To the Faculty Legislature, Santa Barbara Division

The charge of the College of Letters and Science Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) is defined in Part III, Appendix II, D1.93A of the Santa Barbara Division’s Bylaws and Regulations as follows: “Each FEC of the Faculty of a College, often abbreviated as ‘FEC of the College,’ is a committee of the Academic Senate. These Committees are authorized by the Bylaws of each Division of the Academic Senate as organizations through which the Faculty of each College can coordinate the academic affairs of their College.” The FEC provides oversight on academic and other matters pertinent to the welfare of departments, faculty, and students within the College of Letters and Science.

The FEC met 15 times during this academic year, five meetings per quarter for two hours each.

Professor Sabine Frühstück was elected FEC Chair at the meeting on October 8, 2020, and offers this Annual Report for academic year 2020-21.

Executive Summary

Academic year 2020-21 saw the continuation of challenges surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, with plans building toward the potential return to campus in the near future as the year progressed and vaccination programs were carried out. The FEC engaged in discussions of many significant issues related to online instruction and the continued transition to business post-pandemic. This Executive Summary highlights recurring significant issues that the committee discussed in 2020-21.

- The most consistent issue in FEC discussions was the lack of campus level guidance regarding criteria for appropriate fully online courses. Careful and sustained FEC discussion resulted in the determination that online courses ought to have (a) a distinct academic or pedagogic rationale for being offered without an in-person element (beyond statements about efficiency or convenience), and (b) truly require 50% or more online instructional components to achieve course goals. For instructors hoping to use what they learned about online teaching during the pandemic in their return to regular instruction, the FEC repeatedly reinforced in its memos that courses utilizing 49% or less online/hybrid components do not require formal Senate review as “W” prefix online courses.
- A second important issue that took up a substantial portion of FEC discussion and will undoubtedly do so next year as well were strategies for how to solve the problem of particularly impacted majors. Positive trends have emerged and proposals discussed, including: (a) the creation of needed pre-majors recommended, for instance, by program reviews such as that of Statistics; (b) the attempt to reassess the validity of unit caps, restrictions designed to reduce major counts (Senate Regulation 130 regarding major
accessibility); and (c) the possibility to admit all students as undeclared freshmen in order to de-emphasize majors and shift toward a more liberal arts model of undergraduate education.

- The agony about how to replace the ESCIs that we know are ineffective and biased tools of assessing both students’ learning and instructors’ teaching continued. FEC disagrees with the Committee on Student Evaluation and Teaching and Instructional Development on two counts: FEC’s perspective is that it is not sensible to separate teaching evaluation from the question of learning gains. And, FEC does not believe that students are experts in their own experiences (such a perspective would make bias in evaluations impossible). FEC continues to favor a moratorium on the use of numerical ESCI scores in personnel evaluations.

- Securing equal access and success for a diverse student body continues to be a priority in FEC discussions and was brought up this past year particularly in the context of priority registration and the reform of the L&S Honors Program.

The FEC would like to acknowledge the contributions of its ex officio members, Executive Dean Pierre Wiltzius and AVC and Dean of Undergraduate Education Jeff Stopple. Their perspectives and extensive background knowledge of campus issues provided important context and greatly facilitated the productivity of the committee’s discussions. I gratefully acknowledge also the contributions of Associated Students representative Hayley Slater and GSA representative Celine Day. The FEC is also indebted to Nick Alward-Saxon who ensured as smooth a transition from his predecessor, Barbara Gilkes, and provided expert guidance throughout the year.

**Academic Program Reviews**

Maintaining excellence in College departments, undergraduate programs, and graduate education is essential for the continued excellence of the University. As such, the FEC takes its role in Academic Program Review very seriously. In 2020-21, the committee provided extensive comment during the reviews of the Department of Linguistics and the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

FEC also nominated candidates for the Program Review Panel.

**At the Graduate Level**

The FEC provided input on a variety of matters relating to welfare of graduate students, but was not consulted for review on any specific proposals for significant changes or additions to existing graduate student programs.

Relating to individual course issues, the FEC requested input from Graduate Council (and other committees) regarding matters of equity for Teaching Assistants in delivery of remote instruction where the instructor teaches remotely but graduate students are expected to TA in a physical capacity. Graduate Council’s feedback informed the FECs evaluation, discussion, and eventual denial of a proposed fully online undergraduate course that would have utilized such a teaching arrangement.

The FEC provided comment on one systemwide policy proposal exclusively relating to graduate students, dealing with eligibility for in-absentia fee status. The full title of this proposal is listed in the “Systemwide” section below.
At the Undergraduate Level

The FEC has review authority over the modification of all undergraduate programs (majors and minors) in the College. Due to the sheer volume of academic programs being monitored and changes that occur on an annual basis, modifications are divided into two categories—technical (typos, course title adjustments, removing discontinued courses, etc.) and more substantive (impacting the major or minor program). Technical revisions are reviewed by divisional subcommittees (HFA, MLPS, SOSC). Substantive changes undergo full review by the entire FEC and are then forwarded to the Undergraduate Council for final approval to ensure equitable application of policies across the three colleges offering UG degrees (CCS, Engineering, and L&S).

