

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, February 24, 2022

Attendees: Chair LeRoy Westerling, Vice Chair Patti LiWang, Ramesh Balasubramaniam, Kevin Mitchell, Erin Hestir, Holley Moyes, Tao Ye (alternate for Jason Sexton), Jesus Sandoval-Hernandez, David Jennings, Min Hwan Lee, Justin Yeakel, Jeff Butler

Absent: Christopher Viney and Martin Hagger

I. Chair's Report – LeRoy Westerling

A. February 18 UCOP Budget Meeting

- Discussion about fully online education. The UC advocates for online undergraduate degree programs that would appeal to the same student demographics as in-person degree programs. However, a report that was shared at the systemwide level indicates that this is not occurring at some institutions. In other institutions' online programs, the demographic is largely comprised of two populations: 1) adults who are returning to academia to obtain a credential in order to earn a promotion at their jobs and 2) individuals who are just taking courses to qualify for another degree program. The graduation rates in these online programs are low, as are the salaries of instructors who teach the courses.
- A recent court order is forcing UC Berkeley to reduce undergraduate enrollment in response to a lawsuit regarding the environmental impact of Berkeley's expansion plan. UC Berkeley is required to freeze enrollment at the same level as AY 20-21. The UC is asking the California Supreme Court to stay the order. Senate Chair Westerling informed Divisional Council that this will create confusion about enrollment at other UC campuses, especially Merced, as we cannot now determine how many students we will have to admit to reach our enrollment target. The state legislature will introduce a bill to exempt enrollment growth, but in the meantime, the Berkeley situation is creating uncertainty across the UC system.
- The state budget surplus continues to grow. The UC is working with the Governor's office for additional, one-time funding for deferred maintenance projects. The final budget will not be confirmed until later this year.
- There is a push at the systemwide level to create a committee on transfers. This will be helpful for the individual campuses who need guidance on transfer pathways.

B. February 22 Meeting with Chancellor Muñoz and EVC/Provost Camfield

- Items discussed with the Chancellor and EVC/Provost included longer terms for chairs of certain Senate committees in the interest of continuity and to facilitate better collaboration. Senate Chair Westerling is advocating for teaching relief for certain committee chairs to incentivize a possible change to longer terms. The Chancellor suggested that the Senate use some of the funds he allocated to the Senate from the MacKenzie Scott gift to cover the cost of teaching relief.

However, Senate Chair Westerling prefers the longer-term mechanism of putting this request into the campus budget call.

- The Senate office, for the first time, is being asked to submit its own budget request for the upcoming campus budget call independent of the EVC/Provost’s office (previously, the Senate office budget was managed by the EVC/Provost’s office). Senate Chair Westerling and Senate Executive Director Paul are formulating the budget request. However, given that the budget process will take time, Senate Chair Westerling suggested that Divisional Council consider the Chancellor’s suggestion that the Senate use some funds from the MacKenzie Scott gift on a temporary basis.
- Chair Westerling briefly mentioned the continued sit-in of UCLA students as they continue to advocate for a hybrid instruction model.

II. Consent Calendar

- A. The Agenda
- B. February 10 Meeting Minutes

Action: the Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

III. Campus Honors Program – UGC Chair Moyes

UGC Chair Moyes shared a PowerPoint presentation with Divisional Council that was also distributed to Council members prior to this meeting.

The 2014 Task Force under former EVC/Provost Peterson recommended that UC Merced institute an honors program to serve its most “academically-talented students, from all majors and schools.” In 2021 UGC set up a task force to design and implement a new program that would provide academically talented and motivated students with an enriched environment to be creative and innovative, develop leadership skills, and become effective global citizens and community partners.

UGC Chair Moyes explained that an honors program would be beneficial to UC Merced, because according to the Office of Admissions, 17% of responses on the “SIR no” survey in both Fall 2020 and Fall 2021 (about 550 students in both years) responded that they did not SIR at UC Merced because there was no honors program. There are several perks for students who will be part of the honors program, such as priority registration, Living Learning Communities, honors scholarships, and travel stipends.

UGC Chair Moyes stated that she is asking for input on the honors proposal from Divisional Council and School Executive Committees. One comment she has received so far from one of the Schools concerns faculty numbers. She informed Divisional Council that if the honors program offers 24 one-hour seminars, the program would need 8 faculty members by 2030.

