

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD  
ACADEMIC SENATE

Interim Director of Academic Advising Recommendations  
RES 222316

AS&SS and BPC

**RESOLVED:** That the Academic Senate supports the appointment of an Interim Director of Academic Advising for a one-year appointment.

**RATIONALE:** The Academic Senate recognizes the need for an Interim Director of Academic Advising. The position will ensure that CSUB has representation at the systemwide level as well as at the campus level. The problem solver and consultant will provide academic leadership in advising, and report directly to the Office of the Provost. The proposed plan for the advising structure will be provided to the Academic Senate no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Resources (operating budget) are committed for academic advising, with five additional permanent academic advisor lines over the next 3 years.

The call for the proposed Interim Director of Advising would be posted to CSUB campus-only and restricted to staff currently employed in one of CSUB's advising centers. Additional funding will be provided to fill the vacancy created with the appointment of an internal advising staff member serving as the Interim Director.

**Attachments:**

Revised Memo Rationale for Director of Advising 2-13-2023 v15 VHarper  
ASI SB 201 Support for Creating Undergraduate Director of Advising

Approved by the Senate March 16, 2023  
Sent to the President March 24, 2023  
Approved by the President March 24, 2023

**Distribution List:**

President  
AVP for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs  
AVP Faculty Affairs  
School Deans  
Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies  
Dean of Libraries  
Dean of Antelope Valley Campus  
Department Chairs



## Memorandum

DATE: February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
TO: Senate Executive Committee  
FROM: Vernon Harper, Provost, and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
RE: Rationale for *Interim Director of Advising* (v3 REVISIONS in blue)

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### Overview

Academic advising of students is fundamental to student success and in reaching CSUB's institutional goals. Student graduation, retention, health, well-being, and overall student progression are tied to the critical relationship established by academic advisors. CSUB's academic advisor cadre is filled with dedicated and committed professionals that work hard each day to assist students in numerous ways, particularly seeking best practices to ensure student success. CSUB continues to refine and improve critical services for students. After years of reports, recommendations, and consultants, it is clear the university needs to consider alternative approaches to reach institutional goals that focus on improving student progress by doing more to support the academic advisors.

One approach that has not been considered previously, is to create an *Interim Director of Academic Advising*. The proposed Interim Director of Academic Advising would be a crucial first step to providing equity in leadership for advisors. This person would advocate for advisors to ensure vital resources are allocated. The individual would be responsible to serve as the liaison, communicating and responding to the needs of the unit to ensure continued growth and success. Moreover, the person would be expected to continue and defend CSUB's custom experiences for students but endeavor to foster consistent underlying processes.

This person's appointment would be for 12 months from the date of appointment to determine if a permanent appointment is necessary. This memorandum provides several detailed rationales for the role, as well as a description of institutional support for the proposed position.

### Rationales

#### **A seat at the table**

As noted above, resources are essential to support and improve advising such as securing additional advisor positions to reduce student-advisor ratios. Moreover, there is a need for recurring resources for professional development, technology, and policy development. At present, there is no leader whose sole responsibility is to advocate for advising resources. It cannot be overstated how important it is for a unit to have an advocate. The proposed Interim Director, reporting to the AVP for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs, would be able to make consistent resource requests for the improvement of the advising function.

### **A problem-solver and consultant**

Importantly, there has been no decision made regarding the structure of professional advising, nor has a decision been made regarding the balance between faculty and academic advising. These decisions must be vetted through shared governance and supported by the Academic Senate. The purpose of the proposed interim position is to help the academic leadership and the Senate with those decisions. This consultative role of the proposed Director is consistent with the expectations of every administrator in Academic Affairs.

### **A system-wide representative**

CSUB is distinct from the other 22 campuses, as decisions are made with great attention to the needs of the campus rather than conformity to other CSUs. While CSUB has continued to seek opportunities and funding, a representative on the CSU Advising Council would be advantageous, for it would create the opportunity for additional monetary resources, technology, and policy support.

