

## **COSAF ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15**

This past year has been a transformative year as the Campus Unions Recreation Board (CURB) and the Student Services Administrative Advisory Committee (SSFAAC) were consolidated and replaced by the Council on Student Affairs and Fees (COASF). This change occurred as a result of a request by the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs in an attempt to address ongoing issues with member appointments, attendance, and retention. In addition, the Vice Chancellor was seeking one advisory group rather than two in order to eliminate the potential of conflicting recommendations, and from whom she can seek broad input and feedback.

This report is structured into sections that include the process for this consolidation as well as accounts of the Council's specific activities to complete its charge.

### Consolidation of CURB and SSFAAC

Members of both CURB and SSFAAC came together for their first meeting of the academic year on October 31, 2014. Student Affairs Vice Chancellor de la Torre requested that the collective group consider a consolidation into one administrative advisory committee that would be charged with a more comprehensive oversight of student fees and with providing ongoing feedback to the Vice Chancellor on issues affecting UC Davis students.

Subsequently, we, the chairs of CURB and SSFAAC, along with ASUCD President Armando Figueroa, met on a weekly basis to draft a new set of bylaws that would incorporate the charges of both committees and outline additional responsibilities as requested by the Vice Chancellor. CURB and SSFAAC members continued to meet monthly to review and discuss edited drafts of the bylaws. The draft outlined new membership criteria, member and chair responsibilities, student fee review protocols, and voting rules and procedures.

On December 3, 2014, the collective members of CURB and SSFAAC voted to adopt the drafted bylaws "for a new Student Affairs Administrative Advisory Committee that will consolidate and replace two existing advisory committees: The Campus Unions Advisory Board and the Student Service Fee Administrative Advisory Committee." On April 10, 2015, the committee voted to adopt the name, COSAF, an acronym that stands for the Council on Student Affairs and Fees.

### Presentations on Student Fees

- At the first meeting in October, Associate Vice Chancellor Kelly Ratliff provided an overview of the University budget its different funding sources.
- At the March 6 meeting, Laurie Carney from BIA presented an overview of the Student Services Fee and how it is allocated, explaining that while most of the fee

is allocated to Student Affairs, there is a portion that is allocated for student services outside of the Division (such as the Mondavi Center to offset ticket prices for students). Students requested that, in the future, additional information be provided on how such allocations are used for student services.

- On April 10, Luci Schmidl, Student Affairs Budget Analyst, presented information on campus based fees, providing an overview of the revenue and use of fees associated with student referenda, specifically, the SASI, FACE/LEAAP, and CEI fees. In her presentation, Luci also explained the requirement for reserves and how reserves are earmarked for future use.
- Also on April 10, ICA Associate Director Mike Bazemore gave a presentation on the ICA budget, showing revenue streams and overall expenses.
- At the May 8 meeting, Luci Schmidl presented the Campus Recreation and Unions budget and explained how each of the campus based fees are used in compliance to their respective referenda.

Students felt that the ICA presentation lacked specificity and transparency. There was not a clear explanation of how specific fees are used or how the program would make up for the anticipated budget shortfall. Members had several questions that could not be answered, in part due to the absence of a current athletic director, and in part because the information was not readily available. In contrast to this, we felt that the presentation on the CRU budget was clear and thorough, and that it gave the committee the information needed to understand how the department manages its finances and student fees. We believe that in the future, the format used for CRU's presentation should be used as a model for other departments to present their budgets to COSAF.

#### CPI Discussion and Vote

At the last meeting of the year, on May 29, Luci Schmidl provided an overview of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). She explained that CPI adjustments are provided for in the language of the referenda and are not fee increases, but rather an attempt to keep the fee in line with the rate of inflation. She further explained that only the part of a campus-based fee used for operating expenses, not capital, is eligible for CPI adjustment. Luci provided materials that showed the specific amount of CPI adjustments for each fee if passed by the Council. (COSAF bylaws, in an attempt to eliminate any confusion, specifies the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor for the San Francisco Area, calculated at 2.8% for 2015.) Luci also provided the history of CPI adjustments on fees over the past 5 years.

There was a call for discussion and a few members expressed concern with making any adjustments to student fees with current fees already being the highest in the UC system. Ballots were distributed and members voted to apply a CPI adjustment to the FACE/LEAAP fee, and not to the SASI or CEI fees. (Three members who could not attend emailed their ballots. These ballots were included in the vote summary, but were not counted in the results.) Results were forward Vice Chancellor de la Torre who made this recommendation to the Chancellor.

### Recruitment of Members

In May, we followed the guidelines of the new bylaws to recruit, interview, and select the 8 new undergraduate COSAF members for the 2015-16 academic year. (COSAF is not subject to the MOU that calls for the selection of members by ASUCD.) In addition, we are working with GSA, LSA, the Academic Senate, and the Academic Federation to fill the other positions as outlined in the bylaws. The COSAF Co-Chairs for next year are Vidur Dewan, who served as a Co-Chair for this year, and Naftali Moed, who served as the ASUCD Senate appointee.

### Conclusion

We are excited about the establishment of this new committee and what it will mean to increase student involvement in fiscal matters and program decisions in the future. We realize that since much of the Council's time was devoted to establishing this new advisory committee, COSAF was unable to review the use of student fees as thoroughly as we would have liked. However, in the coming year, COSAF members will receive in depth training early on that will better prepare them for this responsibility. We will meet more frequently and carry out a more systematic and standardized review of those department budgets that include student fees. We also look forward to providing Vice Chancellor de la Torre and the Division of Student Affairs sound counsel that reflects the diversity of the student voice at UC Davis.

Respectfully submitted by the COSAF Co-Chairs:

Adam Bolt  
Andrew Musca  
Vidur Dewan