

Academic Senate

Winter 2021 Newsletter

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Inside This Issue

- 1 Chair Elect Message
- 2 COVID-19 Updates
Systemwide Business
Irvine Division Business
- 3 Irvine Division Business
- 4 Irvine Division Business
Activities by Senate Councils
 - CAP
- 5 Activities by Senate Councils
 - CEI & CEP
- 6 Activities by Senate Councils
 - CEP (continued) & CFW
- 7 Activities by Senate Councils
 - CFW (continued), CPB,
& CORCL
- 8 Activities by Senate Councils
 - CORCL (continued) &
CTLSE
- 9 Activities by Senate Councils
 - CTLSE (continued) & GC
- 10 Activities by Senate Councils
 - GC (continued) & CUARS
- 11 Senate Announcements
 - In Memoriam

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE CHAIR ELECT

It has been more than a year since parts of the U.S. and our campus experienced a lockdown due to COVID-19. Since then, positive signs of recovery are visible. Orange County has moved from the purple tier up to red and now to orange. Many colleagues have now been vaccinated. We hope the worst is over, and that our campus will gradually open up for in-person instruction and activities. We see the light at the end of the tunnel! In tandem, we also see much progress by way of our school administration, highlights of which I report with enthusiasm below.

In the fall newsletter, I remarked that the Academic Planning Group (APG) had convened three task groups focused on: (1) Merit and Promotion Considerations in the Context of the Pandemic, (2) Understanding Faculty Teaching Workload, and (3) Professor of Teaching Series Considerations. The winter quarter has been very productive. In February, the Academic Senate surveyed faculty to better understand how they apportion their work time among teaching, research, and service activities. We have received a respectable response rate of 31.5%, and I want to thank everyone who participated in this survey. You can refer to the key survey results [here](#). The three APG task groups finished their deliberations in the winter quarter and will soon pass their recommendations to the Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor. We hope to benefit faculty by sharing with you all the relevant results from these reports when available.

In March, APG convened its fourth task group focused on Reimagining Graduate Education. This task group's charge is to develop data-driven criteria that the Academic Senate and the campus administration can use to assess appropriate program size and levels of support for our Ph.D. and MFA programs. The task group will start its meetings in spring 2021, and as there will be no meetings in the summer, a follow-on group will continue this work in the fall; we look forward to receiving the task group's final report and recommendations at the end of fall 2021.

Lastly, the campus kicked off the Black Thriving Initiative Faculty Cluster Hiring Program (BTIFCHP) in fall 2020. In a few short months, a total of 17 proposals were submitted in response to the call, demonstrating the faculty's enthusiasm for this initiative. These proposals were reviewed by the Deans, Equity Advisors, and the Academic Planning Group. Recommendations have been made to our Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for future funding decisions.

As these are merely highlights, more details can be found in the following summaries of the Irvine Division of the Academic Senate's activities and achievements during the winter quarter of the 2020-21 academic year.

Stay Healthy and Well!



UPDATES TO SENATE BUSINESS DUE TO COVID-19

The Irvine Divisional Senate continues to hold remote meetings for all of its Committees and Councils, as well as for Cabinet and Assembly. Chair Barrett and Chair Elect Ho are serving on several advisory groups and in close contact with campus administration to keep faculty apprised of the most current information on the campus response to COVID-19.

SYSTEMWIDE BUSINESS

Irvine Review of Proposed Revisions to the APM, Bylaws, Regulations and Appendices

REVIEWED AT SENATE CABINET LEVEL:

- **Forwarded comments as part of the systemwide review of Proposed Revisions to the Leave-Related Policies of the 700 Series of the APM**
 - Reviewed at Council level by CFW
- **Forwarded comments as part of the systemwide review of BFB-IS-12**
 - Reviewed at Council level by CORCL
- **Forwarded comments as part of the systemwide review of the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative**
 - Reviewed at Council level by CEP, CORCL, & CTLSE
- **Forwarded comments as part of the systemwide review of the Academic Planning Council Faculty Salary Scales Task Force Report and Recommendations**
 - Reviewed at Council level by CAP, CEI, CFW, & CPB
- **Forwarded comments as part of the systemwide review of the New Presidential Policy on UC Research Data and Tangible Research Materials**
 - Reviewed at Council level by CORCL
- **Forwarded comments as part of the systemwide review of BFB-BUS-43**
 - Reviewed at Council level by CPB

IRVINE DIVISION BUSINESS

Divisional Issues/Updates

Principles for Dean Search and Review Committees

Cabinet members discussed and endorsed a set of principles and best practices for the selection of faculty to serve on dean search and review committees. The changes clarify that names endorsed from the Provost's preliminary list will count toward the Senate's recommendations, confirm the existing practice of notifying the Senate of committee rosters, and remove the reference to an annual assessment of searches.

