

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Videoconference Minutes

Monday, April 5, 2021

Attending: Daniel Potter, Chair (UCD), Dana Carney (UCB), Katheryn Russ (UCD), Tony Smith (UCI), Megan McEvoy (UCLA), Matthew Hibbing (UCM), Juliann Allison (UCR), Geoffrey Cook (UCSD), Jose Gurrola (UCSF), Mary Brenner (UCSB), Tracy Larrabee (UCSC), Todd Greenspan (Director, Academic Planning), Ethan Savage (Analyst, Academic Planning), Mary Gauvain (Chair, Academic Senate), Robert Horwitz (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate)

I. Consultation with Senate Leadership

- *Mary Gauvain, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Robert Horwitz, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

The primary focus of the last Regents meeting was on capital and financing, but UCEP may be interested in a presentation entitled “Beyond Economic Impacts: Understanding Societal Impacts and Public Value of a UC Degree.” The Regents also received a report on an audit of admissions. Chair Gauvain and Vice Chair Horwitz are working closely with Provost Brown on the next steps following the Feasibility Study Report. Senate leadership are working with Academic Council to develop a follow-up to the spring 2020 survey of faculty on remote instruction.

Various groups continue to discuss plans to reopen the campuses and the concerns of faculty are slowly being acknowledged. Whether the COVID-19 vaccination will be mandated for students is still an open question, as are concerns about enforcement and privacy. Research activity has been connected to fall reopening and Senate leadership is trying to get this decoupled since research spaces have not been the sites of any infections. Other concerns revolve around who will have responsibility for enforcing non-pharmaceutical interventions. Vice Chair Horwitz mentioned that some students will come to class and refuse to wear a mask as a political statement, so protocols for handling such incidents are needed since faculty should not be in charge of enforcement. Another problem is that students expect that all courses will be delivered across multiple modes, which would increase faculty workload, so this is another topic of discussion with the administration.

Discussion: UCLA is expecting an uptick in proposals for fully online courses and one question is what the contact hours for them should be. The UCSC faculty member who taught a well-regarded online calculus course has reported spending more time with students in this course versus the in-person offering. Chair Gauvain remarked that there will be a good deal of anecdotal evidence about the successes and failures of remote instruction since last March, but it is critical to think broadly about the kind of university UC will be after the pandemic. Some Regents want to increase the number of online course offerings as a way to increase enrollment and, although this is a valuable and important goal, UC must proceed thoughtfully before there is a major shift in that direction.

II. Self-Supporting Graduate Degree Programs

- *Kathleen McGarry, Vice Chair, Planning and Budget (UCLA)*
- *Andrea Kasko, Vice Chair, Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (UCLA)*

UCEP’s March discussion about the Five Year Planning Perspectives Report led to questions about the impact of self-supporting graduate degree programs (SSPs) on the resources available for undergraduate programs. Kathleen McGarry, a Professor of Economics at UCLA and the vice chair of

the systemwide committee on Planning and Budget (UCPB), has served as the vice chair and department chair for UCLA's undergraduate program. Andrea Kasko, a member of UCLA's bio-engineering department, chairs the division's Graduate Council, serves as vice chair of the systemwide Coordinating Council of Graduate Affairs (CCGA), and has been working closely with SSPs over the past few years. Professors McGarry and Kasko are co-chairs of a joint UCPB and CCGA group looking at the SSPs, which will produce a report on these programs later in the year.

CCGA and divisional Graduate Councils have been heavily involved with SSPs, which took off rapidly, but campus Undergraduate Councils/Committees on Educational Policy have not. There are concerns about what SSPs might mean for undergraduate education. Initially part of professional degree programs, SSPs have come to play a more important role in and with the financing of many State supported graduate degree programs. There are several ways in which SSPs are cause for concern for undergraduate programs. Some campuses allow faculty in SSPs them to count this in their regular teaching load, which reduces their undergraduate teaching.

Faculty in SSPs are likely to assign Teaching Assistants (TAs) to SSPs instead of undergraduate programs. Even if faculty teach on an overload basis, they may cut back on consulting work, for example, but they may also be less engaged with independent study or reduce office hours for their undergraduate students. These faculty might prioritize the higher paying students in the SSPs over their undergraduates. It is possible that SSPs are assigned the best classrooms or given priority in terms of when the classes are scheduled, which is another disadvantage for undergraduates.

UCLA established strict guidelines for SSPs in part because of the concerns outlined above. One of the central worries about the impact on undergraduate students is having an appropriate pool of qualified TAs. Many of the students in SSPs come from different backgrounds than the students in the State supported programs, and if SSPs are prioritized a concern is there will not be a pool of TAs that are needed. There are many hidden costs with SSPs, and most of the campuses tax them at a fairly low rate. It is not clear if recurring costs for things like information technology or the wear and tear on classrooms are taken into account. For campuses in urban areas, even competition for parking is an issue. The growth of SSPs should be carefully planned and monitored.

