



UNIVERSITY UNION ANNUAL REPORT 2005-06

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

OVERVIEW

THE UNIVERSITY UNION SERVES AS THE CENTERPIECE OF CAMPUS LIFE for students, faculty, staff, alumni and guests on campus. Its general goals are to provide quality services to its users and to present and support outstanding educational, cultural and recreational programs. Through programs and services, the Union strives to enhance the quality of college life, which augments the college experience.

The specific goals of the University Union for 2005-2006 are:

- 1)** Strive to provide superior service to our diverse campus community, through continual assessment and improvement of our services and technological resources.
- 2)** Train, develop and encourage a highly committed and conscientious University Union staff to provide exceptional, professional customer oriented service and who are sensitive and responsive to the needs of our multi-cultural campus community;
- 3)** Enhance students interpersonal, leadership and critical thinking skills; develop nurturing and supportive networks; and help prepare them for active citizenship beyond the collegiate experience.
- 4)** Maximize the use of the University Union programs, services and facilities through superior customer service and creative marketing to advance the mission of the Union, Student Affairs and the University.
- 5)** Exercise financial controls and management according to acceptable business practices and University policy for the purpose of maximizing generated revenue production, while prudently monitoring all expenditures of the University Union;
- 6)** Adhere to University, Trustee and State policies.

UNDERLYING THESE SIX GOALS IS A CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER SERVICE.



THE YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During 2005–2006, the University Union experienced a number of successes in relation to its goals, yet there remain several areas in which improvement is both possible and important if the Union is to continue to successfully serve the University community.

Information on reservations, generated revenue and other important, but not easily enumerable, services and activities are presented in this section. It should be noted, given the central importance of programs and activities to the Union, space utilization and technical support are dominant concerns.

EVENT SERVICES

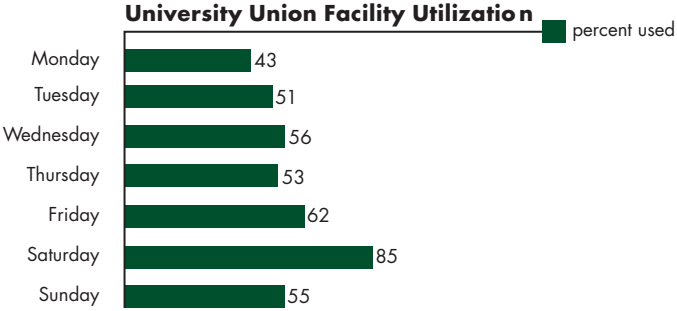
The Event Services department returned to the upward trend in reservations, after a decrease in 04–05. The total number of bookings in the Union was 7,355, a 6.4% increase from 04-05. Fortunately, Student Organization sponsored events increased 8.4% which continues to be a targeted group. This represents 39.6% of our reservations, up 6% from last year. Most of our reduction in room use occurred among Non-University groups, down 25.76%. Auxiliary Organization utilization increased by 21.74%, most attributed to the increase in UNIQUE bookings of 10.47% over last year. University Ballroom use was also down from 619 in 04–05 to 580.

Despite these increases, the Union had a reduction in Facility Use Fees this year. We were up to \$311,428 in 04/05 compared to \$295,646 in 05/06. This is due primarily to the increase in student utilization of the Union which generally carries no charge for use of rooms in the Union.

Event sponsors are defined in five categories: Student Organizations, University Departments, Auxiliary Organizations, Off Campus Organizations and Private Parties. Of those, University Departments represented the largest percentage of Union bookings with 43.9%. Following that, Student Organizations reserved 39.59% of space, Auxiliaries 14.21%, Off Campus 2.3% and finally Private Parties at .24% (12 events).

These numbers tell only part of the story in Event Services. Staff also reserves space outside the Union facility for student organizations when rooms in the Union are full. In total, Event Services secured 4,617 of these “overflow” rooms on behalf of students. That number includes Campus Recreation Reservations). In total, in 2005–2006 the Union handled 18,135 bookings including bookings that were wait listed, canceled, or were on OPUS (Online Personal Union Scheduler).

