
SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID (CSFA)

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE CHAIR: TIFFANY ENGLE

A. Major issues addressed by the committee during the 2010–2011 year

While the committee met collectively at strategic times during the year, the CSFA largely operated through the dedicated work of two sub-committees: the First Time in Any College (FTIAC) and Transfer sub-committee and the Upperclassmen sub-committee.

1. The FTIAC and Transfer sub-committee completed the task of reviewing academic scholarships awarded to prospective first year and transfer students. As of June 1, this sub-committee had awarded 1,767 academic scholarships to potential students for the 2011-2012 year. The FTIAC and Transfer sub-committee was also responsible for determining the recipients of Trustee scholarships; this year, 101 students were offered this academic award. Though this process is highly automated by computer programs utilized in the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, sub-committee members did oversee the process to ensure accuracy and consistency. These members were also required to make important decisions regarding those students who happen to fall “on the borderline” of different scholarship criteria.
2. The Upperclassmen sub-committee dealt with the scholarship appeals of returning students. Since student deadlines to file appeals occur in July, the members of this sub-committee carried out their work during the summer months. Most students were reviewed under the updated scholarship model (implemented in 2009-2010); returning seniors were the only exception, as they fall under the older guidelines for scholarship appeals and renewal. By taking transcripts, student essays, supportive materials, and other highlighted circumstances into account, this sub-committee collaborated to make difficult decisions that ultimately hold some students accountable for their academic responsibilities while awarding others for outstanding academic progress.

Other matters discussed by the committee include:

3. Adjustments to upperclass appeal deadlines. Upon further review (and given the interplay between appeal decisions and other financial aid monies), the CSFA decided to maintain the deadlines already in place. Student appeals received after given deadlines will continue to be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

B. Actions the committee brought before Faculty Senate (if any)

During 2010-2011, the CSFA reviewed its mandate. The main considerations had to deal with the types of members that ultimately comprise this committee.

1. At the beginning of 2010-2011, this portion of our mandate read: “Eleven members: four faculty members, one of whom shall be chairperson; two students, one from Michigan and one from out of state, who shall sit only when matters of policy are being considered; *one member of the Alumni Association*; one designated representative from the Academic Administration Division; two leadership-level representatives from the Admissions and Financial Aid Office, one of whom shall be secretary; and a third designated representative from the Admissions and Financial Aid Office. *No faculty member of the*

Department of Physical Education and Recreation may serve on the Committee of Scholarships and Financial Aid.”

The full committee reviewed these qualifications with two main areas in mind:

2. Alumni Association representative:

Due to the nature of this committee’s work (conducted largely through sub-committee), it was deemed worthwhile to reconsider the role of this representative. Thus, after discussion between members of CSFA and the Alumni Office, it was determined that the continued presence of an alumni representative on this committee would be desirable and appropriate. With this, the following guidelines were established: 1) this person will be appointed by an administrator in the Alumni Office, 2) term length will be determined by the representative and CSFA committee chair (a minimum of one year; maximum of four years), and 3) this person will serve the CSFA committee in an advisory role (thus not participating in sub-committee duties). Thus, the mandate was amended to read: “one member of the Alumni Association, which will also set the length of his or her term (not to exceed four years), and who will serve the committee in an advisory role (i.e., not participating in subgroup work)”¹

3. HPERDS representative:

The CSFA committee agreed to retain the highlighted clause (marked in italics above) to comply with NCAA regulations. The committee further adapted this clause for further clarification. An updated version now reads: “No faculty member from the HPERDS Department (Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance) and/or Calvin athletic coach may serve on the Committee on Scholarships and Financial Aid.”

C. Other actions, not involving Faculty Senate, that the committee initiated or implemented

None

D. Issues that will continue to be before the committee next year

While carrying out the duties of the CSFA sub-committees, issues often arise with regard to the objectivity and consistency in how scholarships are awarded and decisions involving “close calls” are made. Such issues will inevitably arise in the future work of CSFA, and these recurring issues will need to be addressed. Some more notable examples include:

1. Awarding academic and/or diversity awards to students without regular admissions status, such as those in the ACCESS program
 - The CSFA met with members of the Committee on Admissions this year to discuss this issue more fully. The Committee on Admissions requested that decisions on admission status not limit a student’s scholarship/award eligibility. The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid is conducting more research on this issue, but plans to implement changes that meet the Committee on Admissions requests. CSFA will need to follow-up with this in 2011-2012 and make proper recommendations.
2. The most effective and consistent manner in which to deal with students who are applying for diversity awards

¹ Note from the Committee on Governance: According to the COG mandate, “major changes to committee mandates” are sent to Faculty Senate. The change indicated was considered minor and therefore not brought to Faculty Senate.

- During 2010-2011, the CSFA encountered students who had appealed for diversity awards after their freshman year. Students are considered for these awards based on information they provide on their application of admission to the college. Currently, there is no system for confirming the information provided on the application is accurate. The CSFA will review the current criteria and guidelines for diversity awards to determine if there is a better way to be consistent and fair in our recommendations for such scholarships.