UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA   **ACADEMIC SENATE**
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Videoconference Minutes
Monday, November 6, 2023

Attending: Melanie Cocco, Chair (UCI), A. Katie Harris, Vice Chair (UCD), Narges Norouzi (UCB alternate), 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), Susannah Scott (Co-Chair, Academic Planning Council Workgroup on the Future of Postdoctoral Education at UC (UCSB)), Barbara Knowlton (Chair, Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools), Todd Greenspan (Executive Advisor, Academic Planning and Policy Development, Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP)), Carmen Corona (Director, Academic Planning and Policy, IRAP), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate)

I.   General Updates

During the provost's monthly budget call, Chair Cocco learned that UC's 2024-2025 budget is still up in the air. The most recent UC Online Advisory Council meeting included an overview of the program, and the new director, Rolin Moe, is figuring out priorities, messaging, and branding. Director Moe talked the Advisory Council through UCEP's July 2022 memo on data collection and reporting. During a breakout session, a registrar shared that many students at their campus fail UC Online courses. This underscores the need for data such as how many students are taking UC Online courses and the average grade for a course.

Vice Chair Harris described the work of the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senate's subcommittee on baccalaureate degree program duplication which includes Senate faculty from the California Community College (CCC) and California State University (CSU) systems. This subcommittee is figuring out criteria and procedures for determining degree duplication now that the CCCs are offering baccalaureates. Although this primarily relates to the CSUs, there are potential issues for UC. The first part of the subcommittee's charge is to define program duplication and the second is to develop a set of criteria for evaluating duplication. The third component of the charge is to determine the standard for program duplication, as in the percent of similarity that determines program duplication. The group is developing a program duplication rubric to facilitate the review process, and there has been a discussion about putting together an intersegmental faculty committee to conduct the reviews. One idea is to have a pre-review process where the CCCs would consult with the other segments before investing time creating the degree programs. Vice Chair Cheung will be joining the subcommittee.

Chair Cocco was asked by the chair of the Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues (ACSCOTI) to get UCEP's input on two issues. The legislature wants UC to guarantee admission for CCC students who earn an associate degree for transfer (ADT) and meet UC's transfer requirements. The first question from ACSCOTI is related to UC's philosophy transfer pathway which requires epistemology, but not all CCC students have access to this course. UCEP is asked if not requiring students to take epistemology before transferring to UC would be problematic. Two other lower division philosophy courses required for the pathway would still need to be taken before transfer.

The second question from ACSCOTI is related to Assembly Bill 928 which resulted in the new California General Education Transfer Curriculum (CalGETC). The legislature wants students to

complete their general education (GE) credits at the CCCs but UC does not approach GE this way. UC students usually meet GE requirements when it is convenient for them, and some UC majors in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics have a heavy emphasis on math and chemistry in the first two years. CCC students who transfer to UC without having taken courses needed for their major before transferring struggle in upper division courses or spend more time at UC taking the courses they missed. ACSCOTI is proposing changing CalGETC by replacing two courses with requirements for majors that UC students take in their first two years, and the transfer students would finish their GE once at UC. The chair explained that CCC students who transfer to UC may not be admitted into their desired major because they have taken GE courses rather than prerequisite courses for that major. Chair Cocco explained that this change is needed to prevent students in STEM majors from exceeding the 60 unit cap for ADTs. Members were asked to consider if they agree with a proposal to have CCC students transfer to UC with fewer GE courses than in the past.

Discussion: The UCR representative indicated that critical thinking and logic are typically lower division philosophy courses, and it would be fine for transfer students to take epistemology once at UC. Members support the change to allow some GE requirements to be fulfilled after transfer especially given the importance of preparation for the major for student success in the long term. The UCLA representative was encouraged to invite the chair of ACSCOTI to a meeting of the divisional education policy committee to discuss ADTs. Chair Cocco will report UCEP's feedback to ACSCOTI.

II.   Consent Calendar

Action: The committee approved today's agenda.
Action: The October 2nd and October 16th minutes were approved.