Vacancy rates have been a subject of study over the past three years. Even with the heavy volume there are still days and times that we find significant amounts of available space. This is primarily due to traditional usage patterns; student groups rarely book meetings during the prime class hours of Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm. For example, Sunday nights are usually 100% full, but Sunday mornings are virtually empty. The chart below illustrates the highest use rates by day of the week. If we can find a way to steer our event sponsors toward off-peak hours we will be able to make even more use of our meeting rooms.



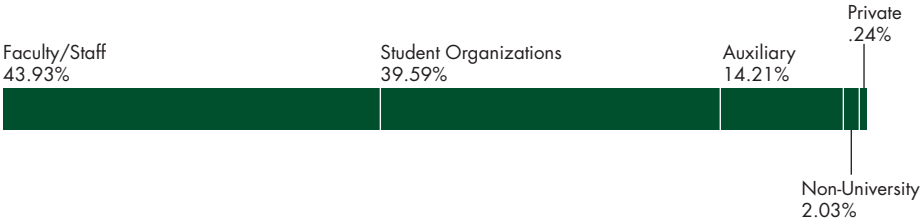
Reservations made in the last four academic (fiscal) years

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total Union events	7,585	8,334	7,820	8,355
Attendance at Union events	437,235	527,701	468,210	449,760
Student organization events	2,817	3,074	3,028	3,308
Ballroom events	635	707	618	580

The illustration below shows data on the number of reservations made by groups in the categories noted, along with the percentage of total reservations.

Student Organizations: 3,308
 Faculty/Staff: 3,670
 Auxiliary: 1,187
 Non-University: 170
 Private: 20

Total Reservations = 8,355



The table below presents data on the number of reservations during specific time periods, along with the percentage of total reservations.

	Summer 2005	Fall 2005	Spring 2006	Total
Number of reservations	1,777	3,215	3,365	8,357
Percentage of total reservations	21.5%	38.5%	40%	100%

June 1 – August 31, 2005 Sept. 1 – Dec. 31, 2005 Jan. 1 – May 31, 2006

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

University Union funding comes from two sources: generated revenue and Student Fees. (The Union receives no state funds to operate) Generated revenue comes from four areas within the University Union: Lease Space, Game Room, Arrangements/ Facility Use, and Facility Operations. Revenue and expense figures for 2005-2006 are

Revenue Figures

	Facility use fees	Sub lease revenue	Program and Program Service revenue	Interest	Fee income	Total
Revenue (\$)	300,554	676,623	195,437	170,912	2,797,900	4,141,426
Percentage of Total	7.26	16.34	4.72	4.13	67.56	100

Expense Figures

	Events	Program revenue	Insurance	Supplies and Communication	Repair and Maintenance	Travel	Service other Agencies	Plant/Capital	Total
Expenses (\$)	1,875,272	217,221	48,069	273,559	111,189	31,166	337,261	441,238	3,654,238
Percentage of Total	51.32	5.94	1.32	7.49	3.04	.85	9.23	12.07	100

Games Room Revenue

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Table Tennis	4,843	6,978	4,298	3,899	5,012
Billiards	49,200	45,399	45,379	35,589	34,009
Video Games	52,000	48,887	48,000	46,902	43,000

DESIGN AND MARKETING

During the 2005–06 year the Design and Marketing department of the Union further built on its reputation for high quality design while providing the volume and timeliness needed from this vital area. Some of the basic support tasks accomplished by this unit were: generating promotional materials for more than 60 UNIQUE activities; designed announcements and color posters for the art exhibits in the Union Gallery; designed and created a vast array of building signage, including simple foam core directional signs, custom metal plaques, vinyl banners, cloth flags, and acrylic signs. Staff maintained the University Union’s website which contains over 70 pages of information. Additionally, they were responsible for creating static and animated content for the Union’s plasma screen display as well as our other event monitors throughout the building. The Unit also lent design support to other departments on campus such as Student Activities, Recreational Sports, and Student Affairs. The Union’s Marketing staff also had a member on the University’s logo re-design committee. Union Gallery program was strong through the year with the leadership of the Student Gallery Coordinator. The Union Gallery produced 7 shows during the year.

PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM SERVICES

The University Union Information Desk continues to provide the most current and up to date information on campus to students, faculty/staff, visitors and the surrounding community. We are the only Information Desk on campus that is open late nights and weekends. Therefore, we are seen by many as “the best place on campus to get information”.

There continues to be a strong level of involvement by students volunteering in UNIQUE, numbering 60+ over the course of the year. Several new freshman leaders have emerged, while veterans of several years have continued to feel engaged. Cultural diversity within the UNIQUE organization remains strong as well.

UNIQUE also has added more major weekend events to the schedule. Of particular success were three Sunday programs: the Tegan & Sara concert; the Molotov concert; and the International Folk Dance Festival, ranging in attendance from 500–1500 patrons.

ASSESSMENT

This is a new area of focus for the University Union, yet critical for the Union to be able to tell its story. The Union must find out if we were effective in reaching the campus community with our programs and services and what areas might require additional information. It is more than just how many people entered the building and customer satisfaction, but about learning. How has the Union contributed to student learning and preparing the student for life after Sacramento State? The Union participated in the EBI Benchmarking study in late spring of 2006. Much attention will be focused on the results of that study and creating methods for assessing the learning of our student employees and volunteers.

HIGHLIGHTS

Recreation/Wellness/Event Center

President Gonzalez announced the reaching of the goal to raise \$25 Million dollars. Planning, architectural and financial planning are in full swing. The remaining student fee increase, \$100 will be implemented beginning Fall 2006.

East Walkway Expansion

The Union has very limited seating available for dining. During lunch it is often impossible to find a place to sit. The idea of increasing available seats by placing outdoor dining seating along the east walkway was proposed last year by the Union Board Operations Committee. After complex and challenging bidding the project was started in January 2006. When completed in early July it will add almost 150 seats for students. About half of those seats will be fully protected from wet weather and made more comfortable by overhead heaters. The project is fully integrated into the architectural scheme of the building and provides amenities beyond just the much-needed seating, such as:

- ~A new sign landmark displaying the new Sac State logo
- ~Electrical outlets and wireless network access for laptop users
- ~Attractive wood trellises and landscaping instead of just masonry
- ~Brighter and more attractive walkway lighting

Games Room Remodel

The Games Room had been virtually untouched in terms of design since it opened in 1976. The overall look of the room was functional but very plain. A new ceiling and lighting plan was designed in collaboration with Facilities Management. We also added televisions, a state of the art video game system, lounge furniture, custom cabinet work, table tennis ball containment and aesthetic features that make the room fun and attractive. As a result, we have seen improved traffic in the room even during this year of reduced enrollment.

UNIQUE Office and new conference room

UNIQUE program volunteer students have congregated in various offices for years, needing a place to call home. A little-used space on the third floor was converted to as a way to provide a comfortable and professional office space for these students. At the same time we created a new conference room for ten designed for our conference planning customers. It can also be used by student organizations needing space in “a pinch”. Almost all of this remodeling work was done by our own maintenance staff and was accomplished without any interruption in essential services by scheduling the key moves over holiday weekends and during planned closures.

Campus Calendar

Sacramento State has needed a comprehensive, unified events calendar for years. This year it has finally come about through an exciting collaboration of the Union, ASI, Student Affairs, Public Affairs and Facilities Management. This new website can be accessed by anyone looking for an event on campus and is searchable on any keyword of the event. Individuals looking for an event need only a bit of information about it and the calendar will find it. In addition, sponsoring departments can notify individuals through e-mail reminders, even keeping them informed about changes to the event as it approaches. Anyone can request a posting to the calendar; it will appear immediately after the appropriate approvals. The calendar is in its final stages of development and we have begun promoting it this summer, 2006.

