

# COSCO REPORT

on

## THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Autumn 2005

## INTRODUCTION

The Committee on Organizational Structure and Community Outreach (COSCO), a standing committee of the UMKC Faculty Senate, met with Dr. Pat Long, Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, four times pursuant to our charge to study the operations and the efficiency of the four administrative units on campus headed by a vice-chancellor. In some of the meetings, Interim Chancellor Steve Lehmkuhle and/or Interim Provost Bruce Bubacz also sat in. Vice-Chancellor Long responded to a series of questions from COSCO members, providing us with information, data, and figures on the organization of the Division of Student Affairs, personnel, budgets, and so on. In recent months, Dr. Long has assumed additional duties and responsibilities within the university, while retaining her position in Student Affairs. This situation is addressed below, but COSCO recognizes the extraordinary service that she has given to UMKC.

### **The Mission of the Division of Student Affairs**

Virtually every university in the country has a Division or Office of Student Affairs. Typically, such offices provide non-academic support for students outside the classroom and the laboratory in order to enrich the students' academic experience. Areas covered by Student Affairs usually include, but are not limited to, the following: counseling and health services; recreational and sports programs and facilities; campus dining and the student union; and residential life. The "Welcome" web page of the UMKC Division of Student Affairs' says the following about its mission:

"The Division of Student Affairs seeks to enhance students' experiences at the University of Missouri-Kansas City by establishing a vital co-curricular program and providing those support services that help students [to] attain their academic goals. The Division touches UMKC students throughout the continuum of their college experience. Beginning with admission and enrollment, continuing with support services that enhance academic progress and emotional growth, and culminating with the search for employment upon graduation, the Student Affairs Division facilitates a student's journey through the University."

It should be noted that most, although certainly not all, co-curricular activities provided by Student Affairs are directed at undergraduate students, rather than graduate and professional students. This is understandable, since most graduate and professional students are mature individuals with less interest and time to devote to extra-curricular and club activities.

## FINDINGS OF FACT

### **The Current Organizational Structure of Student Affairs**

The latest organizational chart of the Division of Student Affairs available to COSCO contains thirty different boxes that indicate administrative offices or positions, plus the FTE's in each (see Chart #1). As of 9/29/05, three administrative positions—Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Student Development, Director of Creative Services, and Project Manager—were vacant. Earlier in the year, Dr. Long had informed COSCO that

[REDACTED]

██████████ (see Appendix #1; note, too, a new position in the Division of Administration & Finance--Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Auxiliary Services--is also posted). We have asked the Interim Provost to intercede and to "freeze" this position in Student Affairs. In addition, a new administrative position in University Communications, which does not appear on the chart—Brand Manager—has recently been created and filled internally.

In all, 242 FTE's reside under the Student Affairs umbrella at the moment. This includes 40 FTE's in University Communications, which was moved over from the Development and Advancement office a few years ago. Even subtracting these employees, Student Affairs has over 200 FTE's under its umbrella. This number, though, does not include the management of contract food service workers and 61 FTE representing 122 half-time student employees. If the student employees are added in, Student Affairs has over 260 FTE employees; including the food service employees would further raise this number.

The Division of Student Affairs has at present four-and-a-half sub-divisions defined by service areas:

- 1) Enrollment management (broadly conceived);
- 2) Student life and health;
- 3) Auxiliary services;
- 4) University Communications (for the moment at least).

The "one-half" mentioned above refers to the Center for Academic Development and the Institute for Professional Preparation, both of which report directly to the Vice-Chancellor.

In general, the offices and services on the far-left of the organizational chart under Enrollment Management are traditional and necessary in a university—Admissions, Financial Aid and Scholarships, Registration and Records, Career Services, and International Student Affairs. Here we are reporting only the current structure of the Division of Student Affairs; below we will make recommendations concerning restructuring Student Affairs. COSCO was informed by Vice-Chancellor Long that the International Student Affairs Office would be combined with Admissions, while the position of Director would not be filled. We applaud this move. Whether the staffing level in each of these offices is adequate, inadequate, or excessive is a question that needs to be addressed by the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs, the Provost, and the Chancellor in association with faculty, staff, and students. COSCO members have formed an opinion on this issue, but do not offer it here. Rather, in this report COSCO has looked only at the "big picture" of the Division of Student Affairs as a whole.

The one office under Enrollment Management that is seemingly out of place is Project Refocus, a job retraining program aimed at out-of-work citizens of Kansas City. This is not an office that serves UMKC students as its primary clientele. Project Refocus is externally funded through the Full Employment Council and the Missouri Division of Job Development and Training (see Appendix #2). COSCO is unaware of the history of how this office came to be located in Student Affairs, but clearly it should more properly be located elsewhere and grouped with other community outreach efforts of the university.

A second set of traditional offices under a Student Affairs umbrella focus on mental and physical health counseling and testing, minority students, and women's issues. At UMKC, the second column from the left on the organization chart lists offices and responsible individuals who also report to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. These offices are: the vacant Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Development; Counseling, Health and Testing; Minority Student Affairs; Student Life; and the Women's Center. Again, whether each of these offices is inadequately, adequately, or excessively staffed is a separate question which needs to be addressed. COSCO also notes that a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transsexual (LGBT) office was created last year under the Student Affairs umbrella. Originally associated with the Women's Center, the LGBT office has been relocated physically and administratively, although we are not certain about the line of reporting at this time. We also note the recent announcement that a student from the Conservatory of Music has been appointed as the new Student Director of LGBT, while the prior Student Director has been appointed to a new position within the Student Affairs Office. COSCO has noted a long-standing practice within Student Affairs of promoting students internally into positions within its office. While COSCO can see some possible benefits of this practice in a few cases, it also views the practice as "incestuous" and as possibly compromising students' ability to represent the diverse views of students. We have heard suggestions and fears from a number of UMKC students that student leaders were being "bought off" by Student Affairs. Whether this is true or not, the perception that this is the case is most unfortunate.

