CELTask Force

Charge from UPAC Report
“College of Extended Learning – The Council (UPAC) believes that significant savings can be achieved through a streamlining of CEL. Central administrative functions in CEL often duplicate the functions and responsibilities of personnel already housed within the colleges. Downsizing some of CEL’s functions and making better use of services available in the colleges would enable the campus to realize significant savings, would help ensure that programming in CEL maintains San Francisco State University’s standards of quality and alignment with the University’s strategic priorities, and would function as an effective tool for departments programs, and colleges.”

CEL Task Force Membership
John Kim, AVP, Academic Resources
Franz Lozano, Budget Officer
Barry Rothman, Professor, Biology
Don Taylor, Dean, College of Health and Human Services
Jo Volkert, AVP, Enrollment Management (Chair)
Agnes Wong Nickerson, AVP, Fiscal Affairs

Data Gathering/Interviews
To provide background for the review, the Task Force reviewed the following policy documents:
- CSU Executive Orders 341, 794, 802, 1047
- SUAM section 3103
- California Education Code section 89704
- Academic Senate Policy F98-204, “Policy and Guidelines for Offering Existing SFSU Degrees via College of Extended Learning”

The Task Force also reviewed current CEL financial information, including:
- 5-year CERF (Continuing Education Revenue Fund) balance
- 5-year College balances in CERF
- Internal CEL budget and financial reports
- CEL staff salaries

Additionally, the Task Force spoke with the following individuals to learn more about internal CEL operations and seek further input:
- Jim Bryan, Director, College of Extended Learning
- Elaine Fang, Director, Fiscal Services, College of Extended Learning
- Nancy Hayes, Dean, College of Business
- Mark Novak, AVP/Dean, International and Extended Studies, San Jose State University
**Recommendations**

After receiving the charge from Provost Sue Rosser, the CEL Task Force met weekly to discuss the issues outlined in the UPAC report. The discussion was wide-ranging, open and collegial. Task Force members had a varied set of experiences and knowledge that contributed significantly to the collective understanding. Interviews with individuals both inside the College of Extended Learning and outside the organization provided further insights into the issues.

As a result of the deliberations over the span of several weeks, the Task Force offers the following recommendations for consideration:

**Leadership/Internal Organization/Oversight**

1. **Designate CEL interim leadership position and create an advisory board to provide interim guidance:** The CEL organization is entering a period of uncertainty with the loss of the Dean/Director. The Task Force recommends that an interim leader be named who can provide a sense of stability and leadership for the CEL staff. We further recommend that an advisory board be named during the interim period to assess the best leadership structure for CEL going forward. The Task Force looked at several options for the ultimate reporting structure, such as having the CEL leader (Dean or Director) report to an AVP or a College Dean. A central assignment for the advisory board would be to recommend a permanent CEL organizational structure for consideration by the Provost.

2. **Integrate CEL fiscal, and IT administration more closely with campus:** To dispel campus concerns and misperceptions, the CEL fiscal and IT operations must be fully transparent and accountable to the University. The Task Force recommends that internal consulting groups consisting of campus experts be set up to review the IT and fiscal operations with a goal of increasing efficiency and effectiveness as well as aligning CEL operations more closely with University processes. These consulting groups may need to meet regularly for up to a year to develop concrete work-plans to improve the operations.

3. **Enlist support from HR to deal with underperforming personnel:** The Task Force heard serious concerns about the performance of a few CEL staff members. We recommend that HR be consulted to address cases of underperformance. One possible scenario is to move CEL Program Directors to MPP status (a la Development Officers) so they can be held accountable for program success and revenue growth.

4. **Develop MOU to govern campus services used for CEL operations:** Ultimately, a campus-wide MOU should be developed to address the workload and services provided by other campus units in support of CEL. Samples of MOU’s can be obtained from other CSU campuses that have developed them.

5. **Develop rate sheet of CEL support charges (%), rather than negotiate rates for each program:** In conjunction with the MOU, the Task Force believes that a “rate sheet” should be developed to specify levels of service provided to campus programs and the percentage of revenue retained by CEL associated with each service level. Creating a
rate sheet would reduce the number and potential inequity of variable negotiated rates that are currently offered to different programs.