Review of Revised English Proficiency Policy for Teaching Assistants

Cabinet members discussed and endorsed changes to the English Proficiency Policy for Teaching Assistants and Associates. The policy was developed by a task force that included representation from CEP and GC. The proposed policy was found to comply with university policy and relevant laws, and was forwarded to Graduate Division for implementation.

Proposed Revisions to Irvine Regulation 440.F: Adding and Dropping Courses

Cabinet members discussed and endorsed a proposal to change the deadline for the undergraduate grading option to week 10. Current limits on Pass/Not Pass options would remain unchanged. The change will be reviewed by CRJ in spring 2021, and then by the Divisional Assembly.

Review of Irvine Division Bylaws, Regulations and Appendices

APPROVED AT THE JANUARY 28, 2021 ASSEMBLY MEETING:

- **Approved the modifications to Appendix I, Chapter XII: School of Law (Cabinet – 1/19/2021)**

Appendix I, Chapter XII: School of Law

The modifications to Appendix I, Chapter XII: School of Law update the voting procedures for the School's Promotion and Tenure Committee.

APPROVED AT THE MARCH 2, 2021 CABINET MEETING:

- **Approved the modifications to Appendix I, Chapter XII: School of Law**

Appendix I, Chapter XII: School of Law

The modifications to Appendix I, Chapter XII: School of Law update the dates of Faculty Executive Committee elections as well as update Committee membership to include members from different Faculty categories. The Senate parliamentarian clarified that School bylaws do not require Assembly approval. This was shared with Assembly as an informational item only.

APPROVED AT THE MARCH 11, 2021 ASSEMBLY MEETING:

- **Approved the modifications to Bylaw 90: Equity and Inclusion, Council on (Cabinet – 2/16/2021)**

Bylaw 90: Equity and Inclusion, Council on

The modifications to Bylaw 90: Equity and Inclusion, Council on update the bylaw to reflect the Council's current membership appointment practices.

- **Approved the modifications to Appendix III (Cabinet – 3/2/2021)**

Appendix III

Assembly members voted to remove Appendix III from the Senate Manual and replace it with a link to a living document on the Senate website outlining disciplinary procedures that will be revised jointly by the Academic Senate and Academic Personnel. The Senate will coordinate with Academic Personnel to ensure the document is kept current, and Academic Personnel will be asked to notify and consult with the Senate when proposing any changes.

Review of Irvine Division Bylaws, Regulations and Appendices (continued)

APPROVED AT THE MARCH 11, 2021 ASSEMBLY MEETING:

- **Approved the modifications to Appendix I, Chapter XI: School of Social Sciences**

Appendix I, Chapter XI: School of Social Sciences

The modifications to Appendix I, Chapter XI: School of Social Sciences update the entire bylaw to reflect current practices and procedures.

Other

- **Discussed recommendations to protect UC digital research data** (Cabinet – 1/19/21)
- **Discussed possible changes to the funding model for SSGPDPs** (Cabinet – 1/19/21)
- **Forwarded comments regarding UC Outside Activities Tracking System (UC OATS)** (Cabinet – 1/19/21)
- **Discussed a proposed Security Camera Policy** (Cabinet – 2/16/21)
- **Discussed priorities and recommendations for the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)** (Cabinet – 2/16/21)
- **Discussed proposed Student Course Feedback Form for Graduate Courses** (Cabinet – 2/16/21)
- **Forwarded comments regarding University Teaching (399) Courses** (Cabinet – 2/16/21)
- **Discussed possible Academic Freedom Statement** (Cabinet – 3/2/21)

ACTIVITIES BY SENATE COUNCILS

Council on Academic Personnel (CAP)

The Council on Academic Personnel (CAP) will welcome five new elected members for 2021-2022, representing the schools of Education, Engineering, Medicine, Physical Sciences, and Social Ecology. The CAP term for members runs from September 1 to August 31.

Despite last year's unprecedented challenges, CAP is continuing its review of files without disruption. CAP meets remotely on a weekly basis during the winter and spring quarters, and through the end of July, in order to review the large numbers of files that require CAP recommendations. Even under the current conditions, CAP is impressed by the great strengths, innovation, and resiliency it has seen in all areas of review of faculty files.

As a reminder, CAP's updated [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) provide information and links to relevant policies during this time.

