

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Videoconference Minutes

Monday, May 6, 2024

Attending: Melanie Cocco, Chair (UCI), A. Katie Harris, Vice Chair (UCD), Darlene Francis (UCB), Gerardo Con Diaz (UCD), Nitin Nitin (UCD alternate), Jose Antonio Rodriguez-Lopes (UCI), Catherine Sugar (UCLA), Christopher Viney (UCM), Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR), Madeleine Norris (UCSF), Ben Hardekopf (UCSB), David Cuthbert (UCSC), Megan Chung (Undergraduate Student Representative), Todd Greenspan (Executive Advisor, Academic Planning and Policy Development, Institutional Research and Academic Planning (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. Consultation with Senate Leadership

- *James Steintrager, Chair, & Steven W. Cheung, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

In response to violent activity related to the protest encampment, UCLA's administration decided to shift classes to remote delivery without consulting the Senate. Divisional Undergraduate Council and Educational Policy Committee chairs should be talking with campus administrators about how instruction is handled during protests. Senate leadership has been meeting with the Regents in closed session to discuss the encampments, and there is concern about the lack of prepared-ness at the campuses and how to determine when peaceful protest crosses a line into something else. Further complicating the situation is the possibility of a UAW strike action as early as this week which would clearly have an impact on instruction.

The provost's congress on online education was held on Wednesday and it seemed like the audience was comprised of people already convinced of the value of online instruction. A few weeks ago, Academic Assembly considered a revision to Senate Bylaw 55 to extend the voting privileges on departmental personnel matters to Teaching Professors. The proposed revision failed to pass in Assembly by a very close vote, but Chair Steintrager suspects this matter will come up again. There is a lack of uniformity across the campuses in how the Teaching Professor series is understood and implemented may be one reason behind the no vote. Regularizing the series took several years but Teaching Professors are fundamental to undergraduate instruction on some campuses.

The Regents meet next week and Chair Steintrager shared that his remarks during the last meeting of the Board were critical of its past handling of shared governance. The Board's new chair and vice chair will be announced soon and it is hoped this will help improve shared governance. The proposed Regents policy on public and discretionary statements on department websites is on the agenda again, but given the current environment, voting on the policy may be delayed.

Discussion: The UCLA representative shared that there are ongoing discussions between UCLA's administration and divisional Senate about when classes should be cancelled versus when campus buildings are closed. Another member is hearing from students that they want to attend class in person if it is safe. Campuses should have decision trees in place and the analyst mentioned that there was a discussion about the need for such communication plans after everyone was blindsided by the COVID-19 pandemic. A member stated that signs with offensive language have been posted in the windows of campus buildings and Chair Steintrager indicated that time, place, and manner policies and restrictions address this type of activity. Campuses have robust defenses of First Amendment rights, but there are

definite limitations and potential Title VI violations. Chair Cocco observed that UC needs to educate students about what is and is not appropriate protest activity.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: The committee approved today's agenda.

Action: The April 1st and April 15th, 2024 minutes were approved with one abstention.

III. Chair's Updates

Chair Cocco sent a note to the UCSF Senate chair recommending that the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs should be asked to review its request for a variance to SR 740 is related to numbering graduate student courses. The chair remarked that Tricia Bertram Gallant, the Director of the Academic Integrity office at UCSD, shared very good information at the congress on online education and rebutted some of the other speakers who did not mention anything negative about this modality. The presenters framed online education as a solution to all of UC's problems and asserted that low-income students do well in online courses. A speaker from MIT talked about the number of students who enroll in massive open online courses but did not acknowledge that most never finish them. There was also no time for discussion with those in attendance.

