

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday, March 4, 2020

Attendees: Chair Tom Hansford, Vice Chair Robin DeLugan, Christopher Viney (Zoom), Hrant Hratchian, LeRoy Westerling (Zoom), Jay Sharping, Michael Scheibner, Linda Hirst, Erin Hestir, Patti LiWang, Nella Van Dyke, Michael Dawson, Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, and Carolin Frank.

Absent: Josué Medellin-Azuara.

I. Chair’s Announcements

A. Meeting with Interim Chancellor Brostrom and EVC/Provost Camfield (February 19, 2020)

- i. The administration is working on an initiative to ease the transfer pathway for community college students to the UCs. The administration may invite Senate participation, e.g. faculty may be invited to visit community colleges with members of the administration.
- ii. CAPRA’s suggestion about the need for additional funding for more UC Merced students to be able to participate in the UCDC program was well-received by the administration. The administration is now re-evaluating the costs to UC Merced students and attempting to locate funding.
- iii. Given the UC cap on the number of international undergraduate students, UC Berkeley has proposed a collaboration with UC Merced whereby Berkeley will accept international undergraduates into their Extension program before having them transfer to UC Merced for the remainder of their coursework. Such a collaboration would be beneficial to both campuses as it would diversify both campus’s revenue streams.

B. Academic Council (February 26, 2020)

- i. Updates on the UCSC TA wildcat strike.
- ii. UCOP Chief Investment Officer Jagdeep Bachher informed Council members that the UC endowment has not divested from fossil fuels. The UC has de-risked its investment portfolio and taken money out of fossil fuel stocks, but this does not constitute a divestment. There remains a possibility that the UC will invest in fossil fuels in the future if the university deems it expedient.
- iii. All UC campuses require diversity statements from Senate faculty candidates which are evaluated as part of the appointment dossier. However, it has come to the Council’s attention that diversity statements at UC Davis have been used in some instances as a pre-screening tool, and if faculty candidates did not represent a certain value on a rubric, they were not further considered in the application process. This process was instituted by the administration, and UC Davis faculty have strenuously objected. The Davis Division is now involved in the situation.

C. Deans’ Council (March 3, 2020)

- i. Updates on COVID-19 were discussed.

D. COVID-19

An emergency meeting was held this week with the EVC/Provost and administrators about emergency course continuity measures in the case of a campus shut down. Some UC campuses have already issued detailed instructions to faculty. Chair Hansford is working with EVC/Provost Camfield on a plan and subsequent communication to the UC Merced faculty. This communication will reference an emergency course continuity policy that UGC and GC are currently formulating. EVC/Provost Camfield indicated that he will compensate particular faculty on campus who have expertise in the appropriate technology for distance learning in order for them to assist their faculty colleagues with their online or hybrid courses. The administration will be flexible in terms of how faculty will conduct online instruction. However, faculty are encouraged to utilize existing technology for online courses so that students do not have to learn a new platform during this emergency. It was also made clear that there will be no interruption to faculty or TA salaries or benefits in the case of a campus shut down. Police Chief Chou Her attended the meeting and dispelled the unsubstantiated rumor that UC Merced will be used as a quarantine center for the local region.

UGC Chair Sharping briefly summarized the draft emergency course continuity policy. GC Vice Chair Hratchian stated that GC discussed the draft policy in its meeting yesterday. While there are obvious differences between undergraduate and graduate student commitments and activities, the goal of both councils is to keep the policy as simple as possible.

Chair Hansford pointed out that the campus issued an emergency communication in a previous academic year when the campus was shut down due to dangerously poor air quality. The former Chancellor, EVC/Provost, and former Senate Chair were jointly involved in making the decision to close the campus. Chair Hansford recommended that the emergency course continuity policy follow that model in terms of the chain of authority. Chair Hansford also asserted that the policy needs to adhere to ADA policy as much as possible; furthermore, if faculty are encouraged to be flexible in delivering online course content, then the Registrar must also be flexible with grade submission deadlines.