Council on Equity and Inclusion (CEI)

Faculty Salary Scales Task Force Report and Recommendations

The Council reviewed the systemwide Faculty Salary Scales Task Force Report, and generally supported the Task Force's recommendations. The Task Force was charged with examining issues surrounding the salary scales, in particular excessive reliance on off-scale pay to achieve competitive compensation. The report offered recommendations, including annual scale adjustments and transparency in compensation decisions.

Members agreed that having too many faculty paid off-scale is problematic, and that transparency is critical. At the same time, they felt that maintaining the concept of off-scale salary was important in order to recruit and retain the very best faculty. Members also recognized that recruitments and retentions that rely on off-scale salaries could lead to inequalities that exacerbate gender and race differences among faculty salaries. They would like to see an annual equity adjustment pool be established to allow for targeted salary adjustments to reduce or eliminate salary gaps for faculty who have not had their salaries adjusted in response to outside offers.

Members also expressed some concern that efforts to eliminate salary inequities across the system by implementing a single set of salary scales may create other inequities. They noted that the cost of living varies significantly among some campuses, and concurred with the Task Force that UC leadership should address these disparities with programs for housing support, for example. Members also saw value in the Irvine-scale model, which at the time of its establishment was designed to adjust the salaries associated with each step to the mean salary for Irvine faculty at that step.

Other Issues

At the division level, the Council commented on proposals for a statement of academic freedom and a new security camera policy, and made recommendations for the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP). Members also finalized the faculty survey assessing the Equity Advisor Program, developed in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research. The survey will have run a two-week course, from April 5 to 19, and the Council looks forward to reviewing the results in the spring quarter and sharing recommendations with the Office of Inclusive Excellence.

This winter the Council welcomed guests from the Center for Educational Partnerships for an overview of its programs that support preparation for and success in higher education; the Office of Undergraduate Admissions for an update on the current admissions cycle; Graduate Division's new Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to discuss efforts to recruit and retain graduate students; and members of the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) to share PSAC's recommendations for the transformation of public safety in the UCI community.

Council on Educational Policy (CEP)

Revision to Grading Option Deadline

The Council reviewed the current Pass/Not Pass policies for undergraduate courses. UCI currently allows students to modify their grading option at their discretion through the end of week two of the quarter. Students may request a change of grading option via an enrollment exception process through the end of week six. The Council's Policy and Assessment Subcommittee was tasked with

CEP – Revision to Grading Option Deadline (continued)

making a recommendation on whether the deadline to request a change of grading option should be extended to a later date in the quarter on a permanent basis. Beginning with spring quarter 2021, CEP approved the Subcommittee's recommendation that the grading option selection deadline for undergraduates be moved to Friday of week ten.

Review of the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative

Three Councils (CEP, CTLSE, and CORCL) reviewed the systemwide Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI) assessment report. The report described ILTI's four main activities: online course development, undergraduate student enrollment, non-matriculated student enrollment, and the cross-campus enrollment system. Members of all three councils felt that an impactful role for ILTI would be to redistribute resources as block grants to the campuses and have these issues handled locally. CEP also recommended that ILTI refocus to serve as a central coordinator to negotiate software contracts and vet the software for appropriate student data privacy protection to ensure new tools meet UC standards. However, this would be a significant shift away from ILTI's current activities.

Upcoming Issues

In the coming months, CEP will continue discussions regarding undergraduate grading policies and consider whether these policies should be updated.

Council on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom (CFW)**Faculty Salary Scales Task Force Report**

The Council reviewed the report and recommendations from the Academic Planning Council Faculty Salary Scales Task Force.

Members agreed that the salary scales are, in principle, worthwhile tools for faculty, administrators, and the public at large. However, the current scales do not provide useful standards for implementation. Members feel that a recalibration effort is required. It was suggested that a first step should be to adjust the salaries of fairly advanced associates and all full professors who are making less than those significantly below them in rank. This situation has mainly been a result of outside offers.

It has been argued that different California locations have significantly different costs-of-living, separate and distinct from housing. Rather than roll these cost-of-living adjustments into salaries, it was suggested that perhaps there could be multiplier effects for specific campus salaries. It was acknowledged that California as a whole is expensive, thus the base salaries for everyone should be adjusted up accordingly.

Some concerns were raised about salary inequities across disciplines and within any given campus. While there is an understanding that the UC must be competitive in salary offers, this does not require such a low bar for the less well-compensated disciplines. Members concluded that the UC should agree to some minimum floor higher than the current one.

