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’ education experiences at UCSB.

Issues of General Concern to Faculty:

- UgC worked with campus administrators to extend undergraduate grading option flexibilities to the Winter, Spring, and Summer 2021 terms.
- UgC actioned on 22 academic proposals involving the establishment, discontinuation, or curricular modification of undergraduate programs

UgC held 16 regularly scheduled meetings and consulted with relevant Senate committees and campus administrators regarding topics of concern within its purview. The Council met with Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education Jeffrey Stopple, Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Belinda Robnett, and other campus administrators.

Local Business

Academic Program Reviews

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

1. Chemistry & Biochemistry
2. Computer Engineering
3. Linguistics

UgC responded to a request from the Executive Vice Chancellor regarding the membership of the Program Review Panel and the departments to be reviewed during the 2022-23 program review cycle.

Academic Proposals

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

1. Discontinuation of the B.A. in Renaissance Studies

UgC granted final approval for the following actions, effective Fall Quarter 2021:

1. Establishment of the B.A. in Italian Studies, Transnational Emphasis
3. Revision of curricular requirements for completion of the following undergraduate programs:
   - B.A. in Anthropology, Biological Emphasis
   - B.A. in Black Studies
   - B.S. in Chemical Engineering
   - B.A. in Classics, Archaeology Emphasis
   - B.A. in Communication
   - B.A. in Chinese
   - B.A. in Chinese, High Proficiency Track
   - B.S. in Earth Science, Geophysics Emphasis
   - B.S. in Financial Mathematics and Statistics
   - B.A. in Linguistics, Language and Speech Technologies Emphasis
   - B.S. in Mechanical Engineering
   - B.A. in Physics
   - B.S. in Physics (upper-division revisions effective Fall 2022)
   - B.S. in Psychological and Brain Sciences
   - B.A. in Spanish
   - B.A. in Dance
   - Minor in American Indian and Indigenous Studies
   - Minor in Black Studies
   - Minor in Language and Speech Technologies
   - Minor in Physics
   - Minor in Spanish

4. Revision of program learning outcomes for the following undergraduate programs:
   - B.S. in Computer Engineering
   - B.S. in Computer Science
   - B.S. in Electrical Engineering
   - B.A. in History of Public Policy
   - B.A. or B.S. in Mathematics or Mathematical Science
   - B.S. in Mechanical Engineering

Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research and Research Mentoring

UgC members Paul Atzberger, Katie Byl, and Elisabeth Weber served as the selection committee for the 2020-21 Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research and Research Mentoring. They selected four undergraduate winners and one faculty winner.

Campus Proposals and Initiatives

Phase One Report of the Chancellor’s Task Force on Enrollment Strategy

UgC reviewed the Enrollment Task Force Report, which addressed the issue of impacted majors at UCSB and other campus constraints. UgC supported the recommendation to increase the number of advising staff on the campus as well as the idea of the “boot camp” approach for orientation. UgC voiced concern regarding the establishment of “semi-STEM majors” and noted that these tracks could be misleading to students. UgC recommended the re-examination of classroom utilization, in order to use classroom space more effectively. UgC recommended that the campus ensure adequate offering and access to General Education courses for students. The Council unanimously endorsed the report and noted that it provides a satisfactory foundation for moving toward a resolution of the enrollment issues that UCSB is currently facing.

Undergraduate Grading Option Flexibilities
UgC worked with Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education Jeffrey Stopple and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies Glen Beltz to extend undergraduate grading option flexibilities to the Winter 2021, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021 terms. Extensive input was received from student petitions, review of other UC campus policies, and communication with academic student advisors throughout the campus. The flexibilities included pushing back the grading option deadline, allowing the Colleges to exercise leniency when considering grading option petitions beyond the deadline, allowing students on probation to take courses for passed not passed, and providing academic departments with the option to allow passed/not passed grades in major, pre-major and minor applicable courses.

Priority Registration Reform

UgC considered a proposal for priority registration reform submitted by Associate Vice Chancellor Jeffrey Stopple and Vice Chancellor Belinda Robnett. The Council’s discussion was informed by various Academic Senate committees and College Faculty Executive Committees. The proposal called for the following changes effective Fall quarter 2021:

1. Priority registration will only apply to the first registration pass time.
2. Students matriculating to UCSB as College of Letters & Science Honors and College of Engineering Honors, and continuing students joining those programs will no longer have priority registration. Honors students who belong to a state-mandated priority registration group will retain their registration privileges.
3. Regents Scholars will no longer automatically be awarded priority registration. Regent Scholars who belong to a state-mandated priority registration group will retain their registration privileges.
4. Continuing College of Letters & Science Honors, College of Engineering Honors, and Regents Scholars will retain their priority registration privileges as long as they remain in that designation.
5. Students entering the College of Creative Studies will be granted a version of priority registration analogous to that of returning EAP students.