Calendar marketing

Created and implemented a marketing campaign for the Campus Calendar of Events using the slogan, “One Campus, One Calendar, One Click.”

Mother’s Room and Unisex Restroom

These two projects have been an outstanding example of the Union’s flexibility and responsiveness to student needs. The needs were expressed by students during the Spring semester and we quickly identified two locations to be remodeled. One was a real stretch; it had been an unused emergency stairway, all concrete and dust. This unlikely area was turned into a cozy and bright mother’s lounge, complete with a sink

and a changing table. The other was a men's restroom that still had the original tile and finishes from when it was built 30 years ago. We took it down to the wall studs and changed it to a unisex restroom, following the guidelines set forth by Facilities Management. In both areas our own maintenance staff took on the challenge and completed the projects before the end of the fiscal year.

Door Entrance People Counters: People counters were installed at all of the main entrances two years ago but the system was primitive and required daily counts and resets. The new system is fully networked so the data is recorded automatically each day, and can be broken down to 30-minute increments if needed. We look at data on a daily basis and that is used by vendors, programming staff and operations.

~Fall 2004 average daily counts (Mon – Thurs) 15,688

~Fall 2005 average daily counts (Mon – Thurs) 17,192 up 9.6%

Staff

The reorganization of the union staff, in light of the retirement of Richard Schiffers after 30 years of service and with the addition of the Recreation, Wellness, Event Center, the Union, while doing searches, worked with fewer staff than necessary. From a staffing perspective, there has been a high level of staff cooperation and collaboration. This comes at all levels of the Union, the staff, the students as well as volunteers. Team members worked toward a common goal of providing outstanding programs, services and facilities.

Personnel Searches

During the past year, amidst other growth and changes, the Union's Marketing staff has expanded as well. In addition to reclassifying our existing Designer I position to the next level, we created an additional Designer I position. Now with Matthew Stuart (as of 4/10) and Tiffany Dreyer (starting 8/1), our full time staff in this area now numbers three.

Printing System

For several years the Marketing Office has been limited in the size materials that could be printed in-house. Although proven effective, any type of digital output larger than 11 x 17 needed to be done elsewhere and was cost prohibitive to do on a regular basis. After much research and testing, The Union purchased a large format Epson printer, providing the ability to print 42 inches tall by any width and dramatically improving our in-house (as well as campus-wide) promotional capabilities.

Plasma Screen

The success of promoting events to the campus using the new plasma display located over the Information Desk. June of this year marked one full year that we have been using the plasma display system at the Information Desk. During this time staff have continued to experiment with animation techniques, movie clips, digital video, as well as sound. Where at one point (not too long ago) many students pointed to our large, outdoor banners as the most effective event marketing tool we used, it now is clearly the utilization of screen graphics, on both the plasma and the six other event screens throughout the building. This has prompted the plan for additional large screens on other floors of the Union, as well as an LED version of the screen for use on the building's exterior.

Design and Marketing Department

The productivity and quality of this operation continues to improve and is highly respected throughout the campus. Union staff and students were able to submit 19 design entries for the national ACUI design competition, "Steal This Idea," in Kansas City, Missouri. They won 2 first place, 2 second, 1 third and 2 honorable mentions. The organization is also using one of Sac State's submitted pieces as the cover artwork for its national design showcase article, published in the July issue of the ACUI Bulletin.

Hosted ACUI Region 15 Conference

In an effort to both reduce costs as well as perpetuate the model for "paperless marketing," our design staff created an exclusively online marketing campaign for the conference, which produced 209 registered delegates. A website was created and maintained as the central information and registration point. E-cards were then employed to stimulate the necessary responses.

Assessment

Completed the EBI Union survey and the results will be utilized for improving the Union in 2006-2007.

Programs

Further diversified the concert and films series that attracted large audiences (throughout the year).

Student Assistants

Recruited & retained strong student leaders to serve on UNIQUE and the building staff, at the information desk and in the games room.

Games Room

The games room utilization increased on average by 13% and revenue increased by 1.06%. Revenue did not increase as much as expected due to video games vendor not meeting expectations.