Finally, members recommended that a faculty committee be formed on every campus to sign off on retention offers, in addition to new hire offers. In the short run, this group could also review career equity

Academic Freedom Statement

The UCLA Academic Senate Committee on Academic Freedom recently released a statement on academic freedom in the context of classroom instruction. The Council was invited to reflect on whether it might be helpful for the UCI Academic Senate to release a statement or guidance for faculty on this important subject.

Members agreed that an academic freedom statement from UCI would be beneficial to provide guidance for faculty and other campus populations. CFW members drafted a revised version of the UCLA statement and submitted it to Senate Chair Barrett. An ad hoc committee has been formed to further evaluate a potential statement for UCI.

Upcoming Issues

The Council will discuss the following items in the upcoming quarter: Security Camera Policy, Systemwide Review of SVSH Frameworks for Faculty and Staff, Faculty Remote Work Program, and the Systemwide Proposed Revisions to Senate Bylaw 336.F.3.

Council on Planning and Budget (CPB)

Re-Establishment of the Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory

CPB endorsed the proposal to re-establish the Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory (CNLM) as an ORU. After the loss of ORU status following a sunset review conducted in 2010, the CNLM continued to operate as a School of Biological Sciences-based center. Under the new directorship of Dr. Michael Yassa, the CNLM's scope and activities were revamped and expanded. The Council noted that the Center's interdisciplinary research activities, dissemination of research results through conferences and meetings, strong training opportunities, outreach activities, and vision for future large-scale funding opportunities far exceed any reasonable expectation of a school-based center. CPB observed that the other neuroscience ORU, UCI MIND, is sufficiently different to justify a separate ORU status. However, the Council supported the recommendation that an umbrella neuroscience program that fosters both neurosciences ORUs would be beneficial for the campus. The Council invited Pramod Khargonekar, Vice Chancellor for Research, and members of his leadership team to discuss the issue and was satisfied by their attention to this possibility.

Upcoming Issues

CPB will discuss the third year review of three SSGDPs (Master of Embedded and Cyber-Physical Systems, Master of Laws, and Master of Pharmacology). The Council will also begin a review of the pre-proposal for the establishment of the School of Population and Public Health.

Endowed Chairs

- Hamoui Salous Endowed Chair in Thoracic Oncology

Council on Research, Computing, and Libraries (CORCL)

Protection of Digital Research Data

Following the hacking of research data at UCSF, there has been systemwide discussion on how data is stored and maintained. CORCL commented on the proposed Presidential Policy Business and Finance

CORCL – Protection of Digital Research Data (continued)

Bulletin IS-12 on IT Recovery, which was developed for safeguarding, security, and emergency management situations. The Council also heard presentations by Phil Papadopoulos, Director of the Research Cyberinfrastructure Center (RCIC), and Tom Andriola, Vice Chancellor of Information Technology & Data, on UCI's response to UC recommendations for the protection of digital research data. A coordinated response by RCIC, OIT, and the Office of Research is underway to establish infrastructure, improve processes, ensure campus data replication, and conduct outreach to researchers.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) is currently undergoing a transition. Launched in 1995, UROP encourages and facilitates research and creative activities by undergraduate students from all schools and academic disciplines at UCI. UROP experiences have been an integral part of the undergraduate education of thousands of our students since that time.

At its January meeting, CORCL considered features and priorities that are important for the future of UROP. The Council voiced serious concerns about decisions that were made without appropriate consultation with the UROP Faculty Advisory Board. Consultation with the faculty advisory board is vital to the success of the program. CORCL reaffirmed how invaluable UROP is to campus efforts on equity and inclusion and expressed support for a funding model that extends access to the program to a wide and diverse student body.

Upcoming Issues

CORCL will evaluate the five-year reviews of the Institute for Mathematical Behavioral Science and the Reeve-Irvine Research Center.

Council on Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience (CTLSE)**Academic Freedom Statement**

The UCLA Academic Senate Committee on Academic Freedom recently released a statement on academic freedom in the context of classroom instruction. The Council was invited to reflect on whether it might be helpful for the UCI Academic Senate to release a statement or guidance for faculty on this important subject.

The majority of members were not in favor of a formal academic freedom statement. Members expressed concern that a formal academic freedom statement may not address the inherent power dynamic between students and instructors and could be counter-productive to an inclusive environment. Members suggested the use of trigger warnings could be effective but should not be mandated. It was further suggested that it may be helpful to allow students to “opt-out” of particular readings, viewings, or assignments that may include sensitive issues or materials.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)

Along with several other councils, CTLSE discussed UROP this winter. Members suggested that the role of the Faculty Advisory Board (FAB) be clarified. The FAB should have a formal charge that includes broader oversight of UROP, each school should be appropriately represented, and members should

CTLSE – Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) (continued)

have clear term limits. The FAB had, traditionally, reviewed proposals, made recommendations on grant amounts, and advised the Associate Dean in the Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) and UROP Director with the distribution of resources. Moving forward, it is strongly encouraged that the FAB be involved with decision-making regarding policies as well. The Council will be following up with the Office of the Vice Provost of Teaching and Learning (OVPTL) and DUE in the near future regarding the recent transitions, including the search for a new UROP Director, the role of the FAB, and any changes in policy or the distribution of resources.

