

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

ACADEMIC SENATE

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

MINUTES OF TELECONFERENCE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2009

**Attending:** Stephen McLean, Chair (UCSB), Taradas Bandyopadhyay, Vice-Chair (UCR), Robert Hendel (UCB), John Yoder (UCD), David Kay (UCI), David Funder (UCR), Dorothy Wiley (UCLA), Arthur Little (UCLA), Rolf Christoffersen (UCSB), Jaye Padgett (UCSC), Charles Perrin (UCSD), Joan Etzell (UCSF), Jamel Velji (Graduate Student Representative), Carol Copperud (Director, Academic Planning, UCOP), Harry Powell (Academic Council Vice Chair), Brenda Abrams (Policy Analyst)

**I. Announcements**

There were announcements from December and January Academic Council meetings. Interim Provost Bob Grey has stepped down and Larry Pitts will assume that position. There is a nationwide search for a permanent provost. The Education Abroad Program was a major topic of the last meeting. A task force examining the EAP business plan and the academic quality will include UCEP representation. The reorganization of Academic Affairs is moving forward, and concerns about diminished analytic support for Senate committees is being addressed. The Regents will vote on the eligibility reform proposal this week and it should pass. Regent Island visited Council last week, commenting that he felt the proposal could have gone further. His areas of concern are access, affordability, and diversity.

An Enrollment Management Group is being established to look at the issue systemwide for the first time. This will be a joint Senate/administrative committee based in Academic Information and Strategic Services. The system will reduce freshmen enrollees by 2,300 systemwide in the coming year and the number of transfer students will be increased by 500. Last year the system was overenrolled by 11,000 students. The enrollment limit was approved by The Regents, and Regent Island voted against it. The limit sends a message to the Legislature about the consequences of not fully funding UC. An intersegmental group will work on improving relationships with community colleges and transfers of students from those colleges into UC, but Senate involvement with this is unclear.

The President announced that a tentative agreement with AFSCME has been reached. The restart of contributions to UCRP is not moving forward as suggested. The Senate has recommended that employee contributions should not start until the employer contributions start and that take home pay should not be impacted. The state is providing \$20 million. The contributions will start in last quarter of 2009-2010 academic year based on this money from the state. A group will be exploring creative funding options and everything will be considered, including how funds are distributed to the campuses.

The Blue and Gold Opportunity Program was supported by Council, the cost of which is relatively small. The proposed UC Davis School of Nursing was discussed by Council at length. The new school was approved with conditions including working out a better funding strategy. It was passed by virtue of the need and the opportunity with the grant from the Moore Foundation.

There was minimal discussion about the budget at the January Council meeting. Each campus was asked to have a face to face meeting with the president regarding how budget cuts would be handled. In response to a request to include the divisional Senate chairs in the meetings, about ¾ of them participated. Campuses are scrambling to increase their revenue. Though it is difficult to know what will happen, it is likely that the budget situation will be even worse next year. UCB's Chancellor Birgeneau suggested differential fees for the campuses but the president indicated that this is not on the table at this time. At least one campus is examining summer sessions to determine if they can be self supporting.

**Discussion:** UCEP might want to weigh in on the decision to limit enrollment and express support for the decision. The campuses are looking at Non-Resident Tuition for undergraduates, not general education and registration fees, to determine if they can be charged differently at the campuses. Revenue could support systemwide initiatives so some of it is shared by the campuses, and UCM might benefit from these funds.

**Action:** The Chair will draft a letter supporting the decision to limit enrollment.

## **II. Consent Calendar**

The December 1, 2008 minutes were approved.

## **III. Undergraduate Research Opportunities**

Chair McLean drafted a one page document which attempts to define undergraduate participation in research.

**Discussion:** A couple of items on the list of possible research activities are too passive and are not equivalent to a research experience. Seminars for example are a good introduction to faculty research but are not a substitute for direct participation. It was noted that activities need to include the types of research conducted in the arts and humanities. In the arts, independent creative projects have to be produced. Courses on research methodologies available to large numbers of students should be recognized even though they do not allow for a one to one relationship with the professor. It was suggested that the paper should highlight what is distinctive about the UC experience compared to other institutions.

