

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON STUDENT AFFAIRS
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008
GERBERDING HALL #36

Chair Brian Fabian called meeting to order at 2:34pm.

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Discussion with Philip Ballinger, Director of Admissions
3. Report from the Chair
4. Report from ASUW Representative
5. New Business

1. Approval of minutes

The Council corrected and approved the minutes of the October 22, 2008 FCSA meeting.

2. Discussion with Philip Ballinger, Director of Admissions

Philip Ballinger, Director of Admissions, distributed a report identifying 2008 freshman and transfer student class profiles. Ballinger defined a freshman as being a student that has come to the UW from high school. By class standing they could be sophomores or juniors if they have come in with credits earned in AP programs or if they were a part of a head start program at a community college. 5500 was the target for enrollments this fall and UW enrolled 5540.

Ballinger discussed data elements within the report – resident versus non-resident. He also pointed out a number of statistics that reflect a significant increase in the diversity of this freshman class over the classes of the past few years. Those students are by and large superb applicants. The UW's commitment to serving the local population is the only reason more international students are not admitted.

Ballinger discussed gender at UW versus the national average. The national average is about 60% female and 40% male. He pointed out that Seattle Pacific University is closer to 70% female. There is a more even split at UW.

Chair Fabien inquired about the data on the African American applicants. Ballinger pointed out an 11% increase in African American applicants. The UW had roughly 20,000 freshman applications, which was an overall increase of about 12%. The admit rate was less than 61% due to an increase in applications. He stated that the UW has made good progress particularly in last three years with the African American applicants. Ballinger pointed out the percentage of the freshman class as good gauge. He also indicated that the offer rate would naturally go down across all groups due to the increase in applicants.

Chair Fabien inquired about the current weighting of GPA versus SATs in admission decisions. Specifically, what happens if an applicant has very high GPA and perhaps not as high SAT scores? Ballinger discussed UW relationships with local high schools as well as test scores and GPAs. Ballinger stated that UW Admissions takes the GPA with a "block of salt." The readers look at GPA and test scores in context to the curriculum offered by the applicant's high school. He also mentioned that UW will start using all three SAT scores, including the writing score, as it is the most indicative of freshman performance.

Chair Fabien inquired about Ballinger's report of the misuse of SATs. Ballinger was on a committee whose job was to make a report providing information on the misuse of SATs and other standardized tests. Fabien also brought up a conference for career counselors and admissions offices which was held in Seattle recently. He pointed out that the feedback from that conference is that counselors want to reduce the excess stress on students to achieve high SAT scores and put more emphasis on other admissions tools. The counselors feel there is undue pressure on the students to achieve unrealistically high SAT scores in order to be admitted to college.

Ballinger pointed out that some schools use the scores because they don't know any other way. He emphasized that UW uses the scores for admissions as well as to provide the students with services they need to be successful. He cited students coming from homes where English is not the first language as an example. Chair Fabien supposed we should continue to use all tools available for admissions decisions. He also pointed out some high schools use a GPA scale that extends higher than 4.0. Ballinger said that UW adjusts the GPAs from those schools to keep all applicants on equal ground.

Chair Fabien asked if the UW limits the number of students admitted from any given high school. Ballinger replied that there is no limit to number of students from a high school. UW assesses all applications the same way. Admissions readers don't see race/ethnicity status or resident/non-resident. Later when decisions are being made, he and his colleagues keep the University's goals in mind. UW's goals are roughly 80% resident, 20% non-resident. He mentioned that the top application school this year was Inglemoor.

Ballinger asked the council to look at the transfer class information on the report. The admit rate for Washington state transfer colleges is 70%. The transfer application pool has the largest admit rate. Generally speaking those transfer students have their AA degree when they apply. UW gives preference to those students. The goal is that roughly 30% all new undergrads will come from Washington State community colleges. Historically this has even exceeded 30%. It can be more challenging to engage the transfer students – but they do get their degree at comparable rates to regular students.

Jim Burke inquired about the in-state four-year transfer students. Ballinger said that even though the admit rate is the lowest rate in all categories, the rate is still high. UW tries to give preference to resident students.

Ballinger moved on to a discussion of graduation and attrition rates for UW Seattle campus only and pointed out that the data provided was from the end of 2007-2008. The attrition rate for first to the second-year students year is 7.3%. Therefore, the retention rate is 92.7%. In view of the fact that the academic profile is rising and additionally the number of underrepresented students is also going up, this is a good sign. One of the measurements is graduation and retention. Vice Provost Eric Godfrey said that this was great news. The rate used to be 15% for attrition for first to second-year students. Godfrey pointed out that the UW is making more of an effort to engage with students now, which helps keep them interested and involved in the community. Clearly, the Registrar is seeing shifts in applicant pool and this is probably due to the change in the economy.

UW Bothell and UW Tacoma campuses were discussed. Both campus met their enrollment goals and have high academic profiles.

Chair Fabien pointed out articles in the newspapers about "great" students who are not accepted to the University. Ballinger agreed that the vast majority of students the UW doesn't admit are good students. The issue is simply a lack of space and resources. The UW is aggressive with enrollment

targets and numbers. Godfrey confirmed that with increased demand, the applications will go up. Ballinger pointed out that his office received 20,400 apps this year. Ten years ago we were at 13,360. He believes too many students are self-selecting themselves out of the application process because they feel they won't get in because of grades or scores. He would like to see more students from other schools.

