To the Faculty Legislature, Santa Barbara Division:

Purpose (per Bylaw 92): To authorize, supervise, and regulate all undergraduate courses and monitor the General Education Program.

Issues of General Concern to Faculty:

- The Committee approved 38 General Education (GE) course proposals.
- The Committee considered 8 proposals to create or renew online courses.

CCGE held 15 regularly scheduled 90-minute meetings during the 2017-18 academic year and consulted as needed with faculty executive committees, academic deans, and other campus administrators. The Committee also benefited from the participation of regular consultants from the Registrar’s Office, College of Letters and Science Advising, and College of Engineering Advising. The Chair of CCGE met periodically with the Chairs of the Undergraduate Council and the Committee on Admissions, Enrollment and Relations with Schools to discuss shared undergraduate concerns.

Recurring Business

Course Requests

CCGE has final approval authority over the establishment, modification, and discontinuation of all undergraduate courses. Individual members are delegated the authority to review and act on course requests via the Master Course Approval (MCA) System, and forward any requests about which they are uncertain for full committee review and final action by the Committee Chair. Several hundred requests are reviewed each year.

CCGE approved 4 online course proposals, all of which were approved for two years. The offering departments may request renewed approval, based on assessment of the effectiveness of the initial offerings. CCGE approved the renewal of 4 online course proposals, 1 for two years, and the remaining 3 in perpetuity.

The Committee approved 38 General Education course proposals, 7 UCSB Extension proposals, and several requests for changes to the final exam schedule.

CCGE reviewed 7 proposals to re-unit existing undergraduate courses. The re-uniting procedures and worksheet were revised to improve the clarity of departmental proposals and efficiency of the review process.
Associate Appointment Proposals

CCGE reviewed 185 Associate appointment proposals, as compared to 185 in 2016-17 and 174 in 2015-16. CCGE approved all of the appointment proposals. In several instances, the Committee Chair contacted the chair of the proposing department to discuss concerns about below average performance in previous teaching assignments. In some cases, the Committee Chair requested additional evidence of the candidate’s qualifications and/or recommended individual faculty mentoring. In some cases, modifications of the proposed syllabuses were requested to conform with General Education requirements.

Local Campus Issues

Proposed Divisional Bylaw 35.K on Conflict of Interest

The Academic Senate proposed a new Divisional Bylaw regarding conflict of interest in alignment with the recently approved Senate Bylaw 128. The Committee voiced no objections to the proposed language and unanimously endorsed the bylaw.

Revision of Divisional Regulation 80 – Subject A Requirement

The College of Letters and Science proposed that the wording of Divisional Senate Regulation 80 G. be amended to match the wording of Senate Regulation, 636 E. CCGE found the proposed changes to be appropriate and voted unanimously to endorse the revised language.

UCEAP Pre-Approval

CCGE was asked to consider a proposal for pre-approval of UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) courses for General Education (GE) credit. The Committee acknowledged that UCSB’s GE program differs significantly from those at other UC campuses, and that the changes proposed would constitute a significant shift in campus policies and procedures. In its role of monitoring the GE program, making recommendations to the Undergraduate Council regarding policy on GE, and exercising sole authority over GE course proposals, the Committee dedicated significant time to considering what changes might be made in order to accommodate EAP’s request, while maintaining the integrity of the GE program.

The current processes for GE course approval have been deemed the appropriate methods for ensuring that courses for which GE credit is granted consistently meet the approved program learning outcomes for specific areas and the overall GE program. CCGE felt strongly that in order to ensure that GE standards are upheld, EAP courses would also need to undergo individual review. The Committee discussed in detail how this task might be accomplished. Given the collective number of courses taken by students, and limited resources within the Academic Senate and the colleges, CCGE was reluctant to endorse a highly intensive process that would require ongoing maintenance. Additionally, in reviewing
the database of EAP courses that have previously been approved for GE, the Committee found that a large volume of courses were approved in only one instance, which does not seem a productive use of staff or faculty time. After much deliberation, the Committee could not support the proposal. CCGE was not convinced by the information provided that difficulty obtaining GE credit is a primary reason that students decide not to participate in education abroad, given other resource or logistical issues.

CCGE recognized the appreciable effort some students must undertake in order to receive GE credit for courses they enroll in during education abroad, particularly when their program of study changes unexpectedly. However, students are offered significant assistance by departmental and central advising staff when choosing their courses for education abroad and upon returning to request credit. The fact that this assistance is offered so generously should be seen as a benefit to them, not an obstacle, and we understand that the system runs well. A cumbersome pre-approval process is not likely to be as adept or consistent in the handling of this matter. CCGE is scrupulous in the overseeing of our campus GE courses and alert to shifts in learning outcomes. The Committee does not have the same oversight of courses in foreign universities, and with so many universities involved, CCGE foresees that it would be forever uncertain whether the pre-approved courses in several hundred universities have remained consistent. The recently developed database of previously approved courses could offer a helpful reference with regard to these efforts, but CCGE does not see it as an effective means for granting pre-approvals.

CCGE remains proud of UCSB’s high participation rate in UCEAP programs.

Proposal to Allow the Appointment of Undergraduates and Non-Students as Teaching Assistants

CCGE was asked to review of the proposed changes to campus policy to allow undergraduate students and non-students as teaching assistants. The Committee found it difficult to examine all of the relevant issues associated with the proposed changes without information on remuneration, responsibilities, and union matters. Faculty considered the broad concepts through the lens of their disciplines, taking into account the needs and norms of their departments. This approach resulted in a divided opinion, with some members opposed to the proposed policy and others in favor under limited circumstances. The Committee’s preliminary thoughts are presented below.

