

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

In-Person Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 3, 2023

Attending: Melanie Cocco, Chair (UCI), Kathleen Bawn, Vice Chair (UCLA), Darlene Francis (UCB), Katie Harris (UCD), Manoj Kaplinghat (UCI), Dorothy Wiley (UCLA), Holley Moyes (UCM), Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR), Geoff Cook (UCSD) (videoconference), Thuan Le (UCSF), Julie Bianchini (UCSB), David Cuthbert (UCSC), James Weichert (Undergraduate Student Representative, UCB), Katherine Newman (Provost and Executive Vice President) (videoconference), Todd Greenspan (Executive Advisor, Academic Planning and Policy Development, IRAP), Ethan Savage (Academic Planning and Policy Analyst, IRAP), Susan Cochran (Chair, Academic Senate), Jim Steintrager (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate)

I. Chair's Updates

Chair Cocco shared that Academic Council endorsed recommendations from the Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction regarding the use of chat during Zoom videoconferences. Faculty should be aware that chat conversations are part of the public record and subject to Freedom of Information and Public Records Act requests. This applies to all department and Senate committee meetings. The chair also described Council's discussion regarding UCB's College of Computing, Data Science and Society (CDSS) proposal. Despite the Committee on Planning and Budget and the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) having the same reservations about the proposal as UCEP, those committees did not vote it down. Council did not vote on the CDSS proposal and instead of asking UCB to submit a revised document to the Senate, Chair Cochran is sending a memo to Provost Newman indicating that Council endorses the establishment of the new college contingent upon UCB responding to a set of specific concerns. The proposal is on the agenda for the July Regents meeting when it is likely to be approved.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: UCEP's March 6th and 23rd, 2023 videoconference minutes were approved.

III. Standard Terminology Related to Online Courses

- *Vice Chair Bawn and Julie Bianchini (UCSB)*

Chair Cocco spoke with the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) Vice President for Substantive Change who agreed to review what UCEP is proposing and provide feedback if any of the guidance is wrong. Vice Chair Bawn and the UCSB representative worked with two members of CCGA on standardized terminology for online courses. Campuses do not have to adopt this terminology but when they submit a proposal to the systemwide Senate they should use these standardized categories when describing courses.

Discussion: The term hybrid-flexible ("hyflex") courses is confusing to both students and faculty. The committee discussed how contact hours are defined and various kinds of student engagement activities. The document could highlight that an online course may require an in-person examination. A number of policy implications that arose during the discussion will need to be addressed later. There is a concern that many online courses involve nothing but recorded videos so some sort of quality control is necessary. Online courses will be scrutinized to see if they meet the Federal requirement to have two different types of engagement activities that are regular (once a week), substantive, and led by the

instructor of record. Faculty may have started teaching online courses with no understanding of Federal regulations or financial aid requirements.

If students are allowed to watch a recording instead of attending class in-person and there are no engagement activities, this would be considered a correspondence course and the students cannot receive financial aid. The analyst recommended that the group working on the terminology review the 2020 report from the Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force and the 2022 white paper on online degrees to see if there are definitions in those documents. It was noted that WSCUC and Federal requirements may well change in the near future so UCEP should not necessarily feel constrained by current regulations. The committee's feedback will be added to the draft and shared with the CCGA representatives. The goal is to send the document to Council for approval in May.

IV. Consultation with Institutional Research & Academic Planning (IRAP)

- *Todd Greenspan, Executive Advisor for Academic Planning and Policy Development, IRAP*
- *Carmen Corona, Director, Academic Planning and Policy, IRAP*
- *Ethan Savage, Academic Planning and Policy Analyst, IRAP*

IRAP is preparing several items for the July Regents meeting. The first item, "Expanding where UC Lives," will highlight UC Scout, the UC Education Abroad Program, and degree completion programs. Another item is an update on the goals in the compact for enrollment and workforce development. UC plans to increase the number of students graduating with degrees in science, technology, engineering and math; education or early education; and doctoral degrees by 25% by 2026-27. The agenda will also include a discussion about affordable education resources and the establishment of UCB's College of Computing, Data Science, and Society.

The Academic Planning Council's Workgroup on the Future of Undergraduate Education has completed its final report which will be sent to the provost, but it is not clear how the report will be distributed or if the Regents will see it. The campuses submitted multiyear enrollment plans with proposals for undergraduate, graduate and summer enrollments between 2023-24 and 2026-27. A systemwide summary of the proposals will be shared with leadership at the Council of Chancellors meeting on April 5th. The summary shows annual and total enrollment growth and compares proposals to the compact enrollment goals. The Legislature wants UC to grow by 8k students and there will be discussions about spreading the growth over four years. Additionally, since the Legislature pre-funded the growth, UC will ask to keep the money until it is achieved.