During 2020-21, the L&S FEC endorsed the following substantive curriculum changes while FEC subcommittees reviewed technical adjustments to 74 major and minor sheets, bearing in mind that the same adjustment could appear on multiple major or minor sheets, including emphases.

Significant curriculum proposals:
1. American Indian and Indigenous Studies Minor – Numerous curricular changes
2. Anthropology Department – Anthropology Major, Biological Emphasis – Eliminated ANTH 7 requirement
3. Black Studies Department – Black Studies Major & Minor – Seminar requirement changes
4. Classics Department – Classical Archaeology Emphasis – Revisions to UD Area A
5. Comm Department – Comm Major – Expanded limit of COMM 160AA-ZZ credit
6. East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies Department – Chinese Majors – Numerous curricular changes
7. Earth Science Department – Earth Science Major, Geophysics Emphasis – Numerous curricular changes
8. English Department – Renaissance Studies Major – Hibernated
9. History Department – Students can combine Poverty, Inequality, & Social Justice Minor with History Major, History of Public Policy and Law Major, or History Minor
10. French & Italian Department – Italian Studies Major, Transnational Emphasis – Established new emphasis
11. Linguistics Department – Language & Speech Technology Emphasis and Minor – Numerous curricular changes
12. Mathematics and Statistics Departments – Financial Math and Statistics Major – Change to pre-major requirements
13. Physics Department – Physics BA & BS Majors, Physics Minor, and Astronomy Minor – Numerous curricular changes in preparation for further changes effective for 2021-22 and 2022-23 in a staged roll-out
14. Psychological and Brain Sciences Department – Biopsychology Major and Psychological & Brain Sciences Major – Eliminated 144 pre-major unit cap
15. Spanish & Portuguese Department – Spanish Major and Minor – Changes to limits of courses taught in English
17. Theater and Dance Department – Dance BA Major – Numerous curricular changes

Other Undergraduate Academic Items Reviewed:
• Priority Registration Reform
• Request for an Extension of the Fall Registration Pilot to 2021
• Student Petition Concerning the European Traditions Requirement
• Proposed Changes to the College of Letters & Science Honors Program

At the Level of Individual Courses
The FEC reviewed the following online course proposals, either for an initial offering or renewal based on assessment data:

• ARTHI W 6R (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• COMM W 107 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• COMM W 146 (renewal, reviewed and approved)
• EEMB W 158 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• ESS W 131 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• ESS W 3 (renewal, reviewed and approved)
• FAMST W 151FA (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• GEOG W 115B (new online course, reviewed)
• GEOG W 148 (new online course, reviewed)
• INT W 120 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• INT W 22 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• LING W 12 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• LING W 140 (new online course, reviewed)
• LING W 141 (new online course, reviewed)
• SPAN W 2 (new online course, reviewed and approved)
• THTR W 2B (new online course, reviewed and approved)

At the Campus Level
The FEC weighed in on:
• Report of the Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force
• Phase One Report of the Chancellor's Task Force on Enrollment Strategy
• Faculty Salary Scales Task Force Report
• Proposed Name Change of the Center for the Study of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of Aging
• Compliance with the Commencement of Academic Activity Regulation for Title IV Financial Aid

The FEC also coordinated the selection of the Plous Memorial Award recipient. The 2020-21 recipient is Carolina Arias (MCDB). The committee subsequently initiated a discussion and wrote a memo asking the Senate to consider in 2021-22 the possibility of Plous award administration being handled by a more appropriate campus-wide awards committee in the future, which could also potentially allow the award to be expanded in scope to campus faculty in eligible fields appointed outside our College.

The committee also endorsed the nominations for the 2021 Mochizuki Memorial Awards within the
Systemwide Policy and Regulation Review

In 2020-21, the FEC responded to:

- Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI) - Recommendations for Future State
- Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation (SR) 544 - Cross-Campus Enrollments
- Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation (SR) 630 - Senior Residency Requirement
- SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Vaccination Program Policy
- Systemwide Review of Proposed Curtailment Program
- Systemwide Review of Proposed Presidential Policy – Fee Policy for Graduate Student in Absentia Registration
- Systemwide Review of Proposed Revision of Senate Regulation 610, Defining Residency
- UC Research Data and Tangible Research Materials
- Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures

Selection of New Members

In Spring 2021, a call for nominations was sent to all L&S faculty and an election was conducted under the regulations of the Senate, aiming to fill the vacancy created by Vice Chair James Roney stepping down from the FEC after three years of superb service.

The following members were elected to serve on the FEC through August 2024:

Trisalyn Nelson, Geography

2020-21 FEC Committee Membership

Walid Afifi, Communication
Peter Ford, Chemistry and Biochemistry
Sabine Frühstück, East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies (Chair)
David Paul, Music
James Roney, Psychological and Brain Sciences (Vice-Chair)
Kevin Whitehead, Sociology

Ex officio members:
Jeff Stopple, AVC and Dean of Undergraduate Education
Pierre Wiltzius, Executive Dean of the College of Letters and Science

Student representatives:
Hayley Slater, Associated Students (from January 2021)
Celine Day, Graduate Student Association (through December 2021)