UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA   **ACADEMIC SENATE**
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Videoconference Minutes
Monday, October 2, 2023

Attending: Melanie Cocco, Chair (UCI), A. Katie Harris, Vice Chair (UCD), Darlene Francis (UCB), Gerardo Con Diaz (UCD), Jose Antonio Rodriguez-Lopes (UCI), Catherine Sugar (UCLA), Heather Bortfeld (UCM), Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR), Geoffrey Cook (UCSD), Madeleine Norris (UCSF), Ben Hardekopf (UCSB), David Cuthbert (UCSC), Megan Chung (Undergraduate Student Representative), Todd Greenspan (Executive Advisor, Academic Planning and Policy Development, IRAP), Carmen Corona (Director, Academic Planning and Policy, IRAP), Ethan Savage (Academic Planning and Policy Analyst, IRAP), James Steintrager (Chair, Academic Senate), Steven W. Cheung (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate)

I.   **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Cocco welcomed everyone to the first UCEP videoconference for 2023-2024 and members introduced themselves. The committee will be asked to weigh in on various issues and can proactively initiate studies and issue reports to Academic Council or another standing Senate committee. UCEP also approves and periodically reviews systemwide undergraduate courses and Chair Cocco would like the committee to create a mechanism to review UC Online courses. Members were reminded to work with their Senate office to find an alternate when they are unable to attend a meeting. The Guidelines for Systemwide Senate Committees point out that members should refrain from advocating specifically for their campus in favor of collective considerations and members must recuse themselves if there are any potential conflicts. Should anyone disagree with the majority opinion, a minority report with the dissenting opinion can be appended to UCEP's memo. Chair Cocco wants the committee's deliberations to be engaged and friendly and members can agree to disagree.

All UCEP discussions, agendas, email correspondence, and draft documents or working papers are assumed to be privileged for the sole use of the intended recipients. Unless a document has already been widely circulated, any distribution to others is strictly prohibited. The committee can use executive session when sensitive issues need to be considered. The Senate has also issued best practices for the use of chat during Zoom videoconferences in the context of debate and voting on formal motions (https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/senate-guidance-use-of-chat.pdf). The chair explained that anything written in the chat (or an email) is subject to disclosure if there is a California Public Records Act (CPRA) or Freedom of Information Act request. The analyst confirmed that UCEP meetings are recorded only for the purpose of drafting the minutes and the recordings are destroyed once Chair Cocco has approved the minutes.

The chair described the other committees which have UCEP representation. The agenda for the September Academic Council meeting did not include topics relevant to UCEP but there was a discussion about labor issues. During the Academic Planning Council's (APC) meeting, Provost Newman announced a future congress on the impact of artificial intelligence on education at UC and another on online education. The APC will eventually discuss updating the Compendium which summarizes policies and instructions related to processes such as establishing a new school, and the chair noted that the document does not address online education. Chair Cocco also attends meetings of the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senate (ICAS) and will serve on the UC Online Advisory Committee; Vice Chair Harris will serve on the ICAS group on

the California Community College's baccalaureate degree proposals; the UCSD representative will serve on the UC Education Abroad Program Advisory Committee; and the UCSC representative will serve on the UC Washington Center's Academic Advisory Committee.

II.   Campus Reports/Member Items

This item was not discussed.

III.   Consultation with the Academic Senate Office
- *James Steintrager, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Steven W. Cheung, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

Chair Cocco welcomed Chair Steintrager and Vice Chair Cheung to the videoconference and members introduced themselves. Chair Cocco sent an email to Chair Steintrager explaining that the motivation behind Senate Regulation 630.E, which requires that students take some in-person classes on campus and was approved by the Senate last year, was to protect the accreditation of in-person degrees by preventing students from piecing together online courses that amount to an online degree that is not accredited. The chairs agree that the regulation has, unfortunately, been incorrectly interpreted by the Regents, administrators at the Office of the President (UCOP), and the media as a way to block online undergraduate degree programs.

