

TO: Dylan Rodriguez, Chair UCR Faculty Senate
CC: Thomas Smith, Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
FROM: Jennifer L. Brown, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
DATE: April 29, 2020
RE: Formalization of Division Status for Undergraduate Education

Please find attached a mini-proposal submitted to the Faculty Senate from the VPDUE of Undergraduate Education requesting the formalization of Undergraduate Education to academic status. We have followed the guidelines as outlined in the compendium. We have also gathered feedback from this document with a few faculty but have not circulated this document to colleges or their executive committees. We understand that this process and review of our documents will take some time and look forward to the feedback.

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RE: Formalization of Division Status for Undergraduate Education

CAMPUS

University of California, Riverside (UCR)

NAME AND PROPOSED ACTION

This is a proposal to create a Division of Undergraduate Education as a dual model administrative and academic unit. This action would formalize the longstanding role of UCR's current Office of Undergraduate Education, which is currently categorized only as an administrative unit. It would sustain and strengthen its credit-bearing academic functions for undergraduate students while facilitating its role as a center of innovation in pedagogy, academic support, and other initiatives that enrich undergraduate education and promote student success.

DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE FOR ACTION

Planning for an Office of Undergraduate Education (UE) began in 1999. UE was established in 2004 by Chancellor France Cordova and was placed within academic affairs under the supervision of Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Ellen Wartella. The Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education, Andrew Grosovsky, was charged to "enhance the Distinction of the University in the area of Undergraduate Education." The establishment of the Office of Undergraduate Education was, according to Grosovsky, the "first step in what is planned to become a Division of Undergraduate Education." In 2014, the UCR Senate Committee on Budget and Planning suggested that academic unit status for UE should be explored. In the following years, the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education became a member of the Provost's Cabinet and the Deans' Council in recognition of UE's impact on undergraduate education at UCR. In 2018, the Provost gave UE Vice Provost a new title: "Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE)."

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

1. Precedents for UE Divisional Status

Six of the nine UC general campuses have Divisions of Undergraduate Education: UCSB, UCLA, UCI, UCSC, UCB, and UCM. Three of those divisions (UCB, UCLA, UCM) are administrative and academic, offering their own courses and minors.

2. Formalizing Long Standing Structures and Leveraging Future Potential

The Office of Undergraduate Education currently operates in many ways as an academic unit, while lacking the affirmative designation to formalize those operations or to make decisions for long-term sustainability in supporting its programs. Given its many contributions to UCR's efforts to raise graduation rates and improve the experience of undergraduate students, the time has come to designate UE as a Division. The importance of UE's contributions to the campus's educational mission is all the more evident in its vital work with faculty and Teaching Assistants across the institution in the ongoing COVID-19 emergency.

At present, two branches of Undergraduate Education operate as academic units: the University Writing Program and Summer Sessions. The University Writing Program is one of the largest academic units on campus and Summer Sessions serves as the official hiring body during the summer quarter and as the academic home for all visiting students. The Academic Resource Center and the Office of Student Engagement, though their activities are less explicitly academic in the technical sense, provide student academic support through co-curricular tutoring and workshops as well as high-impact experiential learning opportunities that increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates. They also coordinate the non-credit and credit-bearing instruction offered through the summer HESA program, ARC 035, the UCDC program, the R'Course program, and various Service-Learning programs. Finally, XCITE (The Exploration Center for Innovative Teaching and Engagement) is heavily involved in helping faculty design and strengthen their courses across all modes of instruction.

A) The newly formed XCITE (formerly the Center for Teaching and Learning), Entirely distinct from the campus's IT office, XCITE's mission is academic and research-based in its scope and operations. Working closely with faculty and TAs, XCITE supports the strategic development and implementation of pedagogical innovations, academic technologies, and effective instructional media and platforms.

XCITE also serves as the home to the **Academy of Distinguished Teachers**, which is dedicated to mentoring and supporting the teaching of UCR faculty. Furthermore, XCITE, as a center for teaching and learning, is a centralized resource for faculty development and training in the continuous pursuit of teaching excellence.

