

COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE AFFAIRS

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

I. Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

Action Taken: *The agenda and minutes were approved with some corrections to the minutes 10-0-0.*

II. Chair's Report

Chair Andrea Kasko

The Chair noted that she had a meeting with the Chair of the Graduate Deans about a joint letter regarding the impact of COVID-19 on graduate researchers. She also participated on the budget call and in discussions about enrollment increase requests from the legislature. The governor's budget was released. UC requested \$600M in capital investments and infrastructure improvements, but unfortunately only received \$100M. However, there was a significant investment in research of \$185M in one-time funds to support three climate initiatives, \$100M for climate action research seed and matching grants, \$50 for climate innovation incubators, and \$35M to establish climate workforce development and training hubs. Chair Kasko said that Vice President Maldonado had advocated strongly for the funding.

In-person retirement counseling was discussed at Academic Council as well as a need for a COLA increase in retirement payments because of inflation. There was also talk of demands for hybrid education by the disabled students and a related sit-in that is taking place on the UCLA campus. There were revisions to APM 759 regarding leaves of absence and the Council was generally supportive. A draft policy on bullying in the workplace was out for review and it was determined that it still needs work. The Regents proposed a revision to the APM to call out entrepreneurship, intellectual property, and patent activity. The Senate committees did not support this revision. There was also discussion about conflict of interest related and the need for prior approval for foreign activity. While the Senate understood the University's need to track faculty affiliations, it declined to support the policy revisions due to concerns about the rationale and additional administrative burdens. There was a very robust discussion about the issue of whether the UC wants to go into fully online undergraduate degrees. This is seen as a way to increase capacity, but there are a lot of concerns. The idea is very controversial and there will probably not be a consensus anytime soon.

III. Vice Chair's Report

Vice Chair Erith Jaffe-Berg

The CoGD discussed the joint letter with CCGA about the impact of COVID-19 on graduate researchers. Next week, the CoGD will meet with Provost Brown, who has recently announced that he is leaving his position. At this point, an interim Provost has not been appointed, and it is unclear if Michael Brown will continue as a consultant. This change may have implications for the workgroup that is looking at transferring authority for approval of Master's degree proposal to the campuses. Vice Provost Susan Carlson will also be retiring soon.

CoGD featured updates about the bargaining with the unions; the postdoc bargaining is ongoing, and the academic student employees are in the process of unionization discussions. The student researcher bargaining will soon be beginning; since this is a first contract, there is a longer process.

Vice Chair Jaffe-Berg also attended the UCORP meeting; the work on the MRU reviews continues. At the next meeting there will be an opportunity to discuss questions with the program leads.

IV. Announcements from Academic Affairs

Pamela Jennings, Executive Director of Graduate Studies

Todd Greenspan, Director of Academic Planning

Chris Procello, Academic Planning and Research Analyst

Executive Director Jennings told the committee that there was considerable activity in terms of union issues. On the ASE front, the parties have exchanged their sunshine notices, which are general notices indicating what each party wishes to bargain. The teams have also completed their initial consultations for bargaining and are working on costing the items where there is consensus. Bargaining will begin in early March. APP received a lot of input from the graduate deans.

Director Greenspan explained that his office has been holding conversations with the Council of Chancellors about future enrollments and is trying to put together a visioning exercise on 2030 capacity. The Regents are really interested in this and have put together their own workgroup to look at traditional and non-traditional capacity. The legislature wants UC to grow quickly, and thinks that 20K new students is too conservative. The other topic the Director discussed was the CSU Trustees meeting; the Trustees want the CSUs to offer the doctorate in Public Health. The University is working to develop its information about the Public health workforce and which degrees are awarded by UC and which by CSU. In addition there is a joint doctorate offered by UCSD and SDSU. This may be a topic that comes back to CCGA.

Analyst Procello spoke briefly about the upcoming preliminary workgroup meeting on the approval of Master's degrees. Separately, he mentioned that his team is putting together a Regents item on academic integrity. It will cover academic integrity during the pandemic, the stresses students felt, and how some students turned to the "commercial contract cheating industry" through businesses like Chegg and Course Hero. The item will pose systemwide options to address this concern. The last item Mr. Procello mentioned was that the call for the 2022-27 Five Year Planning Perspectives has gone out to the campuses.

V. Council of Graduate Deans' Report

Dean Jean-Pierre Delplanque

Dean Delplanque reported that there was a good deal of time at the CoGD meeting was dedicated to the news that Provost Brown is retiring. It is unclear if there will be an interim provost. The transition will be important, and Provost Brown may stay on for some time in an advisory role. The CoGD has been spending a lot of time on labor issues, and there is concern that the focus on negotiations is detracting from other important issues. There is also concern about the encroachment of labor on academics. COGD continues to offer help to Provost Brown in terms of advocating for graduate education with the legislature.

VI. Campus Reports

UCB – The campus had nothing to report.

