INTRODUCTION

This report examines enrollment trends of CSM students with bachelor’s degrees. Unless otherwise noted, all data are for Fall 2003. The context for this report is the possibility of a Statewide implementation of differential “per unit” enrollment fee for California Community College students who possess a bachelor’s degree—from $18 to $50 per unit or more, an increase of at least 178%. CSM and the SMCCCD are concerned about the potential impact of an increase in fees would have on access, quality, affordability, and choice for students with bachelor’s degrees. In addressing these issues, the characteristics and enrollment patterns of bachelor’s degree recipients are important bits of information to be considered in the College’s strategic planning.

FINDINGS

· In Fall 2003, bachelor’s degree recipients comprised 21.1% of CSM’s total enrollment. (See Figure 1)
  o In the SMCCCD as whole, students with bachelor’s degrees comprise 19.0% (5,009) of all students. Campus comparisons are: Canada – 21.0%; Skyline – 14.5%.
  o Overall, the proportion of CSM students with bachelor’s degrees has been steadily increasing since at least Fall 1987, when the figure was 9.3%.
  o In absolute numbers, the population has grown from 1,487 students to 2,456 between 1987 and 2003—an increase of 65.1%.
· Nearly three-quarters (73.6%) of students with bachelor’s degree are 23 – 49 years of age. (See Figure 2)

Figure 1

CSM Enrollments: BA/BS vs. Non-BA/BS Students
Fall 2003
(n=11640 Unduplicated)
Asians and Whites account for 74.0% of all students with bachelor’s degrees. (See Figure 3)
- 58.5% of bachelor’s degree students are female; 41.5% are male. (See Figure 4)
- The educational goals of bachelor’s degree students are as follows: (See Figure 5)
  - Personal enrichment – 32.4%
  - Job related – 28.4%
  - Transfer – 14.8%
  - Undecided – 13.8%
  - Associate Degree/Certificate – 10.7%
- 69.5% of bachelor’s degree students enroll in evening classes. (See Figure 6)
- The overwhelming majority (62.6%) of bachelor’s degree students enroll in only one class per term; 20.8% enroll in two courses; 8.4% in three courses, and 8.2% enroll in three or more courses. (See Figure 7)

As noted, 21.1% of CSM students possess bachelor’s degrees. However, when examined at the division, department, or course-level, this figure varies considerably. The number of students with bachelor’s degree’s—expressed as a proportion of total unduplicated enrollment—for individual CSM Instructional Divisions are as follows:
- Business – 25.6%
- Counseling (COOP/CRER/DSKL) – 8.0%
- Creative Arts – 26.9%
- Language Arts – 12.0%
- Mathematics and Science – 9.0%
- Physical Education/Athletics – 19.0%
- Social Science – 5.4%
- Technology – 18.3%

Moreover, at the course-specific level, students with bachelor’s degree frequently represent as much as 50% - 80% of total enrollment.

**CONCLUSION**

Should Community College students who already hold a baccalaureate degree be charged a differential fee, or should they be charged the same fee as all other students? This decision will be decided at the level of Statewide public policy. A temporary Statewide differential fee increase—$50 per unit for Community College students with bachelor’s degrees—was imposed in Fall 1993. The result was a decrease of 19.7% (-2,933 students) in CSM total enrollment from the prior Fall term. Although the exact impact of another differential fee increase is not known, the data presented above indicate that the College will likely experience a temporary decline in the enrollment of students with bachelor’s degrees. And, at the course-specific level, this impact may be quite severe.
If fee increases are imposed, the basic principles that have guided public postsecondary education in California since the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education are in jeopardy: access, high quality, affordable costs, and opportunities of choice. Requiring bachelor's degree students to pay a majority of the cost of instruction represents a potential abandonment of the public nature of the Community Colleges. As noted in a 1995 California Postsecondary Education Commission report on education finance:

"The State should bear the major share of the cost of instruction at public institutions of higher education because the one factor that truly distinguishes a public institution from a private one is that the government bears the primary responsibility for its operation."

If the State Legislature increases fees, every effort should be made to ensure that increases are gradual, moderate, and announced as far in advance as possible so that bachelor's degree students and their families can prepare for the cost of Community College attendance. Special consideration should be given to ensuring that information about the availability of fee waivers and other forms of student financial aid are made available to the public. These include fee waivers for baccalaureate degree enrollees who are unemployed, receiving any form of public assistance, or those who are out of the workforce and are attempting to obtain skills in order to become employed.

CSM and the SMCCCD will continue to work toward ensuring that educational opportunities are available to all students, irrespective of economic means or prior educational attainment. Ultimately, of course, the decision about how much Community College students should be expected to pay toward the cost of their education will be made by the State's political leaders and will depend on California's current fiscal condition and the likely decline in State resources available to higher education.
Figure 4
CSM Bachelor's Degree Recipients
By Gender
Fall 2003
(n=2446 Unduplicated)

Male, 41.5%
Female, 58.5%

Figure 5
CSM Bachelor's Degree Recipients
By Educational Goal
Fall 2003
(n=2450 Unduplicated)

- Personal Enrichment, 32.4%
- Job Related, 28.4%
- Transfer, 14.8%
- Undecided, 13.8%
- Associate Degree/Certificate, 10.7%

Figure 6
CSM Bachelor's Degree Recipients
By Day Vs. Evening
Fall 2003
(n=2456 Unduplicated)

Day, 30.5%
Evening, 69.5%

Figure 7
CSM Bachelor's Degree Recipients
Number of Courses Completed
Fall 2003
(n=2456 students completing 4168 courses)

- 1 course (n=1538), 62.6%
- 2 courses (n=510), 20.8%
- 3 courses (n=206), 8.4%
- 4 courses (n=108), 4.4%
- 5 courses (n=44), 1.8%
- 6 or more courses (n=50), 2.0%

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