GC Chair Hestir inquired about graduate school pathways. UGC Chair Moyes responded that the honors program proposal does not include information on formal pathways, but in the seminars, faculty would

help students develop their CVs and complete their graduate school applications. If the honors program were to receive funding, the program could also help students pay for graduate school applications.

UGC Chair Moyes confirmed that the goal is for the honors program to undergo Senate review and be put before the Senate faculty for a vote at the Spring Meeting of the Division.

Senate Executive Director Paul suggested that the honors program proposal be submitted to the EVC/Provost so he can review in parallel with the Senate/campus wide review.

Action: Divisional Council members will send their comments on the honors program proposal to Senate Executive Director Paul. After comments are taken into consideration, the proposal will be sent to the EVC/Provost and to Senate committees for a Senate review.

IV. Campus Review Item – Chair Westerling and CAPRA Chair Mitchell

A. Proposal for the Establishment of a Community Labor Center Organized Research Unit

Proposal and supporting materials:

- CoR’s assessment and endorsement of proposal (Dec 4, 2020)
 - Appendix B (Research Plan)
- Interim VCORED Zatz Letter of Support (Dec 9, 2020)
- Divisional Council’s recommendation on the proposal (Feb 9, 2021)
- Administrative leadership’s response to DivCo’s memo (Apr 5, 2021)
- DivCo’s memo to the administration recommending that the CLC maintain Center status, and work with Interim VCORED Zatz to address the resource component (May 3, 2021)
- CoR’s memo to the Senate Chair regarding the committee’s discussion with Interim VCORED (May 24, 2021).
- The policy for the establishment and review of ORU proposals.

Comments on the ORU proposal were received by CoR, CAPRA (revised Appendix A “Budget Plan” was appended to CAPRA’s comments), LASC, UGC, GC, and the SSHA Executive Committee.

Chair Westerling reminded Divisional Council that the Center received funding from the state legislature. He added that the Chancellor will provide additional funding to the Center from the MacKenzie Scott gift. Campus administration is supportive of the ORU proposal.

CAPRA Chair Mitchell stated that CAPRA’s concerns from last year’s initial review – budget and staffing – are no longer relevant given the state funding being provided to the Center and the unfreezing of staff hiring. CAPRA supports the ORU proposal.

GC Chair Hestir conveyed GC’s comment that the current and all future ORU proposals should address how the future ORU plans to support graduate education.

UGC Chair Moyes added that she would like to see more input from faculty across departments and disciplines on the ORU proposal. There are potential synergies to be explored.

The Senate Chair made a motion to approve the ORU proposal. The motion was seconded and the vote was unanimously favorable with no abstentions.

Action: A draft endorsement memo will be distributed for Divisional Council’s review and approval. The ORU proposal’s revised Appendix A-Budget (which was appended to CAPRA’s memo and linked on today’s agenda) will also be distributed to Divisional Council.

B. CoR Updates – Vice Chair Ye

A. Campus Research Infrastructure

Background documents:

- CoR/FWAF/GC’s memo on research obstacles (Oct. 6, 2021)
- Chancellor and EVC Provost’s response (Nov. 1, 2021)
Faculty toolkit referenced in the Chancellor and EVC/Provost’s response:
<https://research.ucmerced.edu/faculty-toolkit>
- CoR draft response memo to Chancellor and EVC/Provost’s Nov. 1, 2021 memo

CoR Vice Chair Ye, who attended today’s meeting in CoR Chair Sexton’s place, summarized CoR’s draft memo that is intended to be a response to the Chancellor and EVC/Provost’s November 1, 2020 memo. CoR’s draft memo acknowledges the improvements made to procurement but points out the continued problems with purchasing and grant accounting. CoR suggests that the Division of Finance and Administration (DFA) needs to articulate clear goals and standards for success. CoR Vice Chair Ye stated that orders still take too long to place, errors on orders are still occurring, and many orders are rejected due to problems with chart strings. The responsibility for entering chart strings is shifted from staff to faculty which is not feasible. Deloitte is making improvements that will result in the auto-population of chart strings which will be helpful. However, Oracle self-service only includes 25 vendors; for orders through any other vendor, users have to submit orders through Service Now and enter chart strings.

