2.3, Revised CFR 3.4).