A third set of offices is located under the purview of, and reports to, the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Auxiliary Services. These offices include: Residential Life; Twin Oaks; the Swinney Recreation Center; the University Center; Business and Fiscal Operations; and Printing Services. Each of these offices, except for Business and Fiscal Operations, brings in income through fees of various sorts (e.g., room and board charges, user fees for the sports facilities, space rental), sales (e.g., bookstore), or internal charges made to other units of the university (e.g., printing). Not all of them make a profit, however. Prior to FY '05, Printing Services, for example, regularly showed a net loss, sometimes a large one (see Appendix #3). Similarly, the Bookstore has not turned a profit and, indeed, has accrued a debt of approximately \$1.9 million. As of November this year, the management of the Bookstore was transferred to a group in the UM-Columbia bookstore, which also manages the UM-Rolla bookstore. The total number of employees in the bookstore has decreased, but COSCO is uncertain how they will be paid. Whether each of these offices under Auxiliary Services is inadequately, adequately, or excessively staffed is an issue that needs to be determined.

A fourth set of offices was fairly recently located under the umbrella of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for University Communications. Offices included here are Creative Services, Electronic Communications, KCUR (the public radio station), Public Relations, and Executive Communications (speech writing and other writing for upper-level administrators directed to external and internal audiences). COSCO feels strongly that university public relations operations in all of its forms should more properly be located in the Chancellor's Office. The Chancellor is the "public face of the university" and, as such, is the primary representative of the university to external constituencies. Therefore, it makes sense to have this office or department report to the Chancellor. Furthermore, COSCO recommends that the position of Assistant Vice-Chancellor for University Communications be re-titled as Director of University

Communications and the salary adjusted commensurately.

Student Affairs seems to have a larger number of employees than it needs in some areas. We make no immediate recommendations on specific offices, but recommend that the Provost and/or Chancellor independently undertake or commission a comparative efficiency study. Student Affairs' defense of its size and expenditures, including comparisons with other institutions, are included in the document entitled "COSCO Report, FY 2002-FY 2005" (see Appendix #4). This document includes Vice-Chancellor Long's responses to some of COSCO's specific questions.

In our conversations last spring with then-Provost Bill Osborne, he suggested to COSCO that approximately \$1,000,000 could be saved by combining some functions of Student Affairs with the Office of the Provost. Not surprisingly perhaps, this suggestion was vigorously opposed by Vice-Chancellor Long in a document entitled "Student Affairs['] Response to the Provost's Proposal to COSCO, May 25, 2005" (see Appendix #5). Later in this report, we will address the issue of duplication between operations in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs and make recommendations concerning possible sources of savings.

COSCO would be negligent in fulfilling its charge from the Faculty Senate if it did not note up front that, like most administrative support units on our campus, Student Affairs is top-heavy. (This topic will be addressed in detail below.) Having said this, COSCO recognizes the important contributions that the staff and student interns in Student Affairs make to the primary educational mission of UMKC. The following report is not intended to diminish the value of these contributions. Rather, when in this report we offer a number of observations and recommendations on how the Division of Student Affairs could be more cost effective, more efficient in providing services to students, and more transparent in its reallocation of resources and student fees, these are offered in service of our overall campus-wide academic mission and educational goals. Our observations and recommendations come out of an intensive study of the organizational structure and operations of the Division of Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and University Communications conducted over the past eight months.

#### **Salary, Benefit, & Consulting Expenses in the Division of Student Affairs, FY '02-'05**

The Division of Student Affairs is a fairly costly operation. Total costs for salary and benefits exceeded \$13,000,000 for the first three years under review and over \$14,800,000 in FY '05. Here we will begin by focusing on the costs of salaries, benefits, and consulting expenses in the four areas introduced above for FY '02-'05. COSCO received two sets of figures for these expenses from Student Affairs. The first set, compiled on 6/6/05, is attached as Appendix #6; the second set from 9/29/05 is attached as Appendix #7. There are some significant differences between these two. The differences for FY '05 are due in part to the fact that the figures received by COSCO in June were current up to only 5/19/05, while the numbers received in September are final figures for fiscal '05. However, there are other differences in the expense figures that cannot be explained away by this one-and-a-half-month correction.

For purposes of clarity, below we will look at the total personnel budget in Student Affairs rather than the individual sub-divisions. To explain why we have decided to do so, we will begin by looking first on the salaries and benefits for one sub-division, the Central Office of the Vice Chancellor. The Center for Academic Development and the Institute for Professional

Preparation are funded in large part by grants and, thus, probably should be viewed separately. Using the most recently received numbers, the salary, benefits, and consultant expense figures for the Vice Chancellor's Central Office for FY '02-'05 are as follows:

FY 2002	\$1,015,531
FY 2003	\$885,145
FY 2004	\$677,332
FY 2005	\$560,173

At first glance, it would appear that costs have continually been cut in the Vice Chancellor's office each year, with substantial savings accruing. These figures can be a bit misleading, however. For example, it is unclear to what extent the differentials in any given year represent the results of reorganization and shifts in lines of reporting rather than actual savings. That is, COSCO has determined that the apparent decrease in salary and benefits is in large part a result of the shifting of personnel expenses to other offices within Student Affairs, rather than a real shrinking of the work force in the Division of Student Affairs as a whole or a real savings in overall personnel costs. In this sense, the separate figures available for each of the four areas from year-to-year must be "taken with a grain of salt." As a result of this situation, rather than looking at each sub-division separately, it will behoove us to begin with total expenses for the four sub-divisions before we turn to look at individual offices.

