

**Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**March 6, 2024**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation met at 9:00 am on March 6, 2024 in the Administration Building room 345 and via Zoom. Interim Chair Kara McCloskey presiding.

I. Executive Session

This session was for voting members only and no minutes were recorded.

II. Campus Review Item

A. Proposed establishment of a MIST B.A. degree program

Prior to this meeting, CAPRA reviewed the lead reviewer's draft memo.

In the meeting, CAPRA discussed the larger issue of whether the campus is efficiently using its existing resources. Members also discussed the MIST proposal's request for a teaching professor which lead to a discussion about equitable teaching loads across the social sciences. VPAAS Spitzmueller agreed that teaching load equity is an issue and offered to speak with CAPRA further on this, in conjunction with VC& CFO Schnier, at a future CAPRA meeting.

**Action:** The committee analyst will re-send the draft memo on the MIST proposal to CAPRA members for additional editing and approval. CAPRA's memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, March 15.

III. Consent Calendar

A. Today's agenda

B. Draft February 21 meeting minutes

**Action:** The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Consultation with Interim EVC/Provost Zatz

A. Budget call in light of campus budget (likelihood of funding of requests)

Interim EVC/Provost Zatz announced that the number of student applications looks positive, but that needs to turn into enrollment. By the beginning of April, the campus should have a better idea of the number of SIRs. The Chancellor will not make final decisions on the budget until the end of the year after the state budget is confirmed after the Governor's May revise. The funding that UC Merced will receive will be from enrollment plus the amount that comes

from the state budget. It will not be a lot of money because the campus still has a lot of debt. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz added that in Deans Council meetings, she asked attendees to identify their top three budget items and what she is seeing is a lot of requests to address staff salary inequities. That will be a high cost but the administration will review them. The campus has had to replace the boilers which cost over \$2 million. VC&CFO Schnier stated that if the UC President wants to implement faculty raises but no additional money is forthcoming from the state budget, that is a further constraint on the campus budget. Whatever growth we have in the budget may be erased by the raise. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz mentioned that the campus made the budget call slimmer this year due to the minimal amount of available funding. She has tried to reduce the time that units had to spent on developing their budget requests. But she emphasized that the administration will review all requests.

A CAPRA member recalled that in the past couple of years, there was only about \$200,000 to allocate to the Schools. He asked for an approximate funding number that CAPRA should keep in mind when reviewing the academic affairs-related budget requests. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz replied that she cannot put a number on it. CAPRA is asked to provide their recommended top funding priorities which ultimately she, VC&CFO Schnier, and future Interim EVC/Provost Dumont will review and then make recommendations to the Chancellor who will make the final budget decisions. The CAPRA member asked if the administration would provide CAPRA an update later in the year so the committee knows how their recommendations were taken into account. VC&CFO Schnier responded that last year, he held a financial transparency townhall. This year, the campus will likely not make budget decisions until July because of the uncertainty of the state budget.

A CAPRA member pointed out that CAPRA's highest budget priority last year was department-level staffing but the committee does not believe that is reflected in this year's budget requests. Another CAPRA member agreed and suggested there may have been a miscommunication between what CAPRA advocated for and what level of staffing actually was allocated to the Schools. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz reconfirmed that ACE funding is intended to support faculty research needs such as procurement and other tasks by staff at the department level. ACE funds are not meant to be used for staff support for research administration such as ledgers. SSHA and SoE are working on hiring staff. In SSHA, the increase in staffing would be eight but that's still not enough for one staff member per department. Staff would have to be shared across departments. A CAPRA member asked whether CAPRA's budget recommendations should again highlight the need for department-level staff. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz confirmed this.

B. EVC/Provost transition plan; update on dean searches

- SNS Dean and future EVC/Provost Dumont will be joining Interim EVC/Provost Zatz for some meetings this month, but she is also preoccupied with transitioning the new interim SNS dean. Dumont will take over as EVC/Provost by the end of this month.
- The SSHA dean search committee is meeting today to decide which candidates to bring to campus for interviews the week of March 18.