**Downtown Campus** (Note: The Downtown Campus rent structure and opportunities for revenue generation at the Downtown Campus figure heavily in the financial success of CEL. Although it might be considered outside the scope of the charge, the Task Force believes that issues associated with the Downtown Campus should be addressed as described below.)

6. Given campus strategic commitment to downtown location, develop solid strategy for success, both economically and in terms of curriculum: The success of CEL is influenced significantly by the current management structure of the Downtown Campus. The Downtown Campus is fractured into several reporting entities, causing on-going conflicts and distracting from the successful operation of the location. The Task Force recommends that serious work be undertaken to develop a solid strategy for economic and programmatic success of the Downtown Campus as a whole.

7. Restructure management of Downtown Campus to put more emphasis on efforts to rent daytime space to outside clients: The Downtown Campus needs business/marketing expertise to handle the rental operations of the facility. Working closely with University Property Management, serious effort is needed to increase the rentals to outside clients when the space is not in use, primarily in the daytime.

8. Space recommendations:
   a. 5th floor
      i. Short term – move clients to the DTC from Pacific Plaza and other locations to save the expense of rental of space elsewhere
      ii. Long term – consider giving up when lease expires in 2014
   b. 6th floor
      i. Increase revenue by increasing rentals, including rental of additional space available when Library staff is relocated back to campus at the end of the Library remodel project
      ii. Increase CEL revenue by increasing Special Sessions offerings (see below) to improve utilization of 6th floor space

9. Based on reduction of space used, restructure Downtown Campus rent for CEL: The financial success or failure of CEL is driven by the on-going cost of rent. If some of the recommendations regarding space at the Downtown Campus can be implemented, it may be possible to restructure the on-going rent obligation for CEL.

**Curriculum**

10. Align CEL course offerings more closely with campus departments: Although all CEL courses and programs are reviewed and approved by a college Dean before they are offered, some on campus continue to be suspicious about the quality and oversight of the
11. Incorporate CEL programs in assessment performed by the college that authorized each program: To assure the academic quality of CEL courses and programs, they should be integrated into the appropriate college program review and assessed in terms of student learning outcomes.

12. Revive limited Winter Session: The Task Force recommends that carefully selected courses be offered during a revived January Winter Sessions. One and two unit as well as courses that focus on practice-based instruction might be appropriate to the intensive instructional period between the fall and spring semesters.

13. Review and discontinue financially unsuccessful CEL programs: Stand-alone courses and noncredit certificates as well as CEL programs requiring high-end computing labs should be reduced or eliminated if they are not financially viable or if they require extensive marketing efforts to be successful.

14. Explore how other CSU campuses use overloads to allow faculty to teach in CEL programs: Other CSUs hire tenured/tenure-track faculty on an overload basis to provide better campus oversight of quality and to give incentives for integration of CEL curriculum with the departments. The Task Force recommends that SF State find out how this is handled following the collective bargaining agreement and current Chancellor’s Office regulations.

Conclusions

The Task Force reviewed many aspects of the operation of the College of Extended Learning carefully for the past several months. We reached the conclusion that CEL administrative operations are not duplicating functions performed centrally. Most functions that may appear to be duplicative (IT, fiscal, operations) were in fact developed by CEL out of necessity when the campus was unable to provide central support for them. That being said, the Task Force does believe that better integration between central IT and fiscal services is needed to give the campus stronger assurance that CEL operations are being handled efficiently and transparently.

The Task Force also concluded that the rent associated with the Downtown Campus is the key factor contributing to the financial success or failure of CEL. There are two ways to reduce the impact that the rent obligation has on CEL finances:

1) Increase CEL revenue by developing more successful programs
2) Decrease expenses by reducing CEL space at the Downtown Campus or by reducing/eliminating unsuccessful programs.

Finally, the Task Force believes that CEL can be strengthened by aligning its offerings more closely with the curriculum of the University. Greater involvement of campus faculty and
departments in CEL courses and programs can serve to improve the general perception of CEL on campus as well as to increase the financial benefits CEL contributes to campus operations.

Overall, the members of the CEL Task Force believe that the College of Extended Learning provides a useful, flexible way for the University to offer programs that benefit the campus and members of the greater community. We appreciate having the opportunity to provide these observations and recommendations and are available for further discussion as needed.