

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

**ACADEMIC SENATE**

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2007**

**Attending:** Richard Weiss, Chair (UCLA)

Keith Williams, Vice-Chair (UCD), Pierre Keller (UCR), Kim Griest (UCSD), Jaye Padgett (UCSC), Benson Tongue (UCB), Omer Blaes (UCSB), David Kay (UCI), Henry Sanchez (UCSF), Alessa Johns (UCD), Martin Kohan (Student Rep-UCB), Susan Wilbur (Director of Undergraduate Admissions), Michael LaBriola (Committee Analyst)

**I. General Announcements and Updates – UCEP Chair Richard Weiss**

Chair Weiss reported on business from recent meetings of the Academic Council, the Academic Planning Council (APC) and the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS).

Academic Council: In January, Academic Council passed amendments to Senate Bylaw 110.A, which adds a provision for the removal of an elected official of the Academic Assembly, and Bylaw 16, which clarifies the reporting lines for personnel actions related to the Senate Executive Director. The Assembly will act on the amendments at its February meeting.

Council also discussed concerns raised by the University Committee on Planning and Budget that the budget Compact between the state and the University does not address the decline in faculty compensation relative to UC's comparison institutions. The Senate continues its review of the University Committee on Academic Personnel's recommendations for increasing the transparency and fairness of the UC salary scales.

The Senate has requested that the academic character of the University's executive leadership be preserved in the reorganization of the Office of the President. Council is resisting any suggestion that UC move toward a corporate model of management. The Administration has responded to the Senate's Memorial to the Regents recommending the elimination of non-resident tuition (NRT) for academic graduate students, with a plan to make NRT income transparent, which will help campuses determine whether NRT funds are being used for graduate student support.

Finally, The Regents have asked the Senate to clarify its position on a proposal to ban research funding from tobacco companies. Faculty are split between those who view the principle of academic freedom as the highest concern and those who are uncomfortable with the unethical and manipulative practices of the tobacco industry.

Academic Planning Council: After meeting with Provost Hume in November, UCEP sent the provost a letter endorsing the Steering Committee model proposed by the APC for the APC planning group on undergraduate education. The provost is now moving forward to establish the Steering Committee. UCEP members agreed that the UCEP chair and vice chair would both serve as UCEP's representatives to the Steering Committee for now. UCEP will define a more permanent system of representation by the end of the year.

Provost Hume is also encouraging campuses to share their long term academic plans so the University can operate in a more unified way, rather than as 10 separate bodies.

ICAS: At its most recent meeting, ICAS discussed the accreditation process with WASC's Executive Director, who noted that the government is exerting political pressure on colleges and universities to implement a "No Child Left Behind" model of assessment. UCEP members said UC should resist the imposition of inflexible assessment models that stifle creativity and individuality. Short of that, the University should take steps to implement an assessment model that is on its own terms rather than allowing one to be imposed from the outside.

ICAS asked UCEP to volunteer or nominate members to serve on two ICAS task forces. The first will discuss C-ID, a proposal from the California Community Colleges (CCC) Academic Senate for a common numbering system for lower division major preparation courses, and the second will address General Education Breadth/IGETC Alignment.

Action: Vice Chair Williams volunteered to serve on the C-ID Task Force. Chair Weiss will serve on the GE Breadth/IGETC Alignment Task Force.

## **II. Transfer Preparation Paths – with Susan Wilbur**

Undergraduate Admissions Director Wilbur joined UCEP to report on the implementation progress of Senate Resolution [477](#) (Streamlining the Major Preparation Course Articulation Process).

She said the California legislature has asked UC to make room for more CCC transfer students, and to make the transfer process and the major course articulation between UC and CCC more efficient and effective. The Senate responded to this request with SR 477, which requires the University to streamline the transfer process. UC administrators have been working with UCEP and BOARS to develop an implementation mechanism for 477 – *UC Transfer Preparatory Pathways*.

The goal of *Pathways* is to allow prospective transfer students and CCCs to access and compare lower division transfer preparation requirements for specific majors at different UC campuses, including details about minimum GPAs and required or strongly recommended courses for highly selective majors. *Pathways* provides information about transfer requirements that are both campus specific and that show differences and similarities across other UC campuses.

Director Wilbur noted that systemwide organizers met with campus articulation officers last year to identify four high demand majors appropriate for testing *Pathways* – biological sciences, history, chemistry, and psychology – which are now posted to <http://www.uctransfer.org/>. Organizers are gradually expanding implementation to the top 20 UC transfer majors and are currently working on draft plans for economics, business, physics, computer science, and anthropology.

Another goal of Streamlining and Pathways is to build on the existing articulation information in ASSIST and make it more detailed and user friendly (via <http://www.uctransfer.org/>). ASSIST is the Internet repository of current articulation agreements covering all three segments.