UCD – The campus had nothing to report.

UCI – The campus is considering whether it wants to add assessment and program learning outcomes at the graduate level.

UCLA – Some students are holding a sit-in for remote learning, arguing that it supports accessibility for students with disabilities. Recently, graduate council went through a white paper for the new budget model for the campus. The administration has put forward that the campus may come to rely more on SSGPDPs and that the responsibility for their quality lies with the senate. The Chair noted that the local senates can sometimes be heavily pressured to approve programs that are not sound; this is an argument for systemwide review of graduate programs.

UCM – The campus is starting to feel some tension between the push to increase graduate enrollments and the feeling that programs should be kept small to ensure quality. As of now, there is no commitment for an increase in faculty numbers to support enrollment growth.

UCR – The co-authored statement from CCGA and Council about recommitting to UC as a residential university was very helpful for the Riverside graduate council. There was also some consternation about CCGA's rejection of the Microbiology 4+1 proposal.

UCSD – There has been an ongoing discussion on the impact of graduate council on block grants. Recently, it seems that the only discretion graduate council has is over \$30K for DEI initiatives. This past quarter, the campus approved up to 50 percent of classes online. A number of faculty have taken the online option which has led to a lot of havoc.

UCSF - The campus had nothing to report.

UCSB – The campus had nothing to report.

UCSC – The campus is having a problem with some TAs not showing up when they are supposed to be in-person. The campus has officially launched an implementation task force to think about new ways of doing graduate education. There are two subcommittees: one on budget and finance and one on graduate student success and well-being.

In response to many of the campus reports, Chair Kasko opened an *ad hoc* discussion about online and in-person instruction. She asked members to report on how this quarter/semester is faring with the return to in-person learning and what “pain points” the campuses are experiencing. Some of the observations members made included the following:

- Certain exceptions need to be made for the immunocompromised and for individuals with children under five years old. Daycare is closing down on very short notice.
- In general, the decision to go back is highly controversial.
- Some campuses are giving faculty the freedom to decide if they would return to in-person instruction. Students were very adamant that they wanted to keep instruction remote. Some campus populations are hard hit with multi-generational issues. Furthermore, transportation and parking continue to be hurdles.
- Only about fifty percent of students are showing up to class; there is pressure to do hybrid. Elderly faculty feel that they are at risk by returning to in-person instruction.
- Classroom capacity with social distancing is an issue.
- Many campuses have high vaccination rates, extensive testing, and low positivity rates, so many students are feeling safe.
- Faculty have been denied exemptions to teach remotely, but TAs have been granted the flexibility to work remotely. Some TAs are not even in California.
- The administration has been very clear that the campus is back in-person but there is ambiguity at the school and department level. Some chairs give exceptions and some do not.

VII. Consultation with the Academic Senate Leadership

Robert Horwitz, Academic Council Chair

Susan Cochran, Academic Council Vice Chair

Academic Council Chair Horwitz told the committee that he and Vice Chair Cochran had a meeting with the President and that he encouraged the idea of “Senate Reopening Guidelines 2.0” to give some ballast to local senate policy. Provost Brown has announced he will be leaving his position at the end of the academic year, as will Vice Provost Carlson and Academic Senate Executive Director Hilary Baxter. The Senate will be involved in all of those searches.

UC was largely pleased with its allocation in the governor’s budget, but did not get what it requested for deferred maintenance and seismic retrofitting. In contrast, \$135M was allocated for climate related research, particularly for projects that are aimed at improving infrastructure resiliency. A key development in the budget is a multi-year compact that would provide the UC with an annual five percent increase on the permanent budget for five years as long as progress is made on certain specified policy goals such as increased enrollment. The President has talked about his proposed increase of 20K students by 2030; the governor’s budget stipulates that growth must be on all 10 campuses. Some of that growth will be substitution of resident students for non-residents, and the governor's compact promises to pay campuses to bring down their non-resident student percentages to an 18 percent cap over the next five years. OP has convened an enrollment capacity working group and it is looking at the expansion of summer session and possible satellite campus arrangements with an underutilized CSU or community college campuses.

At the January Regents’ meeting, there was a presentation from an NGO called California Competes that looked at higher education and workforce issues. It conducted a survey on the demand from adults 25 years or older for UC education and it reported that demand is quite high, especially among Latino adults and that three-quarters would like an exclusive online modality. Vice Chair Cochran believes that the California Competes research is questionable. However it supports predilections by some of the Regents and legislators for online education. One of the provisions of the budget is for UC to double the number of student credit hours generated through undergraduate online courses compared to a pre-pandemic baseline and to accomplish that by 2030. Chair Horwitz explained that this raises the question of fully online undergraduate degrees, which would reorient the whole sense of what it means to have a UC education. The issue of fully online undergraduate degrees has bedeviled the Senate for the three years. It was discussed at the Council meeting last week, and the group came to no consensus about it.

