

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Videoconference Minutes

Monday, February 6, 2023

Attending: Melanie Cocco, Chair (UCI), Kathleen Bawn, Vice Chair (UCLA), Katie Harris (UCD), Manoj Kaplinghat (UCI), Dorothy Wiley (UCLA), Holley Moyes (UCM), Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR), Geoff Cook (UCSD), Thuan Le (UCSF), Julie Bianchini (UCSB), David Cuthbert (UCSC), James Weichert (Undergraduate Student Representative, UCB), Sadaf Bandiali (Graduate Student Representative, UCD), Pamela Brown (Vice President, IRAP), 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 reminded members to book their flights for the April 3rd UCEP meeting at the Office of the President (UCOP). The committee will discuss if it should have two short videoconferences a month or have a long videoconference on the first Monday of the month in the spring. Academic Council met with President Drake last week and the discussion centered on the aftermath of the strike. The president was challenged to be more prepared for the next strike and to be more forthcoming with information. UCEP's proposed Senate Regulation 630.E was unanimously approved by Council and it will be voted on by Academic Assembly this week. The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates is preparing for its annual Legislative Day meetings with members of the legislature. Chair Cocco cannot attend and will a UCEP member to represent this committee.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: UCEP's January 9 and 23, 2023 videoconference minutes were approved.

III. UCB's College of Computing, Data Science, and Society Proposal and UCSD's School of Computing, Information and Data Science Pre-Proposal

- *Geoff Cook (UCSD) and Dottie Wiley (UCLA)*

➤ UCB's proposal for a College of Computing, Data Science, and Society (CCDSS)

Chair Cocco received an unsolicited memo from the proposers and shared it with UCEP. This new memo addresses some of the questions raised about the 2021 pre-proposal but some details are still unclear. The UCSD representative reiterated that the structure of the proposed college is complicated and there is not a memorandum of understanding to define how the entities will interact.

Discussion: It is concerning that the proposal does not explain how admissions will work or how many undergraduate students will be allowed into the CCDSS each year. Creating the college may be a way to restrict enrollment in the major. A member argued that the proposed structure of the college will give it the ability to control hiring and building a cohort of the best faculty in this area so that the CCDSS can compete with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The college is the type of innovation that will not happen often and UCEP should have strong reasons to not approve it. Chair Cocco pointed out that of the 128 faculty in the CCDSS, 95 of them would be from Electrical Engineering and they will

dictate what happens in the college. The letter from the faculty in the School of Information shows that these faculty are not in favor of joining the CCDSS even though that school's dean is supportive.

The leadership of the CCDSS has not taken time to correct the problems the UCB divisional Senate identified in response to the pre-proposal. There is no indication that students will be involved in discussions about governance and curricular policy. Additional shortcomings of the proposed college include that there are no faculty lines associated with the "Society" component of the college and the absence of a long-term plan for financial support beyond donations. It is not entirely clear if the negative feedback from different UCB stakeholders was included in the proposal. UCEP members are worried about the educational experience of CCDSS students, and the committee could recommend that the proposers take another year to work through the unanswered elements of the plan. The committee would like to support innovative programs but there are serious issues with the current proposal.

Action: The committee voted unanimously to disapprove the proposal.

➤ **UCSD's School of Computing, Information and Data Science Pre-Proposal**

This discussion was postponed until the March 6th meeting.

IV. Guidelines for Proposal Reviews

- *Julie Bianchini (UCSB)*

This discussion was postponed until the March 6th meeting.

V. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office

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

Chair Cochran and Vice Chair Steintrager attended a portion of the UC Online Advisory Council's (UCOAC) meeting last week. UC Online was started at UCOP years before the pandemic when online instruction was relatively new to UC and there was a need for pilot funding to encourage campus participation. The pandemic spurred all the campuses to invest in building out their own online instructional groups and expertise, and in some ways, UC Online could not keep up with this. Deloitte was tasked with studying if UC Online has met its goals and finding out how people on the campuses think UC Online is doing. The report from Deloitte was one of the most negative reports from a consultant that Chair Cochran has seen, with the campuses indicating that the organization of UC Online is a problem.

