

Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)
Minutes of Meeting
October 28, 2024

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation met at 1:30 pm on October 28, 2024, in room 245 of the Ruiz-Administration Building. Chair Kara McCloskey presiding.

- I. CAPRA Vice Chair's Report – *Mike Beman*
 - A. October 21 Divisional Council meeting
 - The UC will receive a budget cut next year.
 - Capital projects and space update
 - The Medical Education building is proceeding.
 - Promise Housing is underway, and the groundbreaking is anticipated in the spring 2025 semester.
 - COB3 planning is proceeding.
 - VPAP Tom Hansford consulted with Divisional Council on UC Merced's plans for the implementation of SB 791 and AB 810. Signed into law by the Governor and effective January 1, 2024, this legislation mandates that the UC Regents, trustees of the CSUs, and the governing boards of community college districts require applicants for academic or administrative positions to disclose misconduct findings within the past seven years.
 - The EDI chair discussed EDI's proposal regarding hate speech and bias in student evaluations
 - The TAS work group is developing an allocation formula which will be submitted to CAPRA for discussion at the November 18 CAPRA meeting.

- II. Senate Vice Chair's Report – *Courtenay Monroe*
 - A. October 21 PROC meeting

PROC is examining administrative processes that cross departments and units. An email will be distributed to Divisional Council asking them for input.

CAPRA members raised the issues of lack of bridge funding and difficulties around spousal hires. Senate Vice Chair Monroe replied that she will share these with PROC as potential future issues.

VPAAS Spitzmueller clarified that PROC is reviewing issues that they see occurring in several reviews. For example, student advising is somewhat fragmented. Students get support from the Bobcat Advising Center and their Schools, but there is a lot of variability. Another example is the duration of the process for hiring research staff on grants.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's agenda
- B. Draft October 14 meeting minutes

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Consultation with VC/CFO Schnier

The following questions were carried over from the previous CAPRA meeting:

A. General questions:

- CAPRA requests data on the recent growth of the administration, as well as specific plans to curtail administrative growth to promote fiscal responsibility on campus.

Prior to this meeting, CAPRA Vice Chair Beman submitted a document clarifying CAPRA's question. That document was also linked on today's agenda. Based on the slides that were presented at the October 14 meeting, UC Merced's senior administration is comparable in size to the other campuses despite the larger size of those campuses; UC Merced has a higher percentage of staff in management positions, and UC Merced has more staff relative to students which is likely advantageous. CAPRA seeks additional clarity surrounding the table Total Campus Spend by Function. In Situ Support and General Administration is therefore the single largest driver of budget increases on campus. CAPRA would like to gain greater insight into what is driving these increases and how they can be curtailed so that deficits can be reduced. CAPRA would also like to gain greater insight into the increased spending under Operations and Maintenance. This is the largest percentage increase in spending, although CAPRA recognizes that campus expansion and growth are likely major factors here.

VC/CFO Schnier stated that costs have gone up in several categories. He requested to return to a future CAPRA meeting so he can explain fully.

Action: VC/CFO Schnier will address the above issues at a future CAPRA meeting.

- Why are faculty responsible for 100% of graduate student fees and tuition even after advancement to candidacy, in contrast to many other UC campuses and peer institutions?

VC/CFO Schnier clarified that all graduate students are required to pay tuition in the UC. The campus is required to put 50% of that tuition back into financial aid. UC Merced funds about 80% of graduate student expenses, which is higher than our peer institutions, many of whom only fund about 75%. The amount cannot be lower than 50%. UC Merced spends more on graduate students per capita than other campuses.

CAPRA members clarified that their concern is related to disincentivizing faculty in writing grants proposals, given the rising costs of graduate students and the removal of the tuition waiver.

VPAAS Spitzmueller stated that she shares the concern about the 25% tuition discount removal and spoke to the EVC/Provost.

- Why is there no centralized policy on pre-award spending, despite expectations from funding agencies that this be in place?

VC/CFO Schnier replied that this is under the purview of SPO and ORED. He clarified that there has to be a funding source. Terms and conditions are sent to the campus when the grant is awarded and subsequently, the RAs work with the faculty to ensure the faculty are spending the funds appropriately per the sponsor's rules.

A CAPRA member asked how state funding relates to graduate student tuition. VC/CFO Schnier explained that the former rebenching formula is now called the campus budget model. The amount is related to the money that the Governor has allocated to UCOP to fund students. There was no additional support forthcoming to offset the rise in graduate student costs. VC/CFO Schnier offered to provide a presentation at a future CAPRA meeting on rebenching.

Action: VC/CFO Schnier will discuss rebenching at a future CAPRA meeting. VCR Wilson will be invited to a future CAPRA meeting to discuss a pre-award spending policy.

- B. Questions about VC/CFO Schnier's 7/30/24 memo to EVC/Provost and deans on step II/III revisions to the TAS budget for AY 24-25:
- The memo states that department chairs were given their budgets a full year ahead of time, but that is not what faculty have heard from department chairs. Is the memo mistaken?

VC/CFO Schnier clarified that the memo does not refer to "departments". The budget is provided to the Schools a year in advance and the Deans are then expected to work with Department Chairs. VPAAS Spitzmueller emphasized that Schools have to plan both revenues (sustain student credit hours) and expenditures. As the time gets closer to classes starting, the funding amounts are adjusted so that it aligns with Schools' deficits.

VPAAS Spitzmueller stated that the campus is working on an area that needs improvement which is degree path. Currently, not all of UC Merced's students are on a degree path, or, there is variable adherence to whether students take the classes that are recommended for them. VPDUE Bergerson and Registrar Webb are exploring ways to auto enroll these students in default classes for their majors and that will enable the campus to better predict where our first year students are

going. VPAAS Spitzmueller and VC/CFO Schnier also stated that there is an element of local autonomy with the budgets. A few years ago, VC/CFO Schnier's office provided the Deans with Excel files to show them the money that was coming in, their expenses, and what percentage they want allocated for student credit hours. From there, the Deans would decide how best to support their departments. VPAAS Spitzmueller reminded CAPRA that the TAS working group is working on how TAS is allocated to the Schools. There is nationwide data that can be helpful when thinking about the distribution. VPAAS Spitzmueller also clarified that the TAS model is independent of the density of Senate faculty a unit has available.

- Clarify “Senate conversion” and the process. Is that the 2 FTEs that were moved from SNS to Med Ed?

VC/CFO Schnier clarified that “Senate conversion” does not refer to those FTE lines. The dollars for those lines were converted and used for a Senate faculty search, but not the lines themselves. “Senate conversion” is a reference to a policy he created in a previous academic year in response to the heavy reliance on lecturers to teach courses.

- Graduate Division was receiving \$1 million to support fellowships but that is getting reduced. What is the rationale? Is that why Graduate Division no longer providing 25% reduction in tuition and fees?

VC/CFO Schnier clarified that former VPDGE Zatz had \$1 million that she used to increase graduate student support and increase research and development. It is not related to the issue of the reduction in tuition and fees. Under the previous EVC/Provost, the goal was to move away from the reliance on the TAS budget to fund graduate students.

- There is a statement that suggested that the campus will effectively increase the dollars per a student credit hour to \$126.29 for next year. Is that a correct interpretation? Is that something that can be shared with department chairs?

VC/CFO Schnier confirmed that this is the correct interpretation, however, this is for the institution, not for department chairs.

V. Executive Session – *Voting Members Only*
 A. Campus Review Item

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm

Attest: Kara McCloskey, CAPRA chair