Upcoming Issues

The Council will discuss the following items in the upcoming quarter: Canvas, Revisions to Appendix II: Grade Appeals, Review of First Day Complete Course Materials Model, and Student Athletics.

Graduate Council (GC)**Graduate Education**

Appeal of Admissions Decision. Graduate Council approved updates to the Graduate Policies and Procedures to allow the Graduate Dean to review the earlier recommendation of the Departmental Graduate Admissions Committee and determine the next course of action, as the first step in the appeal review process.

Leave of Absence. Graduate Council approved updates to the Graduate Policies and Procedures to allow for career staff employment while graduate students are on leave of absence.

Student Course Feedback Form for Graduate Courses. In May 2020, Graduate Council was tasked by the Senate Chair to use the new undergraduate student course feedback form as the basis to develop a student course feedback form appropriate to graduate courses. Over the course of the Fall 2020 quarter, the Council collected and evaluated graduate student course feedback forms currently in use on campus and considered the issues at hand. After careful consideration, the Council recommended that, as has been practice to date, individual schools, departments, and programs be encouraged to review the new undergraduate student course feedback form and decide for themselves whether they wish to use it for their graduate courses, revise it to add or change questions, or use a different form such as the one they have been using to date. The Council does not feel there are benefits to developing a campuswide standardized graduate student course feedback form.

University Teaching (399) Courses Grading Option. Graduate Council reviewed academic credit for University Teaching (399) courses, in consultation with the Graduate Division and AGS representatives serving on the Council. The Council considered the issues of the conflation of work performance and academic grading, inconsistent use of letter grades, inequity, and effects on student well-being. Graduate Council voted unanimously to mandate that the S/U grading option be used campuswide for University Teaching (399) courses. Schools that wish to use the letter grade option can submit a written exception request with justification to the Council. Moreover, the Council strongly recommends that all students enrolled in 399 courses be provided with written feedback.

GC – Graduate Education (continued)

Revised English Proficiency Policy for Teaching Assistants and Teaching Associates. Graduate Council accepted the Policy as presented, with the understanding that substantive changes prior to implementation will not occur.

New Graduate Emphasis

- Graduate Emphasis in Film and Media Studies

Termination of Concurrent Program

- Master in Urban and Regional Planning/MS in Civil Engineering

Suspension of Admissions

- Graduate program in Biomedical Engineering (temporary suspension)

Re-Establishment of ORU

- Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory

Council on Undergraduate Admissions & Relations with Schools (CUARS)

Proposed Revisions to CUARS Bylaw

CUARS members approved a revision to Irvine Bylaw 137. Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools and Colleges, Council on that formalizes many processes already in place, including oversight and review of reader training and enrollment management, adding an ex-officio member from the Office of Enrollment Management, and changing the name of the Council to the Council on Undergraduate Enrollment Management, Admissions, and Relations with Schools (CUEMARS). The revised bylaw has been approved by CRJ and will be presented to Cabinet in April.

Digital Recruitment

Members heard a presentation from Director of Outreach Bryan Jue regarding changes in recruitment due to COVID-19. Among these changes is the increased use of an online platform called Conduit that allows schools to upload a catalog of videos and other on-demand materials for prospective students. Members are currently working with their schools and departments to create video and other content to upload to Conduit.

Non-Academic Read Score

Members heard information regarding potential changes to how application readers score files. One option would give 1-5 scores in multiple categories to each application. Another would keep a single read score but would give readers the opportunity to indicate if an application had particular strengths in areas such as leadership. Members will continue discussing these potential changes at upcoming meetings.

SENATE ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Memoriam

If you would like to submit an In Memoriam resolution, or have any questions regarding the In Memoriam resolution process, please contact Christine Aguilar at cmaguill1@uci.edu.

Please visit the Senate [In Memoriam webpage](#) for more information.

The Academic Senate Newsletter is published quarterly during the academic year by the UCI Academic Senate to inform UCI faculty about the activities of the Senate. Your comments are welcome: senate@uci.edu

Joanna Ho, 2020-2021 Chair Elect, Academic Senate, Irvine Division

Christine Aguilar, Editor

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