#### **Total Salary, Benefits, and Consultant Expenses in Student Affairs**

Adding up the final salary, benefits, and consulting expenses for the four areas for FY '02-'05 yields the following total for the Division of Student Affairs as a whole:

FY 2002	\$13,137,424
FY 2003	\$13,148,032
FY 2004	\$13,967,078
FY 2005	\$14,807,602

Note that these figures include University Communications, which moved to Student Affairs only in FY 2004, and Executive Communications, which seems to have been moved as of FY '05. COSCO hopes that both of these operations will shortly be moved and placed in the Chancellor's Office. Having noted this anomalous situation, the inclusion of this item does not substantially alter the overall picture of personnel costs. Considering the Division solely in terms of personnel costs--that is, even without considering operating and other expenses--Student Affairs is a major consumer of budgetary resources on campus.

If one next looks at the salary, benefits, and consulting expenses for individual offices, one finds that a few offices cut expenses from FY '02-'05, others showed significant growth in expenses, while still others showed ups and downs [due perhaps to a retirement or vacated position(s) not having been filled]. These expenses for the Administrative Office of the Assistant, later Associate, Vice-Chancellor for Enrollment Management, for example, are reported as having grown over these four years from \$98,509 in '02 to \$149,830 in '05--a 52% increase. However, the figures shown in Appendix #7 do not disclose the real increase in the salaries of a few upper-level administrators.

It should be noted that the salary figures provided to COSCO cover FY '02-FY '05. Had the figures for FY '01 been included, one would see that the salary of the head of the Enrollment Management area increased by 66% between '01 and '02, while from '01-'05 it doubled. In other words, the cumulative salary increase for this one individual in this period, totaling almost \$60,000, exceeds the total personnel cost increase reported to COSCO by Student Affairs for FY '02-'05. Clearly, the raw numbers provided to COSCO by Student Affairs do not tell the full story.

[INSERT Chart #2 here.]

The Admissions Office showed a marked “spike” in personnel expenses in '04. Personnel costs grew from \$624,126 in FY '02 to \$958,542 in FY '04. In '05, personnel costs for Admissions exceeded \$1,000,000 for the first time. In other words, Admissions' personnel expenses grew over 53% in just two years and 60% over all within four years. It is unclear what caused this spike. Nor is it clear that service and efficiency has improved by 60% in the last four years. These increased costs are a major concern for the members of COSCO. We recommend that the Provost and the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs, together with COSCO, look closely at the Admissions Office for possible re-organization with savings without sacrificing service provided to students, faculty, and school or department staff members.

Counseling, Health & Testing personnel costs have also skyrocketed, increasing more than 43% in the same four-year period. Similarly, Minority Student Affairs personnel costs rose over 37%. The Women's Center, though, showed the most dramatic increase—over a 435% rise in personnel expenses from '02 to '05. COSCO members find this allocation of scarce university resources puzzling at best, especially when the money directed to this co-curricular program office is contrasted to the tiny total operating budget of the Women's and Gender Studies Program in the College of Arts & Sciences. The latter is the academic program on campus that immediately addresses these women's and gender issues, yet it has an operating budget of only \$10,000 per year. While COSCO recognizes the valuable programs and services that the Women's Center provides to our students and the broader community, *we question the rationale*

*behind funding any service support unit at fourteen times the amount budgeted for the parallel academic degree program.*

### **Identifying Problems, Recommending Solutions**

The underlying problems on campus that have led to repeated examples of lopsided and irrational budgeting within administrative and support units are two-fold. First, administrative and support units have been much better funded than academic units, have suffered less severe cuts in tight budget years, and have received more of the additional revenues generated by increased enrollment and tuition increases than have academic units. Second, in the absence of a strong Provost model of administrative organization, wherein all administrative support units report to the Chancellor through the chief academic officer and have their budgets approved by the Provost, administrative and support units have largely been allowed to decide on their own what level of services they will provide, the number of personnel they will have, the titles and pay scales of their employees, and so on.. Moreover, “savings” that are realized within Student Affairs and other administrative divisions tend to remain within those units and then are reallocated internally rather than being reallocated to academic units.

Clearly, a pressing need for UMKC as a whole is to find a way to redirect scarce fiscal resources from administrative and support units to academic programs. Student Affairs is properly a support unit and, as such, it should support the students in achieving their academic goals. However, it cannot truly support the primary academic mission of the university if it absorbs funds that could and should be directed to under-funded academic programs. COSCO feels confident that the number of employees in the Division of Student Affairs could be reduced through attrition without any noticeable decrease in service. Moreover, the inflated titles and salaries of other upper-level positions could be—and should be--adjusted to more clearly reflect position responsibilities and the fiscal realities of the university. (The issue of title inflation and the concomitant inflation of salaries will be addressed immediately below.)

