May 13, 2024

James A. Steintrager, Chair, Academic Council
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607-5200

RE: [Systemwide Review] Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

Dear Jim,

On April 22, 2024 the UC Riverside Academic Senate Executive Council discussed the subject report at length and agreed that more resources, focus, directed guidance, and assistance for both students and faculty with regard to testing and reasonable accommodations would be beneficial at the UC for students with disabilities. All local committees’ responses were positive and are provided below and attached.

The UCR Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion found the report highlighted multiple issues and supported the transition to a social model of support that will improve both equity and inclusion outcomes. The Committee was in support of ensuring that Campus policies on academic standing and incomplete grades do not lead to disparately adverse effects on students with disabilities and suggested that Senate faculty charged with revising such policies should be mandated to consider such potential adverse impacts.

The Committee on Courses was generally supportive of the report’s recommendations and appreciates the Advisory Workgroup’s work to address this important topic.

The Committee on Educational Policy was also supportive of the report’s recommendations.

The Committee on Faculty Welfare commends the workgroup and this attempt to improve the experience of students with disabilities on UC campuses. CFW members had the following concerns and questions with respect to the final report:

• There is no mention of sports and the experience of student-athletes with disabilities. What will be done to ensure student-athletes with disabilities have the best opportunities to excel both academically and athletically?
• It is not clear what resources will be made available to UC faculty so that we may better support our students with disabilities, nor is it clear how the process of improving the experience of UC students with disabilities will be implemented. For example, will the Student Disability Resource Centers on UC campuses hire more note takers for our students with disabilities? Will a faculty member receive a stipend or reimbursement if we have to alter the curriculum for our students with disabilities in a manner that impacts the entire class and incurs additional cost(s)
for us? We as faculty members care deeply about our students with disabilities, but meeting their diverse needs necessitates better institutional support.

The UCR Graduate Council was in agreement that raising faculty awareness and destigmatizing disabilities is crucial. Members felt the report did not have enough space to mention leading contributions students with disabilities make to the community. The suggestions about changing the grading policy were unclear to members. The Council agrees with the suggestion of making courses more accessible to students with disabilities, but members felt it was unclear how this would be accomplished. What are the best practices to make courses more accessible? If there is a way this can be done, it should be made very clear to faculty.

Riverside’s Committee on International Education noted that the report does not appear to mention the needs of students with disabilities who wish to get involved with the education abroad opportunities. The committee believes that it is important to address any challenges that affect education abroad for students with disabilities, as well as challenges that affect international students and scholars with disabilities. As we value education abroad opportunities for our students, and the participation of international students and scholars who may have disabilities, we should proactively identify ways in which to be more inclusive, or at least identify ways in which to provide reasonable accommodations.

The Committee on University Extension generally had no concerns with the report related to their charge of University Extension. Though the Committee did note a concern that the recommendation regarding grading policies is quite broad. The Committee recommends that focus groups comprised of students with disabilities be formed to provide insight into whether grading policies have adversely affected students with disabilities and provide suggestions on how the policies can be improved.

The Faculty Executive Committee of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences opined that the report provides staggering numbers – not just in the increase in the number of students seeking disability services (190% in the last four years), but also in the student-to-disability specialist ratio (468-to-1 at UCR).

It strikes the CHASS faculty executive committee that the recommendation regarding student services (“Develop student services strategic plans…” on page 5) is the most important and should be the highest prioritized, though it is middling on the list of recommendations for university leaders. With the limited resources available to the campus, we suggest the campus should emphasize such service-oriented priorities rather than compliance-oriented staff (as proposed in the third recommendation, “Expand the functions of ADA coordinators…” also on page 5). As a related matter, we note the recommendations call for “chief accessibility officers” at each campus. The committee recognizes that such officers could play an important leadership/visionary role but feels that what students need most are entry-level staff who can support their accommodations.

A related concern regarding recommendations for university leaders is that there was no mention of the resources needed to provide services beyond disability specialists and initial accommodations meetings; these are important, foundational services. We should also remember that our students need support for those accommodations to be made. For example, we have observed inconsistency at UCR in the availability and quality of the services required for accommodations, especially in ASL interpreters.

There are multiple mentions recommending faculty to review Academic Senate regulations for incomplete grades without explicit discussion of how this may inequitably affect students with
disabilities (see page 6 and page 20). Something as simple as a sentence that begins with “For example, ...” would help faculty contextualize this recommendation and understand how to take effective action. There are multiple mentions of existing resources for faculty (see pages 13 and 20), but how knowledgeable are faculty about these resources? What is the quality and uptake of these faculty resources? How can we ensure high-quality and across-the-board uptake? Are these resources available and of equal quality across all campuses? One member of the CHASS Executive Committee who has been at UCR since Fall 2018, and regularly engages the Student Disability Resource Center through the course of their work, had never heard of RIDLE 4X before reading this report (see page 20). They did a web search to find out that it is not directly about success for students with disabilities but instead promotes using Design Thinking in the classroom (a topic on which they published a peer-reviewed article). While Design Thinking can lead us to more inclusive classrooms (i.e., through adopting universal design), it is not explicit how RIDLE 4X helps faculty to support the success of students with disabilities. Returning to the questions above, what was the uptake of this program like? In a period of belt-tightening, the committee recommends prioritizing spending on student services.