These activities are vital to ensuring the high quality of a UCR education. In a time of contagion and campus closures, and the prospect of new disruptions of on-campus instruction in future years, XCITE is all the more important to UCR's ability to sustain and improve its current operations, and persist in its ascent to higher levels of distinction. It is imperative that UC Riverside not only develop a far more robust capacity than it has now for alternative modes of instruction to meet these challenges; the campus must also make a long-term investment in academic technology and an embrace of pedagogical innovation, both of which are indispensable to such efforts. As we forge ahead in new modes of instruction, faculty must be capable of engaging our students in ways that are true to the Academic Senate's standards and the campus's high academic expectations. XCITE's contributions to that effort, facilitated by its interaction with faculty and the granting of Divisional status for UE, will be crucial to the campus's success.

B) The University Writing Program (UWP) has been housed in UE for the last 13 years. It is one of the largest academic units on campus. In 2007 a joint faculty-administrative committee directed its move from the English Department to UE in order

to emphasize its campus-wide role. The move facilitated, among other things, the creation of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and the recruitment of TAs from a wide variety of departments. The WAC program has engaged intensively with the faculty of twenty departments in the four colleges, helping them offer Senate-approved and UWP-supported WAC courses. It is a leader in developing intensive workshops, TA training, and online instruction.

Overall, the University Writing Program is currently responsible for generating more than 50,000 academic units per year, or 4% of all UCR undergraduate instruction. It houses over 50 faculty, most of whom are Lecturers and two of whom are Lecturers with Security of Employment (LSOE) temporarily attached to English for the purpose of merit reviews. It also employs and mentors approximately 70 teaching assistants from over a dozen departments. Its credit-bearing TA-training program reaches approximately 40 TAs each year, many for multiple quarters. Its Inland Area Writing Project works with scores of local K-12 teachers. UWP volunteers offer literacy education in visits to 80-100 local high-school English classes each year. Through its Writing and Foster Youth Alliance, its volunteers tutor and mentor students who have aged out of the Foster-Care system.

C) The Office of Summer Sessions moved to UE over twelve years ago from Extension and continues to serve by necessity as a college for all summer visiting students, including dismissed UCR students seeking re-entry. Summer Sessions is the official academic home for all visiting students. It serves as the formal hiring body for all instructors and as the registrar for all coursework offered during the summer at UCR. The VPDUE oversees those responsibilities in what is by necessity a decanal capacity. Summer Sessions engages an Academic Steering Committee comprised of campus faculty to advise on program operations and policy. At present, over ten thousand individual students enroll in Summer Sessions each year.

D) The Academic Resource Center serves as the primary academic support and tutoring center on campus. It engages over seven thousand individual students a year, many of whom participate in numerous ARC offerings. The ARC also runs the Highlander Early Start Academy (HESA), the summer bridge program, offering credit and non-credit math courses for students working to fulfill college requirements. During the academic year, it maintains a large supplemental instruction program, which interacts with dozens of courses across campus. The ARC's writing center provides one-on-one tutorials for students from all UCR's colleges.

E) The Office of Student Engagement is home to a wide array of High Impact Practices and multiple programs with formal academic coursework. The Student Engagement portfolio is made up of R'Courses (credit-bearing seminars taught by faculty-supervised undergraduates), service-learning courses, the annual undergraduate research symposium, the undergraduate research journal, research mini-grants, capital internships and courses in Washington DC (UCDC) and Sacramento (UCCS), and the designation of Chancellor's Research Fellows. The UCR Senate has recently invited the R'Course program to create a single UE course subject abbreviation for clear identification of these courses in the catalog and the class search system.

UE further supports undergraduate research and student success in its recruitment and mentoring of promising applicants for prestigious scholarships and fellowships such as the Goldwater, Strauss, and Fulbright fellowships. Additionally, Student Engagement

coordinates campus wide programs and external outreach via programs and collaborative organizations meant to increase the success of underrepresented, low-income, and minority undergraduate student populations (First-Generation programs, California Alliance for Minority Participation, Growing Inland Achievement, and American Talent Initiative). R'Courses are governed by a Senate-appointed faculty committee, UCDC and UCCS both are governed by faculty at the system level and have a campus faculty representative, and both Undergraduate Research and service learning are supported by faculty advisory committees.