### **The Culture of Administration at UMKC, 2001-2005**

The Division of Student Affairs, like all other administrative units, has contributed to the creation of a “culture” of administration on campus that is unhealthy in too many respects. In large part, this culture is the result of the importation of business models of management into the university. The verb “to administer” has at least two divergent meanings that reflect two different philosophies of structural organization, as well as of the proper power relations among upper-level management (=university administrators) and labor (=university staff and faculty). For the sake of convenience, we may equate the two different philosophies of management and administration with: 1) the business or corporate model of management; and 2) the model of shared governance in the academy.

The operative definition of “to administer” that is adopted by upper-level university administrators makes a real difference on a campus. Indeed, one might say that the operative definition “makes all the difference in the world” precisely because of the culture it creates on campus. An operative definition of administration inevitably leads to specific dispositions and practices among upper- and mid-level administrators, just as it creates others among faculty and staff members in response to these. Over time, the dispositions and practices based on the different operational definitions create two distinctly different cultures of administration.



In the business model, “to administer” usually is taken to mean to manage, to have executive charge of some area or operation, and to impose one’s will or wishes from the top down in a hierarchical organization. There are two main classes of employees in the organization under this model: management and labor. Management claims for itself the responsibility for running and managing the organization, including, most especially, exercising control over funds, the setting of goals and priorities, and the supervision of subordinates. Under this model, labor is to follow directions from above in order to achieve the goals set by management or administrators. Furthermore, under this model, a top manager is rewarded, in significant part, in proportion to the number of subordinates she or he directly supervises and the size of the budget s/he oversees. Under the corporate model, the incentive exists, for administrators seeking to “move up the corporate ladder,” to increase the number of employees he or she supervises and the size of the budget he or she controls. Moreover, under the corporate model, an administrator’s sense of self-worth and power is in part measured in these terms. Finally, the built-in incentives to increase the number of upper-level managers or administrators have an additional consequence: these same individuals are financially rewarded for controlling or cutting the costs of labor further down the chain of command. As a result, an ever-growing income gap develops between upper-level administrators and lower-level staff.

Over time, this administrative culture and this reward system have a number of predictable results. The business or corporate model of administration in the university:

- encourages increasing the number of upper- and mid-level administrative positions reporting directly to the top-level managers;
- encourages title inflation;
- leads to a growing sense of self-importance and entitlement among these titled administrators;
- leads to upper-level administrators granting inflated salaries to the persons occupying the administrative positions just below them;
- over time creates a situation in which faculty and staff members are, in relative terms, ever more poorly rewarded for their work and contributions to the university, while top administrators are richly rewarded;
- leads to a growing chasm between management/administration and labor/faculty and staff and a growing sense of alienation and cynicism among faculty and staff members;
- encourages “end-runs” around shared governance structures and procedures on the part of administrators and, eventually, to the breakdown of shared governance on campus.

Under the business model, holding down the cost of “labor” on the part of administrators is alchemically transformed into “cost savings” and “efficiencies” as these results are reported up the organizational hierarchy. Unfortunately, using this sort of language, while focusing only on the savings in salary and wages paid to non-administrators, obfuscates the real “human costs” that accrue over time within this culture of administration. In recent years, almost inevitably in the business world, the income differential between management and labor has grown progressively larger over time and, consequently, labor has become alienated, dispirited, and

cynical. No one should be surprised that the same thing has happened in universities that adopted the corporate model. Indeed, anyone who has observed UMKC over the past several years, let alone those who lived through the Gilliland administration, will recognize that the scenario sketched above played out on our campus.

This situation is not unique to UMKC. Since the business model was imported into the academy around the nation, upper-level administrators have all too often styled themselves as management, while faculty and staff have come to be viewed by administrators as labor. Consequently, just as executives in big business in recent years came to believe that they were deserving of huge salaries and perks, upper-level administrators on campuses around the country came to believe that they, too, should be handsomely rewarded for their leadership and professional management skills. In both the business world and in those university administrations that adopted the business model, higher salaries for upper-level management are justified in part because they have successfully held down the pay of labor and/or made the necessary "hard decisions," including reducing the size of the regular tenure-track faculty.

As noted above, a culture is created and sustained by administrators in large part by ingrained dispositions, daily practices, patterned forms of social interaction, and through language usage. Another example of the role language plays may not be out of place. In the culture created by adopting the business model of administration, university employees are regularly referred to as "human resources," rather than as human beings. The term "human resources" suggests that employees are a commodity to be used (and used up) by others for their own intents and purposes. Locally, numerous slogans such as "UMKC—a Community of Learners" and "UMKC—A Work Place of Choice" have been promulgated from above, yet the daily practices and language used by administrators put the lie to these "nods" to community.

One of the perverse results of the importation of the business model into the university has been precisely the loss of a sense of community on campus and a growing divide between "the administration" or "Oak Street" and faculty and staff members. The latter groups have seen too many upper-level administrators seemingly being rewarded handsomely for "holding down costs," most especially in terms of the salary, wage, and benefit costs of faculty and middle- and lower-level staff members. At the same time, merit increases for faculty and staff members have been miniscule at best. Administrators have presented mean averages of salary increases as a response to questions about the inequity of this situation. This is neither an acceptable nor an adequate response. Mean averages are skewed by even a few "outliners"—in this case, exceptionally high raises for a few administrators—and do not represent the real experience of the vast number of individuals involved.