Senate Chair Westerling stated his hope that the Oracle Advisory Committee will work on communication with faculty. He added that faculty serving on the advisory committee need to keep their Senate committees and Divisional Council informed of the advisory committee’s progress. He added that he has been in contact with faculty from other campuses who are experiencing the same problems with Oracle. Collaboration with faculty is key; the Oracle Advisory Committee needs to consult with campus stakeholders.

Senate Executive Director Paul pointed out that the Senate revised the draft Oracle Advisory Committee charge sent by Interim VC/CFO Schnier and sent back to him but the Senate has not heard any updates. Senate Chair Westerling asked Divisional Council members to finalize revisions to the charge and re-send to Interim VC/CFO Schnier.

Action: Interim VC/CFO Schnier will be reminded to send his comments on the draft charge for the Oracle Advisory Committee.

Action: Divisional Council will send their comments about CoR’s draft response memo on campus research obstacles to Senate Executive Director Paul and she will forward them to CoR. After CoR takes into account Divisional Council’s comments, CoR will revise the memo and transmit back to

Divisional Council.

C. Discussion: LASC Memos – Chair Westerling, CAPRA Chair Mitchell, GC Chair Hestir

Background documents:

- A. To CAPRA and DivCo re: UCM Library Staffing
- B. To GC and DivCo re: Updates to CCGA Handbook regarding Library Resources

Senate Chair Westerling stated that with regard to the LASC memo to CAPRA and Divisional Council on Library staffing, the EVC/Provost is handling the issue through the budget process. This issue is not under the Senate’s purview.

Chair Westerling expressed concern about LASC’s memo to GC and Divisional Council about revisions to the CCGA Handbook related to Library resources. GC Chair Hestir agreed and added that the LASC memo is essentially asking to change the definitions of what authors have to address in proposals for a new program. This gives the Library the ability to introduce their staffing and budget needs into the proposal which is inappropriate. Those needs are under the purview of the administration, not the Senate. It also gives the Library an unfair advantage: by introducing their needs into proposals for new programs, they are advantaged over other administrative units on campus who also need additional resources to support new programs. GC Chair Hestir added that the Library introducing its resource needs into program proposals is encroaching on the campus’s ability to grow and faculty’s authority over curriculum.

Chair Westerling stated that he spoke with the EVC/Provost about Library resources and the EVC/Provost is committed to providing them.

UGC Chair Moyes pointed out that LASC’s memo does not mention undergraduate education which also requires Library resources.

Action: Divisional Council will request that LASC not transmit its memo to CCGA. CAPRA will respond to LASC’s memo on Library staffing.

D. Discussion: Terms of Senate Service – GC Chair Hestir

GC Chair Hestir recommends that Merced Senate committee service terms begin and end on July 1 or September 1. The current practice of beginning and ending terms in late August is not feasible as it does not allow for smooth transition between chairs amidst the chaos surrounding the start of the new academic year. Other Divisional Council members agreed with July 1, as it aligns well with faculty bio-bibs and service dates. A Divisional Council member did point out that memberships on corresponding systemwide committees begin and end on September 1.

This revision in the terms of service requires a change to the Merced Division bylaws. The proposed bylaw change will have to be submitted for a Senate review followed by a vote of the Senate faculty at the Spring 2022 Meeting of the Division.

Divisional Council members agreed that the revised bylaw language will include a reference to the need for overlapping terms in this transition year.

Action: GC Chair Hestir will take the lead in drafting revised Bylaw language for the terms of service on Senate committee.

E. Other Business

Senate Chair Westerling requested that Divisional Council hold in person meetings for the rest of the spring semester. He wants faculty to begin reengaging with colleagues and build up the campus community. Another Divisional Council member agreed and added that students not coming on campus is harming them academically. If students see their professors on campus, it will set a positive example. A sense of belonging is critical to the success of graduate education in particular. A few Divisional Council members pointed out issues of family responsibility and the difficulty posed by the early Council meetings. Chair Westerling suggested moving the start of the Divisional Council meetings to 9:00 am.

Action: Divisional Council will send their input/concerns to Senate Executive Director Paul. This discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

F. Consultation with EVC/Provost Camfield

Divisional Council was informed at 9:50 am that EVC/Provost Camfield was delayed at his previous meeting and is unable to attend today's Divisional Council meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.
Attest: LeRoy Westerling, Senate Chair