Throughout the discussion, faculty referred to a number of existing departmental arrangements in which undergraduates assist in the classroom and receive academic credit. In these cases, they felt that the work of the undergraduates was beneficial to the course and the students. The practices mentioned varied considerably, and it is unclear whether there are situations in which undergraduates have assumed roles equivalent to that of a teaching assistant. While some members preferred that these arrangements remain informal, others cautioned that informality creates the conditions under which problems arise. The Committee recommends that the campus take stock of these activities in order to better understand campus needs and available options, and also to discourage ill-advised practices.
Several members of the Committee were in favor of the limited use of undergraduates as teaching assistants. A few faculty noted a severe shortage of instructional assistance in their departments, and expressed the need for undergraduate teaching assistants when qualified graduate students are not available. Presently, departments sometimes hire graduate students from outside the department who are minimally qualified, but feel that their top undergraduate majors possess a deeper knowledge of the course subject matter. These faculty assert that the teaching assistant position includes specific expectations such as developing a sub-syllabus, running a discussion section, advising, and grading, which gifted undergraduates could manage after thorough pedagogical training. As an example, a member suggested that students from the College of Creative Studies would make excellent teaching assistants, as these advanced students often take courses at the graduate level. The Committee discussed the importance of a high GPA threshold, while at the same time noting that excellent grades do not necessarily indicate teaching talent.

Other members expressed serious concern about the proposed policy, and referred to the widely held principle that proposed appointees for a teaching position should hold at least the degree being pursued by the students they will teach. Members voiced concern that allowing undergraduates to serve in this capacity would deprecate both the profession and the value of undergraduate education. Several faculty mentioned that the grading in their departments is not mathematical, and undergraduates do not possess the appropriate expertise to serve as teaching assistants. Further, members expressed unease about unintended consequences that might result from the policy, such as impacts on graduate student support and increased pressure to rely on undergraduate TAs as a form of inexpensive labor. The increasingly interdisciplinary aspect of graduate study, especially in the humanities, arguably makes it advantageous to hire and train grad students from other departments.

The Committee also raised a number of questions to be considered. Is it realistic for undergraduates to take on a TA appointment as part of their overall academic workload? What should be done to avoid possible conflicts of interest, as undergraduate TAs would be instructing students of their own degree level? Would students receive fee remission? How would students be held accountable if they did not perform well? For graduate TAs, evaluation of teaching is included in the overall assessment of their degree progress, which would not be the case for undergraduates. CCGE members routinely review associate appointments, and in that process we often observe that graduate students stumble at first in teaching then improve with experience. Undergraduates who undertake teaching would routinely be at that beginning stage.

With regard to non-student teaching assistants, CCGE posed a number of questions. Under what circumstances would a non-student be invited to serve as a teaching assistant? Would the appointment of non-students be taking away funding opportunities for graduate students? Would graduate students object to the policy, especially if it created a lower cost alternative to hiring graduates? What would the proposed salary structure be for non-students, and how would it differ from that of graduate student teaching assistants? CCGE suggests that the campus examine UC Davis policy and practices to learn more about non-student appointments.
After much discussion, CCGE was not opposed to the development of a draft policy for campus review, but emphasized the need for a comprehensive proposal that would detail all elements of undergraduate TA appointments and safeguard departments from potential dangers.

**Proposed Changes to the General Education Requirements for the College of Engineering**

The College of Engineering proposed several changes to their General Education (GE) requirements. The main revisions include a redistribution of the courses in Areas D (Social Sciences), E (Culture and Thought), F (Arts), and G (Literature). Area H (Foreign Language) was removed as a requirement. The changes to Areas D, E, F, and G bring the requirements further in line with the College of Letters and Science Bachelor of Science GE requirements.

In the Special Subject Areas, students were also given the opportunity to choose from World Cultures or European Traditions. The Depth requirement, which proved to be confusing and inflexible, was also removed. After several revisions, the Committee voted to support the College’s proposal.

**Supercourse Challenges and Options**

Several members of CAERS were invited to meet with the Registrar’s Office to discuss their recommendations regarding the Supercourse Challenges and Options report, and formulate plans for refining certain areas of the report. Members of the group were able to come to agreement on the various topics contained in the report, and the Registrar’s Office will develop a revised draft for Divisional Senate review.

**Proposed Changes to Introductory Biology Laboratory Requirements**

CCGE was asked to consider a proposal to modify the introductory biology laboratory course series. The Committee voiced no objections to the proposed change.

**Interim WASC Senior College and University Commission Report**

CCGE was invited to review the draft interim report to the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), which was designed to provide WASC with an overview of the campus’s assessment activities. The Committee issued preliminary comments on the report, but will revisit it at the beginning of the fall quarter.

CCGE truly appreciates the care the Assessment Research Group (ARG) has taken to assess the GE learning outcomes and to address the issues raised by WASC. CCGE recommended additional consultation with the Committee during the planning and implementation of assessment-related projects. In addition, CCGE members felt that most faculty know little about the GE program outcomes, even with the appointment of departmental assessment liaisons. The campus would benefit from the
dissemination of additional information regarding assessment activities, and the introduction of further activities to encourage faculty engagement.

Systemwide Issues

Along with other Senate councils and committees, members of CCGE were invited to review materials pertaining to the following systemwide issues:

1. Procedures for Senate and Non-Senate Faculty Violations of the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
2. Proposed Amendment to Senate Bylaw 128 - Conflict of Interest

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