In the academic model of shared governance, on the other hand, while "to administer" also means to manage, the emphasis is on contributing assistance or aid to the faculty, staff, and students in order to support the academic mission of the university. Shared governance is based on the original meaning of "administer"—"to minister to" or "to assist." In the shared governance model, administrators, faculty, staff and students are all involved in working towards providing the best education possible for students. Unfortunately, on the UMKC campus in recent years, the business model was imported and adopted. The resultant culture of administration that has developed and that has been fostered on campus has led to huge and

growing salary differentials between upper-level administrators and faculty and staff. In addition, it has fostered a sense of privilege among upper administrators and has led to the usurpation of rights and prerogatives of faculty and staff in too many instances. Finally, as noted earlier, the business model of administration has led to an unhealthy divide between the administration and faculty and staff and caused a serious decline in morale.

Within Student Affairs, one finds the following unhealthy developments and conditions:

- “title inflation” and accompanying inflated salaries for upper-level staff;
- “responsibility creep” leading to the usurpation of academic issues and faculty and student prerogatives;
- duplication of offices and responsibilities found in other units;
- the amalgamation of too many different offices and functions under the umbrella of Student Affairs, with a consequent dissipation of focus and lack direct supervision;
- a lack of transparency and public accountability as to how student fees are expended;
- “sweet deals” for certain administrators and others;
- excessive expenditures of scarce resources on “pie-in-the-sky” planning projects, such as the proposed new student center, and in “black holes,” such as Twin Oaks.

Each of these will be addressed below, as well as other issues relevant to the organizational structure and operation of the Division of Student Affairs.

### **Title Inflation and Inflated Salaries**

Within the University of Missouri System, the fiscal years of 2001-2005 were marked overall by massive cuts in state support to the university. The decline in state support in some years, followed by flat funding in others, led to lean budgets in most academic units, another early retirement program (VERIP) that produced a marked decline in the size of the regular faculty, and annual raises for faculty and staff only in the two percent (2%) range in most years and no raise at all in one year. Yet, at the upper-level of Student Affairs, as in the other administrative divisions at UMKC, top administrators did not share in the lean times. Rather than the “belt tightening” found in the academic units during these years of pinched budgets, in the top administrative units the egregious practice of “title inflation” was rampant. Title inflation refers to the practice of creating a new title for an individual and, then, using this new title (and, at times, but not always, a newly written job description) to justify a salary increase far in excess of the 2% salary pool available in most academic units for faculty and staff and for other staff members in support units. In Student Affairs, upper-level administrators enjoyed robust salary increases in 2001-2005 in spite of the budget cuts shared elsewhere across the campus--in one case, this involved a forty percent (40%) increase in salary in a single year.

The simplest way to indicate the extent of the title inflation in the Division of Student Affairs at UMKC during the Gilliland administration is to compare the organizational chart of this office with that of Student Affairs at the University of Missouri-Columbia (Compare Chart #1—UMKC with Chart #3—UM-Columbia).

[INSERT CHART #3 HERE]

The Columbia campus is much larger than UMKC, with more than twice as many students. UMC enrollment for Fall '05 is 27,985; UMKC enrollment is 12,164 (this excludes 2,160 dual-enrolled high school students since they are not on campus and served by Student Affairs). Moreover, Columbia is a residential campus in a mid-sized town, with fewer things for students to do off-campus than in Kansas City, while UMKC remains a predominantly urban commuter campus. Many of our students return to their work place or home after their classes, rather than remaining on campus.

The Columbia campus clearly requires more student services than UMKC, yet the Student Affairs office at Columbia is leaner at the top than Student Affairs here. UM-Columbia has a Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and *only one Assistant Vice-Chancellor*. At UMKC, in addition to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, in 2004-2005 we also had an *Associate Vice-Chancellor* and *Three Assistant Vice-Chancellors*. One of the assistant vice-chancellors, the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Student Development, left the university mid-year last year and the position has not been refilled as of this time, although it has been recently advertised, as noted above. Students have not reported any noticeable decline in the services provided to them in the interval, suggesting that this position may not be necessary. Even if this position is not filled—and COSCO strongly recommends that it not be and that the monies saved from this office be transferred to the Provost's office for redistribution to academic programs--UMKC will still have one associate and two assistant vice-chancellors in the Division of Student Affairs. The salaries in FY '05 for these three remaining positions with associate or assistant vice-chancellor in their title total over \$350,000. With benefits added in, the total is about \$500,000

per year. In these tight budget times, when the size of the faculty has been cut and raises for most faculty and staff have not kept pace with the annual increase in the cost of living, we have to ask: What's wrong with this picture? Are all three of these administrative positions more important or essential in realizing our core academic mission than the number of regular tenure-track faculty positions that could be filled with equivalent funds? COSCO is not convinced that this is the case.

The conferral of inflated titles on individuals (e.g., "Assistant Vice-Chancellor" instead of "Director" or "Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor") has added significant cost to the university's budget. A few examples must suffice to suggest the magnitude of the problem. Note that all figures cited here are for salary only, and do not include benefits. In one case, a title change from Director of Admissions (FY '01 salary of \$60,808) to Assistant Vice-Chancellor (@ \$100,000 in FY '02) led to a 66% salary increase in cost in one year. By the time the title of Associate Vice-Chancellor was given to this individual in FY '05, he had realized a salary increase of 97.5% in just four years.

In sharp contrast, a Senior Secretary earning \$12.02/hour in '01 earned \$13.31 in '05—or a total increase over four years of just 10.7%. In pre-tax dollars, the administrator earned \$59,312 more in FY '05 than he had in FY '01, while the Senior Secretary earned only an additional \$1,683. In other words, within four years the annual salary differential between this administrator and this staff member grew by \$57,629. The cumulative difference in earnings for the intervening years is even more egregious. This type of situation has not gone unnoticed across campus. Many UMKC employees have begun to ask rhetorically, "What's wrong with this picture?"

