

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE  
ON  
EDUCATIONAL POLICY  
2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

**TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:**

The University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) met eleven times in Academic Year 2019-2020 (including seven regularly scheduled videoconferences and two emergency videoconferences) to conduct business with respect to its duties as outlined in [Senate Bylaw 170](#) and in the Universitywide Review Processes for Academic Programs, Academic Units, and Research Units (the "[Compendium](#)"). The major activities of the committee and the issues it addressed this year are outlined briefly, as follows.

**INNOVATIVE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE (ILTI)**

The ongoing discussions with ILTI about campus and systemwide policies and practices that may sometimes hinder student access to online courses focused on [Senate Regulation 544](#) this academic year. SR544 sets rules governing cross-campus enrollments with the goal of facilitating access and the transfer of credits between campuses. Last revised in 1999 to apply to online courses as well as traditional face-to-face courses, the committee debated the merits of possible changes to the Regulation that might facilitate greater access. As a result of extensive consultation with ILTI directors, UCEP identified and agreed upon a set of revisions related to the type of credit granted, the definition of good standing, non-home campus enrollment limits, and equivalency. The proposed revisions were transmitted to Academic Council in late March and they will be sent out for systemwide review in the fall.

**STUDENTS WHO ARE INCARCERATED OR FORMERLY INCARCERATED**

Following last year's initial exploration of the challenges facing students who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated, a small team of UCEP members developed a series of principles to inform future work with these populations. The principles are grounded in the University's public mission to strive to provide access to education to all those who seek and are eligible for a UC education. The committee was also motivated by the need for four-year undergraduate degree programs within California prisons as well as the lack of transitional programs for individuals being released from prison. In June, [Council endorsed the principles](#) which were subsequently submitted to the Office of the President. Going forward, UCEP will encourage UC to advocate for state funding to support the creation of undergraduate degree programs for individuals who are incarcerated. The committee will also look at systemwide Senate regulations and policies that should be reconsidered to accommodate working with these students. In addition, the Provost's Office has notified the Senate that, next year, the joint Administration/Senate [Academic Planning Council](#) will discuss next steps for working with students who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.

**STUDENT FEES BEYOND TUITION/COSTS OF COURSE MATERIALS**

UCEP took up the issue of student fees for course materials after reviewing [a set of recommendations](#) issued by a UCI task force in 2019. The committee focused on transparency, ensuring that fees can be included in financial aid packages, and avoiding conflicts of interest, basing the discussion around the UCI guidelines as well as on [system-wide guidelines](#) that were already in place. Finding that existing policies establish clear guidance for faculty, the committee agreed that any additional regulations could stifle innovation and may impinge on academic freedom. Instead, in [an April memo to Council](#), UCEP suggested that divisions should review local oversight via their Course Materials and Service Fees Committees (or similar) to ensure that issues surrounding transparency, financial aid, and conflicts of interest are receiving adequate review and consideration.

## **LIVED NAMES ON DIPLOMAS**

In April, [UCEP responded](#) to the proposed Presidential Policy on Gender Recognition and Lived Name. The committee expressed support for proposed policy in general but recommended greater clarity about when a legal versus lived name would be used on documents or in UC information systems. Noting that the presidential policy indicated that policy changes regarding academic documents such as transcripts and diplomas are recommended by the Academic Senate, UCEP provided a separate memo to Council endorsing the use of lived names on diplomas. The committee outlined potential next steps, including clarification of [Regents' Standing order 110.3.c](#), which is subject to different interpretations.

## **RESPONSES TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The committee had been considering campus closure policies following wildfires that impacted the delivery of instruction in 2018. UCEP deliberated over the types of policies and procedures that might be needed in the event natural disasters, but the committee and the UC system did not anticipate and were unprepared for the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in the closure of all campuses in mid-March and an abrupt shift to remote instruction for students and faculty.