The University and the GSRs have reached an understanding about the initial phase of the contract. The primary bone of contention is the line between students and employees. President Drake has been adamant about maintaining that line. PIs may be placed in the position of preferring to hire postdocs rather than graduate students. If the University intends to increase the number of graduate students by 4000 in the next eight years, it needs to consider how it is going to admit and fund them. Separately, the Senate has put together a working group to look at Senate membership for UC Health clinicians.

Chair Horwitz said that he and Vice Chair Cochran had talked to the President regarding faculty frustration with the continued theft of intellectual property and academic dishonesty through businesses like Course Hero and Chegg. If UC cannot solve the cheating problem that is endemic to the online domain, then it cannot expect online education to be the solution to the access problem to the University. This argument sparked the attention of Regent Park, who has asked

the Office of the President to address the issue of student dishonesty at the next Regents' meeting.

Some division chairs have related complaints from retirees about the new Medicare prescription plan and long wait times for assistance. RASC is looking into reinstating in-person retirement counseling in response to Senate complaints. Last year, the UC pension saw COLA increases of two percent, but inflation is at seven percent. The Senate has asked OP to institute another COLA, and President Drake has promised action on this front. At the Regents' meeting, the Senate weighed in on the new housing loan plan. These loans are designed to help faculty with down payments and offer up to \$150,000, much of which would be forgivable over time. The Senate argued that the policy should state a strong preference for these loans to be used for entry-level and junior faculty.

COO Rachel Nava came to the January Academic Council meeting to talk about staffing matters. CUCSA (the Council of University of California Staff Assemblies) conducted a survey that reported that approximately 43 percent of staff say they are thinking of leaving UC. The Chair noted that the new University work environment will allow some staff to work remotely, but that some faculty- and student-facing staff may need to appear in-person. The University is going to have to address the need to have some kind of post-pandemic social contract between students, faculty, and staff to determine mutual commitments and to reestablish a functional intellectual community.

Finally, Chair Horwitz told the committee that the climate memorial to the Regents had been approved by Council and is going to Assembly on February 9. If it passes Assembly, it will then go to the campuses. It is important that the memorial be brought forward in a timely fashion because it may impact the May Revise.

VIII. New Program Proposals

- A. Proposal for a Master of Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics on the Berkeley Campus [SSGPDP]

Lead Reviewer Bjoern Schwer

The Lead Reviewer shared the reviewers' comments and UCPB report with the proposers. There were not any major issues. There was some concern regarding cost and return-to-aid, which the proposers addressed. This transition from a Bachelor's to a Master's related to professional licensure

Action Taken: The proposal was approved 10-0-1.

- B. Proposal for an Eighth Undergraduate College on the San Diego Campus

Lead Reviewer Lissa Caldwell

The Lead Reviewer is sending out requests for reviewers.

IX. COVID's Impact on Graduate Students

The committee discussed a draft letter which had been crafted in collaboration with the CoGD. The Chair stated that the CoGD would also be reviewing the draft. The letter is going to ask for an investment in graduate education at the systemwide level. Currently, when there are challenges with funding, PIs are having to use their own funds. In addition, some external

fellowships to do fieldwork abroad have been deferred or cancelled outright. Students are left in limbo. Some other issues raised by members included:

- The cost of housing and the need for University commitment to addressing that issue.
- Inequities between different disciplines and how to address them.
- The need for targeted investment in the recruitment of future faculty and ways to incentivize entry into academia.
- The need for greater investment in graduate student mental health.
- Food insecurity for graduate students.
- Increased numbers of faculty taking medical leaves and retirements. Mentorship issues for graduate students have been exacerbated by fewer faculty being available. The onus is taken on by younger faculty who are struggling to get their research out. The number of mentees has doubled and the needs have increased and deepened.
- International students can't work outside of campus.

One member emphasized that the letter should include suggested remedies to the concerns it highlights.

X. SSGPDP Sub-Committee Work

The Chair stated that at the conclusion at the sub-committee's work at last summer, it produced a series of recommendations and that it was time to revisit them. CCGA needs to adopt a stance that requires all SSGPDPs to report any curricular or financial changes; it could propose this to Academic Council and ask Council to approve it. In the event that a program reported a significant deviation, the divisional graduate councils would have the authority to suspend admissions. Perhaps senates could ask for re-review at CCGA, but it is unclear what authority the committee would have. Also unclear is the way to address program closures. There is more power with the local graduate councils to assert authority than with CCGA, but CCGA could provide them with practices that might be helpful. The committee could also try to be more explicit regarding expectations about what occurs in the third year review.

Chair Kasko asked that members go back to their graduate councils to see what is being done with regard to SSGPDPs on each of the campuses and what resources are being allocated for those efforts. CCGA should share documented processes that work between the campuses.

XI. New Business

There was no new business.

The committee adjourned at 1:44 p.m.