**[Add a Chart (#4) here comparing these two salary histories]**

In only a few years, title inflation, coupled with huge salary increases, has led to a vast (some would say "obscene") income gap between upper-level administrators and staff. As noted above, this has not been lost upon staff members. Need we wonder, then, why mid- and lower-level staff members are cynical about the promulgation of slogans such as "UMKC—a Work Place of Choice" coming out of the Administrative Center on Oak St.? In terms of employee morale, the cost of title inflation and huge raises for administrators, while not quantifiable, has no doubt been even greater than the dollars misdirected under the business model of the Gilliland administration.

Next, compare and contrast the situation of top administrators and regular faculty members during the same period of time (FY '01-'05). In '01, the Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs earned \$53,247—a salary comparable to a senior Associate Professor in the College at that time. In '03 when given the title of Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Student Development, this individual's salary was bumped up to \$95,000. Put another way, dropping the “to” from this person's title resulted in a 78.4% salary increase! This individual's final '05 salary was \$99,807.

This salary history is in sharp contrast to that of a typical tenure-track Assistant Professor. For example, an Assistant Professor of English, hired as an entry-level tenure-track faculty member at \$40,000 in FY '00, earned \$41,560 a year later in '01. Five years later, after having distinguished herself as a teacher and as a publishing scholar, this professor was promoted and tenured. Her salary at this point was \$48,571—or a total salary increase of only 16.9% in four years even with tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Over the same time period, the Student Affairs administrator's salary noted directly above increased 87.4%. In pre-tax dollars, the administrator's salary had increased \$46,560 between FY '01 and '05, while the professor's salary increased only by \$7,011. Again we ask: What's wrong with this picture? What rational value system says that the contribution of the administrator to the mission of educating our students is so much more valuable than that of the scholar-teacher? This example could be multiplied hundreds of times over on campus.

**[Add Chart #5 here illustrating these two salary histories]**

In only a few years, title inflation, coupled with unreasonably large salary increases in the administration, has severely undermined the sense of collegiality and shared purpose between faculty and the administration. In too many ways, the “rules of the game” have become different for faculty members and upper-level administrators. Consider the fact that even entry-level regular faculty members are hired only after intensive national searches are conducted. In contrast, in Student Affairs, as in other support divisions of the university, administrative positions, including those at the level of associate or assistant vice-chancellor, have often been filled (or newly created and filled) without any real search having been conducted.

Moreover, in general, a faculty member can be given a new title only twice in her or his career—once when promoted to Associate Professor and again with promotion to Professor. For faculty, promotion is granted only after strenuous peer review at a national level. In addition, there are a minimal number of years between promotions (e.g., six years between being named an assistant professor and promotion to associate professor). These “rules” and time limitations are in sharp

contrast to the absence of any controls over how often and how rapidly administrators can be promoted and/or granted new titles. Above we saw how much an administrative change of title could be worth. For comparative purposes, let us compare how much an academic promotion is worth in terms of a salary boost and how much a new administrative title is worth. In the beginning of the period used here (FY '01-'05), in the College of Arts and Sciences, newly promoted and tenured faculty members, upon being granted the title of Associate Professor, received an annual salary increase of only \$2,500. Compare this with the administrative raises in much shorter time periods in Student Affairs, ranging from \$40,000 to \$60,000 or more. Last year in the College, the salary increase for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and for having earned tenure was raised—all the way to \$3,000! This “reward” in terms of a salary increase is still pitifully, even shamefully, small. When compared to administrative raises in Student Affairs and other support divisions in the past four or five years it is, to be blunt and honest, outrageous. COSCO believes that this situation—and the culture that created and fostered it—cannot be allowed to continue if we are to achieve our goal of becoming a premier urban university and a workplace of choice.

COSCO does not dispute the fact that Student Affairs provides important and necessary support for our students. Nor do we mean to imply any disrespect for the contributions of the many employees in this division. However, the exorbitant salaries paid to a few administrators have created a sense among many employees of the university that *they* are not appreciated. This situation must change.

Chart #6 traces the salaries of top administrators with “vice-chancellor” in their titles within Student Affairs for FY 2001-2005.

### **Responsibility Creep In Student Affairs**

When the current Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs was hired, she was charged naturally enough with running the Division of Student Affairs. Over several years, however, a pattern of “responsibility creep” emerged as more and more duties were assumed by her as more and diverse offices came under her purview. Without going into a step-by-step history of developments between 2000 and the present, suffice it to say that today this administrator’s responsibilities and titles have grown greatly. Her titles have included, or now are, Deputy Chancellor for University Communications, Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Interim Director of Development and Advancement, and Interim Executive Vice Chancellor. In large measure, the ever-increasing responsibilities “on her plate” are a testimony to the respect this individual has garnered for her skills as an administrator.

However, COSCO believes that the felt need on the part of the Chancellor or Interim Chancellor to turn to this one individual repeatedly to help straighten out one problem or another is also testimony to the relative lack of competent administrators in other support units. The latter situation was itself a predictable result of the practice of promoting individuals without conducting searches and, at times, without regard to whether the prior experience of specific individuals fit the requirements for a given position. To be blunt, we are still suffering from the results of a blatant and common form of cronyism that flourished under the previous Chancellor.

In Student Affairs, the Vice-Chancellor has been spread very thin. Much of her time, attention, and energy have been directed to other things than Student Affairs. One result of this has been the understandable need to delegate some authority to others within Student Affairs. This no doubt contributed in part to the title inflation discussed above.