III.   Deloitte: Cross-Campus Enrollment System Evaluation
- *Heather Bortfeld (UCM) and Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR)*

Chair Cocco explained that UCEP will meet with the new Executive Director of UC Online on December 4th and the committee should identify questions for that discussion. The UCM and UCR representatives have reviewed two Deloitte reports on UC Online, one on the current state of the program and the second which has recommendations for the future. Deloitte found substantial problems with UC Online and concluded that continuing the program in its current state is not an option. Organizationally, the program is a mess; the relationship between UC Online and the campuses is chaotic and lacks trust; and the campuses want to use the monies from UC Online for other purposes.

Students reported that the registration process is cumbersome, and most students do not complete UC Online courses. Deloitte spoke to many different people on the campuses and at the Office of the President, with some reporting being unaware of UC Online and others stating that the program is difficult to understand. The provost is enthusiastic about online education but a foundation is needed to support it. Deloitte's three recommendations are to: 1) provide more funding to improve UC Online's functioning; 2) seriously rethink the program; or 3) disband UC Online and let campuses lead online efforts.

Discussion: No committee members have taught UC Online courses. From Chair Cocco's perspective, it would be better to fix UC Online's problems because it has potential. One question is what the value added of UC Online is. Faculty can teach an online course without going through UC Online and it is not clear what makes UC Online courses different. UC Online

invested heavily in its cross-campus enrollment system. At one point UC Online intended to offer courses in the summer but the provost did not want the program to compete with summer session. Problems with UC Online have implications for online undergraduate degrees, particularly since students could be taking UC Online courses to get unapproved online degrees. UCM may be the only campus that is counting the online courses their students take.

It would be valuable to have demographic data on the students taking UC Online courses along with data on outcomes, especially for underrepresented groups. UC Online could offer courses in significantly impacted majors, but it appears to fund courses that faculty are interested in teaching. There should be a systematic plan for what is offered through the program although this might require more resources and different incentives for faculty. Students pointed out that the enrollment approval process ought to be streamlined.

The Deloitte report does not speak to the quality of the courses and the courses are not otherwise audited, so UCEP could recommend that assessment is needed. The analyst described the basic guidance UCEP has provided over the years to UC Online related to data which included the need for a taxonomy for its cross-campus enrollment system to organize and classify student enrollment actions. In addition, the analyst suggested that UCEP send a memo to Academic Council proposing that UC Online offer courses that CCC students need to transfer to UC but that their community college cannot offer regularly.

It is unclear if UC Online is monitoring the success of the students taking its courses when there should be a desire to prove the success of the program. If a student takes a UC Online course that is a prerequisite for another course, the student's success in later courses should be tracked. Chair Cocco proposes creating a Senate policy to enable a subcommittee of UCEP to review data on UC Online courses on a consistent basis. In the past, the program's leadership has received outside opinions pointing it in different directions, but with the right guidance and expectations UC Online may improve. The Senate should monitor what is happening and learn about what works or not, including what is causing students to drop UC Online courses. UCEP can point to the analysis in the Deloitte reports to assert that UC Online has serious problems and the program should be reevaluated. The curriculum should be organized to meet the needs of the majors and the campuses. Chair Cocco noted the program's executive director's difficult position because he cannot require that faculty make adjustments when a course is going off the rails.

IV. Consultation with Senate Leadership
- *James Steintrager, Chair, Academic Council*
- *Steven Cheung, Vice Chair, Academic Council*

Chair Steintrager reported that President Drake commented on the Israel-Palestine war during the October Academic Council meeting as well as on the difficulty of making any statements about this topic. The Senate is being pressured to make a statement and Chair Steintrager anticipates making comments to the Regents next week focused on academic freedom and First Amendment protections. Two memos from the University Committee on Academic Freedom related to controversial speakers on campuses and deplatforming emphasize the centrality of these protections. Last year, the Senate issued guidelines regarding posting political statements on departmental websites which UC Legal has indicated are permissible. The chair's remarks to the Board will also address this issue because the use of university resources for such things has been questioned.