UNIQUE

UNIQUE conducted its first successful trip to the Coachella music festival. In addition to discovering several new performers to bring to the campus in the future, this served as a reward to several UNIQUE members who have volunteered a great deal of time and followed through on their work.

High Profile Programming

The most high-profile concert of the year was Fall Out Boy and there were also high-profile comedy shows by Jamie Kennedy and Pauly Shore. Fall out Boy sold out 30 days prior to the show and was paid \$12,500; they now sell out venues like Arco Arena and are paid \$100,000+.

Target Marketed Programming

Successful cooperation with, and support of, the African American Community was achieved and program highlights of that partnership included the Blackalicious concert; Goapele concert (Fall Welcome event); concert with Zion I and Crown City Rockers; Dr. Cornel West lecture; Saul Williams spoken word program; and the Elaine Brown lecture.

The strong relationship with Women's Resource Center and Multicultural Center continued in their time of transition. Co-sponsored events included a concert with Toshi Regan; a presentation by artists, Guerilla Girls. Other popular concerts were Sacramento Taiko Dan; Semana de La Raza events; and a Sac State Luau night.

SQL Database Implementation

Upgrades have been implemented from Access to SQL databases resulting in several improvements throughout the Union IT areas:

- ~ Integration of Catering orders into EMS allowing a database solution for catering in the Union instead of unlinked documents.
- ~ Vastly improved Web interface (OPUS) which now includes room booking capabilities given to selected University departments.
- ~ Real-time booking for semester reservations of regular meeting rooms. Students are able to request rooms from anywhere. We even had some room requests that were submitted on Christmas!

~ Faster, more reliable database with a much higher storage capacity.

~ The selection and implementation was done in collaboration with Space Management. In return, we collaborated with them on the selection of Ad Astra as the new campus-wide classroom scheduling solution. This will permit future merging or migration of the two systems.

Phlagleblast (and its promotional campaign)

The University Union Annual Open House (“Phlagleblast”) in only its sixth year has become a very popular Sac State campus tradition. The “look” of Phlagleblast was significantly upgraded through more “upscale” decorations. Much of the decoration work was accomplished by an outside vendor, freeing students and staff to focus more on customer service early in the semester and on the program itself. Over 20,000 students came through the Union that day and enjoyed learning about, and experiencing, the myriad of services and programs that the Union has to offer. A full day, and evening, of entertainment along with prizes, exhibitions, discounts were offered as a welcome back to our most treasured asset — the students of Sacramento State.

Retention of Student Employees

Nationally, student assistant turnover runs 30–50 % from semester to semester but for the past two years, in the Program Services departments, it has been running at under 10% (exclusive of graduations). This speaks well to the level of job satisfaction of our student assistants, which translates positively into a better level of customer service.

College Bowl

The 2005 Sacramento State “All Star” team finished 5th out of 12 teams at the Region 15 Tournament in Feb 2006 (also 5th in 2004, 7th in 2003, and 11th in 2002). Sac State would have done better, but UC Davis, which ultimately finished 7th, somehow managed to pull off an out-of-nowhere, upset game that brought the team’s stunning performance to a premature end. But it was the Sac State team that had all the “buzz” about it among all the participants. Unfortunately, most team members are graduating, so it is time to send in some recruit, and train unseasoned team members for February 2007!

Events/UNIQUE

During the fall and spring semesters, we produced over 60 events, with a total attendance (including Phlagleblast) of over 50,000. Producing those events, there were over 60 active volunteers participating in UNIQUE, over 50% of them new to the organization. Over 40% of the volunteers are people of color.

Collaborative Programming

Continuing close relationships with university organizations were the key this year to many successful programs. Collaborating organizations included the Multicultural Center, Women's Resource Center, B.R.I.D.G.E program, CAMP program, Student Affairs, AFRICA, University Affairs, Music Department, Bilingual Education Department, Student Activities, Residence Life, and Associated Students Inc.