Chair Steintrager echoed Chair Cocco's remarks to the committee about CPRA requests for emails, documents, and any types of recordings of Senate meetings. A carve out in CPRA is meant to allow Senate committees to discuss matters under deliberation in a frank and open manner so records of these discussions would not be disclosed. Following consultation with UC Legal, Provost Newman advised Chair Steintrager that UCOP will support the Senate's decisions to withhold documents related to deliberations about work in progress.

The Regents Special Committee on Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship held its final meeting in late August and its work on how research is conducted on the campuses will be folded into the President's Entrepreneurship Network Council. The Regents annual retreat in early September included chancellors, senior management at UCOP, and the faculty representatives. The meeting included a detailed presentation on admissions and Chair Steintrager, Provost Newman, and UCI's and UCSC's chancellors were on a panel about fully online undergraduate degrees. During a priority setting session, several Regents expressed interest in increasing online undergraduate education at UC. One comment was that offering fully online degrees would be aligned with the Governor's goal for 70% of Californians to have an undergraduate degree or advanced certificate by 2030, which may be an aspiration related to workload readiness.

Chair Steintrager's remarks to the Regents on September 19th began by pointing out the need for competitive total remuneration and then turned to the nature and importance of shared governance. One item on the Regents Academic and Student Affairs Committee was "Expanding Opportunities for College Credit in High School: The University of California in Partnership with the National Education Equity Lab" which involves offering UC faculty-developed courses to high school students for college credit. This item was presented by the Provost and the new executive director of UC Online. While it is not clear what these courses will look like, how they will be approved, or if UC faculty will run them, Chair Steintrager explained that this program was originally going to be operated through UC Extension on the campuses but this would not allow students to receive UC credit. The Senate is interested in

ensuring that the courses receive the proper approval and that they are doing what they are supposed to do without unintended negative consequences.

The APC's working group on the future of UC doctoral education will release its preliminary report during the Provost's Congress on graduate education next week. The APC is also launching a working group on faculty post-pandemic work and recovery which will consider how faculty can balance research, instruction, and service. A primary driver of this workgroup is that faculty attention shifted significantly to instruction during the pandemic and students' expectations for flexibility in teaching modalities comes with a cost in terms of time and labor for instructors. There are questions about how the desire for flexibility is balanced with faculty commitment to research, and there is a concern about what happens to service, including Senate service, if the primary demands are instruction and research. Chair Steintrager indicated that the provost is planning a number of congresses on various topics, including artificial intelligence and online education, as forums for blue sky thinking. But it is unclear how these congresses figure into the Senate's participation in shared governance.

Discussion: A member asked if the Regents discussed the potential for online undergraduate degrees to lead to competition between campuses and if there is any planning or coordination underway to deal with this. Chair Steintrager indicated that while the issue of competition is a serious concern for the Senate, it did not come up during the retreat and has not been a focus for the administration to date. Many issues related to online education require more thought, including what UC's copyright policy means for the faculty members who develop the material. Chair Cocco explained that federal law requires that any degree program that is more than 50% online has to be approved as a distance education program and the accreditation requirements for those programs are different from in-person programs. Distance education programs require specific engagement activities and specific training for the faculty who teach online. If an in-person program exceeds the 50% threshold, the degree is no longer accredited.

UCEP could play a critical role by being the skeptical voice about educational quality and pushing back against hasty implementation of online classes and programs. The Senate does not want to be perceived as a roadblock but it should exercise extreme vigilance. The courses offered through the partnership with the National Education Equity Lab (NEEL) for UC credit have to meet the bar for a UC quality course. UCEP will meet with UC Online's executive director on December 4th and the NEEL partnership can be discussed. APM 015 states that it is faculty misconduct to teach a course that is not approved, and to take a course approved for one set of topics and morph it into something else is considered misconduct.

IV.   Review of [UC Washington Center Course](): Design Your Life

Chair Cocco asked for a volunteer to review UC Washington Center's (UCDC) new Design Your Life Course which UCDC plans to offer in summer 2024. This will be a systemwide course which any UC student can take when they attend UCDC.

Action: The UCSD representative agreed to be the primary reviewer and the UCR representative will serve as the secondary reviewer of the Design Your Life course. The reviewers will notify Chair Cocco about when this work might be completed.

