To the Faculty Legislature, Santa Barbara Division:

Executive Summary

Purpose (per Bylaw 80): To set standards for and policy on undergraduate education and to provide advice and consent on all matters of policy, planning, and practice that impact the quality of undergraduate programs and undergraduate students’ educational experiences at UCSB.

Issues of General Concern to Faculty:

- The Undergraduate Council registered its concern to the Executive Council regarding the Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction (ESCI), particularly the campus’s reliance on ESCIs for gauging teaching performance, and the evidence that such evaluations display bias against women and people of color. The Academic Senate agreed to form an ad hoc committee to explore this issue in the 2018-19 academic year.
- The Undergraduate Council analyzed the results of its 2017 Survey on Classroom Protocol and Academic Engagement and developed a report to the Academic Senate.

The UgC held 15 regularly scheduled meetings and consulted with relevant Senate committees and campus administrators regarding topics of concern within its purview.

Local Business

Academic Program Reviews

In cooperation with the Program Review Panel, UgC participated in the academic program reviews of the following academic units.

1. Education
2. English
3. Global Studies
4. Physics

UgC responded to requests from the Executive Vice Chancellor regarding membership on the Program Review Panel and departments to be reviewed during the 2019-20 program review cycle.

Academic Proposals
UgC granted preliminary approval of the following actions and recommended final approval by the Faculty Legislature:

1. Establishment of a B.A. in Marine Science in the College of Creative Studies
2. Revision of Divisional Senate Regulation 205. General Education Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Science (Engineering)
3. Revision of Divisional Senate Regulation 80. Subject A Requirement
4. Revision of Divisional Regulation 240: Honors at Graduation

UgC granted final approval for the following actions, effective Fall Quarter 2018:

1. Establishment of a Minor in Museum Studies
2. Revision of curricular requirements for completion of the following undergraduate programs:
   - B.A. in Anthropology
   - B.A. in Black Studies
   - B.A. in Chicana and Chicano Studies
   - B.A. in English
   - B.A. History
   - B.A. in Japanese (High-Proficiency Track)
   - B.A. in Spanish
   - B.S. in Chemical Engineering
   - B.S. in Mechanical Engineering
   - B.S. in Pharmacology
   - Minor in Applied Psychology
   - Minor in Art
   - Minor in Black Studies
   - Minor in Spanish
3. Establishment or revision of program learning outcomes for the following undergraduate programs:
   - B.S. in Psychological and Brain Sciences
   - B.A. in Writing and Literature
   - B.A. in Marine Science
4. Revision of the Introductory Biology Laboratory Series
5. Implementation of Political Science 15 as a prerequisite for additional upper-division courses

UgC reviewed two proposals to establish minors, but the Council was unable to offer its approval. The departments were asked to resubmit revised proposals in the coming year. UgC also reviewed a proposal to establish a professional master’s program, and responded regarding the proposed program’s potential impacts on undergraduate education at UCSB.

Campus Proposals and Initiatives

Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction
The UgC held many discussions throughout the year regarding the Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction (ESCI), which resulted in a memorandum of concern to the Executive Council. The UgC’s main concerns were the statistical limitations of ESCIs, misunderstandings about what they measure, and the body of empirical evidence that student evaluations like the ESCI display biases against faculty of color, female faculty, and faculty from other underrepresented groups. The Academic Senate agreed to form an ad hoc committee to explore this issue in the 2018-19 academic year.

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

The UgC was asked to informally review a potential change to campus policy to allow undergraduate students and non-students as teaching assistants. Faculty opinions of the proposal were split, based primarily on different disciplinary perspectives.

There is a clear imbalance in some departments between the number of graduate students qualified to serve as teaching assistants and the number of instructional personnel needed to meet undergraduate teaching demands. The situation is particularly dire given the current state of over-enrollment and impaction in some areas of the campus. Departments look to other disciplines to hire teaching assistants when they cannot find qualified internal candidates. While the external students are minimally qualified, the arrangement is not ideal. Faculty assert that the top senior undergraduates in their programs have better disciplinary knowledge, and that departments need the flexibility to allow undergraduate teaching assistants under limited circumstances.

Other faculty feel that the use of undergraduate teaching assistants in their departments would be pedagogically unsound, and stress that undergraduates lack the expertise and experience to serve in this capacity. They suggest, for example, that undergraduates would not be well suited to serve as teaching assistants for courses in the Humanities that require the evaluation of critical writing assignments. Members drew a clear distinction between this type of instruction and students assisting in laboratories, running problem sets, and generally serving a resource for their peers. Additional areas of concern included the potential for negative public perception of the policy, graduate student objection, and the need for adequate resources to address over-enrollment and impaction.

A fair amount of the Council’s discussion centered on the ways in which undergraduate students participate in instruction via informal departmental arrangements. UgC recommended that the campus study existing practices to form a better understanding of campus needs and available options, and to discourage ill-advised practices. The Council also suggested an examination of the policies used at other institutions.

Undergraduate Council did not discuss the specific case of non-students serving as TAs. The Council’s main concern was with the ramifications of undergraduate students serving in that capacity.

Overall, the Council was not opposed to further exploration, as members indicated a clear need for flexibility in some disciplines. However, UgC felt strongly that any future consideration of this issue
must include a clear statement of the policy’s limitations and robust safeguards to avoid negative consequences.