Cultural Affairs Programs

There were a total of over 25 programs offered collaboratively with ASI through the Cultural Affairs grant to the University Union. They included lectures, dance, comedy, movies, plays, and musical performances.

Lobby display System

A new 3-sided lobby display system, adjacent to the Information Desk, is projected to be complete by the later part of the Fall semester.

Website

Completely re-designed the Union's website, included expanded sections for both UNIQUE Programs and Event Services.

Signage

Continue to implement new signage methods in the building which utilize the large format printer. This will manifest itself in other ways as well: window decals, fabric banners, and digital, outdoor signage.

Union Art Collection

Re-tag all artwork in the Union's permanent collection using small plexi-glass plates which give them a lower profile on the wall and a more contemporary look.

Media

Relationships with the local media and target marketing of events continues to benefit us in both attendance and visibility.

Custodial Services

Custodial Services encompasses more than just cleaning, although the daily and nightly cleaning activities are the most important aspects of this department. Few people are aware that there is a "graveyard" crew of several full time employees that work throughout the night to have the Union ready each morning. The heavy cleaning that would be disruptive to students if it was attempted during the day is completed by that shift. After the building opens each morning the light custodial activities that maintain the general cleanliness continues without running noisy vacuums and machines. Disposal of trash is the main daytime cleaning activity.

Custodial Services also maintain our related building amenities such as furniture upholstery, office moves, logo entrance mats, night security, signs and project cleaning (windows and sidewalks). The Union is proud of all the efforts of the custodial and maintenance crews because the facility has continued to be kept at a high level creating an atmosphere that is clean, inviting and comfortable.

Maintenance Services

Maintenance Services takes care of all of the repairs, painting, lighting, heating, and cooling and energy conservation in the Union. Projects accomplished this year include a new satellite coordinated clock system, additional ADA door actuators, intensive flood recovery projects, new display systems, significant infrastructure project cost savings plans, improved storage facilities and improved security systems.

Art Gallery

There were seven exhibits presented this year in the Union Gallery. The diverse exhibits featured photography, sculpture, paintings, and a variety of multi-media and mixed media pieces. The annual Student Purchase Award show at the end of the Spring Semester is now in its 28th year and has produced much of the art that is hung throughout the Union.

Music Listening

New furniture allows students to plug in their personal mp3 & iPod players into the furniture itself. This allows students to lounge in the chair and hear their music amplified. A possible free music download contract with the university, if implemented, may result in further technological advances for the area.

OPUS

OPUS (Online Personal Union Scheduler) was originally implemented in 2002 as the new web-based room request system for the Union. The system was improved this year by moving it to a high speed Web server. It is used not only to request space but also to look up space and check on current events. It was used for 29.8% of our reservations during the first eight months of 2005.

Additionally, we have now added the ability to track our website activity on OPUS to see when and how people are using this service. During the first six months of 2006 we averaged 214 page views per day. Our busiest time of use is between 1pm and 3pm but we have at least some traffic during every hour of the day. At 2am we had a total of 376 page views! We also experienced a huge spike in activity on April 10 for the Fall Semester scheduling requests with almost 2,000 page views that day alone.

Event Equipment

New equipment added this year:

- ~New high-end folding tables for improved conference functions
- ~Twelve new portable cocktail tables
- ~Improved communications with new radios
- ~Built-in LCD projectors in most meeting rooms

Equipment Theft

The recurring problem of theft of equipment in the Union has returned. Efforts will be taken; in collaboration with Public Safety, to create deterrents and even to catch the perpetrators will be put in place.

Wireless networking

The University Union has expanded wireless networking services into the Coffee House and Ballroom. Wireless printing is the latest feature to be added, which should relieve some of the high usage pressure in the Student Computer Room. We are continuing to confer with UCCS to seek ways to offer the service to non-SaLink users.

SPECS

Students Providing Exemplary Customer Service: The creation of a student employee recognition program was developed through the efforts of the Student Management Team. This is a “peer driven” program where student staff members nominate their colleagues for recognition in the provision of superior customer service.

