

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

**Minutes of Meeting**  
Friday, March 15, 2024

**I. Approval of the Agenda and Minutes**

**Action Taken: *The agenda and minutes were approved as noticed 10-0-0.***

**II. Chair's Report**

*Chair Michelle Leslie*

The Chair thanked the committee for being willing to come to an extra meeting the previous month. She reported that she and the Vice Chair attended a UCEAP Advisory Committee meeting where they reviewed the budget for next year and engaged in some discussion about the summer physics program. The Chair explained that this had been a very popular summer program, but that it has been scaled back to two quarters due to plummeting enrollment. UCEAP is looking into the data and trying to find the cause.

**III. Campus Reports**

Members reported on matters related to international education from their campuses.

**IV. UCEAP Director's Report**

*Vivian-Lee Nyitray, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director*

The Executive Director reported that UCEAP enrollments are very close to where they were before the pandemic. About 5,500 students are abroad at this time.

Executive Director Nyitray told the committee that the UCEAP Advisory Committee approved the budgets for the coming year. Three years ago, the Advisory Committee allowed UCEAP to mimic what is done on the campuses with regard to fee collection. UCEAP has held the participation fee at a steady level. Programs that don't break even or that have significant costs are often assessed a program-specific fee, and many of the programs have seen an elimination or reduction of these fees. Executive Director Nyitray explained that she had just concluded a month abroad and in Washington, DC, and had been talking to UCEAP partner institutions about the challenges of getting students to turn in their program evaluations. The partner institutions have agreed to send students a reminder and to explain to them why these evaluations are important. She said she had an excellent meeting with the faculty and staff from Japan. They are looking for research opportunities for students and they have received an enormous grant. They are very excited to have UCEAP as a partner. An important topic for UCEAP is grade inflation. Accent International will be coming to UC Santa Barbara next week and one of the topics will be grade inflation. There have been unreasonable

requests to change an A- or B+ to pass/no pass. It is hard to determine which students have a genuine need for the adjustment from those who are just manipulating grades.

The Executive Director reported that UCEAP will be renovating and moving into two buildings on the Santa Barbara campus. This will happen in late 2025 at the earliest. She also said that her office is close to the end of its reorganization and is backfilling a few positions. By June she anticipates having a full cohort of roughly 125 staff. In fall, UCEAP will be launching a recruitment for a short-term scholar in residence program.

Members had questions for the Executive Director and there was discussion.

## V. Program Review

### A. 2023-24 10-Year Mexico Review

Professor Giovannini reported that the review process was a very interesting experience. It included a two-day site visit where the chair met with campus representatives and students. The chair did not meet with representatives of the Community Health program, which is one of the five programs UCEAP has for Mexico. There is a six-week program during the summer which does not require Spanish proficiency, however the courses are taught in Spanish. UCEAP submitted specific questions, and the overall sense was that academic integration was a major point upon which to focus, particularly for the research program. The committee recommended that the program keep track of the research project through a database. Overall, the group thought that the portfolio was interesting with some exciting opportunities for UC students. Professor Giovannini said that he thought the issue of Spanish proficiency testing was “overblown,” and that students who speak Spanish at home should be able to pass the test with a minimum of preparation. There is a version of that test for Spanish in Latin America, which is slightly different than Spanish in Spain. A major question was the delegation of grading and the need to see if there is an agreement about the way credits are allocated at the end of the internship. There is a need to establish clear learning outcomes and better marketing. It was noted that UCEAP is not promoting going to Mexico as much as Spain.

Members had questions for Professor Giovannini.

### B. Proposed 2024-25 UCIE Reviews of UCEAP Programs and Call for Review Committee Nominations

**Action Requested: *Nominate faculty members to participate in the 2024-25 review committees.***

Members were asked to return nominations to Analyst Harms by April 14.

**VI. UCEAP Associate Dean's Report**

*David Lopez-Carr, UCEAP Associate Dean*

Associate Dean Lopez-Carr reported that he had visited the Berkeley and Davis campuses and had also met with the Global Engagement Office staff at Davis about the summer physics program. He learned that the pushback on summer physics was financial and not pedagogical. They talked about strategies to address the loss of students. He also met with the Spain director for UCEAP. Spain is immensely popular and is growing quickly; it has increased by 150-200 students each year. Separately, he met with the registrars and tried to determine how to improve integration and how to keep track of what courses have been approved. He noted that the Berkeley study abroad team is large and impressive. One item that came out of the meeting was the need to improve the UCEAP website to show how courses and programs are selected. UCEAP has been working to increase STEM applicants, and has started reaching out to environmental science students. They started with UCSB and are following up with UCSC. He noted faculty are quite open to approving classes that would cover some of their major course requirements. Finally, he discussed the Academic Integration grants. The 2023-24 grants are about halfway through their cycle and have reported excellent progress. The 2024-25 cycle will be released shortly with a deadline of May 31. The grants will be about \$3,000 each.