The president also commented on online undergraduate degree programs (OUDPs) during the Council meeting, saying that if Senate Regulation (SR) 630.E, the campus experience requirement, is taken up by the Regents it is likely to be overturned. President Drake wants the Senate to come up with a solution that entails a strictly advisory systemwide review of OUDPs but it is unclear how this would resolve SR 630.E. Undergraduate degree programs are not currently reviewed at the systemwide level and UCEP probably should add this to its workload. The committee should start thinking about what such a review process would look like and the criteria that would be used as well as how issues related to SR 630.E, accreditation, and financial aid should be resolved.

President Drake has agreed to form a joint Senate-Administration task force to consider questions related to instructional modality and UC quality, important steps toward understanding how campuses might mount fully online undergraduate degrees that meet UC's quality standards and are fair to both students and faculty. A draft of the task force charge has been shared with the president and Chair Cocco, and Chair Steintrager hopes the task force will be convened soon although its work will not be completed on a timeline that satisfies Regents who want SR 630.E removed. Board Chair Rich Leib also joined Council in October and talked about online education, noting how much he valued his own on-campus experience during college. Chair Leib seems to have reservations about OUDPs and the opinions of other Regents will likely vary.

A program that decides to move all of its courses online has to seek accreditation as a distance education program from the WASC Senior College and University Commission but there is no policy requiring systemwide review of this OUDP. Chair Cocco posited that the best way forward may be for campuses seeking approval of their online programs request a variance to SR 630.E. Once a handful of the programs have been approved through the variance mechanism, UCEP could devise a set of guidelines and principles to help other departments interested in OUDPs. However, the Regents most interested in fully online programs might not agree with the variance idea.

Discussion: A member suggested thinking about what constitutes a quality UC education and what students gain from being on campus to better explain the rationale behind the campus experience requirement. This exercise would shed light on what students are normally expected to get from their on-campus experience that faculty want to see in OUDPs. Chair Steintrager stressed the importance of having data to support the Senate's position and urged UCEP to tease out whether things like participating in research opportunities are correlated with retention or student success. The committee's input on the essential elements of a UC quality education in the online environment can inform the work of the joint task force.

One pressure working against in-person education is the high cost of housing near UC campuses. According to Chair Steintrager, the Regents bring up housing in discussions about access, and the chair acknowledged possible access and equity upsides to online education. However, the tradeoffs must be identified and thoughtfully weighed. Chair Cocco argued that UC need not offer fully online degree programs, pointing out that Florida State, ranked by the U.S. News and World Report as the number one online university, is a hybrid program. UC could implement a hybrid model where students would be in-person their first year and third years and online for their sophomore and senior years, thereby opening up 50% of the space in dorms and other buildings on campus. UC's reasons for offering fully online undergraduate degrees are not entirely clear and this would be done at the risk of creating a second class of students who never benefit from being part of a campus community. Chair Steintrager shared that the joint task force will study instructional modalities in general because exploring only

OUDPs would be too narrow. Though hybrid education is the current status at UC and provides more flexibility, how it will be executed in the future needs to be determined.

V.   Teaching Assistant (TA) Support and Alternatives

- *Susannah Scott, Co-Chair, Academic Planning Council (APC) Workgroup on the Future of Doctoral Education at UC (UCSB)*

Susannah Scott, the co-chair of the APC Workgroup on the Future of Doctoral Education at UC, joined UCEP seeking input on how undergraduate courses will be supported going forward. The workgroup was charged with exploring academic issues in response to the new union contracts for graduate students and coming up with actionable recommendations. An interim report will be made public soon, and the workgroup will continue its efforts and produce a final report this spring. An issue the workgroup will take up is delivering quality undergraduate education in this new labor environment where costs are increasing and enrollment in graduate programs will change. However, how to reorganize the delivery of undergraduate education in a way that deploys graduate students differently and in a more limited way is outside the workgroup's expertise, so groups such as UCEP should be involved in these deliberations. Chair Cocco invited members to weigh in. Members can raise this matter with their divisional committees but should be mindful about confidentiality.

