



CHAIR, ACADEMIC SENATE
RIVERSIDE DIVISION
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BUILDING, RM 225

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February 2, 2009

Mary Croughan
Professor, Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences
Chair, UC Systemwide Academic Senate
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Mary:

**RE: PROPOSED BLUE AND GOLD OPPORTUNITY PLAN:
Briefing for January 2009 Council of Chancellors**

The UCOP Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan was submitted to Planning and Budget, Educational Policy, Undergraduate Council, Diversity and Equal Opportunity and Preparatory Education Committees for review. All the five committees that reviewed the proposal thought that overall, it was a good proposal in that more students will be receiving financial aid. It was suggested that UCOP make the financial aid information more easily obtainable on a single website to make the application process smoother. There is a typo in Attachment A, line 1 of text, it should be Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan (not Blue and Goal). They also had the following comments:

Page 1 contains the following statement: "Under the new Blue and Gold, (UC will) provide that financially needy undergraduates with income up to the median for California households (\$60,000) and enrolled in their first four years (two years if a transfer) will have UC systemwide fees covered by scholarship or grant awards."

Committee on Educational policy thought there were two problems here – first, "the blanket eligibility of two years for transfer students misses the fact that some students transfer to UC after only one year. It would be unfair for these students to be limited to two years of financial aid. Secondly, the general aid eligibility of 4 years for entering freshmen and two years for transfer students may not be reasonable. Transfer students frequently take three years to graduate, and other students may take more than four years, especially if they enter with academic deficiencies or are unable to carry a full unit load every semester or quarter."

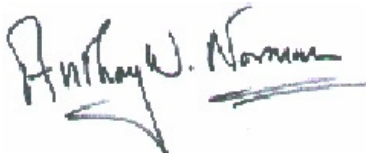
A few questions arose that needed clarification:

1. Are the students who receive additional grant support to help defray the costs of books, living expenses, transportation, etc., a subset of the students who receive support from the Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan?
2. Are the funds for this plan based entirely on the expected fee increases?
3. How was the figure of 0.7% in the Implementation Cost Table in Attachment B derived?
4. What does the phrase "Capped at Need" in Table B-1 mean?

With regards to issues of diversity, the Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity had this to add:

“First, while the Blue & Gold plan is designed to attract middle income families who may otherwise choose private colleges due to fee increases at the UC, this is done at the expense of lower income families. In part, funding for Blue & Gold will be diverted from grants now going to lower income families. These students and their families will have an additional burden by having to make up the difference by taking out loans and work study jobs (instead of outright grants). Second, lower income families may be less likely to have the human and cultural capital to wade through all financial aid information or understand the difference between loans that are federally versus privately funded. There is a concern about excluding students who have already defaulted on loans, as it is more likely that these are the low income students who are most vulnerable to having been hooked into taking on private loans vs. federal loans (see LA Times article Dec 28, 2008). Consequently, a group that is most in need of financial assistance seems to be denied the opportunity for Blue and Gold aid. At minimum, there should be a mechanism where students who have defaulted on loans should be able to plead their case and not be discounted outright.”

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony W. Norman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Anthony W. Norman
Distinguished Professor of Biochemistry and
Biomedical Sciences; and
Chair of the Riverside Division

CC: Martha Kendall Winnacker, Executive Director of the Academic Senate
Sellyna Ehlers, Director of UCR Academic Senate office