

Academic Support and Student Services Committee

Thursday Sept. 29, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Zoom Online

Members Attending:

Dr. Elaine Correa (Chair), Dr. Pratigya Sigdya (BPA), Dr. Monica Ayuso (A&H), Dr. Melanie Taylor (AV), Mariela Gomez (Student Service Professional), Steve Miller (Staff Member), Maria Espinoza (*ex-officio*, ASI Exec-VP), Sandra Bozarth (*ex-officio*, Dean of Libraries), Dr. Denver Fowler (*ex-officio*, AD Undergrad. & Graduate Studies), and TBA (*ex-officio*, AVP Student Affairs & Student Success), Jennifer McCune (*ex-officio*, Registrar), Dr. Markel Quarles (AVP Student Affairs), Dr. Carol Dell'Amico (A&H, alternate)

Absent:

Prof. Matt McCoy (Librarian) [*excused*], Dr. Alicia Rodriguez (Vice-Chair, At-Large) [*excused*; alternate present]

I Call to Order: 10:00 a.m.

II Approval of Agenda

- Approval of Agenda: Sept. 29, 2022
(Motioned by Steve Miller, Seconded by Pratigya Sigdya)

III Approval of Minutes

- Approval of Minutes: Sept. 15, 2022
(Motioned by Steve Miller, Seconded by Pratigya Sigdya)

VI New Business

- No new Referrals

VII Open Forum

- Guests
 - Dr. Brian Street (SSE),
 - Dr. Kris Grappendorf (SSE),
 - Adriana Sixtos (Academic Advisor, A&H),
 - Gilverto Herrera (Academic Advisor, SSE)
 - Yvette Morones (Advising and Tutoring Coordinator, SSE)
- Referral #7 – Advising Taskforce Recommendations

- Kris Grappendorf initiated discussion by summarizing the Advising Task Force Report and the recommendation therein. After this introduction, there was an in-depth discussion that centered around the role of the MPP, the reporting structure, and how we can justify putting money to a new MPP position while there is so much need for resources for additional advisors and faculty density.
- The main goal of the recommendations is, in summary, the development of advising structure that improves advising consistency and advising experience of students throughout the university. The advising structure recommendations include a point person 'Director of Advising (MPP)'. This person is intended to serve as the point person for centralizing the policies and processes of the seven advising centers on campus and hopefully improve the flow of information between the centers on campus. The advising centers are expected to stay where they are currently located.
- Clarification was asked about how the advising structure currently leads to inconsistency, and to provide examples of how it negatively impacts students. Examples provided were: the way 'add/drop slips' are processed in different schools; the unequal engagement and availability of faculty advisors (both within and between schools); difficulties for students when they switch majors because each department has very different advising approaches and practices, e.g., with some departments strictly doing their own advising and other departments relying more on the professional academic advisors; there are also huge differences in faculty workload between majors which contributes to inconsistency and inequity for both students and faculty.
- The question was asked who currently decides on the advising practices in each department. Clarification was given that, currently, it is the faculty that decides on the advising practices in each department, while the AD's oversee the advising centers.
- It was mentioned that the accreditors (WASC) have requested improvement of advising on campus and that a new WASC visit is upcoming. The 'advising leadership team' has been assessing the advising practices on campus and this team is expected to produce a report about this in the next weeks, which will include evaluations from the advisees about their experiences with the three different types of advisors we currently have on campus.
- Clarification was asked about the respective roles of the faculty in the taskforce's recommendation option 1 vs option 2. Faculty will still have

advising roles, specifically to their knowledge about the major and possible high-impact practices related to engagement in research and advising about career options. The professional advisors will take the role of providing consistent student advising “from freshman to senior years” based on the curricula as defined by the departments. The recommended changes will allow the professional advisors to do their jobs better: they are the most accessible and they are experts who can provide quality advising.

- It was asked if the MPP admin position will be a new position or if it will be fulfilled by an existing admin. Clarification was provided that the taskforce has recommended a new hire for the MPP role, but it was mentioned that no decision was made about this yet, or that this is not entirely clear. Dr. Brian Street provided additional information on the background story about how the taskforce recommendation came about. It was said that, while it is important that faculty density needs to be a priority in our university, the literature supports the suggested changes and that other campuses have already made these changes.
- It was asked what the MPP will do. Will this person now have the resources that currently are allocated to the school? Yes, the MPP will be able to allocate resources and hire new people for advising to reach a good ratio of advisor to student ratio, based on data in the literature. It was also said that the provost realizes that there is a need for extra resources that will support additional advisors based on need. The MPP will oversee these aspects.
- Due to the many differences that are inherent between the departments, it was asked if it is realistic to have a centralized advising process and policy. In response, it was said that the communication will need to improve and that this is part of the recommendations. This would allow to provide a better training to the advisors. It was also clarified that there is still ‘wiggle room’ for unique situations in departments to inform how advising will be done (e.g., nursing, music). However, there will not be a possibility to ‘opt out’.
- Having been a CSUB student, a professional advisor agreed that consistency needs to be improved to provide a wholesome experience to the students. It was also mentioned that there is often a high ‘student load’ placed on the professional advisors, and that in many instances the advisors are doing parts that are not considered advising (e.g, how to remove holds etc.) or that the information that the advisors need is not adequately relayed to them. It was also mentioned that a direct reporting

line to the AD's would be important to maintain the existing good relationships with the departments and the faculty going forward.

- It was questioned if the faculty workload will be affected by the changes. It was clarified that the heavy lifting will be done by the MPP but there might be some buy-in needed from faculty because they will need to adjust the ways in which they do advising. For example, by the adoption of a campus-wide advising software. It was commented that there will be need for training on all sides, including the faculty.
- There were questions about the benefits of the reporting structure option 1 vs. option 2. The concern was raised that in option 1 (direct reporting to the MPP) the advisors are responsible for executing policies that might be contrary to what the AD's and the school advising centers prefer. In response to this concern, it was mentioned that the taskforce did not reach consensus on the reporting line. Nonetheless, it was said that -regardless of the option chosen- there will be a need for improved communication between three entities, the 'coordinator', the AD's and the MPP. It was mentioned by several people that option 2 seems to have a higher likelihood to lead to inconsistency, and that if option 2 is chosen, it might be even better to not have a new MPP since it would be similar to the current situation.
- It was asked to what degree the advisors and AD's are currently communicating with each other. Advisors from SSE and A&H mentioned that there is a high degree of involvement by the Deans in the advising policies and the day-to-day operations.
- It was asked what the role of the Enrolment Management Leadership team would be in the new advising leadership team, or if this team could maybe fulfill the role of the new MPP since it is already involved in development of student success systems. In response to this it was mentioned that staff of the Enrollment Management team will be represented in the Advising Leadership Counsel and that, as such, they will provide the necessary input.
- ASI provided input. It was said that ASI has been having discussions about the differences in advising practices between departments and that they would like to see more consistency across campus. It was said that if the recommendations do lead to improved consistency that this would be a very welcome change to them.

- Several AS&SS committee members raised questions. Mr. Steve Miller provided many context-related questions with the responses from the discussion highlighted and captured in the aforementioned sections.

VIII Adjourn – 11:21 am