To the Faculty Legislature, Santa Barbara Division:

Executive Summary

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

Issues of General Concern to Faculty:

- Having just completed its first year as a new stand-alone committee, the Committee on Courses and General Education (CCGE) successfully took over many of the duties that were previously carried out by the former Committee on Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policy (CUAPP), which operated as a standing committee of the Undergraduate Council (UgC).

- CCGE initiated a review of all currently approved courses in UCSB’s General Education Program for the purpose of assessing compliance with recently approved GE area learning outcomes. Responses have been received from all academic departments that offer GE courses.

CCGE held 14 regularly scheduled 90-minute meetings during the 2013-14 academic year and consulted with faculty executive committees (FECs), academic deans, and other campus administrators as needed. The Committee also benefited from the regular participation of consultants from the Registrar’s Office, College of Letters and Science Advising, and College of Engineering Advising.

Recurring Business

Review of Undergraduate Course Requests

CCGE has final approval authority over the establishment, modification, and discontinuation of all undergraduate courses, including those that are proposed to be taught online. On behalf of the Committee, individual members review and act on course requests via the Master Course Approval System, forwarding any requests about which they are uncertain for full-committee review and action by the Committee Chair. Several hundred requests are reviewed each year.

CCGE reviewed and approved a total of 9 proposals for fully online courses. One of these is being offered systemwide in conjunction with the UC Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI), while the others are being offered as UCSB Summer Session courses. CCGE considered possible revisions to the currently approved policy and procedures for submission of online course proposals. When these guidelines were approved by UgC, CUAPP, and the FECs, it was intended that they be revisited for possible revision once the campus had gained more experience with this type of instruction. CCGE recommends further consultation among these groups during the coming year.
CCGE reviewed 36 proposals requesting eligibility to fulfill one or more areas of the GE Program, or in some cases, removal of existing eligibility. Of these, 30 requests were approved or partially approved and 3 were denied.

CCGE approved 3 course proposals from UCSB Extension as well as the appointments of 5 Extension instructors.

The Committee also approved several requests for changes to the final exam schedule.

**Associate Appointments**

CCGE reviewed 178 Associate appointment proposals, as compared with 163 in 2012-13 and 181 in 2010-11. All but one of the appointments were approved. In several instances, CCGE’s Chair consulted with the proposing department chair regarding a candidate whose past teaching performance prompted concern on behalf of CCGE members. In some cases, additional evidence of the candidate’s qualifications was requested and/or individual faculty mentoring was recommended.

Using examples from other UC campuses, CCGE considered ways to streamline and create greater consistency within the associate appointment submission and review process. A form has been drafted that could be used in place of the currently required Department Chair’s Letter which is submitted with proposal packets. Adoption of the new form would, of course, require thorough consultation and the endorsement of multiple campus groups and individuals.

**Local Campus Issues**

**General Education Review Project**

Prompted by a directive from WASC to pursue assessment of the GE Program beyond that which was achieved in the course of UCSB’s recent reaccreditation review, CCGE initiated a major review project. The purpose of the project was to ensure that all GE courses meet the Senate-approved learning outcomes of the GE area(s) for which they have been approved. Each academic department received a memo identifying its respective GE courses by area and requesting that each course be reviewed for compliance with area learning outcomes. The request included options for responding in cases where the course did not fully comply. All departments have responded, and some have requested modifications based on the results of their review. CCGE will evaluate the overall results of this project during the coming year and report its findings to the Council on Assessment, which will eventually report to WASC.

**Online ESCIs**

CCGE submitted comments regarding the Online ESCI Pilot Program and plans for campuswide implementation of online-only collection of ESCI evaluations. Given the important role that student evaluations can play in course design and pedagogy, CCGE is particularly concerned with the impact of the lower response rate and potentially more polarized responses that are expected to result from the move to an online ESCI system. The Committee also recognizes that a major change to the ESCI system might disproportionately disadvantage Unit 18 lecturers, for whom teaching excellence is the primary criterion for advancement and merit. CCGE also endorsed the elaborate set of comments that were submitted by the Council on Faculty Issues and Awards in its 2/4/2014 memo on this topic.