V. Consultation with the Office of the President

- *Katherine Newman, Provost & Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs, Office of the President*

Chair Cocco welcomed Provost Newman to the meeting and explained that each campus has a member on UCEP and shared the committee's charge as well as some of the issues the committee is considering. Many policies about undergraduate education are handled at the divisional level but UCEP deals with systemwide issues such as decisions about new schools or colleges and the committee reviews systemwide courses. UCEP is currently working on guidelines for online majors to help faculty and departments design majors that are compliant with Federal regulations. Chair Cocco explained that the Compendium needs to be updated, noting that the document is silent on online courses, and indicated that the provost's office leads the revision process in collaboration with the Senate. The provost was provided with a set of questions before the meeting.

What do you think does and does not work for undergraduate education? Campuses are independently developing instruction for faculty in online teaching methods. Does UCOP have any plans to offer or sponsor training for faculty in online teaching?

- UCOP recently commissioned Deloitte to review UC Online with the goal of reshaping the program to better meet campus needs. The UC Online Advisory Council has reviewed the recommendations prepared by Deloitte and has had some preliminary discussions about how to implement new approaches, including potential training programs.
- The faculty recommended that UCOP hire an executive director for UC Online who would work with faculty and the campuses to chart the future direction of the program, and the executive director is expected to join UCOP in the spring. Once the executive director is in place, there is potential to develop training programs based on what the faculty indicate is needed. If UCOP develops the training, economies of scale will be created since every campus will not have to invent their own training. Campuses could tailor the trainings but there are principles of course design and delivery that might be usefully developed centrally.
- Provost Newman was steeped in online education in previous jobs and is knowledgeable about what high quality online instruction requires. The provost agrees with Chair Cochran's observation about online instruction only being as good as the investments that go into it and can be a powerful way of reaching people who, for many different reasons, cannot be on campus. But if the investment is inadequate and online instruction is not properly supported, the offerings will be subpar, which is not something UC wants.
- Everyone experienced the ups and downs of distance learning during the pandemic and learned a lot about what can be done well, but the provost thinks there was tremendous potential in online instruction. Online instruction can be very helpful to disadvantaged students if it is done properly with sufficient support and opportunities for interaction with faculty who have been trained.

Online exams are highly problematic with regard to academic integrity. Will UC invest in testing rooms where students can do exams/assessments in person?

- Provost Newman indicated that the campuses take the lead when it comes to physical facilities and a physical facility at UCOP would not make sense, and the provost is not aware of efforts by campuses to set aside space for testing rooms.
- Many solutions related to academic integrity utilize software, but these are imperfect. Major effort has been put into detecting cheating and preserving academic integrity, and there are possibilities for investment in software solutions.
- Academic integrity in general has become an issue, whether students are online or in-person. There is less clarity among undergraduate students, especially as the internet has become increasingly accessible, about what constitutes plagiarism, the need for citations, and other violations.
- Significant work will be needed to be sure that the students who were in high school during the pandemic understand the nature of and expectations related to academic integrity along with many other kinds of socialization that probably weakened.

What are your thoughts on online instruction and degrees?

- The provost is respectful of the faculty's role in defining the quality and educational experiences that UC students will have.
- Online instruction will continue to be an important part of students' academic plans and expectations, and it will be particularly important for working students and degree completers who are not as privileged as students who can afford to be on campus all the time. Providing online instruction and degrees may become part of UC's mission related to equity as long as it is done well, properly invested, and rigorous.

- Provost Newman agreed with the argument in UCEP's 2022 white paper that online degrees should not be created inadvertently but should instead be high-quality programs that are thoughtfully constructed. However, providing access is an important UC mission as are diversity and fostering upward mobility. For many people, online education can be the route by which that is delivered.
- Prior to joining UC, the provost was responsible for UMass Global at the University of Massachusetts and the program's graduation rate was 70% and the retention rate was very high while student debt was low.
- Provost Newman hopes that UCEP develops guidelines that will ensure that the quality of online degree program is good and wants to encourage coalitions of the willing to be involved with these programs. UC will need to closely monitor how the online degree programs perform and if they can meet the committee's high standards for quality.

What is the plan if graduate students stage a wildcat strike? Since the Union strategy is largely driven by creating conflict, what is the plan to mitigate this conflict in the next strike?