Discussion: Members thanked Professor McGarry and Professor Kasko for their attention to this matter. There are no accurate estimates of the true costs of an SSP in any given discipline nor of the funds redirected from undergraduate programs. Another unknown is how many faculty count the SSP toward their regular teaching load. UCLA does not allow buyouts and certain deans have pushed back against this, but they have not responded to request for data about who is getting bought out and who is replacing them in the undergraduate programs. Professor Kasko noted that the tax rate at the campuses is between five and ten percent depending on the program, and an analysis of the true costs to implement a full program without any campus resources is needed. The subcommittee will make recommendations about the types of data, specifically with regard to budgets, each division should collect and transmit to systemwide. A member commented that there can be unequal treatment of undergraduates and Master's degree students when they are in the same classes as students in SSPs.

III. Consent Calendar

Action: UCEP's March 1st minutes were approved.

IV. Consultation with Institutional Research & Academic Planning

- *Todd Greenspan, Director, Academic Planning, IRAP*

- *Ethan Savage, Analyst, Academic Planning, IRAP*

In addition to the presentation on the public value of a UC degree, in March the Regent's Academic and Student Affairs Committee received a presentation entitled "Using Curricular Innovations and Enhancements to Address Equity Gaps" which included examples from the nine undergraduate campuses. In addition, President Drake and Provost Brown talked to the Regents about faculty being rewarded for teaching and research, a rare discussion with the Board about the undergraduate mission. Director Greenspan reported that campuses are analyzing why enrollments for spring quarter and spring semester are down and this might be because students have taken additional units since last spring and summer.

Campuses are making admissions offers and students are submitting Statements of Intent to Register. Admissions directors are trying to determine what will happen this year and the absence of standardized test scores will make it trickier to figure out the yield. As of now, the pool of students offered admission is more diverse than in the past. UCOP has received the campus multiyear plans for the next four years, and in spite of the pandemic, growth is still anticipated across the system. Even though the percentage of non-resident students has decreased this year in part due to the pandemic, the Legislature continues to have concerns about UC's reliance on these students. Director Greenspan noted that the Academic Planning Council discussed academic integrity and the problems with students posting course materials on various websites.

Discussion: Chair Potter met with Candace Sue, the head of academic relations at Chegg, and she will meet with UCEP in May to describe the steps the company is taking to curb academic integrity violations. A member noted that students use chat rooms and other mechanisms to share course materials. Undergraduate deans are also discussing this issue and focusing on moving away from high stakes assessment. However, there is concern about more frequent, lower stakes assessment especially for students who are not well-prepared when they get to UC, need more time to catch up and depend on the end of year exams to raise their grades. An additional troubling situation is that administrators are telling faculty how to assess the mastery of their disciplines.

V. Systemwide Senate Review: Proposed Revisions to the Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures

When UCEP initially discussed the proposed revisions to the police policies in March, there was disagreement about whether UCEP should opine. A couple of members prepared draft responses for the committee's consideration, one of which is brief and another that is more detailed.

Discussion: A member recommended adding a sentence indicating that good police officers are valued on the campuses. The more detailed memo describes the fundamental problems with policing currently under discussion nationally, and some members are appalled by certain aspects of the proposed policies. Arbitrary rules and inconsistencies in the proposed policies should be pointed out. UCEP could emphasize the importance of having mental health professionals respond instead of police when appropriate, and that the policies will have the greatest impact on students of color. There was general agreement about the importance of the committee using its voice and providing feedback about these policies. It was noted that individual campuses are probably developing their own policing strategies.

Action: The UCB and UCSC representatives will finalize the response and send it to the committee for review and approval.

VI. Consultation with the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative

- *Ellen Osmundson, Director, ILTI*

The analyst provided Director Osmundson with the feedback from the systemwide review of the proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 544. The proposed revisions, which were not approved, were designed to support cross-campus enrollment. Director Osmundson summarized the feedback point by point and described possible changes that may address the divisions' concerns.

Discussion: Analyst Savage indicated that pre-approving the type of credit students will receive can be problematic in the event that a course is disrupted. Although the California Community College courses are approved by UC, those are lower division or preparatory courses whereas ILTI's offerings include upper division and/or advanced courses. UCEP should consider if certain operational elements of the policy would be better communicated to the registrars or academic advisors outside of Senate regulation.

V. Principles for Online Undergraduate Degree Programs

Academic Council has discussed the comments on the report from the Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force, and Chair Gauvain wants Council to think about the second option that would allow fully online undergraduate degrees that meet a high bar. The question becomes what exactly is the high bar, what are the criteria to be considered, and if proposals for these programs should be approved at the systemwide level initially or indefinitely. UCEP's suggestions will help inform Council's deliberations about this matter.

Discussion: The pandemic has resulted in both advocates and critics of online education to rethink their positions. A member recommended postponing any significant decisions about online undergraduate degrees and letting campuses figure out the types of degrees that should be offered online. There may or may not be a surge in the number of faculty who propose teaching online courses based on having positive experiences with remote instruction during the pandemic. Overall, the committee is not in favor of UCOP making decisions about these degree programs. The UCSC representative will find out if questions about online degrees developed by that campus can be shared with UCEP and this topic will be on the agenda again in May.

VI. New Business

A member has noticed that administrative units on campus are getting ahead of the Senate in thinking about course design and equity in ways that might be constructive but could conflict with academic freedom if faculty are not actively involved. The campus Senate does not have statements on course or program design and equity to provide a framework for undergraduate program reviews.

VII. Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Videoconference adjourned at: 12:30 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Dan Potter