Student Engagement also serves as the primary pre-health advising resource via the Health Professions Advising Center (HPAC), supporting all UCR students and alumni who have an interest in pursuing a career in the health professions. Advisors and student peer advisors engage with the pre-health community through advising, facilitation of workshops/events, and peer mentoring. HPAC is also supported by an ad-hoc advisory committee and works closely with faculty and staff to support pre-health students. HPAC maintains a strong connection to the academic units in which it was previously housed, the College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (CNAS) and the School of Medicine (SOM), to ensure students access prerequisite coursework and necessary information to become competitive applicants when they apply to health professions programs. These programs and others within Student Engagement emphasize experiential learning and align with all four UCR 2020 goals.

F) University Innovation Alliance (UIA), is a national student success collaborative of which UCR is one of eleven research universities. UIA initiatives seek to innovate, scale, and diffuse knowledge of student success efforts to aid low-income and first-generation student populations. As the home of the UIA's work on campus, UE leverages its cross-institution learning, capacity, and funding to help fulfill UCR's academic goals of increasing graduation rates and improving social mobility. UCR and UE are well positioned to execute this mission. UIA initiatives include proactive advising, completion grants, college to career transitions, and ChatBots that help students navigate complex processes at the university.

3. Enabling UCR to Enhance and Innovate Student Success Initiatives

In alignment with the UC 2030 graduation and equity goals, the Office of Undergraduate Education is dedicated to enhancing student success through a wide array of academic and supplemental programs that facilitate student engagement, high levels of student success, and timely graduation via partnerships and collaborative projects across campus units. Over the last 16 years, the scope of UE has expanded to include greater responsibility for fostering success initiatives, assessing campus supports, identifying potential innovations, and engaging the campus around best practices related to positive retention, graduation, and other student success outcomes. Serving as a hub for innovation and collaboration is part of UE's mission. UE is also responsible for the various success-oriented technologies including predictive analytics to identify students who are in academic difficulty, dynamic course planners (e. g. EduNav) that enables students to map their coursework in timelines that lead to more favorable graduation rates, and implementing service communication aids (e.g. ChatBot) for financial aid and other partners. UE is also responsible for developing and promoting campus and systemwide initiatives to strengthen graduation rates, enlarge the number of student FTEs, expand summer enrollment, increase qualified community college transfers, develop cross-

campus collaborations to support first-generation students, and strengthen relationships with community-based organizations and local non-profits.

4. Current Coursework and the Need for a Divisional Executive Committee

As an administrative unit, UE lacks the prerogative to propose courses under its own course nomenclature (i.e. WR 1ABC in place of ENGL 1ABC). All of its courses are offered through partnerships. At present, the UCDC courses managed by UE are technically offered through CHASS, Writing Programs courses through CHASS (mainly English), R'Courses through various colleges, and the R'Course training course through the Graduate School of Education. The proliferation of course labels and affiliations now overly complicates oversight, the course approval process, and attendant student support services. In the proposed model, these courses would be offered with UE-designated, Senate-approved titles. Senate oversight over all courses and the course approval process would of course be maintained.

The new division would therefore have an Executive Committee made up of Senate members, at least some of whom should have a record of direct involvement in UE academic programs. The Executive Committee would include representatives from all colleges and schools, with its size and precise configuration determined by the UCR Academic Senate. Like other Executive Committees, it would vet course proposals (e.g. from the University Writing Program) and forward approved proposals to the requisite committees in the Senate.

Proposed Coursework

As a division with clearer lines of authority and cooperation, UE would have much greater flexibility to offer, dependent upon Senate approval, crediting-bearing mini-courses and other optional offerings that would strengthen student engagement, help raise students' quarterly unit totals, and facilitate academic success. Among the possibilities for those offerings are courses for First-Generation student success, leadership, community-based research, research ethics, service-learning, and the exploration of Health Profession and other careers.

Personnel Reviews for Senate Members in the University Writing Program

Currently, LSOEs in the University Writing Program are temporarily housed in the Department of English, even though the work of those LSOEs is almost entirely, if not completely, in the writing program – a unit that is now administratively separate from English. Personnel reviews for merits and promotion for LSOEs, who are Senate members, must therefore be conducted by English, even though the fiscal and formal pedagogical responsibilities for the teaching of Senate-mandated writing courses reside in UE, and even though the writing program already has by charter its own personnel and curriculum committee with Senate members (the Writing Program Committee). Divisional status for UE would facilitate the placement of the writing program's LSOEs within the new division. Divisional status would make it possible to formalize and standardize the process of LSOE hiring and review within the new division before files are forwarded to CAP. Recruitment, ad hoc, and review committees could be drawn from Senate faculty already affiliated with UE (e.g. on the UWP advisory committee, in UWP leadership positions and elsewhere) and, if needed, from faculty designated by the Senate.

