

COMMITTEE ON PLANNING & BUDGET
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 14, 2023

PRESENT:

Peter Atkinson, Entomology, Chair
Dana Simmons, History, Vice Chair
Reza Abbaschian, Mechanical Engineering
Juliann Allison, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Subramanian Balachander, Business
Bronwyn Leebaw, Political Science
Hiroki Nishimura, Economics
Ayala Rao, Microbiology & Plant Pathology
Frances Sladek, MCSB
Yadong Yin, Chemistry

ABSENT:

Roger Lake, Electrical & Computer Engineering
David Lo, School of Medicine

Chair Peter Atkinson called the meeting to order at 11:02am.

The committee unanimously approved the January 31, 2023 minutes as written.

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES/REMINDERS

On February 13, Chair Atkinson, along with Senate Chair Sang-Hee Lee and Graduate Council Chair Christiane Weirauch, met with Provost Watkins, VCPBA Bomotti, and VCRED Torres to discuss climate initiative funds and the OASIS Project. Provost Watkins indicated that more Senate faculty members would be asked to serve on the planning committee of the OASIS Project.

Chair Atkinson indicated he attended the UCPB Meeting on February 7, 2023. At the meeting, UC Chief Financial Officer Nathan Brostrom reiterated what he already has publicly told news outlets regarding the financial impact of the UAW-UC labor contract. Some funding is available for researchers and postdoctoral scholars, whose jobs are generally supported by federal grants obtained by faculty. But faculty will need to incorporate the larger price tags in their contract renewals. There remains a significant risk that, with these new labor agreements, there will be a mismatch between rising labor costs, insufficient revenue to pay for them and inflation could tip campuses into budget deficits in coming years.

To absorb the impacts of the labor contract, UC campuses continue to consider cutting graduate student admissions. To date there is no indication that the State will provide support to address any budget deficits related to the impact of the UAW-UC contract agreements, other than a relatively small pool of money from UCOP to help the campuses through FY23 and perhaps a little beyond. These are not recurrent funds.

Chair Atkinson circulated to the committee two letters from the UCLA and UC Santa Cruz Academic Senate Chairs sent to their respective Chancellors and Vice Chancellors regarding post-strike concerns, campus graduate programming, and sustainability.

In the UC Santa Cruz letter dated February 3, 2023, UC Santa Cruz Senate Chair, Patty Gallagher, writes:

The UC Santa Cruz (UCSC) community lacks guidance as to how we as a campus, within the broader UC system, are to deal with a projected gap in graduate student funding as we adjust to new salaries and uncertain funding levels. In addition, it is not clear how UCSC plans to work with other UC campuses to stabilize graduate programs so that they can be sustainable and productive going forward. This gap in both information and guiding principles poses challenges for programs, faculty, and current graduate students during a time of peak admissions activity, making a challenging situation more difficult to navigate. It is dismaying to have been told for months that negotiations with students had to be completed on a systemwide basis, with little input from individual campuses, but now that the impacts of a UC-based agreement are apparent, we are being told to solve the problem locally, without systemwide support.

Gallagher requests:

The campus must define principles for sustainable graduate programs and collaborate to set reasonable enrollment targets over time, program by program. Some changes will come this year, but broader planning should apply to a longer time frame (next 3-5 years). Principles should be defined initially in a statement from you to the campus to assuage anxieties and ensure all programs are working toward common goals with a common understanding alongside a clear reminder that funding graduate enrollments is money well spent. Ultimately the re-envisioning of graduate programs will be a long-term effort, but your leadership will help to frame the issues and set a positive trajectory towards resolution.

In the UCLA letter dated February 10, 2023, UCLA Senate Chair, Jessica Cattelino, writes that UCLA's FEC Chairs hold the following position:

- *The **financial responsibility** for reinvesting in graduate education and postdoctoral training in the wake of the related contract settlements **must not be borne disproportionately by academic units and faculty PIs**. It is illogical and wrong-headed to expect that a reinvestment in long-underfunded graduate education and research, which are at the core of our academic mission, would slash academic budgets.*
- ***Every budget must be on the table, including administrative budgets**, as our campus and UC system address cost increases.*
- *The **faculty must be involved**, both at the level of the FECs and through the Council on Planning and Budget and other Senate bodies, in making these hard and likely painful budgeting decisions.*

UCLA's FEC Chairs observed that there are immediate, short-term needs for guidance and resources as departments, schools/divisions, and faculty make post-strike decisions about resources, graduate students, and research and teaching. They urge their Administration to make needed guidance and resources quickly and transparently available.

UCLA's FEC Chairs added that their faculty stand ready to join in efforts to secure more public funding for graduate education from the State of California and federal research funding agencies.

VISIT FROM SENATE CHAIR & GRADUATE COUNCIL CHAIR

Senate Chair Lee and Graduate Council Chair Weirauch visited the P&B Committee to discuss how the committees and Senate as a whole might best formulate concerns to the Administration about future budgets for graduate education.

MEETING WITH BOURNS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING (BCOE) FEC CHAIR

The Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE) FEC Chair, Victor Rodgers, fielded questions about strategic planning in BCOE and shared their thoughts on how the Senate's role could be bolstered around planning and budget.

MEETING COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CHASS) FEC CHAIR

The College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) FEC Chair, John Kim, was unable to attend this meeting with the P&B committee and asked to be rescheduled for another date/time.

The meeting was called to a close at 12:30 pm.