Results of the Undergraduate Council’s 2016-17 Survey on Classroom Protocol and Academic Engagement

In 2017 the Undergraduate Council distributed a survey to the teaching faculty to assess the existence of systemic pedagogical concerns at UCSB in need of further evaluation and possible action. Three general categories were considered: electronics in the classroom, pedagogical problems as they apply to the student body as a whole, and pedagogical concerns that may be particularly pronounced for transfer students and/or international students. Five hundred and seventy faculty responded to this survey with representation from all divisions/colleges/schools.

According to the survey responses, the large majority of faculty did not consider electronics in the classroom to be a problem of sufficient magnitude to warrant university wide action at this time. Nevertheless, the Council will continue to monitor the national discourse, as this issue is examined at other institutions of higher education. The survey did identify several other concerns that may warrant further evaluation. There seemed to be at least a modest mandate for the University to explore faculty perceptions that that students’ limited proficiency in writing is problematic. Most importantly, the survey suggested a clear mandate to address faculty perceptions that International students are facing a host of unique difficulties that are deserving of further evaluation and potential action.

UCEAP Pre-Approval

The UgC considered a proposal requesting pre-approval of UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) courses for General Education (GE) credit. The Council’s deliberations were informed by comments from other reviewing agencies involved in undergraduate education.

While the Council felt that EAP’s goal to streamline the system for GE course approval was laudable, the arguments for pre-approval were not compelling enough to convince the the UgC that the campus should invest in a new, labor-intensive review process.

The UgC felt that the current processes for GE review and approval serve their purpose to maintain UCSB’s standards of academic quality. Further, these have been deemed the appropriate methods for ensuring that courses for which GE credit is granted consistently meet the approved program learning outcomes for the specific subject areas and the overall GE program.

Several groups expressed concern about the oversight of courses from foreign universities, the consistency in course material over the proposed five-year pre-approval period, and the lack of detail regarding course articulation and the resources that would be necessary to implement a new review process. In addition, many were not convinced that difficulty obtaining GE credit is a significant barrier to student participation in education abroad given other resource or logistical issues. Departmental and central staff dedicate significant time to assist students before and after their trip abroad.
The UgC was unable to support the proposal at this time.

*Proposed Classroom Recording Policy*

The UgC reviewed a proposed policy to regulate audio and video recordings in the classroom. Although UgC agreed with the intent of the policy, members identified a number of issues in need of consideration or resolution. As such, the Council was unable to offer its endorsement. UgC found the wording of the policy to be confusing.

UgC believed that the policy would benefit from guiding language, similar to that of UC Berkeley. The Council recommended that the document identify the consequences for violation of the policy, for both enrolled students and visitors to the campus. In light of events at UC San Diego, members wondered whether it might be useful to establish a separate policy for campus visitors. UgC also suggested that the guiding language include a statement on who is affected by the policy, and felt strongly that teaching assistants should be afforded protection equal to that of faculty. Finally, though it was clear that the initiators of the proposal had consulted the Disabled Students Program, UgC recommended that the document include an explicit statement regarding accommodations for disabled students.

The Council also considered that the creation of unauthorized recordings of class lectures or discussions might be a potential recourse for students who witness discrimination or other inappropriate conduct in the classroom.

*Revision of Divisional Regulation 25 in Response to Concerns Raised by the Office for Civil Rights*

The Undergraduate Council was asked to review a memorandum from Campus General Counsel regarding the process for student grade appeals when the complainant also alleges discrimination. The Council reviewed the proposed revised procedures and found the language to be unclear and ambiguous. The Council requested a number of clarifications in its written response.

*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 Undergraduate Council raised no objections to the proposed language and unanimously endorsed the bylaw.

*Proposed Revisions to Appendix E: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Student Student Adjudication Framework and Section 100.00: Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline*

The Council was asked to respond to proposed revisions to Appendix E: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Student Adjudication Framework and Section 100.00: Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline. While the Council recognized the need to cultivate a campus culture of zero tolerance, members found several elements of the document to be troubling, including the exclusion of several basic allowances of due process for the respondent, and the whether the framework would provide a fair and impartial fact-finding and a fair and impartial hearing. The Council recommended that the
University examine adjudication framework models from other institutions to determine best practices and return with further revisions.

Council Review of Interim WSCUC Report
The UgC was asked to respond to 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 Council made several recommendations regarding tone, but otherwise found the report to be satisfactory.

Undergraduate Research Awards
A select group of UgC members reviewed nomination materials and chose three student recipients and one faculty recipient of the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research.

Systemwide Business

As UCSB’s representative on the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP), David Paul reported to and consulted with the Council regarding issues under discussion by UCEP.

Trevor Hayton represented UCSB on the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) and reported to the Council on items addressed by the committee.

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

1. Systemwide Review of Taskforce Report on the Negotiated Salary Trial Program
2. Procedures for Senate and Non-Senate Faculty Violations of SVSH Policy
4. Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI)
5. Proposed Amendment of Senate Bylaw 128 – Conflict of Interest
6. Proposed Changes to Senate Regulation 424A.3 – Area D Laboratory Science

Undergraduate Council Members

David Paul, Chair
Trevor Hayton, Vice-Chair
Walid Afifi
Ninotchka Bennahum
Ted Bennett
Mary Bucholtz
Maria Isabel Bueno Cachadina
John Foran
Phillip Gans
Jennifer Holt
Jennifer King
Everett Lipman
Susan Mazer
Robin Nabi
Eric Prieto
Matthew Quirk
Jonathan Schooler
Teresa Shewry
Charles Stuart
Dave Bothman (Non-Senate Academic Representative)
Shasta Delp (Adviser)