Division Council members then held a brief discussion on the appropriate language in the draft policy with respect to delivering a minimum percentage of learning outcomes. A Council member stated that this minimum standard would allow faculty to deviate from the syllabus in the case of emergency while still providing students with a satisfactory level of course content. Another Council member pointed out that ABET may not look positively on such a low percentage of learning outcomes and suggested that this language be revised.

In response to a Council member's question about student preparedness in the event of a campus shut down, Chair Hansford replied that the administration is engaging with students. He added that he will advise the administration to add a line in their future communication that assures the campus that faculty are communicating with their undergraduate and graduate students with regard to a new modality of course delivery in the event of a campus shut down. Chair Hansford also stated that EVC/Provost Camfield will contact department chairs, graduate group chairs, and undergraduate program chairs about the impending emergency course continuity policy.

Action: UGC and GC will revise the policy by this evening and send it to the Interim Executive Director by the evening of March 5. She will review and transmit to Divisional Council.

Divisional Council must review quickly and transmit the final policy to the EVC/Provost by mid-day on Friday, March 6.¹

II. Consent Calendar

- A. The Agenda
- B. February 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Action: The consent calendar was approved as presented.

III. Executive Session

No minutes were recorded.

IV. White Paper on Recognizing International Activities in Merit, Tenure and Promotion Processes

The White Paper was prepared by Michael Lazzara, Associate VP for Academic Programs, Global Affairs at UCD, and UC Senior International Officers. They present an argument for why the University of California should consider changing the APM to include language that allows for a faculty member's international activities to be recognized in the merit, tenure and promotion reviews. UGC, CAP, GC, and the School Executive Committees were lead reviewers.

Prior to this meeting, Division Council members reviewed the comments from Senate committees and School Executive Committees.

CAP Chair Van Dyke summarized CAP's comments and the comments from other Senate committees and School Executive Committees. Two themes common to all the responses are: 1) faculty are already recognized and credited in the personnel review process when they engage in international activity, however 2) international activities should not be valued more than community engaged scholarship, moreover, faculty whose disciplines do not lend themselves to international collaborations should not be disadvantaged in the review process.

Action: UCOP will be informed that Divisional Council does not endorse the White Paper.

V. Consultation with Maria DePrano, Chair of LASC

The University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (UCOLASC) has asked each campus LASC committee to write a letter in response to the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) RFI. LASC Chair DePrano invited Division Council and CoR to consider writing a joint statement.

LASC Chair DePrano formulated a draft letter for the review of Council members linked to today's agenda. She summarized for Council members the contents of the letter, which called for support of a zero-embargo so that the public has free and immediate access to peer-reviewed findings of publicly-funded research.

¹ The policy is available [here](#)

Division Council members supported the zero-embargo, however, most Council members raised serious concerns over the exorbitant costs of publication that mainly disadvantage faculty in the sciences and engineering. Council members were concerned that the UC's endorsement of the zero-embargo memo may lead to an unfunded mandate by federal funding agencies that will disadvantage faculty researchers and universities. Such a mandate poses a threat to faculty research productivity and operations. LASC Chair DePrano pointed out that the high costs of publications is a key reason why the UC has entered into transformative agreements with other publishers, including Cambridge University Press, after it ended its contract with Elsevier. She added that the UC is also seeking to partner with the CSU system to bring down the costs of publishing. A Council member pointed out that transformative agreements are sometimes a way for publishing houses to continue making profits from science and engineering faculty and that publishers view faculty grants as an attractive source of funds.

Chair Hansford recommended that LASC Chair DePrano revise the draft memo to include the concerns raised by Division Council members.

Action: LASC Chair DePrano will revise the draft memo for Division Council's consideration.

Due to time constraints, the agenda item Proposals from Standing Senate Committees (Amendments to UCM Senate Bylaw I.III.5-Divisional Representatives and UGC's Proposal to Establish Admissions and Financial Aid as a Stand-Alone Senate Committee) was tabled for a future meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.

Attest: Tom Hansford, Senate Chair