Members are asked to provide their campus undergraduate grades data by May 17 so the committee can have another discussion about systemwide Senate Regulation 634 which defines a minimum GPA for graduation and the possibility of a GPA requirement based on a minimum number of units required for a major. Based on UCEP's initial discussion, members were not enthusiastic about proposing a revision to the regulation but it will be worthwhile to look at the data to understand how many units students are earning. The retroactive withdrawal mechanism is appropriate to use for situations when students have low GPAs and too many units. The chair followed up on a concern raised about the final report on students with disabilities and confirmed that the Americans with Disabilities Act does not extend to the caregivers of people with disabilities.

During the recent Academic Council meeting, UCEP's plan to review the UC Center Sacramento was approved. The provost asked Chair Steintrager if UCEP could postpone the review until a new faculty director is hired. Chair Cocco advised the Senate chair that the review will examine what the program has done in the past and it would be helpful for a new director to be aware of any problems identified as a result of the review.

IV. UCI School of Population and Public Health Full Proposal

- *Darlene Francis (UCB) & Catherine Sugar (UCLA)*

The UCB and UCLA representatives have completed their review of UCI's full proposal for a School of Population and Public Health. UCEP reviewed the pre-proposal in 2022-2023 and the proposers were responsive to the committee's input. The full proposal is strong and has been approved by UCI's divisional Senate. The feedback on the full proposal is intended to help the school with its accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health. The UCLA representative provided an overview of the current program's structure which includes a large undergraduate major. Minor shortcomings UCI should address include delineating how the core disciplinary areas are covered; creating a clear plan for the growth and optimal size of faculty and administrative positions; having a systematic structure for diversity, equity, and inclusion activities; and ensuring sufficient faculty are available to serve as professional mentors. Both reviewers enthusiastically recommend that the committee approve the proposed new school.

Discussion: Members did not have any questions and appreciated the reviewers' work.

Action: A motion to approve the school was made and seconded, and the committee voted unanimously to approve the new school.

V. Criteria for Senate Review of Certain UC Online Courses

- *Madeleine Norris (UCSF) & Ben Hardekopf (UCSB)*

The goal of the UCSF and UCSB representatives' work is to figure out the criteria to be used to identify the UC Online courses that will be reviewed by UCEP. Chair Cocco has found it difficult to determine how many courses are being actively offered by UC Online, information that would help the committee plan how the reviews will work. The number of students enrolling in each course is also needed.

Discussion: Over the years it has been challenging for UCEP to get any meaningful data from UC Online. Members might try asking their campus Institutional Research units for data on these courses. The committee discussed how to approach the review of courses and the workload involved with reviewing a significant sample of them. One idea is for UCEP to recommend that UC Online utilize a standardized student evaluation form. The chair will ask UC Online's executive director to send the program's annual report a week before the May 20th meeting. Members should send Chair Cocco any questions they have for the executive director in advance of that discussion.

VI. UCDC's Design Your Life Course

- *Eric Schwitzgebel (UCR) & Chair Cocco*

The executive director of UC Washington Center (UCDC) asserted that the Center's offering of the Design Your Life course is exactly the same as the UCB offering. The UCB representative indicated that this course may not have been sent to the UCB Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) because the campus has a mechanism to pilot a course without that step. One option is for UCDC to ask UCB's COCI to review and approve the course. UCDC states that the course is equivalent to a flexible unit class at UCB and wants it to be offered for a grade rather than Pass/No Pass as recommended by UCEP. UCDC could be advised about how much work is involved per unit. The UCR representative recommended approving the request.

Discussion: The course description does not include information to support flexible units, so the committee will ask UCDC to provide the details related to how it will meet the 4, 3 or 2 unit requirements. UCEP will send the UCB unit worksheet to the executive director with a request to justify the hours. The request does not clarify if it is a quarter or semester course and the information in their request about UCLA's pass/no pass requirement is incorrect. Members agreed with asking UCDC to provide more information.

VII. Member Items/Campus Reports

There were no member items/campus reports.

VIII. New Business/Executive Session

There was no new business or Executive Session.

Videoconference adjourned at: 12:30 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Melanie Cocco