- Going forward everyone will be better prepared than in the fall because many lessons were learned that will be put to good use if UC has to face this again.
- A good collective bargaining system recognizes and discusses the needs of all parties, and strikes are a last resort.
- Provost Newman is concerned about preserving the mentor/mentee relationship in what is now an employer/employee world, and how confidence and trust between graduate students and faculty can be restored.
- UC will need to make it clear that the most important responsibility is to ensure that classes are manned and that students receive the education they paid for while the administration also supporting faculty.
- To avoid conflict, UC should better anticipate students' needs and try to provide the necessary support.
- The provost hopes that everyone is comfortable with the current package and that in the future UCOP can move forward with contract negotiations in a more orderly fashion.
- If there is a strike, UCOP will meet its obligations and make the boundaries of what is acceptable behavior very clear so the situation does not devolve into the kind of conflict that occurred during the recent strike.
- Provost Newman expressed gratitude for the faculty who worked hard to make sure that the sacred responsibility to undergraduate students was preserved.
- UCOP has learned from the past and worked very hard to remedy some of the problems that everyone experienced during the strike related to gaps in communication.

Discussion: Asked how faculty should provide input regarding systemwide training for teaching online, Provost Newman suggested using the usual lines of communication from the Senate to the administration. The provost explained that UCOP will start holding "congresses," gatherings of interested parties from across the system to surface innovations and share different perspectives. A congress will not be a decision or policy making body, but an attempt to galvanize a public spirit around a set of issues. One congress being planned will be on the future of graduate education to provide individuals with the opportunity to highlight innovations bubbling up from the campuses.

VI. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office

- *Susan Cochran, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Jim Steintrager, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

Chair Cochran thinks the Regents are troubled that the graduate student researchers (GSRs) who went on strike did not have their pay docked as other striking workers have and want all represented employees to be treated the same. If there is a wildcat strike in the spring semester, the response will be very different because it will violate the contract and students could lose their jobs although any faculty who strike in support of the students will have more rights. It may be that the only way UC can admit the same number of students would mean changing the model of doctoral education so the University is no longer responsible for supporting them. Last week, graduate students went before the California Assembly Budget Subcommittee 2: Education Finance hearing advocating for more money, and the subcommittee chair responded that they will not get funding from Sacramento.

UC has promised the governor that more graduate students will be admitted even though the State has not funded these students in many years. One outcome is that UC might not have the same quality of graduate students as in the past. Coming out of the pandemic, a central message is that faculty can pivot on a dime and keep the University running. There is a question about what the administration is willing to pay if faculty are to teach in an excellent way. Faculty need to argue for the additional funding and people required to get the work done. To pay for the new contract for the GSRs, there will be fewer teaching assistants and expenses will be paid for out of grants. Some campuses have agreed to support faculty for a year or two until more indirect money is generated.

In light of UCEP's unanimous vote against UCB's proposal for the College of Computing, Data Science and Society (CDSS), Chair Cochran explained that Council agreed to establish a set of conditions that need to be satisfied by the campus in order to secure Senate approval. Typically, when the Compendium committees (UCEP, CCGA and the Committee on Planning and Budget (UCPB)) provide feedback on a pre-proposal for a new school or college, the campus responds to the Senate's concerns in the full proposal. UCB, however, did not address the questions raised by the pre-proposal and while CCGA and UCPB felt the proposal was still problematic these two committees approved it.

Since the vote on the proposal was split, Chair Cochran had to arbitrate the disagreement by identifying the best path forward with input from the chairs of the three committees and the chair of the UCB divisional Senate. The sentiment is that the college should be established, but more detailed information should be provided by the proposers and specific conditions should be met. The conditions include obtaining: a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the College of Engineering and the CDSS; letters of support from the dean and Faculty Executive Committee of the College of Letters and Science as well as from other departments which will contribute to the CDSS; and constituting the Human Technology Futures group as an augmented graduate group within the CDSS to provide the "Society" component.

UCOP agrees with the Senate's opposition to the proposed admissions process that would eliminate the requirement that students from diverse backgrounds to take specific UCB courses for admission to the major as freshman. The Council's memo outlining the conditions was transmitted to Provost Newman who likely immediately forwarded it to UCB's Executive Vice Chancellor and the proposers have until September 30th to respond. The Regents will vote on the college in July and the extent to which UCB will listen to the Senate's input is unknown but the campus is motivated to start the college as soon as possible. One important factor for UCB is that various donors have already committed to providing several million dollars for a new building for the college and this support is at stake if the approval is significantly delayed.

Discussion: Members shared concerns about the CDSS proposal being approved by the Senate and questioned if UCB will actually respond to the Senate's conditions. Chair Cochran asserted that the

Senate's disapproval of the college would have been overwritten by the Regents so it would not have changed things for the better. The Senate would be blamed if the donors decided to withdraw their funding because of the delay, so Chair Cochran tried to figure out how to encourage UCB to devise a better plan. Members were dismayed that the information about the funding was not in the proposal.

