

Career Resource Center Response to Program Review Recommendations

The recommendations of the committee have been thoughtfully considered and discussed among the staff of the Career Resource Center and with the Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement. We appreciate the committee's time and diligence in reviewing our self-study, gathering additional data and perceptions, and developing this set of recommendations. We are very grateful for the time and effort of the committee members on behalf of the Career Resource Center.

Our response to the committee's summary of recommendations is as follows:

Recommendation One: The committee feels that the budget requests in the self study are quite modest and the concern is that even with the requested increases the CRC will not be able to continue the level of services offered. As compared to CRCs at peer institutions, Pacific's CRC offers a competitive range of services with less staff and a very modest budget.

Response

The Career Resource Center budget has remained at the same level for the past several years, despite increases in costs associated with doing business and increased costs for professional development. As an example, the copier equipment lease expired this year and the price for the next lease, in combination with per copy charges, will increase by approximately \$3,000 per year. The cost of office supplies, food for events and professional association dues has continued to rise over the past 6 years as well. In addition, four years ago, the CRC switched to a much better, but costlier (\$10,000 annually), web-based job database and reporting system, the same system used at McGeorge School of Law. This system provides many advantages including ease of use for students, ability to preserve confidentiality of notes, and improved employer relations development. It is widely used at college campuses across the country.

The CRC also has experienced a significant increase in demand for assessment tools from faculty, students and parents who request their students use these tools. Between AY 07-08 and 08-09, demand increased by 137%, resulting in additional assessment costs of \$1800. Increased enrollment at the University over the past 2 years is now being felt in demand for services, presentations and materials.

Currently, the CRC is forced each year to determine which programs, items or services can be cut back or eliminated due to increased costs over the prior year. This is unsustainable and diminishes the breadth and quality of services that can be offered. Additional negative impacts are that the CRC loses the ability to be responsive to class size changes and market conditions. The CRC sometimes also must forfeit collaboration opportunities with employers, faculty or Student Life departments. For example, the CRC was unable to pursue an invitation to provide assessments to all Pacific Seminar 1 students.

Action Plan

The CRC will develop a request for augmenting the current operating budget for presentation to the IPC. We conducted a comparative review of other Career Center budgets, including the McGeorge School of Law at Pacific, and several career centers at peer institutions. Further, we investigated costs and determined the additional funds needed to carry out operations at the proper level. We will request an increase in our budget from \$38,000 to \$65,000. (Please see budget comparisons attached.)

Recommendation Two: Establish separate cost center for Assistant VP. The existing funding model never included a separate budget for the AVP when the original CRC Director was promoted. This has been a significant strain on already limited CRC resources. It is important to retain adequate funding for the CRC.

Response

The addition of the Assistant Vice President role within Student Life brought no separate budget allocation. Expenses related to this role have been drawn solely from the CRC budget, including professional development, travel and operations related to University-wide commitments to diversity and community engagement, as well as other departments within the subdivision. This has adversely impacted the CRC's ability to provide the services it has historically provided. Further, as co-chair of the University's Diversity Committee, there are no funds for activities related to the administration of that committee, including the annual retreat. While the Assistant Provost co-chair has funding, the Student Life co-chair does not.

Action Plan

The Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement will develop a request for a separate budget and present this to IPC at the fall meeting.

Recommendation Three: Staffing needs are evident and the committee supports additional staff. Either graduate student staff (philosophically great but practically often challenging due to frequent transitions) or a permanent full time staff line (this has the advantage of less turn over and higher level of professionalism) is recommended.

Response

At the time the Assistant Vice President and the CRC Director roles were separated, the CRC lost one permanent full-time career counselor position. This resulted in the need to shift counseling responsibilities onto other staff members, which has subsequently impacted the ability of those individuals to fulfill their other responsibilities. Because the CRC has been able to attract interns only intermittently, we will need the hire of a permanent staff member to provide career counseling. A full-time professional counselor would be expected to have a higher skill level than a graduate intern, which is important to providing quality career counseling services to students and alumni. Further, with the large class sizes of the past 2 years, we expect the demand for career counseling appointments and presentations to continue to rise. In addition, with interns leaving each semester, continuous training and supervision is required, which consumes the time of existing staff.

Also with the addition of the Assistant Vice President role, the CRC Budget and Operations Manager's time has been split to support this role. The new workload prevents the Budget and Operations Manager from tending sufficiently to student staff supervision or filling in as front desk receptionist during student staff and receptionist absence. The part-time CRC receptionist position should be expanded to a full-time position to provide continuous reception service, additional administrative support and supplementary student staff supervision.

Action Plan

In consultation with the Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement and with the Vice President for Student Life, the CRC will develop a proposal for an additional permanent full-time staff member to present to IPC at the fall 2010 meeting.

Recommendation Four: Creation of a steering/advisory/council body to continue to facilitate communication among groups across campus and serve a “sounding board” for the CRC.

Response

As mentioned in the Campus and External Relations section of the CRC self study, two years ago, the Career Resource Center (CRC) created a CRC Advisory Board that included representatives from various constituencies, including undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, faculty members and employers from both the corporate and non-profit sectors. The Advisory Board meets twice annually and provides input regarding CRC services, programs and practices, acting as our “sounding board.” In the spring of 2010, the Advisory Board reviewed and revised the by-laws, adding standing committees, including one for employer developers, one for employers and one for those providing career education services at Pacific. These committees will meet outside the Advisory Board and report annually on the activities and outcomes related to their committee purviews.

Action Plan

The new by-laws have been reviewed by the University attorney and will be presented to the CRC Advisory Board for final review and vote at the fall 2010 meeting. Further, the reach of the advisory board is proposed to include Pacific staff members outside the CRC who also deliver career services in an effort to support the President’s goal of “One Pacific.” The name of the advisory board will be changed to the Career Services Advisory Board. CRC and non-CRC staff members will be invited to participate as standing committee members and invitations will be sent after adoption of the revised by-laws. First committee meetings will take place thereafter. Money for board meeting lunches and certificates of appreciation for members will be included in the CRC budget request to IPC.

Recommendation Five: Continue working to develop a robust vision for the CRC.

Response

The original CRC vision was developed by the former Director of the CRC in consultation with the staff. In 2009, the CRC vision statement was posted on Pacific Plan, the University’s database for recording assessment of the Strategic Action Plan for the Division of Student Life. In May 2010, the CRC held a two-day end-of-year retreat for staff, where the mission, vision and values of the Career Resource Center were revisited and revised.

Action Plan

The new statement will be shared with the CRC Advisory Board at the fall 2010 meeting. Our vision is founded on the needs of the current student population, alumni and employers that we serve. It is further framed and influenced by professional association standards, economic data, industry trends and regional, national and global developments impacting employment. The vision will be reviewed annually at the CRC end-of-year retreat for continued alignment with the strategic mission of the University, as well as the yearly goals of the President and the Division of Student Life.