The California Master Plan for Higher Education asks UC to give highest admission priority to CCC transfer students. Admissions directors are concerned, however, because the number of

transfer applicants to UC campuses has flattened or declined in recent years. Some students have cited the complexity of the UC transfer process as a factor in not applying.

Director Wilbur said that as *Pathways* develops she wants to improve communication between UCOP and the campuses so that faculty are more involved in vetting and improving the language. Faculty advice and expertise can help clarify semantic issues around how majors are defined and what “preparation” is required or recommended for a major. She said UCEP can help establish a process that will facilitate communication around defining future Pathways. Getting feedback from campuses and potential users is essential if *Pathways* is going to communicate clearly and accurately the requirements for admission into a major.

Chair Weiss noted that it has not always been clear who is or should be vetting the major Pathways on the campuses. Local Educational Policy committees and Undergraduate Councils should be more engaged and can help identify faculty with the expertise to test the various Pathways. It may also be useful for UCEP and Academic Council to formally endorse the proposal and disseminate it to the faculty. This action could positively affect buy-in and involvement at the local level. Chair Weiss also suggested that organizers produce a Guide to Process clearly articulating how an articulation path is developed, vetted, and approved.

**Action:** Director Wilbur will circulate a revised *Pathways* draft proposal. UCEP will provide feedback and also solicit opinions from campus CEPs.

### **III. Consent Calendar**

**Action:** UCEP approved the minutes of the November 6, 2006 meeting.

**Action:** UCEP removed the draft proposal on the Relationships Between Pharmaceutical Vendors and Clinicians from the consent calendar and agreed not to opine.

### **IV. Proposed Systemwide Cap on Entry Level Writing Class Size**

Chair Weiss reviewed the history to date of a proposed systemwide cap on the class size of entry level writing requirement (ELWR) courses. University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) Chair John Eggers also joined UCEP by phone.

The cap was originally proposed by UCOPE in 2005, and in July of that year, UCEP reviewed projected costs and recommended that ELWR classes be capped at 15 but no more than 20 students per section. Council later endorsed that position and asked the Provost to implement the cap. When the Provost responded in mid-2006 that class size mandates were in the Senate purview, Council asked UCEP and UCOPE to propose a Senate regulation to codify a cap. In November 2006 however, the current UCEP questioned the merits of the overall proposal and decided to oppose the mandate. A draft memo was prepared, but Chair Weiss delayed submission after further discussion with the UCOPE chair.

Chair Weiss suggested that by questioning the cap and a previous committee decision, UCEP was going beyond its current charge to review UCOPE’s proposed language for SR 636. He said UCEP should address only that specific request rather than revisit the basic issue. Chair Eggers also noted that UCOPE would like UCEP to reconsider its position.

UCEP members noted that UCEP's July 2005 memo to Council recommended that "As new resources become available from the Compact and other sources, reducing writing class sizes to the recommended levels should be a high priority use for the new funds." In that memo, UCEP also expressed concern that without such additional funding, an ELWR cap could have a negative impact on other academic areas, including upper division writing programs, and could increase pressure on classroom space.

UCEP members noted that their original recommendation had now become a proposed mandate, but there was no evidence that additional resources had become available or that the Office of the President was willing to fund the mandate. Members noted that it would be irresponsible for the Senate to order campuses to reallocate resources to fund smaller ELWR classes without more certainty about the effect on campus resources and where funding would come from. Although some campuses might be able to meet the class size target without negative consequences, the effect on curricular programs at other campuses was unclear and potentially very harmful.

UCEP decided to stand behind its original recommendation that campuses make smaller ELWR class sections a priority, but to oppose the imposition of a mandate on individual campuses. In a revised memo, UCEP will encourage campuses to increase their efforts to reduce ELWR classes to between 15 and 20 students per section and state its opposition to a mandated cap and the proposed modification to Senate Regulation 636 unless the resource question is settled.

**Action:** UCEP will submit revised comments to Council.

## **V. UCEP/CCGA Report on the Role of Graduate Students in Instruction**

UCEP members reviewed responses from systemwide committees and divisions to the joint UCEP/CCGA report, *The Role of Graduate Students in University Instruction*. Chair Weiss asked members to consider possible next steps for the report.

Chair Weiss noted that several campuses expressed strong opposition to some of the report's recommendations – particularly the proposal to establish two new systemwide graduate student instructor titles. He said he considers the new titles to be a trivial part of the proposal, and it may have been a mistake for the committees to put them forward as a mandate to campuses, which tend to be very protective of existing local structures and practices. In addition, any attempt to change University job titles and responsibilities may face serious challenges from unions. He said UCEP and CCGA may have attempted to cover too much in the report, and although the responses reveal a number of misperceptions about what was being proposed, the report may have contributed to those misperceptions by not articulating clearly enough the core underlying principles behind the recommendations.