The UCOAC discussed what should be done with the program. Chair Cochran explained that the state allocates funds for UC Online which pass straight to the campuses. Each campus gets \$2M and some money is held back by UCOP for the program's operations and to fund campus course development. There are issues with how this is done and the campus representatives on the UCOAC recommended that all money from the state should be given to the campuses as a direct pass through. The Council considered if there are things that UC Online is doing that would be difficult for the campuses to manage. It would be challenging for an individual campus to handle the required reports to the legislature accounting for how the state's money is spent. UC Online also manages courses offered across campuses or in different locations. The program might also offer a new service by developing

courses needed by potential transfer students in the California Community Colleges (CCC) that the CCCs have difficulty offering, thereby improving UC's capacity to facilitate transfer to the UC system.

Deloitte asked the UCOAC to consider three options: keep UC Online as it is but increase its budget so it can achieve its goals; eliminate the program; or recognize that there are aspects of what UC Online does the campuses cannot and refocus the program on these activities. While there seemed to be no interest in increasing the program's budget, some members of the UCOAC seriously discussed eliminating UC Online. Senate leadership do not know what decision was reached about the future of the program. One question is whether facilitation of cross-campus enrollments can be done in a less expensive way since only a limited number of students utilize this expensive process.

Discussion: A member suggested that UC Online could develop systemwide training modules and webinars for faculty, but Chair Cochran remarked that these are already developed by campus entities and there is no guarantee of an audience for what would be offered centrally. Chair Cocco explained that once UC starts being accredited to offer online degrees, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) will require that UC describe its training for online instruction, so modules will need to be provided by the campuses or UCOP. Even at a campus level, one size fits all trainings have limited reach, and teaching and learning centers have had the most success with training tailored to specific disciplines.

Chair Cochran asserted that the plethora of student services provided to students and the safety nets put in place are hard to duplicate centrally. When students contact UC Online in need of help, the program refers them back to their campus because it is not set up to handle these issues. A concern about online education is that people under appreciate the support structures students need to get through their UC education. The cross-campus enrollment system (CCES) may be the central reason for UC Online to exist, but it prevents students from registering for classes on time. Students enroll in UC Online courses as a backup and will drop them if given the opportunity to take in-person classes at their home campus. Registrars complain about the workload and expenses related to the CCES and the high drop rate signals that cross-campus UC Online courses are not needed as much as has been asserted. The analyst suggested that the program could focus on courses in the new California General Education Transfer Curriculum needed by CCC students but not available at their community college.

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

- *Pamela Brown, Vice President, IRAP*
- *Todd Greenspan, Executive Advisor, Academic Planning and Policy Development, IRAP*
- *Ethan Savage, Academic Planning & Policy Analyst, IRAP*

Vice Provost Brown joined the meeting to describe IRAP's resources and highlights from new data on graduation and retention rates. The members have received a summary of the results from the most recent UC Undergraduate Student Experience Survey (UCUES). The 2030 dashboard highlights the goals UC wants to communicate to the public as the University celebrates its 150th anniversary, and IRAP worked with the chancellors and others on the campuses to obtain the data used in the dashboard. This information is a key area of annual discussions with the Regents and used for UC's accountability report. The goals include increasing undergraduate and graduate degree attainment, improving undergraduate outcomes, and improving timely graduation for freshmen and transfer students while also eliminating the gaps for Pell grant recipients and first generation and underrepresented students as these students represent the majority of California public high school students. The outcomes for undergraduate

students feed into the goal of increasing the number of graduate students which connects to the goal of growing and diversifying the faculty.

UC is striving to close the gaps in timely graduation rates between freshman and transfer students and Vice President Brown noted that there are smaller gaps for first generation and underrepresented students. The dashboard is based on goals provided by the campuses which is rolled up to provide a picture from the systemwide level. While campuses have identified similar areas of focus and goals, their programs, strategies, and efforts vary. Graduation rates for transfer students at four years are higher than those for freshman at six years. All campuses are emphasizing timely graduation for transfer students and ensuring that those students are able to graduate sooner, which may expand their choices and opportunities to go to graduate school. The specific area of emphasis for each of the goals for each campus is summarized in the 2030 capacity plan.