Equally seriously, the Vice-Chancellor's direct and regular supervision of others in the Division of Student Affairs seems to have suffered as a result of her many other responsibilities. Without regular direct supervision, some upper-level administrators in Student Affairs exercised poor judgment by offering "sweet deals" to friends. To cite just one example, COSCO has discovered that an Assistant Vice-Chancellor in Student Affairs drew up such a sweet deal for a former employee and "insider" in Student Affairs. A Memorandum of Understanding (essentially a contract) was issued in November 2002 concerning compensation for this individual for a twenty-hour per week assignment in a newly created position as Neighborhood Liaison. The position description for this position (see Appendix #8) is such that it is hard to imagine twenty hours a week being required (e.g., neighborhood associations meet only monthly or quarterly). In return for his services, this former staff member, who is also the spouse of the Director of Student Life in Student Affairs, was given a university-owned house at 5310 Charlotte rent-free. Moreover, all utilities, including heating and cooling, were also paid by the university, as was a security system. Finally, a university parking permit was thrown into the deal.

COSCO finds this arrangement troubling for several reasons. Besides the fact noted above that the assigned duties seemingly did not require twenty hours of work per week, we question whether the position of Neighborhood Liaison was ever needed at all. As we understand it, university-owned properties and rental homes, as well as those owned by the University of Kansas City (now UMKC) Board of Trustees, are the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor of Administrative and Financial Affairs. He already has a system in place whereby university officials from his office interact with the neighborhood associations and renters, including students. Moreover, there are also two FTE positions in the Advancement Office dedicated to Community Public Affairs. In short, the position in Student Affairs appears to have been duplicative from the start. It was, frankly, unnecessary. Finally, the job description for this Neighborhood Liaison alludes to his responsibility for the "development and implementation of Neighborhood 101 course." We do not know what this course is about, but wonder why any staff member of Student Affairs is designing and offering courses in the first place? Needless to say, sweet deals of this sort for insiders create jealousies and poor morale among other employees. After all, no doubt there are many hard-working staff members who would jump at the chance to receive totally subsidized housing. Apparently, though, those who lack the personal connections with upper-level administrators cannot get the same deal. COSCO feels that if the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs were able to devote her full attention to this division, such abuses of power would not happen.

Elsewhere in the COSCO reports, attention has been drawn to the fact that there are numerous other examples of duplicative positions in the four administrative divisions. For example, Student Affairs has had an office of Minority Student Affairs, which might make sense except for the fact that the Provost's Office and the Chancellor's Office both have (or, until recently, had) one or more positions dedicated to minority and diversity issues. COSCO favors consolidating these positions and there has been movement in this direction. However, in



addition, we urge that any savings accrued thereby be reallocated directly into academic programs and/or a fund for minority faculty hires.

Another example of the recent creation of a highly paid, but in our eyes unnecessary, administrative position is that of the Vice-Provost for Student Affairs and Student Engagement. Vice-Chancellor Long informed COSCO last spring that Student Affairs had written the job description for this position, located in the Provost's Office, and provided 50% of the salary and benefits cost. In FY '06, the salary (excluding benefits) for this position is \$119,500. Reportedly, this position was designed as a "bridge" between Student Affairs and the Provost's Office. When COSCO spoke with the occupant of this position, we came away unsure exactly what she did every day. One of the few specific responsibilities of the office mentioned was directing SEARCH, a once-a-year showcase of undergraduate research. Again, this is a most laudable activity, bringing attention to the best work of some of our students, but it is for only a few days. Moreover, at least three other individuals on campus also claim to be supervising this activity. COSCO recommends that this position be discontinued and that the Undergraduate Council, composed of faculty and staff from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, be re-established and charged with recommending policy for undergraduate education across school boundaries.

#### **The Lack of Transparency in the Use of Student Fees**

In the past several years, Student Affairs has found itself repeatedly challenged by students and the Student Government Association over the use of student activity fees. At issue in most cases is whether the fees collected have been expended for their intended or announced purposes or not. The level of distrust and suspicion has been such that just a few years ago the Student Government Association asked for a UM System-level audit of student fees. Again this fall, student leaders have made noises again about demanding another audit. Students (and a growing number of faculty members) regularly question whether the IT fees that students pay really go to support computer labs and other IT resources they need. Not only has the name of the fee changed several times, but the financial reporting records make it extremely difficult to confirm precisely where fees were expended.

UMKC students have shown themselves willing to bear their part of costs on campus. For instance, students approved an additional fee of \$85 to support the construction of a new student union a few years ago. However, due to the lack of real progress in realizing this project, coupled with mixed messages from administrators on how the student fee would be used, led the student government to withdraw its support this fall. The lack of progress on the student center has been frustrating for all involved. Nevertheless, Student Affairs must bear some of the responsibility for this failure. First, Student Affairs spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on plans for a deluxe center attached to the library, yet without a well-designed plan for getting the private support needed.

Since the time of Gary Widmar, UMKC students have also protested the use of student fees to help cover the salary of employees in Student Affairs, yet the practice has continued unabated. COSCO shares the students' concern over using student fees to pay salaries. We recommend that the university adopt a policy prohibiting this and, moreover, that the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Provost exercise direct supervision of student fees. Finally,

dissatisfaction with the fee structure and the seemingly ever-increasing cost to students has recently led the Student Government Association to pass a resolution opposing the indexing of fees to a national calculation.