Members had some questions for the Associate Dean.

**VII. Program Development****A. For UCIE Review and Vote**

1. **University of Alicante**  
Director Abraham remarked that UCEAP is trying to see if it can get students to go to programs outside of Madrid and Barcelona. Alicante has the largest English-speaking course offerings in all of Spain. There is increased interest in Spain, but is it only the major cities. Executive Director Nyitray said that Alicante has summer options that might be of interest to UCEAP.

**B. For First UCIE Review**

1. **Business and Economics in Barcelona**  
Director Abraham reiterated that the student numbers for Spain are growing. The proposed Business and Economics program will be built upon UCEAP's UC construct program. Language will be offered at every level, and there will be internships in Barcelona. Historically, UCEAP had three partners in Barcelona. One was cancelled because of calendar conflicts, and the other two are unable to expand beyond their current capacity. Executive Director Nyitray noted that the UC construct framework allows a lowering of the GPA that is acceptable for admission. There will be three-year review for quality and for other concerns; any necessary changes can be made at that time. Director Abraham noted

that UCEAP has been impressed with other ExSpanish programs, and that – while they are new in Barcelona - they have hired staff that have been running programs like this for 20-30 years.

Committee members asked for a “snapshot” of how the program does after one year.

2. Mahidol University International College

Director Abraham explained that this is a university just outside of Bangkok that is internationally focused and instructs in English. UCEAP is currently experiencing some constraint issues with its extant Thai partners. Students will have access to the whole university catalog; everything is taught in English and classes are smaller. The program is very comparable to some of UCEAP’s partners in the UK. The program does not have its own housing, but it provided a list of all of the housing that it approves and recommends to students. The Executive Director said that the program will be very attentive to student support, and that they have a robust outreach program for new students. UCEAP negotiated the retention of an academic advisor to advise outbound students.

C. Expanding Global Start to Non-UC Partners

Director Abraham remarked that Executive Director Nyitray had explored this question with Chair Leslie. Currently, two campuses are a part of the Global Start project, which is being run through Accent International. Accent has told UCEAP that many Universities are interested in in the program and were wondering if UC was interested in broadening it to include non-UC partners. She noted that this is intended to be a small “high-touch” program that is built around a cohort mentality. She wanted to ask UCIE if it felt comfortable with a possible arrangement involving other schools.

Chair Leslie said that she already sent a long list of questions to UCEAP about this option. She acknowledged the potential benefits but also expressed considerable hesitancy regarding the addition of another variable to a brand-new program. She said that she would feel more comfortable discussing this option after there had been a successful program pilot. The committee agreed.

## VIII. Information Item

A. Program Changes

1. Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean

Director Abraham explained that UCEAP had provided information at the last UCIE meeting about a change for this program. UCEAP had to exchange Barcelona for Istanbul, which is a considerable adjustment. Chair

Leslie asked for more time to consider the question. This will be tabled until the May meeting.

**IX. Consultation with the Academic Senate Leadership**

*James Steintrager, Academic Senate Chair*

*Steven Cheung, Academic Senate Vice Chair*

Professor Eaton asked a question regarding the elimination of the SAT as part of UC admissions and its impact on admissions for international students. Chair Steintrager advised consulting with BOARS on the question. He noted that it is very unlikely that the Regents will reconsider reinstating the SAT.

Chair Steintrager said that the Regents are meeting next week at UCLA and will be discussing – among other things – the Area C admissions requirement. BOARS has determined that Data Science will no longer validate for Algebra 2. This is causing some ripples internally and externally. The external pressure has to do with URM access and whether Data Science is a more equitable way to bring those students to UC. However, there is an argument that more rigorous preparation benefits all students. Another item that will take place at the Regents' meeting is a vote on a proposed draft policy on political statements on department websites. The Senate's review of the proposed policy is not binding on the Board in any way. Council voted not to endorse the policy, due largely to the fact that it is vague, could be misinterpreted, and may be impossible to implement. The Senate suggested that the Regents should issue a recommendation rather than a policy partly because a policy would be extremely difficult to enforce. Chair Steintrager also discussed the problematic state of the California budget. UC is waiting on the May Revise, but the thinking as of this point is that the University will not get the promised five percent increase from the compact, but will get 10 percent in 2024-25. That notwithstanding, it looks as if the faculty salary program is going forward. Represented staff have gotten an increase, which means that unrepresented staff will also get it.

**X. New Business**

There was no new business.

**XI. Executive Session**

A. **Action Taken: The University of Alicante Proposal was approved 10-0-0.**

B. **Action Taken: The Report on the 2023-24 10-Year Mexico Review was approved 10-0-0.**

The committee adjourned at 2:53 p.m.