**Financial Subcommittee of the Graduation Initiative 2025 Committee**

**Solutions Finding Session April 10, 2017**

**Identifying Options for Reducing Financial Barriers**

**Based on the March 16 meeting, the following broad categories of Impediments were presented for discussion of concrete options for reducing or eliminating barriers:**

**Categories of Identified Barriers:**

1. Scholarship Issues: Burden to apply, information about availability, amounts
2. Website and communication issues (regarding financial matters)
3. Work issues including lack of sufficient work study availability
4. Financial Aid Issues: Lack of understanding of the financial aid process by students and parents
5. Textbook Costs
6. Transportation Costs (including parking)
7. Housing Costs
8. Computer availability: Cost and lack of open labs
9. Student Drop for non-payment Issues
10. Students in crisis and special issues
11. Credit Card fees
12. Lack of Childcare on campus
13. Financial Inequities in college preparation / pipeline preparedness
14. Lack of institutional support/ advancement support for students

**The group discussed potential options, and generally agreed upon the following recommendations:**

1. **There was general consensus that our student population needs more hands-on assistance than did previous generations of college goers. The large number of CI students who are first generation college goers, many of whom are underprepared for college necessitates a more proactive approach to student service delivery, becoming less reliant on electronic communications and more on one on one human interaction. Therefore we support efforts to hire more staff, counselors and faculty to do more outreach to students who have financial as well as academic needs.**
2. **Textbooks cost the average CI Student an estimated $1,948 each year. A modest additional investment aimed at educating CI faculty about lower-cost textbook options and providing additional support to the redesign of classes to include less expensive (and potentially free) texts is recommended.**
3. **Unlike many of its peer institutions, CI does not invest any of its institutional resources in student financial support. There are likewise issues regarding allocation of Advancement resources and the way that scholarships are awarded (perhaps divided into too small, $500 increments?). We recommend that the question of university financial support for students be explored in the context of the Graduation Initiative.**
4. **Tiered pricing of parking is a potential way to reduce the costs of attendance for some students and is something that should be investigated.**
5. **Other transportation options should be analyzed including free or subsidized bus passes and/or extension of the Camarillo trolley to serve the campus.**
6. **The establishment of open lab times for students who cannot afford personal computers should be considered as should synergies with other potential uses for non-classroom computer labs such as financial aid workshops (FAFSA) and testing arrangements.**
7. **We support the establishment of a daycare center on the CI campus that will provide an affordable daycare option for students.**
8. **There was general consensus on the desirability of encouraging more students to enroll in University 100 (or a similar “welcome to the university” class) class that can inform students about financial matters as well as other ways to transition to university life.**
9. **A recommendation was made to revisit the purpose and execution of the Bell Tower Information Center. Our recommendation is that be it used more to direct students to university services including financial aid and on campus employment.**
10. **Student drop for non-payment issues are a continual struggle between the desire to keep qualified students enrolled in their classes, and the difficulties encountered when students are unable to pay for their studies. Over the past few years the university has worked hard to improve timing and communication/notice of dropping students from classes and this needs to be recognized by the campus community. CI should continue to work on best practices in this area, finding ways to reduce or eliminate the number of students who cannot attend due to payment issues.**