Finally, a small note: Figure 5 on page 18 needs a color key.

The UCR School of Medicine Faculty Executive Committee remarked that the report details an ongoing process to be more inclusive to students with disabilities, and that the reported efforts aim at changing the overall ‘culture’ from just being compliant to viewing the integration as ‘normal.’

The Committee members discussed the need for disability education for faculty to better recognize their responsibilities towards students/student workers/graduate students that need accommodations. The committee echoed that it is hard for faculty members to navigate how to address student/student worker accommodations and they would like one, clear policy for it. The committee was in favor of an accommodations liaison to navigate accommodation needs for faculty/staff.

The Committee would like more details on how findings from the report will be implemented. The Committee recommended the following points:

- Include a statement about student employee advisers to be trained in the GSR contracts and how they would communicate with staff disability advisors/HR.
- Create a section in contracts devoted to hybrid employees, such as student workers, and how UCR would address accommodations for them.

The SOM FEC also commented that there should be clear communication and understanding of which office oversees the disability accommodation process. Preferably, there should be one office for this to provide clarity in terms of responsibility for implementation of accommodations.

As always, that you for the opportunity to opine.

Sincerely yours,

Sang-Hee Lee
Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the Riverside Division

CC: Monica Lin, Executive Director of the Academic Senate
Cherysa Cortez, Executive Director of UCR Academic Senate Office
February 26, 2024

To: Senate

From: School of Business Executive Committee

Re: Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

Please let this memo serve as an official notification that the School of Business Executive Committee has no comment regarding this topic.
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

March 6, 2024

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
    Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Matt King, Chair
      Committee on Academic Freedom

Re: Final Report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The Committee on Academic Freedom reviewed the final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities and did not have any concerns related to Academic Freedom.
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
March 4, 2024

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
    Riverside Division

From: Ward Beyermann, Chair
      Committee on Educational Policy

Re: Final Report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) reviewed the final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities at their March 1, 2024 meeting and were generally supportive of the report’s recommendations.
April 3, 2024

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

FROM: Wesley Leonard, Chair
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The CHASS Executive Committee reviewed the Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities. This report provides staggering numbers – not just in the increase in the number of students seeking disability services (190% in the last four years), but also in the student-to-disability specialist ratio (468-to-1 at UCR).

It strikes the committee that the recommendation regarding student services (“Develop student services strategic plans…” on page 5) is the most important and should be the highest prioritized, though it is middling on the list of recommendations for university leaders. With the limited resources available to the campus, we suggest the campus should emphasize such service-oriented priorities rather than compliance-oriented staff (as proposed in the third recommendation, “Expand the functions of ADA coordinators…” also on page 5). As a related matter, we note the recommendations call for “chief accessibility officers” at each campus. The committee recognizes that such officers could play an important leadership/visionary role but feels that what students need most are entry-level staff who can support their accommodations.

A related concern regarding recommendations for university leaders is that there was no mention of the resources needed to provide services beyond disability specialists and initial accommodations meetings; these are important, foundational services. We should also remember that our students need support for those accommodations to be made. For example, we have observed inconsistency at UCR in the availability and quality of the services required for accommodations, especially in ASL interpreters.

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disabilities (see page 6 and page 20). Something as simple as a sentence that begins with “For example, ...” would help faculty contextualize this recommendation and understand how to take effective action.

There are multiple mentions of existing resources for faculty (see pages 13 and 20), but how knowledgeable are faculty about these resources? What is the quality and uptake of these faculty resources? How can we ensure high-quality and across-the-board uptake? Are these resources available and of equal quality across all campuses? One member of the CHASS Executive Committee who has been at UCR since Fall 2018, and regularly engages the Student Disability Resource Center through the course of their work, had never heard of RIDLE 4X before reading this report (see page 20). They did a web search to find out that it isn’t directly about success for students with disabilities but instead promotes using Design Thinking in the classroom (a topic on which they published a peer-reviewed article). While Design Thinking can lead us to more inclusive classrooms (i.e., through adopting universal design), it’s not explicit how RIDLE 4X helps faculty to support the success of students with disabilities. Returning to the questions above, what was the uptake of this program like? In a period of belt-tightening, the committee recommends prioritizing spending on student services.

Finally, a small note: Figure 5 on page 18 needs a color key.
The Committee on International Education reviewed the Systemwide Review-Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities and note that the report does not appear to mention the needs of students with disabilities who wish to get involved with the education abroad opportunities. The committee believes that it is important to address any challenges that affect education abroad for students with disabilities, as well as challenges that affect international students and scholars with disabilities. As we value education abroad opportunities for our students, and the participation of international students and scholars who may have disabilities, we should proactively identify ways in which to be more inclusive, or at least identify ways in which to provide reasonable accommodations.
To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Gareth Funning, Chair  
Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Re: [Systemwide Review] Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The Committee reviewed the report from the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities. The Committee found the report highlighted multiple issues and supported the transition to a social model of support that will improve both equity and inclusion outcomes. The Committee was in support of ensuring that Campus policies on academic standing and incomplete grades do not lead to disparately adverse effects on students with disabilities and suggested that Senate faculty charged with revising such policies should be mandated to consider such potential adverse impacts.
Committed to courses

March 7, 2024

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: James Flegal, Chair
   Committee on Courses

Re: Final Report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The Committee on Courses reviewed the final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities at their March 6, 2024 meeting. The Committee is generally supportive of the report’s recommendations and appreciates the Advisory Workgroup’s work to address this important topic.

