

Maintaining and Sustaining Student Services During Challenging Financial Times: Some Ideas (Big and Small) that Worked



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OBJECTIVES

- The effects of the current financial crisis at our institution have ranged from delays in improvements to the learning environment to increases in student debt and reduction of Library hours and thus loss of study space.
- This poster outlines various ways that we have addressed these issues to maintain and enhance student services and the student experience.
- Our goal is to share examples that may enable others to identify similar opportunities on their own campuses.

BACKGROUND: A GRADUATE-ONLY CAMPUS

- The University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) is one of 10 campuses in the UC system.
- It is the only campus dedicated to the health sciences.



- UCSF has top-ranked health professions Schools and graduate programs & well-funded research
- But no undergraduates (or sports teams, or mascot..) and
- A wide range of student services.

WE CAN'T USE SOME COST-CUTTING IDEAS USED ON UNDERGRADUATE CAMPUSES

- Elimination of courses – *most are required*
- Changing time to graduation – *not possible*
- Closure of programs – *not feasible*
- Increasing class size – *bottleneck is clinical training capacity, not lecture hall or classroom size*



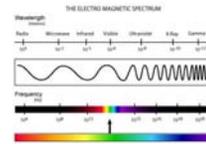
EFFECTS OF DEFUNDING ON STUDENT SERVICES AT UCSF

- Reduction in staff and staff time (furloughs, retirements)
- Rise in student fees (increasing debt burden & student anxiety)
- Delays in learning environment improvements
- Reduced Library hours - loss of study space

RESPONSES TO THESE CHALLENGES:

1. FINDING NEW FUNDING SOURCES

- Lease of unused educational television spectrum to create an endowment that supports educational Infrastructure
- Use of Stimulus funds for scholarships
- Partnering within campus to address needs (e.g., postgraduate career counseling with no student fee impact)
- Seek out grants and apply for them (Hearst Foundation - renovation of Library for new study space named for them)
- New grants & low-interest loans to offset fee increases



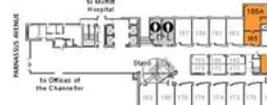
2. INNOVATIONS IN STUDENT SERVICES

- “First Professional Degree” support group
- Waiver of student health insurance if student has equivalent coverage
- All-UC Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP) – consolidated purchase by multiple campuses → substantial cost reduction
 - Identify & invest in software for student aid calculations that fits our unique needs at (six very different types of students)
 - Result: less counselor time spent with files, more on direct contact with students
 - New focus for staff on student debt counseling and financial management
- Centralize administrative support – e.g., one budget officer for entire unit – result, more staff time for student contact
- Combining positions (such as disability services & learning resources) thus providing new safety net to support retention



3. SPACE, THE FINAL FRONTIER

- Negotiated the use of classrooms in buildings that were not constructed with CA state funds for general assignment space
- Opened main campus classrooms in evenings for use as study space
- In process: a 24/7 Library study space
- Near future: online classroom scheduling



4. AUTOMATING FOR SELF-SERVICE

- These previously paper-based procedures are now all online:
- A common calendar for all academic programs
- Transcript verification and degree verification
- Tuition payment & electronic funds transfer for financial aid
- Web portal for user-specified reports by staff
- Self-entry by students of immunization and Tb records as well as their health histories (staff check & review them)
- Registration of student organizations
- Result: self-service 24/7, frees staff to provide service

Online Registration

SOME RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

- Funding for content capture in classrooms has been obtained – on the basis of meeting the needs of today's students as well as to support emergency preparedness
- The construction of a new simulation & clinical skills center is now moving forward again – UC was able to borrow money and then loan these funds at a higher rate to the State of California, which then had funding for 'shovel-ready' projects that were on hold (including this one)
- The new Mission Bay campus Student Resources Center (funded, scheduled to open Fall 2010) – an MOU was just signed to permit the use of space intended for retail use for this essential student services satellite
- Athletic field at Mission Bay campus (at the top of the student wish list) has been approved in concept, next step is planning and funding – in place by 2011/2012(?)
- Chancellor's fundraising initiative for student financial aid



MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS

- Student satisfaction/campus climate surveys of all students
- Assessment of faculty and staff (for example, about classroom availability)
- User survey of recipients of services
- Headcounts in study spaces
- Google analytics of web pages
- Cost/benefit analysis of changes made



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