

Administrative Response to Academic Senate Resolution 2013-13

May 12, 2014

This response is being provided to the Academic Senate because of the Administration's non-acceptance of Resolution 2013-13. The issues related to international students appear to focus on an assumption that the College is moving ahead with a full expansion of the enrollment of international students. This is not the case. No formal outreach program is in place.

Governance Question

As referenced in Senate Resolution 2013-13, the College has not chronically failed to observe the recommendations included in 2012-06 in that there has been no intentional enactment of a plan to undertake a massive expansion of the International Students Program. Although there may have been discussions in Cabinet and with the Board of Trustees, there has been no formal directive or plan to increase the enrollment of international students. Presentations were made to the Board of Trustees on March 2, 2012, July 25, 2012 and July 24, 2013. The most recent presentation clarified the mutual concern of the faculty regarding a negative impact should the number of international students increase substantially. The Board of Trustees was in agreement and thus there has been no movement to double or expand international students' enrollment. The official minutes of the July 24, 2013, Board of Trustees minutes do not indicate that there was any direction to significantly expand the enrollment of international students.

Discussion Points from March 2, 2012 Board of Trustees Retreat and July 25, 2012 Board of Trustees Meeting

- Concerns about expanding the program were articulated:
 - What will happen to our native, resident students?
 - International students do NOT get any priority over other students. Their admissions process is much more rigid and requires additional testing and documentation.
 - If our own students can't get classes, how can we bring in more students?
 - The revenue generated by international students can offset our unfunded FTES, thereby allowing more resident students to access classes.
 - Are we setting our international students up to fail if we accept them and they can't get classes?
 - Through support from international counselors and admissions staff, the overwhelming majority of international students have been able to enroll in classes. Because most international students do not work, they have more flexible schedules. There are some students that have concerns in this area, similar to all other Mt. SAC students.
 - How can we be cutting back in some areas and growing this program?
 - The growth of the international program will provide increased revenues that will enable the College to have more resources to sustain other efforts.

English Language Institute/English Language Training Program (ELTP)

To clarify, Donna Burns discussed elements of an English Language Training Program (ELTP) with some AmLa faculty and shared this discussion with both President's Cabinet and the International Students

Advisory Committee. Donna has reiterated that this is not a plan, but initial stages of a discussion about a model for assisting students to accelerate their English language skills.

The original proposal was to have a fee-based program – an English Language Institute (ELI) that would provide an avenue for intensive English language instruction, especially for students desiring to transition to the credit program. Additionally, it was thought that such an Institute would provide additional revenue for the college by which to support additional credit course offerings.

At the present time, there is no planning agenda to institute either one of these proposals.

International Students Program Goals

The enrollment of international students at Mt. SAC enables our students to maximize their educational experience within a student body that is rich in diversity while providing an academic setting that encompasses both local and globalized perspectives.

The July 24, 2013 presentation to the Board of Trustees listed the following goals as part of the Draft International Students Development Plan. These goals have been updated (May, 2014).

- Establish Pre-arrival Follow-Through Services and Arrival Services – *Some services have been established but further work needs to continue to improve arrival services based on the needs of our students.*
- Enhanced Efficiency in Tracking and Reporting (SEVIS; fsaATLAS) *Beginning with Spring 2014, the Admissions Office began to use ISSM (International Student and Scholar Management system) formerly known as fsaATLAS to increase the efficiency in reporting SEVIS information and better tracking international students.*
- Establish an International Students Center– *This is now complete and highly utilized by students.*
- Improve Outreach and Marketing – *redesigned the International Student Admissions Application and International webpage complete with student testimonials and a google translator connection.*
- Modify Student Insurance Requirement – *Established a relationship with Student Insurance beginning with the 2013-14 academic year to provide comprehensive health insurance for students.*
- International Student Advisory Committee - *The Committee discusses issues such as improving the acclimation of international students to U.S. higher education, data regarding student profiles, recommendations for student programs and services and responding to requests from the Academic Senate to measure the potential impact of a possible expansion of international students.*
- Initiate an International Students Week – *The first, campus-wide event was held in 2013 as part of the designated International Students Week. Planning for the 2014 International Education Week is just beginning.*
- Support Academic Excellence - *Mt. SAC international students are excelling academically*
 - 42 students have a perfect 4.0 GPA
 - 98 students have a 3.5 GPA
 - 26% of all students are on
 - the President's List (3.5 or higher GPA)

Assessing Impact

The International Students Advisory Committee is presently underway with designing and initiating surveys and research studies to determine the potential impacts of an increased number of international students on college areas and programs. A student and faculty/staff survey have been developed and are pending finalization and dissemination. Data reports regarding student course enrollment and testing placement levels have been presented to the Committee. Additional data reports showing service utilization and student success rates are pending.

Equity Issues

The administration does not agree that international students should be deprived and prevented from participating in known student success initiatives and efforts such as learning communities. There has never been any form of favored status for international students.

The administration submits this response to the Academic Senate in hopes that greater communication will be held with all parties to more fully understand and appreciate the contributions that international students bring to the college. Discussions and concerns related to the expansion of the international students program should continue to be forthright and upfront.