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Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
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University of California
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January 23, 2024

MICHAEL V. DRAKE, PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Re: Proposed New Regents Policy on the Use of University Administrative Websites

Dear President Drake,

On behalf of the Academic Council, I am writing to express serious concerns about the process leading to the proposed new Regents Policy on the Use of University Administrative Websites¹, which appears on the January 24 agenda of the joint meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Compliance and Audit Committee as an action item for adoption by the full Board.

First, the process that led to a presidential recommendation for the Board to consider and adopt the proposed policy is unclear. We understand the recommendation was based on the interest of some Regents in establishing such a policy and we know that an ad hoc workgroup was convened to discuss and to draft it. Senate leadership was at least consulted intermittently during parts of the process. However, the official status of the ad hoc group, its composition, and the representative function of its members remain ambiguous, and no information about the group is available on the Regents website or in the proposed item². This lack of transparency is unusual and particularly troubling given the current politically charged environment.

Second, it is unclear why the University determined that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Compliance and Audit Committee should be the relevant bodies to consider the policy recommendation. Although the charters of both committees are broad, the nature of this recommendation does not seem to effectively align with the purview of either.

Third, the absence of a systemwide review process deviates from the approach taken for recent regental policies. For example, the Policy on Affiliations with Healthcare Organizations that Have Adopted Policy-Based Restrictions on Care underwent multiple rounds of review and involved ample opportunities for Senate input. A formal task force, inclusive of Senate and administrative representation, was convened to investigate the matter. The finalized policy was much improved following Senate consultation. In contrast, this proposed Policy on the Use of

¹ <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/j3attach1.pdf>

² <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/jan24/j3.pdf>

University Administrative Websites bypassed such review steps, and the workgroup's deliberations and recommendations were not reported for broader discussion within the University community.

We are deeply concerned that the process circumvented normal shared governance protocols for a policy that will significantly affect faculty across the University. We are also concerned that a regental policy that is described in the meeting material as recommended by the President for consideration by the joint meeting of Academic and Student Affairs and Audit and Compliance and, even more problematically, for adoption by the full board was not shared with the Senate before its inclusion on a Regents meeting agenda.

I want to emphasize that the Academic Council is not commenting on the merits of the policy itself at this time but is solely addressing the procedural anomalies leading to its consideration as an action item at the January Regents meeting. Lacking further clarification and justification for not abiding by shared governance processes, we express our opposition to the policy in defense of the status quo.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions about the Senate's position on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



James Steintrager, Chair
Academic Council

Cc: Academic Council
Provost and Executive Vice President Newman
Chief of Staff Kao
Chief Policy Advisor McAuliffe
Chief of Staff Lyall
Senate Division Executive Directors
Senate Executive Director Lin