

August 6, 2014

Higher Education Coordination and Campus Climate in California

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented to:
Assembly Select Committee on Campus Climate
Honorable Shirley Weber, Chair





History of Coordination in California



Master Plan, 1960

- Defined structure and mission of public higher education segments.
- Established freshman eligibility pools.
- Called for streamlined transfer process.



Coordinating Council for Higher Education, 1960 to 1973

- Consisted primarily of representatives from the segments.
- Advised Legislature and Governor on resource allocation.
- Conducted long-term planning studies for growth in higher education.
- Criticized for insufficient planning efforts and dominance by segment representatives.



History of Coordination in California

(Continued)



California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), 1973 to 2011

- Replaced Coordinating Council following a legislative review of the Master Plan.
- Consisted primarily of members of the public.
- Conducted planning and advising functions for the Legislature and Governor.
- Collected data from segments and made the data publicly accessible.
- Criticized for serving too many functions and ineffective planning.
- Eliminated by a line-item veto of the Governor in 2011.



No Current Coordinating Body

- AB 1348 (Pérez), currently pending in the Legislature, would create a new coordinating agency starting July 1, 2015.



Coordination and Campus Climate



Past Campus Climate Coordination Efforts

- Chapter 690, Statutes of 1988 (AB 4071, Vasconcellos), directed CPEC to determine the feasibility of developing a uniform campus climate assessment for California's higher education institutions.
- In 1992, CPEC issued a report encouraging the segments to develop their own assessments of campus climate. The CPEC argued that developing a uniform assessment to compare campus climate across institutions, while feasible, would not provide any benefits to individual institutions seeking to improve their campus climate.
- To help institutions develop their assessments, CPEC released a resource guide in 1992 that provided institutions with examples of methods and processes for studying campus climate.
- Two years later, CPEC issued a progress report on institutional campus climate efforts. After that time, CPEC only issued occasional reports related to campus climate, such as reports examining the needs of different student populations (such as students with disabilities).
- The CPEC also maintained campus crime data on its publicly accessible website. (This data is still publicly available but has not been updated since CPEC closed.)



Coordination and Campus Climate

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Current Campus Climate Coordination

- State law contains various provisions related to discrimination and harassment at postsecondary institutions in California. For example, state law requires each institution to have a written policy on sexual harassment.
- Federal law also contains provisions related to campus climate. For example, federal law requires colleges to publicly disclose annual campus crime statistics and safety information and to follow certain disciplinary and victim assistance procedures. Colleges also must provide violence prevention education to students and employees.



Issues for Legislative Consideration



Data Collection, Use, and Reporting

- Would the state, higher education institutions, and students benefit from state-level data collection on campus climate? If so, what data should be collected?
 - Incidents of harassment and discrimination?
 - Students' perceptions of campus climate?
- How would any data that is collected be used to improve campus climate?
- How would state data collection relate to existing federal reporting requirements?



Coordination

- Would the state, higher education institutions, and students benefit from state-level coordination of other campus climate efforts?
- If so, what type of coordination would be beneficial?
 - Uniform assessments of campus climate?
 - Sharing and assessing responses to campus incidences?
 - Disseminating best practices among institutions?
- Which agencies would be responsible for such efforts?
- How might the state's public higher education systems improve coordination among their campuses?
- How might public and private institutions improve coordination with each other?
- How might the state and institutions improve coordination with community groups?