THE NEW DIVISION'S FIT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY CALIFORNIA SYSTEM

Within the University of California system there are several instances of UE units (Berkeley, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz) already in operation as Division designations with the ability to offer coursework as an academic unit. These units serve as dual administrative and academic units. These units are able to utilize targeted, Senate-approved academic offerings to advance teaching and learning initiatives, generate necessary revenue to expand academic support, and increase the campus's FTEs without additional cost to students. Six campuses, including Riverside, incorporate the title of Dean with the lead of Undergraduate Education. Across these campuses, Undergraduate Education units are responsible for a wide range of student success and co-curricular programs including freshman seminars, summer bridge, internship courses, honors courses, student-initiated courses (e. g. R'Courses, UCI's uTeach, and UCB's DeCal), special studies courses, life-long learning programs, UCDC and UC Sacramento courses, and even minors and certificates in civic and community engagement.

THE NEW DIVISION'S FIT WITH UCR VISION, MISSION, GOALS

Within UCR, Divisional status for UE would formalize long-standing ad hoc structures (e.g. the UWP, Summer Sessions) and provide a formal academic structure to house these interdisciplinary areas. Formalization would allow for greater engagement and progress toward each of the UCR strategic goals including: enhancing opportunities for undergraduates, providing resources for improvement of teaching and learning, enhancing excellence in undergraduate research and creative activities, engaging with and serving our local community through service and research, engaging the growth of UCR's undergraduate population, creating experiences for high-achieving students, expanding opportunities for intellectual stimulation, developing meaningful engagement opportunities for faculty and students interactions, serving as an exemplar for diversity and inclusion, and enhancing student success by improving retention and graduation rates (UCR 2020: The Path to Preeminence).

RESOURCES REQUIRED

There would be minimal resources required to establish UE as an academic unit: the present capital requirements, physical space, campus degree offerings, and faculty FTE would remain largely unchanged from their current configurations. UE is already established as a campus administrative unit, with a formal campus budget, and an allocated faculty who provide instruction and oversight of programs in the University Writing Program and various academic internships. NSF Faculty and TAs in the writing program are already housed in UE. UWP Senate faculty (presently, two LSOEs), though they are technically housed in English are paid by UE.

Physical Space and Capital Requirements

UE would not require any additional physical space, nor have additional capital requirements for establishment of the unit as a Division. Physical space and capital are already allocated for the unit's existing operations including office space and instructional costs for all existing Writing Program faculty.

Senate-Appointed Committee

UE would require a faculty Senate-appointed executive committee, comprised of academic senate faculty from across the campus, in order to review all submitted courses and course changes.

STUDENTS AND EMPLOYMENT IMPLICATIONS

Divisional status would not in and of itself entail the hiring of additional faculty and student employees, though it would facilitate future requests to meet demand for UE courses (including writing program courses) and academic services such as those in the Academic Resource Center. Requests for expansion of R'Courses, Highlander Early Start Academy (summer bridge), service-learning, community engaged research, and other programs and courses would be facilitated by Divisional status but would continue to depend upon regular budgetary and staffing processes. New credit-bearing offerings would of course require the approval of the Senate.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

In accordance with the guidelines and associated timelines for UCR Senate and University of California Senate reviews for proposal of a new academic unit, UE would anticipate an effective date of July 1, 2021 for the establishment of UE as an academic unit.

CONCLUSION

Establishment of UE as a dual model administrative and academic Division would formalize and strengthen its work to enrich and improve undergraduate education and overall student success at UCR. With Division status, UE would be in a much stronger position as a hub of innovation and collaboration to contribute to the long-term flourishing of UC's students and faculty.

Divisional status would create new avenues for UE to help bring about an unparalleled student experience. Divisional status would create a more coherent, consistent, flexible, and sustainable UE structure with which to advance student success, and do so in ways that would enable the campus to better address institutional and systemwide goals. Divisional status would strengthen UE's capacity for innovations that would help UCR students succeed. We hope you will support this endeavor.