The Faculty Executive Committee of the School of Public Policy reviewed the document “[Systemwide Review] (Proposal) Proposed Academic Senate Statement on UC Quality.” We wish to note the following with respect to the section on “UC Quality: Environment,” which discusses the following points about its value:

a. “Offers insights and experiences based in both research and practice, including engaging students with hands-on projects closely mentored by UC faculty.”

b. “Promoting a rich learning environment beyond the classroom, providing context for social interactions with others, potentially grounding and inspiring creative research activities, and other contributions to society, and creating relationships that can continue after graduation.”

However, the report does nothing to address the budget concerns, specifically how research opportunities are now limited following the increased wages for TAs, GSRs, and Postdoctoral fellows. In other words, faculty experience greater difficulty paying for these increased costs to fund students of awarded grants/contracts, which, in turn, limits both the number and duration of research mentorship opportunities faculty can offer—opportunities that are fundamental to training students. It is difficult to be optimistic that, moving forward, faculty will be able to meet these terms in the recent contracts, and, therefore, students will experience greater competition for mentorship amidst fewer opportunities to gain this valuable training without some intervention being undertaken at the university level to help offset these costs for individual faculty members.

Sincerely,

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