COSCO feels that the current situation surrounding student fees is detrimental to our educational mission. The Division of Student Affairs needs to move immediately to adopt complete transparency in accounting for all fees collected and for their expenditure. This should not be hard to do. On the course schedule web site at the University of Missouri-Columbia, the Student Affairs Office lists in full the amounts of fees collected and how they are allocated. Surely, Students Affairs at UMKC could provide the same transparency to students here.

COSCO shares the concern of students over the lack of transparency in this area. It is one area where the Division of Student Affairs has been less than forthcoming in terms of providing answers to questions from members of COSCO. For example, COSCO made the following direct request to the Vice-Chancellor: "Provide detailed information on how student activity fees are expended. What oversight is there?" In response, COSCO received a one-page disclaimer, which says in part, "Student Fees are expended in direct relation to [the] purpose the fee was created [for]." This response is totally inadequate and guaranteed to feed student suspicions. Indeed, the casual—and grammatically sloppy—nature of the response seems to signal that Student Affairs does not take this issue seriously and even resents having to answer such a query, whether the query comes from students or a standing committee of the Faculty Senate.

Increasingly, students and faculty members also wonder how Student Affairs could accrue a year-end balance of \$1,656,098 in FY '05. If student fees are directed to the purposes for which they were designated and collected, and if the General Revenue Allocation (GRA) for Student Affairs is at an appropriate level, then why is there such a large operating balance at the end of the year? If this figure of almost \$1.7 million is attributable to earnings from auxiliary services, should not this "profit" be put into the academic programs on campus or student scholarships? This has been done for years on the UM-Columbia campus, where the bookstore, for instance, operates as a not-for-profit entity and all profits generated are transferred directly into the general scholarship fund. Millions of dollars have been directed to students in this way each year. COSCO applauds the Faculty Senate Budget Committee's and the Budget Advisory Committee's move to look at year-end balances and urges the Chancellor and the Provost to consider their findings in making budgetary decisions.

Student fees are not small change—they bring considerable funds into the Division of Student Affairs, just as they take significant money from the bank accounts of students and/or their parents. Student fees are assessed based on Student Credit Hours (SCH). The University Center Fee is to be directed towards the maintenance and repair of the student union, as well as towards operating expenses. In FY '05 student fees of \$1,281,552 were directed to the University Center. The Student Health Fee supports the Student Health Center, while the Intercollegiate Athletic Fee supports the men's and women's athletic programs. In FY 2005, Swinney Recreation Center alone received \$745,466.97 from student activity fees.

### **The Need for Fiscal Responsibility and Constraint in Student Affairs**

In this report, COSCO has noted several areas where funds have been expended in a questionable fashion in Student Affairs, ranging from “sweetheart deals” for insiders to pie-in-the-sky planning and consulting costs for the new student union complex. We would be remiss if we did not also mention the Twin Oaks housing complex. This property was purchased by UMKC following the advice of then-Vice-Chancellor Joe Doerr and has cost the university millions of dollars every year since. The current Student Affairs leadership is not responsible for our taking over this fiscal “black hole.” However, there is some culpability for unwisely pouring significant monies into renovations for ideal learning environments in this crumbling and unsafe structure. COSCO was unable to get an accurate total of the funds Student Affairs spent on Twin Oaks. In one sense, “there is no use crying over spilled milk,” but, at the same time, this history should lead us to recognize that the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs has been asked to do too many things at the same time. Had she been allowed to concentrate exclusively on student concerns, perhaps many tens of thousands of dollars would have been saved.

### **Recommendations**

All of these considerations lead COSCO to make several recommendations—both structural and in terms of policy--concerning the Division of Student Affairs, which we believe will lead to greater efficiency, budgetary savings which can be re-directed to academics, and increased focus within Student Affairs on the quality of the student experience at UMKC. These recommendations are in concert with the unanimous support expressed for a “strong Provost model,” with all vice-chancellors and heads of support units reporting to the chief academic officer of the university.

#### **Structural Recommendations:**

- Within Student Affairs, Business and Fiscal Operations should be under and report directly to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, not to an Assistant or Associate Vice-Chancellor.
- Enrollment Management and related offices and services should be re-located to the Provost’s Office.
- All Assistant and Associate Vice-Chancellor positions should be re-examined and, in some cases, re-titled (e.g., as Director) to reflect job responsibilities more accurately and to correct title inflation.

#### **Policy Recommendations:**

- A full and complete public accounting of all student fees collected and where they are expended should be made each semester.
- No student fees should be used to pay or supplement salaries of employees in Student Affairs.
- No university housing shall be assigned to employees without an “open” process in which all interested persons would have an equal opportunity to have access to such housing.

## RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING STUDENT AFFAIRS

1. Move Enrollment Management (Records, Admissions, etc.) to the Provost's Office in order to enhance strategic planning.
2. Move the University Advancement operation to the new Office of Advancement under the supervision of the Chancellor's Office.
3. Transfer the the Center for Academic Development to the Provost's Office and the Institute for Professional Preparation to the Medical School.
4. All positions in Student Affairs, as in other Vice-Chancellor-directed units, above Director should be re-titled as Directors and their salaries readjusted to a level commensurate with their duties.
5. Have the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs concentrate on Student Affairs in order to address the problems associated with "responsibility creep."
6. Appoint a committee of faculty, students, and administrators to review current practices regarding the setting, collection, and use of student fees and to develop a transparent system of collecting and distributing student fees to their announced purposes.
7. Reallocate SA funds currently used for promoting diversity and curricular innovation to academic units and put these funds under faculty control.