**SIDE Proposal**
The fullness of CCGE’s agenda preempted the Committee’s opportunity to discuss a revised version of a proposal to establish a Student Initiated Democratic Education (SIDE) Program at UCSB. However, CCGE’s Chair submitted brief comments regarding aspects of the proposal that pertain to the Committee’s purview. The proposal states that CCGE would be involved in the approval of courses, assumedly along with the relevant FEC and the Registrar, although these two reviewing agencies are not mentioned. The campus’ three-layered course review process requires considerable advance time for submission of requests in order for courses to move through the full approval process; moreover, if a significant number of SIDE courses were proposed, the workload for these groups would also increase.

It would seem appropriate that there be a careful process for approving the student instructors of SIDE courses. Although a faculty member would be the instructor of record, the instruction of the SIDE course would primarily be delivered by an undergraduate in the absence of that instructor of record. CCGE’s process for approving graduate students as Teaching Associates involves the submission of a letter from the chair of the proposing department and assessment of the candidate’s CV, transcript of grades in graduate courses, previous course evaluations (they need to have TA’d for at least 3 quarters), and a course syllabus. Given the rigor of the review process for graduate instructors, it seems that a standardized review process for undergraduate instructors would be equally important. To establish such a process, the Senate would need to consider what materials to request, how to evaluate those materials, and how to manage increased workload.

**AVC for Undergraduate Education**

CCGE responded to the proposed job description for the position of AVC for Undergraduate Education and L&S Dean of Undergraduate Education. Members were generally supportive of the desire to create a position that would promote enhanced leadership in the vast area of undergraduate education. While it seemed to members that combining the two proposed job titles into one position might create some new administrative efficiencies, concern was expressed about the imbalance of authority that might result from the proposed dual position, and its potential to the disadvantage the College of Creative Studies and the College of Engineering.

**Utilizing Technology**

CCGE responded to the Report of the Task Force on Utilizing Technology to Enhance Student Learning. There was general consensus that the report provided a timely and helpful discussion of instructional technologies and their role at UCSB. Given that much of the report is focused on fully online courses and MOOCs, CCGE appreciated that at least some attention was given to hybrid and flipped courses and to the use of technologies in face-to-face instruction. It was recommended that institutional support be provided to produce case studies and other local research that could inform faculty decisions to teach online, hybrid, or flipped courses, or to incorporate new technologies into their face-to-face courses. In particular, there appears to be a need for data that compares the effectiveness of online and face-to-face courses in achieving learning outcomes.

Members felt that in some disciplines—particularly in the sciences and engineering—fully online courses would be more appropriate at the lower-division level, and that upper-division students would derive more benefit more from face-to-face interaction with professors.

Regarding unit valuation of online courses, CCGE acknowledged the difficulty/impossibility of determining whether and why students might devote more or less time to their work in an online course. In any event, the ideal would be for student (and faculty) workload to be the same in online and face-to-face offerings of the same course.
Chair Madeleine Sorapure will represent CCGE on the Innovative Technology Coordinating Committee that has been formed on behalf of the EVC by Carl Gutierrez-Jones, L&S Dean of Undergraduate Education. This committee will oversee and coordinate campus activities responding to the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative.

**Systemwide Business**

The Committee responded to a request for input on the articulation of online courses offered by other UC campuses that are completed by UCSB students. Most CCGE members agreed that the relevant academic department should be consulted in determining whether an online course offered by another UC campus may be used to satisfy major or pre-major requirements. There were mixed opinions about the appropriate process for determining whether GE credit should be granted, but it was agreed that departmental and/or CCGE consultation should be pursued in cases where there is any uncertainty as to whether the content of the course fully meets UCSB eligibility criteria.

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