Our Opinion: Freshman program at San Diego State in flux?

BY IMPERIAL VALLEY PRESS STAFF WRITER

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Community support can wax and wane when it comes to any number of subjects, and it’s especially tough to engender real community spirit for educational programs threatened with extinction.

But San Diego State University-Imperial Valley campus’ Freshman Scholars Program is that rare exception that really rallies the troops when a real or even perceived slight to the program is felt. The proof of that came in 2005, when the main campus was ready to cut the program, and the Imperial Valley community came out in mass numbers to protest its elimination. The community won, and since then the program has become one of the more special aspects of SDSU-IV life, a program often referred to as a gem by campus officials and community members.

Now, many in the community and some at the campus feel the program is under threat once again, however campus officials, including new Dean David Pearson and new Associate Dean Michael Sabath say preliminary talks are under way to improve, enhance and expand the program.

That enhancement and expansion, according to officials, would see a new partnership forged with Imperial Valley College, including the possibility of basing the freshman program out of IVC.

The Freshman Scholars Program is a good program, and while it might not be possible for it to stay as it is, we hope whatever changed occur are in the best interest of the program.

It’s a bright spot on the campus, a chance for qualified high school seniors to transition into a four-year university setting without leaving the Valley. That concept, one they earn through qualifying for the program with the right kinds of grades and test scores, wouldn’t feel as special if the students were splitting their time between SDSU and IVC.

With 2+2 programs already in place between both schools and nearly automatic matriculation between the campuses, moving the Freshman Scholars program almost feels redundant.

But that’s not to say it couldn’t and wouldn’t work. That’s not to say it couldn’t be beneficial for both campuses, and most important, the students.

That remains to be seen. Whether this expansion even happens remains to be seen, as nothing is set in stone, officials say.
The community and others at both campuses will apparently get a chance to weigh in, and we can imagine the fireworks when that happens. Like we said, though, this could be a good thing if done correctly. Now it’s important to make sure it is, and if it’s not, we have a feeling the public and others will be involved every step of the way to do what they can to right the situation.

THE ISSUE:
Changes are being talked about for SDSU-IV’s Freshman Scholars Program.

WHAT WE SAY:
We hope whatever happens is for the best for the campus and the students.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?
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