### Senate Regulations

UCEP was quick to recognize the need to adjust a number of divisional and systemwide Senate Regulations in an effort to support students in concrete and meaningful ways during this public health crisis. In addition, feedback from divisional Educational Policy/Undergraduate Committees made it clear that systemwide guidance from UCEP in certain areas would be helpful. The committee offered the following recommendations, which were each endorsed by the Council:

- 1) In [a March memo](#), UCEP recommended that all divisions be allowed to set local grading policies flexibly, especially regarding the use of Pass/No Pass grading for the 2020 winter quarter and spring quarter/semester. This was followed by [a memo in May](#) recommending extending the flexibility to use Pass/No Pass grading for summer sessions.
- 2) To facilitate the access of all students to the online cross-campus course offerings, UCEP encouraged campus registrars and academic advisors to take a broad approach when defining “good standing” in [SR544](#). In April, Council transmitted [a memo from UCEP](#) to the Provost’s Office which included recent clarification from the Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction that students who are enrolled in their first quarter/semester at the UC are, by default, in “good standing”.

The process of reviewing the systemwide Senate Regulations revealed a number of contradictory, inconsistent, or outdated policies which the committee discussed in June. This effort may also involve identifying how the Regulations could be adapted to address short and long term suspensions of normal instruction. Members agreed to begin the long-term project of revising problematic Regulations in Academic Year 2020-2021, beginning with the changes that will most benefit students. One of the Regulations most relevant to the current situation is [SR610 in Article I on Residence](#).

### Remote Instruction Surveys for Students and Faculty

The unplanned and hurried move to remote instruction during the COVID-19 emergency was an opportunity to find out about the experiences of students and the approximately 20k instructors teaching at the time of the campus closures. In a collaboration with Institutional Research and Academic Planning led by Vice President Pamela Brown, UCEP Chair John Serences steered the development of a set of survey questions added to the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey. The Senate also designed and disseminated a survey for instructors and [a draft summary](#) of the report was shared with the divisional Council chairs. The complete report is available [here](#).

## **OTHER ISSUES AND ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

In response to requests for formal comment from the Academic Council, UCEP issued views on the following:

- Current State Assessment Report and Proposal for Future State for the UC Washington Center
- UC Irvine School of Pharmacy Proposal and Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Report and Recommendations of the Academic Council Standardized Testing Task Force
- Proposal from the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools to eliminate the SAT Essay/ACT Writing Test requirement for undergraduate admission

UCEP touched on a variety of other issues related to the business of the Academic Council, Academic Assembly, the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates, and the work of campus Committees on Educational Policy/Undergraduate Councils.

### **UCEP REPRESENTATION**

UCEP Chair Serences represented the committee on the Council’s [2019-2020 Teaching Evaluation Task Force](#). This [Task Force’s report](#) to Council was endorsed in July and subsequently transmitted to divisional Senate’s for consideration. Chair Serences was also responsible for chairing the Council’s [2019-2020 Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force](#), which included UCEP Vice Chair Dan Potter and the Merced representative to UCEP, Jay Sharping. The Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force’s report was submitted to Council in July and the report will undergo systemwide review in the fall. Both task forces have fulfilled their respective charges from Council.

Chair Serences represented the committee at meetings of the Academic Council and the Academic Assembly. Chair Serences also participated on the Provost’s monthly budget briefing teleconferences and the Academic Planning Council. Finally, UCEP was represented by Chair Serences on the Office of the President’s Education Financing Model Steering Committee and by Vice Chair Potter on the UC Education Abroad Program Advisory. Due to scheduling conflicts, no UCEP representative participated on the UC Washington Center’s Academic Advisory Council.

### **COMMITTEE CONSULTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

UCEP benefited from consultation and reports from; Todd Greenspan, Director, Academic Planning Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP); Ethan Savage, Analyst, Academic Planning, IRAP; Ellen Osmundson, ILTI Director, UCOP; Mary-Ellen Kreher, ILTI Course Development Director; and Paul Montoya, ILTI CFO and Marketing Director, UCOP.

In addition, UCEP consulted the Academic Senate chair and vice-chair, who updated the committee on issues facing the Academic Council and Senate.

Respectfully submitted,

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