One member noted that the original impetus of the report was a request to UCEP from the Office of the President, which asked UCEP to consider the issue partly out of concern over potential legal issues that could result from a perceived ambiguity about where graduate student instructors who are under union contract stand in relation to the Faculty Code of Conduct.

Chair Weiss recommended that UCEP and CCGA first define a few core principles that the committees felt should guide campuses' use of graduate student instructors, and then base a revised set of recommendations on those principles that would be flexible enough for all

campuses to implement within existing structures. He suggested that the existing document be modified to be less of a mandate and more of a recommended set of guiding principles and best practices, which the campuses might receive more readily. UCEP and CCGA should recognize that “best practices” differ from campus to campus and then accommodate those differences as completely as possible within the core principles.

#### Proposed Core Principles:

1. Graduate student instructors are faculty members-in-training and should participate in instruction only when they have received the appropriate training and when faculty mentoring and supervision are present.

2. Faculty oversight, mentorship and supervision of graduate student instructors should be substantial, not simply a rubber stamp.

UCEP members added that faculty mentorship and oversight during Summer Session is a more complicated issue for some campuses. Some UCEP members felt the recommendations should continue to encompass Summer Session, as UC apparently planning to regularize summer instruction in the near future.

3. There is no pedagogical basis for the distinction between oversight of upper division and lower division teaching in the Senate regulations. Both should be in the Senate purview.

UCEP members felt the CCGA/UCEP document should continue to advocate abolishing the distinction between oversight of upper and lower division teaching.

4. The use of graduate student instructors should be limited.

Members noted that in general, regular UC faculty should be doing most of the teaching at the University, and campuses should not be handing over freshman courses to unsupervised graduate students. A perception that faculty do not teach harms the reputation of the University. Moreover, is it fair to undergraduates to have graduate students teaching so many courses? How does it affect academic excellence? The current situation may reflect negatively on the value of teaching at UC.

Finally, although the report recommends a 10% limit on graduate student instructors, UCEP members thought it would not be useful to continue to advocate a specific limit.

**Action:** UCEP will discuss its initial thoughts with CCGA.

#### **VI. CCGA’s Proposed Amendments to Senate Regulation 694 and new SR 695**

UCEP reviewed CCGA’s proposed amendments to the Senate regulations governing residency requirements for graduate students. Proposed modifications to SR 694 clarify the role of University Extension in off-site instruction. SR 695 is a new regulation establishing guidelines for judging the use of distance learning in graduate education as “off campus” or “on campus.”

UCEP members noted that the issue does not fall squarely in the purview of UCEP, but it does raise issues that could ultimately affect undergraduates. UCEP members noted that increasing the

use of on-line educational delivery carries with it the potential for abuse, and there was concern that precedents would be established that could be extended to undergraduate education.

**Action:** UCEP will submit brief comments expressing concern about the potential application to undergraduates and noting that any movement to include undergraduates should require extensive deliberation.

## **VII. Senate Regulations Governing A+ credit**

In November, UCEP asked for information about the systemwide policy for awarding extra GPA credit for an A+. The committee analyst reported that Senate Regulation [780](#) and [778](#) cover grading policy. There is no systemwide policy for the A+ credit. The Assembly has allowed campuses to set their own separate policies, and the list of [Assembly approved variances](#) to 780(A) indicate that Riverside is the only campus currently awarding extra grade point credit for an A+ beyond that received for the grade of A. Riverside allows an extra 3/10 for an A+. The Riverside grading policy was approved by the Assembly in May 1973. Some UC campuses allow instructors to award the A+ to denote extraordinary achievement without extra GPA credit.

UCEP members noted that some UC students want the opportunity to earn an A+; students could possibly be disadvantaged by not having this opportunity; and the lack of a “plus” option for the grade of A creates non-symmetry on the grading scales. However, UCEP decided not to pursue the issue further.

## **VIII. Campus Reports and UCEP Member Items**

**Santa Barbara.** The Undergraduate Council (UGC) is discussing an ongoing issue involving several heavily impacted majors and programs in the Social Sciences, which are exploding in popularity but lack sufficient faculty. The UGC recently closed one program to majors until the program can demonstrate that it can maintain a viable undergraduate program. Departments are fighting over whether to permit non-majors into upper division courses. UGC is responding

**Student Representative.** The undergraduate student representative noted that Berkeley students are unhappy that there is only one “dead day” scheduled before the start of the final exam period, while at other universities, students have as many as two weeks to prepare for final exams.

Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola  
Attest: Richard Weiss