One question is whether opportunities can be provided to a broader group of students. The committee discussed the idea of building research experiences into their curriculum such as the capstone courses at UCLA. The benefit of the research experience to the students should be emphasized, even those experiences not connected to writing a thesis or receiving honors. In light of the focus on accountability, it would be helpful to have and disseminate data that illustrates that involvement in research is a positive. It is important to show the connection between education and research. The committee discussed how credits will be granted for research participation. Practices for giving credit vary across the campuses. Members agreed that it is good for students to have some type of incentive and giving credit makes it measurable and presentable to the legislature. The senate chair suggested that UCEP might want to include internships in our discussion of research opportunities. The consensus seemed to be that while

they certainly can be valuable in a student's training, they are not unique to UC and can be offered at any institution of higher learning. Consequently internships will not be included in future discussions.

A white paper on undergraduate research opportunities will focus on: what is unique to the research university and specifically to UC; the value of research to students; ways to increase opportunities which may involve incentives like credit or pay or building opportunities into programs such as Capstone, especially where they are not currently available; and reducing the burden on faculty by using graduate students more actively.

**Action:** Chair McLean will begin drafting the white paper.

#### **IV. Impacted Majors**

Impacted majors are the result of students wanting to study a certain area but there are insufficient resources (FTEs) in the program for all the students. UCEP should consider strategies to address the impacted majors. Input from members indicated that a common strategy has been to raise the bar to make it harder to get into the program.

**Discussion:** Student demand should not drive decision making but it cannot be ignored and should be considered in resource allocations. There is a resource allocation issue unrelated to whether UC is having a good year or a bad year with respect to the budget. Student interests change rapidly. The state and national needs should be considered with regard to enrollment in different fields. It is also important to know where jobs will be in the future in order to help students chart their careers. There can be planning for the number of majors in certain areas that will be needed in the long-term. Having impacted majors is a sign that planning in the past has not been good. Better planning within campuses, across the system and even with other systems can be helpful. As a matter of interest, twenty-seven percent of California's bachelor's degrees come from UC, 46% from the CSUs, and the rest are from other independent four-year institutions in California.

One solution would be to combine some departments, especially departments or programs in new fields that might be absorbed into existing traditional departments that have resources available. Faculty with expertise in the new fields exist across the campus and a mechanism for chairs to better distribute resources is needed. There are departments that are impacted where the chair has control over how resources are committed to address the problem, and there are programs where this is not the case. Every campus has programs that are impacted. There is an issue related to the number of students admitted into impacted departments and an enrollment management program at the campus would address this problem. Pre-majors are complicated and it is not clear what departments have to do to establish them and whether there are differences across the campuses. Members should investigate the processes to define and establish pre-majors at their campuses. Related issues are second majors and how summer session is used to manage the overflow in from the impacted majors. UCEP might want to suggest a policy the campuses should follow to handle impacted majors.

**Action:** Members will talk to undergraduate deans and the local CEP about defining impacted majors and specified strategies.

## **V. UC Accountability Framework**

The committee did not discuss the framework.

## **VI. SR 764 Credit in Special Study Courses**

Senate Regulation 764 is a systemwide regulation which limits credit in special study courses for undergraduates to five units per term. This issue came up at one campus because of a major that makes significant use of community service for the program. Students spend the summer and a quarter doing community service work with faculty oversight.

**Discussion:** There is variability in the quality of oversight and there are instances where more credit is allowed. There should be an overall ceiling, not just a limit per term, and a more structured approach should be used. It can create problems when comparing students if one has been granted additional units. A committee member pointed out that some majors require work in a clinical setting. The burden is on faculty to make a course rigorous if it has to be developed outside of the norm. Credit could be given for an organized course with a coherent syllabus that is proctored by faculty. Faculty should be more accountable for that kind of course. One campus uses pass/not pass, restricts the number of courses that can be taken, and makes exceptions where students need to take more special study courses for legitimate reasons. There could be a cap related to total number that can be taken towards a degree. UCEP should determine how frequently this situation occurs and this issue will be discussed again during the next meeting when information from the campuses is available.

**Action:** Members were asked to find out how often variances are given and who gives them. Members can contact the registrar to find out how many in the 90s and 199s exceed the limit occur and why exceptions were granted.

## **VII. Two-Year Appointment to UCEP**

Chair McLean indicated that at UCSB a two-year appointment to UCEP is not required, therefore every year someone different is on the committee. This impacts the committee's ability to function well due to lack of continuity from year to year.