### **A partner**

CSUB's student body has consistently indicated areas of needed improvement in our advising structure. Particularly, the student body has noted inconsistent underlying processes, especially for students that change majors. This area of improvement has been identified by multiple consultants, WASC accreditors, and the internal task force. Unlike any other academic unit, the Office of the Provost does not have a sole leader to consult with to address the above issues.

## **Resources**

- The proposed *Interim Director* would not increase the current cadre of administrators in the division, for the position line is currently vacant.
- Office of the Provost is committing to increasing the number of lines allocated for Academic Advisors (5 permanent lines over the next 3 years)
- Office of the Provost would provide resources (60K) to support the Interim Director, including existing support staff and an operating budget to support the technological and professional development needs of the advisors. Administrative support will come for the Office of Academic Programs.

## **Timing**

- If the Senate were to resolve to support an Interim Director of Advising, the Provost would direct the respective Director to develop a proposal that represents the interests of the entire academic community regarding CSUB's future structure of advising. The consultations would be required with each School's faculty, ASI, the School Deans, and the administration. The Interim Director would take advantage of existing evidence and prior reports to build a recommendation for advising. The proposed plan would be delivered to the Academic Senate no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

## **Commitment**

- The call for the proposed *Interim Director of Advising* would be *campus-only* and restricted to staff currently employed in one of CSUB's advising centers. In this way, the advisors who have committed the most to CSUB have the best opportunity to grow while enacting positive structural change.
- The call will be developed jointly between the Provost and the School advising leads task force.



Vollmer

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**SB 201**  
**Support for Creating a Director of Undergraduate Advising**  
**DRAFT**

WHEREAS: The Associated Students, Incorporated (ASI) of California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) is the official representative body, and the voice of CSUB's more than 11,000 students and is entrusted to represent the best interests of their constituencies; AND

WHEREAS: It is the mission of Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) of California State University, Bakersfield to provide an official voice through which students' opinions and issues may be expressed regarding university and statewide affairs; AND

WHEREAS: ASI is committed to ensuring students have access to academic support services such as academic advising which will help them successfully progress towards their degree; AND

WHEREAS: For the past several years, advising issues have been brought forth to the ASI Board of Directors. Students have continued to struggle with a lack of consistency across inter-departmental advising, with wrong information about classes to take, and with the limited opportunities to see an advisor; AND

WHEREAS: Currently, advising practices are managed differently depending on the school and department. This is extremely problematic to students who want to pursue minors or more than one degree. As stated in the task force report, 'The current structure provides no consistency and impedes effective communication at all levels; AND

WHEREAS: Students have to wait extended amounts of time to meet with advisors and get the necessary guidance they need to graduate on time. The WSCUC visit showed the campus that our advising is failing students and was a recommendation to be changed; AND

WHEREAS: CSUB is only one of two CSU's left in the system who have not implemented a centralized advising system; THEREFORE, LET IT BE

RESOLVED: ASI, as the official voice of students, strongly supports the recommendations presented in the Academic Advising Task Force Report and Proposed Structure.

A Director of Undergraduate Advising will allow students to have a singular person to hold responsible for their advising needs. This Director is necessary to ensure advising is consistent among schools and serves the students best interest over anyone else.

The Advising Leadership Council will allow for direct collaboration and communication between all departments. ASI asks that as this council forms, two students from ASI be added to represent students since we are majority stakeholder in advising; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: ASI supports and recommends the implementation of a Director of Undergraduate Advising and Advising Structure in order to move towards a centralized oversight of advising throughout the school; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: ASI urges the Academic Senate to fully support both recommendations set forth by the Task force immediately as advising has been a recognized issue for several years and in doing so will directly help us move closer to meeting our GI 2025 goals; AND IT BE FINALLY

RESOLVED: Copies of this resolution will be distributed widely, including, but not limited to, CSUB President Dr. Lynnette Zelezny, CSUB Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost Dr. Vernon Harper, CSUB Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Thomas Wallace, and CSUB Academic Senate.

**Passed unanimously by the Associated Students Inc, Board of Directors on Friday, February 17, 2023.**