The Council’s discussion included a diversity of opinions and the vote to approve the priority registration reform was split and passed 7 in favor, 3 against, and 3 abstentions.

While the Council agreed that the current system is inequitable, several members felt strongly that these recommendations would harm UCSB’s ability to recruit and retain talented students. This group of members noted their support of UCSB rewarding excellence and feel that these changes will disincentivize student participation in College Honors Programs.

Request for Extension of the Fall Registration Pilot to 2021

UgC considered a request from the Office of the Registrar to continue a previously approved Registration Timeline Pilot to Fall quarter 2021. The pilot shifted registration pass times for continuing students in a way that would allow new students to have a more equitable opportunity to enroll in courses. The first registration pass for continuing students was also extended beyond the spring grading deadline. The Undergraduate Council fully supported this request and noted its appreciation of the efforts of all those involved to help improve the registration process.

GEOG W 115B Proposal

UgC was asked by the College of Letters and Science Faculty Executive Committee to comment on the request to establish GEOG W 115B, a new hybrid course. The L&S FEC noted two significant concerns with the proposal:
1. The instructor’s living situation was listed as a reason for the lecture portion of the course being offered in an online format.
2. While the instructor would teach remotely the teaching assistants would be responsible for the in-person portion of instruction. This could place an undue burden on them.

Taking into account these specific concerns UgC posed the following questions and concerns:

1. Why is teaching this course online better than the more common in-person lecture format?
2. Should more justification be given for why particular tools (e.g. Nectir) are being used, although it was good to see that the instructor gave consideration to improving inter-person communication?
3. Are there reasonable requests of students’ time to master this course in an online format?
4. Due to the fact that online courses do not belong to a single faculty member, is this request solely being made to accommodate a particular instructor’s living situation? Online teaching should be for academic reasons, not the convenience of an individual instructor.
5. The Council also noted concerns about requiring graduate students to teach in-person while the instructor would teach in a fully remote capacity. Does this place a larger burden on TAs? How would TAs be trained for this kind of course?
6. Was consideration given to possible cheating on exams?

Moving forward, the Council supports the creation of a clear set of standards that will help determine which courses are best suited for an online or hybrid format.

Compliance with the Commencement of Academic Activity regulation for Title IV Financial Aid
UgC reviewed a request from an Office of the Registrar and Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships workgroup regarding compliance with the Title IV financial aid regulations. The regulations state that institutions must document that students commenced academic activity in their courses early in the term and adjust financial aid eligibility for those that do not meet the requirements. Therefore, UCOP has requested that all campuses develop a plan that will comply with these financial aid regulations. The report provided examples of models currently being used by UC Davis and UC Merced. The Council unanimously supported the work group's recommendation to implement a system following the model used at UC Davis, which would require students to complete a low-stakes assignment in GOLD by the census date for each of their courses. UgC also raised the following question and suggestion:

1. What is the work group’s backup plan if an attempt to implement a system based on the UC Davis model is rejected by a reviewer?
2. The Council recommends that students who have not completed the compliance activity a week before the deadline receive a reminder via GOLD.

Student Petition Concerning the European Traditions Requirement
UgC began to consider a student petition to reimagine the European Traditions Special Subject Area requirement. The proposal calls for the European Traditions requirement to be absorbed by the current World Cultures Special Subject requirement. However, it was ultimately determined that the proposal was incomplete as it was missing memos from departments that house courses approved for the European Traditions requirement. Therefore, UgC felt that they could not make a fully formed decision and determined that it was best for the issue to be picked up again in the 2021-22 academic year.

Systemwide Business

As UCSB’s representative on the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP), Mary Betsy Brenner reported to and consulted with the Council regarding issues under discussion by UCEP.
Elisabeth Weber 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 Proposed Curtailment Program
2. Systemwide Review of the Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force Report
3. Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation (SR) 544 - Cross Campus Enrollments
4. Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation (SR) 630 - Senior Residency Requirement
5. Innovative Learning Technology Initiative - Recommendations for Future State
6. Universitywide Police Policies and Procedures
7. Systemwide Review of Proposed Revision of Senate Regulation 610, Defining Residency

Undergraduate Council Members

Mary Betsy Brenner, Chair
Raise Feldman, Vice-Chair
Paul Atzberger
Randy Bergstrom
Javier Birchenall
Katie Byl
Chen Ji
Kalju Kahn
Esther Lezra
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Scott Marcus
Carl Meinhart
William Smith
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Xiiaowei Zheng
Amber Vanderwarker (Ended 11/5/20)
John Hartman (NonSenate Academic Representative)
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