**Discussion:** Most committee members indicate that they have two-year appointments to UCEP and most agreed that a two-year appointment is a good idea. One member indicated that his division is concerned about creating 'professional' committee members, noting that having new representatives brings different perspectives to the discussions, and that significant time is taken up with committee participation. It was suggested that we design a schedule so that only half the members would rotate off every year. It is important to have a member of undergraduate Council, not necessarily the chair, on UCEP. The recommendation to make UCEP representation two years is supported by most members, one member opposes it, and one member wants to consider it further before making a decision. There is a question of whether the student

appointment should be extended for two years was discussed. This might be easier for a graduate student since they are around longer. A two-year appointment would give students an opportunity to learn about the issues. This decision should be left up to the student organization.

**Action:** The Chair will draft a letter to Academic Council recommending a two-year appointment to UCEP.

### **VIII. Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) Project**

- *John Douglass, Co-Principal Investigator of the SERU Project and Consortium*
- *Gregg Thompson, Co-Principal Investigator and Executive Director of the Office of Student Research*
- *Dennis Hengstler, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Planning and Analysis and collaborator on the SERU AAU Consortium*
- *Steve Chapman, SERU Project Director*

SERU representatives provided an update on UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) process. UCB conducts the survey annually but other campuses conduct it every two years. It will next be administered in Spring 2010. The results from 2008 are being put together now. The survey allows for campus modules. All students can participate, answering a set of core questions and questions in four or five different modules. A campus can design its own set of questions for another module. SERU works hard to get a good response rate. UCUES is a comprehensive questionnaire that collects data on 800 variables. Students complete the survey in about 20 minutes. There is a set of core questions after which students are randomly assigned into more in depth modules. The national survey of student engagement is not a census survey like UCUES.

The data collected is confidential but not anonymous because the data is linked to background information available on students including demographics and performance. The funding comes from all the campuses and the collaboration has received support from OP. UCUES is one of the major products of SERU. There is interest in identifying ways the data can be used for institutional improvement and to promote scholarly research. The survey provides a significant increase in the amount and kind of data available about who UC students are. The data can be integrated into academic program review, accreditation and other special initiatives. There are four areas of focus are research engagement, affordability, campus climate, and learning outcomes.

SERU has initiated a project on research engagement. Elizabeth Berkes, a postdoctoral student, wrote a paper looking at UCB data from UCUES. A more general report on the 2008 results will be produced that includes a significant section on universitywide trends on engagement. The report should increase the understanding of what exists. SERU submitted a grant proposal to the US Department of Education to expand the data collection on research engagement but it was not awarded. SERU has compared UCUES results to national data sets and has seen that UC has a higher instance of undergraduate involvement in research. There are patterns and differences between the campuses and disciplines. An example of a limitation in the analysis is the limited number of African American students in UC. SERU is working on web-based tool that allows for queries by campus, discipline and background characteristics. An advantage of the UCUES

census-style survey is that it provides the ability to drill down to identify where research engagement is occurring.

**Discussion:** Chair McLean mentioned that the committee discussed producing a white paper about UC's unique offerings related to undergraduate research opportunities. The survey will provide a better profile of each campus. The new SERU web-based tool will help UCEP understand research engagement and opportunities that are happening at the campus. Comparisons at different campuses in similar department can be made and differences as well as efforts that are paying off can be identified. The program review process could include information on research engagement. Each campus has a liaison for UCUES and a research office. The web-based tool links results to the courses the students take, whether it includes a Capstone course and seminars. There is a need to systematically show that engagement in research is value added to education. It is hard to completely control for individual characteristics like self-selection and motivation differences.

With respect to the Accountability Framework, there is a question of how participation in research experiences can be quantified. It is better to approach the UCUES survey in a way that takes the subjectivity out of the questions. More detailed information is available and in the framework it has been clustered. There are differences by campus in terms of participation in research opportunities. UCUES data is being used at most of the campuses to some degree or another in academic program review. There is a systemwide meeting with those engaged in program review to discuss how data is being integrated into this process. The SERU consortium will provide an opportunity to collaborate with other public research institutions. Data is being integrated into measuring student learning outcomes. There are two committees working on this issue: the undergraduate effectiveness task force and the post graduate outcomes task force. The latter will focus on planning for an alumni survey and this task force is just starting. Preliminary findings on perceived learning outcomes of students will be in the UCUES report. Information from UCUES can be very important to the campuses. There is interest in how students perceive the campus.

Funding for the project has been year to year. SERU may come to UCEP for support for UCUES and the survey administration. The committee was reminded about the May 1 symposium. There is mutual interest in collaboration between UCEP and SERU. Access to data is restricted, but UCEP can request access and tap into resources at OP. SERU representatives will meet with UCEP in April.

Meeting adjourned at 3 PM  
Minutes prepared by Brenda Abrams  
Attest: Steve McLean