Recreation/Wellness/Event Center

The Union, in collaboration with the University Administration, Athletics, ASI and the Student Health Center is developing the concept of a Recreation/Wellness/Event Center. With the successful referendum, the project has moved into the more formal planning stages. The program for the facility has been confirmed and recommended to President Gonzalez. This recommendation did come with some concerns on the part of the students like the inclusion of some recreational facilities (Bowling Alley and movie theatre) as opposed to fitness/intramural based facilities be included. As this facility will become the signature facility of the campus, information sharing will be critical to the success of the project in light of difficult administrative decisions that must be made based on the ever increasing cost of construction and the financial impact of the RWEC on the University Union.

Gas prices

The significant increase in gas prices could have a drastic impact on the Union and Union customers. An individual's disposable income will be impacted by the increase cost of gas. Gas impacts not only how individuals get to school but how goods and services get to campus. If we have it here, it was delivered by a truck. Prices will adjust accordingly, impacting an individual's ability to purchase goods and services. They will bring their lunch versus buying it in the Union.

Long Range Financial Plans

With the moving forward of the Recreation/Wellness/Event Center, long range financial planning is critical to the overall success of the Union. Ever increasing costs of construction, doubling the size of the personnel of the Union and accompanying benefits will have a major impact on the fiscal health of the organization.

Food Service

There has been no change in the union's food service since the addition of Mother of India. Planning must begin on how to redevelop and improve on the current food offerings in the Union.

Enrollment Numbers

The campus has been short of the enrollment target for the last several years. Since the Union is dependent on student fees for on going support, reduced student enrollment impacts the Union's financial status. More emphasis must be placed on getting greater bang for the buck and on increasing revenue generation ideas to insure the Union's fiscal health.

Growth/Destination 2010

The philosophy of Destination 2010 is to transform the campus into a more welcoming campus with double the current on campus residential opportunities, new and/or renovated facilities, all preparing for the anticipated growth of the campus. The Union needs to look at what can be done now to prepare for the future, thus planning Vision 2020 of the Union and how it matches the growth of the campus and matching financial resources to that growth is critical.

Expanded Hours of Operation

The Union is now open until midnight Sunday through Thursday nights. This is in response to the needs students have expressed for later meeting times, extended food service hours and late night study areas. Preliminary traffic continues to be slow, and a push exists to open at 6:00am versus 6:30am M–F. Assessment of utilization will be addressed in 2006–2007. Budgets have been increased to reflect the additional staff time and utility cost impact.

Student Wage Scale

The Union spent much of 05–06 studying wage rates in the CSU system and in our local area for market competitiveness. The information showed that the Union was not keeping up with our sister schools or our neighbors. This impacted the Union’s ability to retain employees. We are replacing the most number of positions since 1998. A new wage scale was developed to encourage retention and to motivate students to move up the ranks to positions with greater authority. (i.e. line staff to lead staff to Building supervisor)

Increase in Minimum Wage

The legislature is currently studying the possibility of increasing the CA minimum wage by one dollar an hour. The Union planned for a 50 cent increase, and the budget will be impacted if the rate goes up by a full dollar.

Games Room Revenue

The Union has invested in the long overdue renovation of the Games Room with a focus on customer enjoyment, satisfaction and learning. Revenue levels for billiards are healthy, but—as is the case almost universally—commercial video game revenues continue to decline. Our vendor, Patton Vending, has not been able to reverse that slide and has no promising plans to do so. As a result, we have renewed our current contract with them for a period of only one year (vs. 2 years) and have taken back some of our square footage dedicated to their games. The Union has entered into an agreement to use home video equipment with public performance rights for commercial use and is installing 3 plasma screens and home video systems and subsequently will rent time on them at an hourly rate. This is because the quality and variety of home video games that are available have surpassed that of “stand alone” commercial games and because the investment in a new home video game is negligible compared to that of the commercial games, allowing for much more immediate response time to game suggestions and update of the games to the most current releases. In addition to improving Games Room customer satisfaction in our offerings, we anticipate an increase in revenue as a result and will use the results in deciding whether to renew Patton’s contract next year.