- The VPDUE search committee will decide by March 18 a short list of 3-4 candidates to bring to campus for interviews.
- The CREATES director search is progressing.
- The SNS dean search will be managed by the Berkeley Executive Search firm again as the campus is very pleased with their work. The search firm will hold meetings with faculty before the end of the year to get their input and over the summer, the firm will start recruiting candidates. The search will continue into the fall.

C. Update on TAS working groups and deans' meetings on TAS

- The working groups are meeting every week.
- Interim EVC/Provost Zatz held a meeting with the deans to get their perspectives on TAS. This series of meetings will continue. By the middle of this month, the TAS work groups will produce an interim report. VPAAS Spitzmueller added that there is a plan to create a website where the working groups will upload documents in the interest of transparency. She stated that the TAS working groups would be willing to attend meetings of CAPRA and other Senate committees to provide updates.

A CAPRA member pointed out the TAS budget is allocated incorrectly in one of the Schools and it is negatively impacting the quality of students' education. She asked if this can be rectified by fall. VPAAS Spitzmueller responded that it is too late for fall. However, SoE has adopted a tool for TAS budget allocation and SNS and SSHA are considering adopting it as well. She agreed that the campus cannot compromise student success and retention which affects the campus's long term institutional success. But if the campus has massive TAS deficits, that also affects our long term trajectory. The campus has to adjust its efficiency in a way that does not negatively affect students and faculty research. A CAPRA member asked tweaks could be made to the TAS budget allocation model. VC&CFO Schnier stated that the administration is grappling with the data around what is wrong, is it retention? Graduation? He asked for CAPRA's help in understanding the problem so he can collect data and track it. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz pointed out that the allocation is a decision that is made by the Schools and the administration cannot dictate how to do it.

A CAPRA member suggested that the committee could make a recommendation on the TAS budget allocation process: that faculty have to be involved in the decision making and the deans cannot make unilateral decisions. There is too much variability across the Schools to have just one formula that all deans could apply. So, while neither CAPRA nor the administration can dictate to Schools how to allocate their TAS budget, perhaps CAPRA could advise on the procedural issues.

VC&CFO Schnier pointed out that one of the TAS working groups is addressing this and is examining what kind of changes the campus could make to create efficiencies that are outcome-neutral for our students.

A CAPRA member pointed out that cost of TAs. Interim EVC/Provost Zatz replied that the university has to abide by the new contracts and the high cost of graduate education is a significant issue that is being discussed systemwide.

V. Campus Review Items (Continued)

A. Proposed establishment of a Biochemistry B.S. program

The lead reviewer summarized her comments and CAPRA members supported them and suggested a few edits.

**Action:** The committee analyst will redistribute the draft memo to the committee for further edits and approval. CAPRA's memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, March 15.

B. Proposed establishment of an Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology (EECB) B.S. program

Member Beman recused from this discussion due to a conflict of interest.

The lead reviewer summarized his comments. CAPRA members supported them and suggested a few edits related to enrollment.

**Action:** The committee analyst will redistribute the draft memo to the committee for further edits and approval. CAPRA's memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, March 22.

C. Proposed Establishment of a Communication and Media Major and Minor

This proposal was previously sent to CAPRA on February 20 and February 29 with a request for a lead review volunteer.

The committee analyst asked again for a lead review volunteer, but none was identified in the meeting.

**Action:** The committee analyst will again follow up via email to identify a lead reviewer. CAPRA will discuss the lead reviewer's comments in the April 3 and/or April 17 CAPRA meeting. CAPRA's final memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, April 19.

VI. Upcoming Business

A. March 13 CAPRA meeting

This meeting will be held under executive session to review the budget requests. The budget requests from the EVC/Provost's office were forwarded to CAPRA on February 28.

## B. April 3 CAPRA meeting

Proposed establishment of a Science, Technology, and Ethics B.S. degree program and minor

- The lead reviewer's comments are forthcoming.
- Member Carolyn Jennings will recuse from this discussion due to a conflict of interest.

**Action:** The lead reviewer will submit comments to the committee analyst by March 25. CAPRA will discuss the comments via email and finalize them at the April 3 meeting. CAPRA's memo is due to the Senate Chair by April 3.

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

Attest: Kara McCloskey, CAPRA interim chair