V.   Review of UC Washington Center program

The entire UCDC program will be reviewed by UCEP this academic year. UCDC has been given the template for describing their program and the specific questions they need to address. Chair

Cocco has asked UCDC to send the first draft of their responses by January, and the reviewers might need clarification or have more questions, but the goal is to complete the review by UCEP's June meeting.

Action: The UCD and UCSC representatives agreed to lead the review of UCDC.

VI.   Establishing Senate Peer Review of Select [UC Online](#) Courses

Chair Cocco explained the policy that gives UCEP the responsibility for approving and reviewing systemwide courses. However, this does not apply to UC Online courses which are effectively systemwide because any UC student can take them. UC Online courses are reviewed by the campus offering them and it would be consistent with how in-person courses are treated for UCEP to review UC Online courses. Peer review, by a faculty member with expertise relevant to the course, will give honest feedback to the instructor. The idea for peer review came about because there is a UCI instructor teaching a UC Online course that now has about 2k students and reportedly 94% of the students receive an A. On a Reddit discussion board, students claim they can complete the entire course in a day without watching the lectures and that all of the answers to the homework and quizzes are available online. Chair Cocco asserted that policies should be in place to monitor courses like this. Two members are asked to develop a policy for the review of UC Online courses which will need to be approved by the Senate and added to UCEP's bylaw.

Discussion: At UCI, every program is reviewed every ten years and the documentation includes the syllabus but no information on enrollment or grades. Once a course is approved by the Senate there is no mechanism to look at it again. Chair Cocco commented that, rather than a being a punitive process, the instructor would be notified if there are serious deficiencies and areas for improvement. This proposal could get push back from faculty.

Action: The UCSF, UCSB, and UCM representatives agreed to work on a process for Senate peer review of select UC Online courses and have a proposal ready for the committee's review in the spring.

VII.   Finalizing the Proposed Regents Policy on Awarding Degrees Posthumously

Every campus has a different policy for awarding a degree posthumously but the degrees are conferred by the UC system, not an individual campus. A proposed policy was written by UCEP in 2019, sent out for systemwide review, and approved by Academic Council as well as the Academic Assembly. However, after the proposal was transmitted to the president it was sent to campus administrators who raised valid questions and concerns, mostly related to graduate students but the policy was not revised. UCEP members will collaborate with members of the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs to draft a revised policy.

Action: The UCI representative volunteered to work on finalizing this policy.

VIII.   Priorities/Activities for 2023-24, New Business and Executive Session

Chair Cocco provided an overview of some of the business the committee will handle this academic year including reviews of two full proposals and potentially updating UCEP's 2010 statement on UC quality. The statement on quality is comprehensive, touching on student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction as well as undergraduate research. Chair Steintrager would like UCEP to work on this statement because in various conversations about online

education people assert that UC quality has to be maintained. Unless members think changes should be made to the 2010 statement, the committee can submit it to Council. The analyst noted that the statement was written in conjunction with the UC Commission on the Future and endorsed by Council at the time but it was never sent out for systemwide review although that might not be necessary since it is not a policy document. The next steps with the UC quality statement will be discussed on October 16th.

Discussion: The UCLA representative described the steps the campus is taking to implement the associate degrees for transfer pilot required by AB 1291, and it may be helpful for UCEP to discuss issues that arise during this process. The UCLA Senate is forming a joint Admissions - Undergraduate Council committee to work on the pilot. There are concerns about the unintended consequences of the legislation such as a negative impact on the diversity of UCLA's student body. UCLA's Senate has also just passed a resolution about ramping up COVID-19 protocols in light of the recent surge in cases.

Action:
- UCSD's full proposal for the School of Computing, Information, and Data Sciences: the UCD and UCSB representatives volunteered to review this proposal when it is submitted.
- UCI's full proposal for the School of Population and Public Health: Chair Cocco will ask the UCB representative to be the primary reviewer of the proposal and the UCLA representative volunteered to be the secondary reviewer.
- Deloitte report on UC Online's Cross-Campus Enrollment System: The UCM and UCR representatives volunteered to review the Deloitte report before the committee's December 4th meeting.

Videoconference adjourned at: 1 PM
Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams
Attest: Melanie Cocco