Interest by students in attending campus events

Parking, construction projects, impacted classes, and other factors of inconvenience to students are a challenge not only to Union programs, but to the campus as a whole, in motivating students to make the time and effort to attend events here. We are responding by expanding the times and days of event offerings, with some success. But we are in an era of very specific interests, personal schedules and widening entertainment options and it is difficult to overcome those obstacles.

Cost of Artists

The very expensive lecture, concerts, and performing arts markets continued to be a significant challenge in cost-efficiency, but we gave it our best shot. We made some headway this year (e.g.: particularly good deals on Fall Out Boy, Dr. Cornel West). We continue to network with other Northern California campuses to tie in with speakers and artists they are hoping to attract, thereby reducing costs. But in some cases, even well-attended events with well-negotiated artist fees (e.g.: Pauly Shore, Jamie Kennedy) still don't end up recovering all of their fees and end up being heavily subsidized, just to keep their ticket prices reasonable for students.

Free vs. Ticketed Events

Students have become even more discriminating with their spending habits on campus and we have responded with a lot of free programs. As an example, we presented Tom Deluca as a free event this year and drew over 1300 people, vs. attendance of 300–500 the past few years. It wouldn't seem like the \$7 ticket cost for students should make quite that much difference, but it can, unless it is a big, "name" act. This puts us in the tough predicament of choosing whether to pay a higher fee for a high-profile artist or speaker, with the hopes of recovering much of the costs, vs. bringing a lesser-known, but interesting one, and not charging to attend. So far, we've opted for a blend of both approaches.

ASI/Box Office Charges

The loss of 7–9% of revenue from ticket sale events is also a challenge. 6% of that loss is due to ASI Business Office charges to the Box Office, passed on to us.

Village People

We had one event that sold so few pre-show tickets that we had to cancel it, to save money and embarrassment. Thankfully, that situation is extremely rare, and usually due to a bad confluence of circumstances (in this case, mostly weather and construction-related).

Facility Maintenance

We also face the ongoing problem of staying ahead of the custodial and maintenance demands that the building requires. Projects such as key issue/control/storage, preventive maintenance scheduling, carpet and furniture replacement and roof repairs will take a lot of our time and attention in the coming years. We have been fortunate in that we have kept up to date in our maintenance projects so we do not have a deferred maintenance issue. We need to plan now for how to stay on top of these projects in the coming years.

Student Management Team

With focus being placed on student development and preparing students for leaving the University with effective job skills, the continuing development of the student management team is a natural step. A level of student employee has been created in each area,

Games Room, Information Desk, Gallery, Set-Up and Custodial Crews and the Building Supervisors. Their focus will be bringing concerns and ideas of the student assistants to the Union's attention and to also keep them informed about activities around the Union and the Campus.

Bookstore Construction

With the construction of the new bookstore well underway, changes in traffic patterns and parking are a major issue for users of the Union. It will be a tight squeeze for a couple of years. Marketing to grab the Union customers at the start of the school year will be a critical aspect of the success of the Union in 06–07.

Parking Structure III

Parking structure III is under construction for AY 06–07. This will have a significant effect on student and general customer parking. This presents a significant challenge to Union customers who come from off campus.

New Book Store

Construction of the new bookstore beginning in January 06 in lot 4 also further limits access to the Union and services offered to the campus.

CONCLUSION

THE UNIVERSITY UNION CONTINUES TO SERVE THE UNIVERSITY in the provision of programs and services. Through the collaborative effort of the entire campus community, the University Union and its staff (both full time and part time), the student constituencies, and the thousands of customers who utilize the Union, a partnership has been developed and maintained throughout the year. All those involved demonstrate a feeling of commitment to the Union and Sacramento State University and it is these feelings of ownership and loyalty which underlies the high quality of service provided to all who use the Union for programs, meetings, conferences and other activities. There is a real sense of optimism and anticipation for the future.