Chair Fabien said that 20,000 applications raises concern for the future of the holistic review process. Will reviewers be able to handle that volume and maintain consistency? Ballinger's response was that UW takes pride in application numbers and he anticipates – with the exception of top 3-4% - all applications get at least 2 readers – and sometimes a 3rd reader. The time burden per application is ten to fifteen minutes, times two readers. The Office of Admissions typically uses 25 graduate readers (hired especially for this purpose) plus use the staff already working in admissions to screen applications. The really strong students will be offered in December; in fact about 25 offer letters have already gone out. The rest of the applicants will be sent offers in March.

Ballinger said that the UW needs to continue assessing what it wants as an institution. The admissions policy will follow from that assessment. It currently connects to the University's mission very well. He would like to continue to build and shape the applicant pool in order to get the numbers desired. Recruitment is eight years old at UW. He stated that some might wonder why the UW wants more applications when it has too many students as it is. The answer is that the University wants to shape the class. He reported that his staff does limited work in the community colleges – and that could be increased. He noted that more outreach work and recruitment work could be done in order to shape the pool.

Gabrielle Rocap asked Ballinger what the Office of Admissions does from the time they offer the student to the time the student accepts, in terms of influencing the student's decision to attend UW. Ballinger replied that some departments working with his office are Admissions, the Office of Minority Affairs, as well as recruitment and outreach staff. His office started having yield events in 2006. The Husky Experience was mentioned. This was both a recruitment and a yield event. Also, there are events in the spring for students and their families. Approximately 16,000 students visit campus each year. That is the primary way admitted students are affected. Chair Fabien confirmed that there are a number of recruitment and pre-freshman activities going on.

Ballinger suggested one area the UW could explore is reaching out to potential students much earlier. He noted that 7th grade students and their families where there is very little knowledge of college could be approached with information to help them be more aware of the opportunities available to them.

Chair Fabien wanted to know what was happening with the underrepresented minorities. He stated that people used to say it's not our problem. He noted though that if they are not applying to the UW then it's a UW problem. He mentioned recruiting and outreach efforts at Garfield High School. Ballinger reported that his office had requested contact information for students on the "free lunch" programs so that they could reach out and inform the families of the opportunities available to them for funding their child's college education. The request was denied because of concerns related to confidentiality, but he will be asking for the information again this year.

Chair Fabien reported that Washington State University (WSU) is aggressive with recruiting underrepresented minorities and that there is little recruitment activity coming from the UW. Ballinger replied that the UW spends very little money on recruiting. Fabien answered that reaching back to the junior high level is really important. The kids and their families need to know what they need to do to get into college.

Carrie Perrin discussed the advantages of advising students through affinity group. Ballinger is happy to see this being a part of related discussions. Perrin said it really helps to find the students an academic home. The honors program and direct entry department admits were discussed. Ballinger offered that Jim Clauss is the new Director of the Honors Program at the UW. He suggested that Clauss might be able come to a council meeting and shed some light on the direct admit subject.

Ballinger stated that the Business School allows for direct admissions and the process is just beginning in School of Engineering. Parents who want kids to be engineers will often steer their children to another school because they can get into the major immediately. Direct entry to a major is attractive because freshman and sophomore students get the support services geared towards the students in that program. There is a wide mix of feelings on the subject. Some departments don't want freshmen, but Ballinger believes there is a great benefit from that type of admission.

Phuong Nguyen of the ASUW asked if there were a certain number of spaces for direct admits. Ballinger replied that the students have to be within the admission goals. They come from the admission pool, not in addition to it. Ballinger would like to be able to advertise that UW offers direct admit to the major.

3. Report from the Chair

Chair Fabien state he is serving on the search committee for a new Housing and Food Services Director and the committee should have a candidate by next month. He also reported that Jeff Schwartz has offered to be the FCSA representative for COIA. He also mentioned that he continues to recruit for representatives for the Student and Activities Fees Committee. Although a very important Committee, it is difficult to find faculty able to commit to a weekly meeting on late Friday afternoons.

4. Report from the ASUW Representative

Phuong Nguyen reported that the ASUW had developed its legislative agenda. Tuition is, as always, a big issue. The main message is that UW students want affordable, reasonable and predictable tuition rates.

5. New Business

Chair Fabien stated that Kay Lewis from Financial Aid will be the guest speaking at the next meeting. She will specifically discuss tuition and what the UW Financial Aid Office is doing to address the situation.

Vice Provost Eric Godfrey recommended Paul Jennings or Randy Hodgins could give updates on the tuition issue politically, financially and legislatively. He will think about it and get back to the council on who might have best information.

Rocap saw an article in the New York Times about veterans and education. She wanted to know how many current students are veterans and if there were any special support programs in place for them at the UW. Godfrey confirmed that we have 250-300 vets enrolled. There is a Veteran's Affairs office to help with resources and VA educational/financial benefits. The UW is developing a Veterans Affairs office to be more like one-stop shop for veterans. Godfrey conveyed that we want to be ahead of the curve and are anticipating more vets next year.

Chair Fabien adjourned the meeting at 3:55pm.

*Minutes by Kelly Baker
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Present: Faculty: Burke, Fabien, Rocap, Poovendran
Special Guests: Ballinger
President's Designee: Godfrey
Ex-Officio Reps: Nguyen, Perrin

Absent: Faculty: Berninger, LeVeque, Schwartz
Ex Officio Reps: McKinstry, Miller, Winans