Discussion: Suggestions included using undergraduate learning assistants and making lectures longer to replace discussion sections. Since faculty may lean heavily on teaching assistants (TAs) for office hours, identifying more efficient ways to manage office hours would be helpful. Fewer TAs could be catastrophic for the Humanities where they are relied upon to provide individualized feedback on written work. Every additional student per TA dilutes the quality of education. Provost Newman has floated the idea of finding people with bachelor's degrees to form a new class of junior lecturers willing to teach more than graduate students do for the same salary. However, the effectiveness of this new lecturer class would vary across disciplines. For example, it is difficult to utilize Unit 18 lecturers in computer science because people with skills in this field can find better paying jobs.

A structural issue is that how credits are counted directly impacts teaching budgets and determines allocations of graduate student researchers, and some thought could be given to revising or adapting the allocations. Relatedly, departments could grant more units for the same number of courses thereby requiring fewer courses to graduate with the degree. Economics at UCI is the most impacted major on the campus and, since there are not enough TAs, the department has borrowed TAs from unrelated departments who do not know the material. About six years ago the department started the Economics Learning Center from Monday through Friday from 5 to 7 PM. There are usually three or four undergraduate student mentors who have taken Economics courses available to offer support for eight specific classes. The mentors are paid by the hour for their work in the center. Offering discussion sections will not be sustainable in the future. While some structural changes may not address the problem of how to support graduate students, such changes might support the quality of undergraduate learning in some disciplines.

Given the magnitude of the challenges UC is now facing, bringing in a management consultant firm could be helpful. The legislature has made it clear that there will not be any additional appropriations coming to UC to cover the cost of the new contracts. UC has a cohort tuition plan, linked to the state appropriation, that provides a steady but slow increase to undergraduate tuition. Co-Chair Scott doubts that the legislature will alter the plan or that there will be a significant infusion of new resources from other sources. Committee members were asked to think about who has the expertise to identify ways to untangle the complex issue of

graduate student support and undergraduate course quality or at least eliminate some of the negative impacts that are anticipated due to the abrupt increase in costs. The best ideas may come from the campuses and will need to be shared.

VI.   Updated Proposed Policy on Awarding Degrees Posthumously
- *Tony Rodriguez-Lopez (UCI)*

The UCI representative worked with members of the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) to finalize a draft proposal on awarding degrees posthumously originally put forward in 2019 and came up with two potential options. Policy option A only requires that a student be in good academic standing at the time of death. The procedure for making a request would be straightforward and exceptions would only be needed in cases where the deceased student's actions might have led to dismissal. Policy option B incorporates feedback from the systemwide review of the original proposal. A student with senior-level standing who dies having completed a certain number of units would be eligible for a degree and this would be after an undergraduate student's junior year. To receive a master's degree, a student should have completed 75% of the course credit for the degree and been in good academic standing. To receive a doctoral degree, the deceased student should have advanced to candidacy, been in good academic standing, and a member of their doctoral committee would confirm the student would have completed their dissertation.

Under option B, to receive a professional degree, the deceased student should have completed 75% of the course credit for the degree and have been in good academic standing. This option would allow for exceptions to the policy to be considered and exceptions would usually be requested by a family member, a dean, or a fellow student, and the family should be consulted if they did not make the request. The decision-making process would take into account if a deceased student's actions may have led to dismissal from UC and if there are exceptional circumstances, and the chancellor's approval would be required to award the degree. An example of this would be a student who used illegal drugs on campus which would be cause for dismissal.

Exceptions could also be made for deceased students who had not met senior-level standing and the local Senate committee on educational policy would make decisions in these cases. Exceptions will not be required for students who died in notably heroic circumstances even if they have not met the 75% threshold. This policy would require that some group or individual in the student's school will assess each case and the appropriate Senate committee on campus would grant the degree. Any fees associated with the administration of the degree or certificate of attendance shall be waived and the certificate or diploma will be mailed to the person who initiated the request.