The Senate's approach also gives the departments at UCB the opportunity to stand up for what they need from this merger. Ideally, UCB's Senate should not have approved the proposal and CCGA and UCPB should have rejected it as UCEP did, but it is now the responsibility of Provost Newman to ensure that the campus satisfies the Senate's conditions. The Senate will change how proposals are treated in the future by, for example, instructing campuses to respond to every concern raised during the review of the pre-proposal, recommending that MOUs are in place, and requesting information about funding or deadline issues. There might be a review of the proposal to determine if it is responsive to issues previously identified and, if it is not, the proposal will not be advanced to the Compendium committees. This might prevent flawed proposals from being pushed through the Senate. UCEP members are somewhat frustrated that CCGA and UCPB had reservations about the CDSS proposal but did not take a stand by voting it down, so Chair Cochran's efforts to support this committee's position is appreciated.

Chair Cochran feels that the Senate has protected undergraduate students from the worst elements of UCB's plan but the departments involved along with students in collaboration with the Faculty Executive Committee will need to follow-up to ensure that improvements are made. A member expressed disappointment that the memo from Council did not emphasize that the lack of consultation with students who will be in the new college is problematic even though the students' worries have repeatedly been discussed at UCEP. Chair Cochran recommended that students attend the public comment portion of the Regents meeting to voice their displeasure with the college because when UCB presents the proposal, the Board will inquire about the issues raised by students. UCB's attempt to respond to the Council's conditions will involve faculty decision-makers but students will probably be marginalized. In the future, the Senate should ask proposers to obtain letters from various student organizations registering their support or enumerating reservations and recommendations. Chair Cochran apologized for not ensuring that student concerns were emphasized in the memo to Provost Newman, but underscored that students do have influence and that the central problem is that UCB did not thoughtfully develop the proposal.

VII. Draft Principles for Online Majors and Minors

- *Manoj Kaplinghat (UCI) and Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR)*

The principles will give faculty and departments guidance about best practices when designing online programs to increase the likelihood that these programs are approved by the accreditation agency. It is not a policy document. Chair Cocco recommended that UCEP propose a new regulation that the committee will review online majors four years after they are approved, and subsequent reviews will be conducted by the campuses on a timeline established by each division. The review after a short period of time will be important because online degree programs have notoriously low graduation rates.

Discussion: Opinions about a new regulation were divided. A concern is that requiring a review every four years would lead to an increased workload for and burden on the divisional committees, but Chair Cocco clarified that the campuses will determine the frequency of their reviews. It would be unadvisable to wait 10 years before reviewing online majors because these programs need to be frequently monitored to ensure the graduation rates are acceptable. At present, there are only two online degree programs in the pipeline so the burden on faculty will be negligible. UCEP should hold the first online majors to a high bar and pay close attention to them the first several years. These reviews can help

inform the development of other online programs. UCSC would be supportive of a robust review of its Creative Technologies program, and it was noted that this proposal will set the standard for future proposals.

Should a program have a 60% graduation rate, the proposed regulation would give UCEP the leverage to have a discussion with the campus but it would not be focused on withdrawing approval since that would leave enrolled students in a bad place. UCEP would probably encourage an online degree program that is not doing well by its students to transition to an in-person offering. Another option would be for the committee to provisionally approve the programs, and if they do not pass muster at the four year review UCEP would recommend that it sunset. The committee has not clearly differentiated between online degrees and majors, and an online major could become a de facto online degree for transfer students.

It is in the interest of the campuses for UCEP to provide the criteria they will need for accreditation, so proposers should be asked if they have thought about the engagement activities, plans for faculty training and student advising, and other components of the program. Chair Cocco pointed out that even if UCEP approves UCSC's Creative Technologies degree, the program still must be accredited and this is true for the first online major at every campus. There is uncertainty regarding whether a diploma will indicate that it is in an online degree. Labeling a degree as online infers that 100% of the courses were completed online, therefore a program with less than 50% of courses online would be a hybrid program.

The committee discussed the problems with UCI's School of Business for an online bachelor's degree in business administration which resulted in the proposal not being approved by UCEP. Members also shared different types of engagement activities for students in online courses and debated whether participation in research should be an expectation. The guidelines might include the recommendation that there be opportunities for students to have regular one on one interaction with their instructors. Undergraduate students are so focused on finishing the requirements for their degree that they might not consider the benefit of interacting with their professors, in addition to which this calls for classes with a relatively small number of students. One such benefit is the ability to acquire meaningful letters of recommendation from faculty. Faculty who propose online majors could be encouraged to think creatively about ways research can be constructed. Members are encouraged to read the principles document and provide feedback.

VIII. Guidelines for Proposal Reviews

- *Darlene Francis (UCB) and Julie Bianchini (UCSB)*

This item was not discussed.

IX. Campus Reports/Member Items

This item was not discussed.

X. New Business/Executive Session

There was no New Business or Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at: 4 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Melanie Cocco