AGENDA ITEM

A-6. UNC Policy Waiver for AIMS Microgrants .... Junius J. Gonzales

Situation: The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs requests the Board's permission to use a portion of UNC General Administration funds budgeted for the Actualizing Innovations Meant to Scale (AIMS) to fund micro-grants (or similar interventions) at specific campuses, should any of their proposals to scale innovations show promise of improving degree completion for specific populations.

UNC Policy Manual 300.3.1, Section B.1.b.4 (Budget Administration) states, "No action should be taken which would have the effect of establishing a new community service or financial aid program without specific approval by the Board."

Background: As part of a larger grant program designed to improve student success, UNC General Administration has budgeted funds to scale innovative practices, including financial aid microgrant interventions to specific populations. Microgrant interventions have received extensive attention nationwide after positive outcomes.

Assessment: In order to achieve goals tied to student success, we seek the Board's permission to use up to $50,000 total in state funds under the AIMS grant mechanism for any feasible and promising microgrant innovations proposed by the campuses and approved after review by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. This request is for the current fiscal year and is not a continuing request or policy revision.

Action: This item requires a vote by the Committee, with full Board vote through the consent agenda.

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CAOs,

We have just obtained $150,000 one-time funds to spend on "Actualizing Innovations Meant to Scale" (AIMS) and we are requesting your proposals for funding. The concept is for you to take innovative practices that you (or another institution, not just at UNC) have tried or have wanted to try--that have supporting data for effectiveness, even if pilot--and expand the practice to a larger scale program.

Here are the proposed guidelines:

1. The money must be spent by the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2017
   a. Each institution may request up to $35,000, but agree to match at least 33% the UNC GA funding for the concept. Match may be well-documented in-kind contributions, not necessarily dollars.
   b. Institutions may submit only one proposal for each concept area listed below (maximum of three proposals per institution), and the total requested per university from these funds cannot exceed $35,000.
   c. Limit proposals to no more than three single spaced pages per proposal (maximum of nine pages if submitting a proposal for each area), outlining the background on the concept (where was it tried, evidence supporting positive outcomes), justification for the amount requested, target student population, and the proposed scale. A short final report will be due to GA December 1, 2017.

2. The concepts must be in one of three following areas:
   a. Deploying Academic Innovations for Affordability
      i. Open Content/Open Educational Resources for courses (to replace student-purchased materials; proposals might link with library resources/faculty development). Examples might include faculty stipends for open source development for large enrollment courses, collaboration with university libraries, etc.
      ii. Use of Personalized/Adaptive Learning Content Applications (e.g., OpenStax, Acrobatiq)
   b. Enhancing Student Success

      i. Supplemental Instruction Programs – Examples for expansion include: alternative delivery (hybrid/online), augmentation of SI in high demand/gateway courses, explore alternative or adapted models (etc.)

      ii. Academic 'Coaching': Examples can include course-based coaches, adaptations of motivational interviewing, interventions that focus on non-cognitive factors

c. Utilizing Financial Aid Innovations:

      i. Micro-scholarships to specific populations (e.g., scholarships for students who have expired financial aid but need one more semester/summer session to complete their degrees; scholarships for students to use in the first summer session or short sessions in order earn 30 semester hours for the AY and stay on-track for graduation)

      ii. Other, institutional proposed, financial aid innovations

Please send your proposals to Rondall Rice (rrice@northcarolina.edu) by December 15th. We will have the money available for the designated programs at the start of the 2017 spring semester. The proposals will be reviewed by internal and external parties.

I look forward to seeing your proposals, selection of evidence-informed interventions, and their possibilities for expansion at your institutions and possibly system-wide. We apologize again for the short turnaround time, but, as discussed, these funds were recently released to us, and we identified the three areas based on past conversations with you and others.