At our meeting on March 12, 2024, the Committee on Faculty Welfare (CFW) reviewed the Final Report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities. CFW commends the workgroup and this attempt to improve the experience of students with disabilities on UC campuses. CFW members had the following concerns and questions with respect to the final report:

- There is no mention of sports and the experience of student-athletes with disabilities. What will be done to ensure student-athletes with disabilities have the best opportunities to excel both academically and athletically?

- It is not clear what resources will be made available to UC faculty so that we may better support our students with disabilities, nor is it clear how the process of improving the experience of UC students with disabilities will be implemented. For example, will the Student Disability Resource Centers on UC campuses hire more note takers for our students with disabilities? Will a faculty member receive a stipend or reimbursement if we have to alter the curriculum for our students with disabilities in a manner that impacts the entire class and incurs additional cost(s) for us? We as faculty members care deeply about our students with disabilities, but meeting their diverse needs necessitates better institutional support.
The Graduate Council discussed the final report of the UC Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities at the March 21, 2024 meeting. The Council was in agreement that raising faculty awareness and destigmatizing disabilities is crucial. Members felt the report did not have enough space to mention leading contributions students with disabilities make to the community. The suggestions about changing the grading policy was unclear to members. The Council agrees with the suggestion of making courses more accessible to students with disabilities, but members felt it was unclear how this would be accomplished. What are the best practices to make courses more accessible? If there is a way this can be done, it should be made very clear to faculty.
March 19, 2024

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: Kathleen Montgomery
       Chair, Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction

Re: [Systemwide Review] (Report Review) Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction reviewed the [Systemwide Review] (Report Review) Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities and did not have any concerns as it relates to the Committee’s charge of Rules & Jurisdiction.
4/10/24

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Division Chair of the UCR Division of the Academic Senate and Cherysa Cortez, Executive Director of the UCR Academic Senate

From: Katherine Meltzoff, Ph.D., Faculty Chair of the School of Education Executive Committee

Subject: [Systemwide Review] Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The SOE Executive Committee reviewed the Systemwide Senate Review of [Systemwide Review] Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities. Comments/feedback were solicited at our executive committee meeting and via email.

The committee did not have any comments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

Katherine Meltzoff
Faculty Executive Committee Chair
School of Education
University of California, Riverside
April 4, 2024

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

FROM: Marcus Kaul, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, UCR School of Medicine

SUBJECT: [Systemwide Review] Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

Dear Sang-Hee,

The SOM Faculty Executive Committee has reviewed the final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities.

The Committee noted that the report details an ongoing process to be more inclusive to students with disabilities, and that the reported efforts aim at changing the overall ‘culture’ from just being compliant to viewing the integration as ‘normal’.

The Committee members discussed the need for disability education for faculty to better recognize their responsibilities towards students/student workers/graduate students that need accommodations.

The committee echoed that it is hard for faculty members to navigate how to address student/student worker accommodations and they would like one, clear policy for it. The committee was in favor of an accommodations liaison to navigate accommodation needs for faculty/staff.

The Committee would like more details on how findings from the report will be implemented. The Committee recommended the following points:

- Include a statement about student employee advisers to be trained in the GSR contracts and how they would communicate with staff disability advisors/HR.
- Create a section in contracts devoted to hybrid employees, such as student workers, and how UCR would address accommodations for them.

There should be clear communication and understanding of which office oversees the disability accommodation process. Preferably, there should be one office for this to provide clarity in terms of responsibility for implementation of accommodations.

Yours sincerely,

Marcus Kaul, Ph.D.
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee School of Medicine
TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair  
Riverside Division

FR: Richard M. Carpiano, Chair  
Executive Committee, School of Public Policy

RE: [Systemwide Review] Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

Date: April 22, 2024

The Faculty Executive Committee of the School of Public Policy reviewed the document “[Systemwide Review] Report Review: Final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities.”

We have no comments on this document.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Carpiano, Ph.D., M.P.H.  
Professor of Public Policy
COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

April 4, 2024

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
   Riverside Division

From: Vagelis Papalexakis, Chair
       Committee on University Extension

Re: Final Report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities

The Committee on University Extension reviewed the final report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities by email and at their April 3, 2024 meeting. The Committee generally had no concerns with the report related to their charge of University Extension. The Committee did note a concern that the recommendation regarding grading policies is quite broad. The Committee recommends that focus groups comprised of students with disabilities be formed to provide insight into whether grading policies have adversely affected students with disabilities and provide suggestions on how the policies can be improved.