A steep improvement in graduation rates may be attributed to the pandemic when students took more units than usual and took more courses during the summer. In addition, there were changes associated with flexible grading and related to when courses could be dropped which were factors behind the notable short-term increases in three and four year graduation rates during the first year of the pandemic. IRAP has a dashboard with data on students who leave UC without attaining a degree (<https://universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/ug-stop-outs>) and this information can be used to help identify early intervention strategies to keep at risk students from stopping out. Vice President Brown reported that some campuses have parachute courses or other ways to support students getting low grades, and campuses also have effective tools for looking at major migration. The dashboard allows comparisons between the populations that earn degrees and those that do not by discipline. Students with high grade point averages may drop out due to family responsibilities or financial reasons.

IRAP has reports on undergraduate alumni outcomes and the value of a UC degree (<https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/files/value-of-degree-full-report.pdf>; <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/uc-alumni-earnings>; <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/uc-alumni-work>). The data includes outcomes two years and 20 years after graduation but the vice president noted that the Employment Development Department data does not include individuals working for the federal government or who start their own businesses. The information shows the number of undergraduates who go on to earn a graduate degree, median earnings, and income trajectory over time by campus and by major.

Vice President Brown noted that the gap in retention rates for Pell grant recipients and first generation students increased during the pandemic. Retention has stabilized but has not increased for the most recent cohort of students and the rate for Pell grant recipients continues to decline. Traditionally, retention rates seem to be indicative of what the six year graduation rate will be. The support lower income students need may be more significant than what has been provided in the past as these students had more significant challenges throughout the pandemic.

The 2022 UCUES can be filtered by different student populations and data from previous surveys allows for longitudinal comparisons. The survey is always launched in March or April and is conducted into the summer. The percentage of students indicating some level of satisfaction with their overall academic experience in the 2022 survey was 90% and this rate is relatively consistent across disciplines, however the percentage of students expressing satisfaction with the value of their education for the price they

are paying decreased in comparison to earlier years. The responses in 2022 to questions related to sense of belonging were consistent with previous response rates. There was an increase in the percentage of students reporting that they were able to get into the major of their choice. A significant concern is the proportion of students who indicated that they did not know a professor well enough to ask for a letter of recommendation, with a higher percentage in 2022 than at any point in the past. The overall response rate to the UCUES in 2022 was 28% whereas the rate is usually around 35% to 40%.

Discussion: There is a concern that curriculum is being made less rigorous to improve graduation outcomes. Vice President Brown explained that when the state asserts that UC should enroll more students, UCOP emphasizes the need to ensure that students leave the University with a degree in a timely manner. UCOP also emphasizes the importance of expanding support for Pell grant recipients and first generation and underrepresented students, part of which comes down to faculty growth and expanding curricular opportunities. The failure to increase the number of faculty negatively impacts UC's ability to meet other goals. A member suggested analyzing the time to degree for transfer students based on how many years they were at a community college since some spend up to six years before transferring to UC.

There was a low response rate by international students to the UCUES and it was suggested that the survey should be offered in foreign languages. Students lost trust in the survey following a data breach and UCOP should be transparent about what has been made to prevent a recurrence. Another suggestion is that new questions regarding online instruction should be added to the survey. Vice President Brown explained that the survey administration page has information about how the questions are evaluated. Each campus has UCUES coordinators who focus on increasing the response rate to the survey. IRAP carefully evaluates the utility of the questions on the survey every year and the coordinators help test the instrument with small groups of students.

VII. Campus Reports/Member Items

UCI: The Entry Level Writing Requirement has a passing grade of C or better and UCEP will discuss whether it should recommend changing the passing grade to a C-.

VIII. New Business/Executive Session

Committee members agreed to having two shorter meetings in May and one meeting in June.

Videoconference adjourned at: 1:30 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Melanie Cocco