Discussion: Members expressed support for option A, citing the need for compassion in situations like this. It would be a nightmare for the deceased students' grieving family and friends to deal with the requirements in option B. The importance of good academic standing was questioned, and the UCI representative explained that the policy proposed in 2019 included a grade point average (GPA) requirement. Instead, the good standing requirement can be used to make the case that if the student had not died they would have obtained the degree, an easier bar to meet than GPA. If UCEP believes the good standing criteria is too strict, it could be something for which an exception is necessary. A member recommended that it may be more important to consider if the circumstances leading to the student's death also caused them to not be in good academic standing rather than focusing on academic standing issues related to

actions that might have led to dismissal. If the aim is to take a compassionate approach to awarding degrees posthumously, connecting it to specific academic standards is tricky. Another question is if there are any ways a degree awarded posthumously could be used that would create a problem for UC. A strong sentiment was expressed against the degree or certificate indicating the student is deceased but that this could be noted on the transcript. Members suggested clarifying the language regarding students being currently enrolled or on leave and about the loss of good academic standing. Members confirmed that there is no support for policy option B. The UCI representative will share UCEP's comments with the CCGA representatives and bring it back to this committee.

VII.   Regional/ Institutional Accreditation Terminology

This topic was tabled.

VIII.   Next Steps: Credit by Examination
- *Barbara Knowlton, Chair, Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) (UCLA)*

Chair Cocco welcomed Chair Knowlton to the videoconference. Last Friday, BOARS was joined by the campus admissions directors and enrollment management leads, and credit by examination in the context of A to G courses was discussed. The admissions directors' thinking about credit by exam is different from the perspective of faculty, at least as it relates to admissions. There appeared to be consensus among the admissions directors that many exams have the same controls as Advanced Placement (AP) exams and UC should look at ways they can be used to fulfill A to G. The workgroup suggested by Undergraduate Admissions could look at the most common exams (including AP, International Baccalaureate, the A-Levels in India, and one or two others) that comprise about 95% of the exams students submit when applying to UC.

Chair Knowlton recognized that the admissions directors' inclination to be more permissive to help students likely differs from UCEP's position in terms of what counts once students are at UC. Therefore, it is possible that there be stricter polices about what counts for units than what counts for A to G completion, but campuses or majors could reserve the right to decide if a particular curriculum or exam is insufficient. Chair Cocco expressed concern about how much time would be needed to review the exams. Looking at the most popular ones might not be the most principled approach as it could result in equally good exams being overlooked simply because they are not taken by many students. The more popular exams may be taken by students because they are easier.

Discussion: A member reiterated the objection to the concept of credit by examination and urged that how this matter is framed should be changed because taking one exam is not a full educational experience. Chair Knowlton indicated BOARS might be inclined to agree that a student is eligible to apply and is entitled to review if they have passing scores on AP exams that allow them to fulfill an A to G course requirement. The admissions directors' position that UC could be more generous when it comes to A to G diverges from the perspectives of those thinking about and in charge of educational policy and the undergraduate experience. One member expressed concerns about the redundant work associated with exams having to be vetted at the systemwide level and again by individual campus departments and majors. If the result of the systemwide review is that an exam should not be used to grant credit, some departments might accept this judgement without conducting their own review, and this may also be true if the systemwide reviewers recommend approving an exam.

The case could be made that review at the systemwide level is important for maintaining quality. Chair Knowlton believes that departments want to retain the power to make decisions about exams accepted for credit, and a member agreed that the review by departments may be more rigorous than the systemwide assessments. A member noted that students might be confused about the type of credit they can receive for AP and other exams. When UCEP looked at the use of AP exams in 2016, there was pressure to reduce time to degree and accept any score above a 3. However, there is skepticism about whether the time to degree issue can be resolved by credit by exam. Chair Cocco and Chair Knowlton will connect after today's meeting to consider a list of exams that could be evaluated.

IX.   Campus Reports/Member Items

This item was not discussed.

X.   New Business/Executive Session

Chair Cocco reminded members to make their travel arrangements for UCEP's December 4th meeting at the Office of the President.

Videoconference adjourned at: 1:00 PM
Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams
Attest: Melanie Cocco