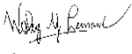




March 20, 2025

TO: Ken Barish, Chair
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

FROM: Wesley Leonard, Chair 
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: (Proposal) UCR Registrar's Implementation of UCR Senate Regulation 6.14
(UCR SR 6.14) - 35 Units In Residence Requirement

The CHASS Executive Committee reviewed the (Proposal) UCR Registrar's Implementation of UCR Senate Regulation 6.14 (UCR SR 6.14) - 35 Units In Residence Requirement. We appreciate the need for clarification as described in the Proposal, but feel that major issues are insufficiently addressed and that there should be much more robust consultation, starting at an earlier stage, about any policy to create new categories for instructional modes. The current memo outlines our general feedback, with the understanding that we may opine differently on a more developed proposal.

- 1) We recognize that the current binary categorization (in-person/online) misses potentially valuable specificity, particularly for purposes like scheduling classrooms. However, adding new categories for instructional modes requires detailed analysis, consultation, and Faculty Senate expertise in crafting the particular details of curricular expectations at all stages. Currently, curricular proposals entail discrete review and approval for courses that have both an in-person and online option, and there are some distinct criteria we employ based on these two modalities. (*In-person* versus *online* modalities call for different pedagogies and often have different assignments, thereby also having different assessments.) We are concerned that the current Proposal does not engage with the existence of these differences or the associated review processes, which have been developed through Senate committees. If UCR decides to implement the four proposed subtypes of course modality, a process of examining and perhaps codifying the curricular standards for the new "in-between" options is necessary. We also emphasize that this may take a great deal of Senate labor and potentially increase the already-challenging workload of committees such as ours.

- 2) We are further concerned that the proposed four-way categorization, despite its laudable goal of adding clarity, may create more confusion (especially if suddenly adopted) because of inherent ambiguity with terms like “mostly” even when definitions are provided. For instance, if a given class has *slightly* more remote meetings than in-person, it would be “mostly online”, but is this how students would actually understand the course when signing up for it? In contrast, the current categorization, while admittedly not perfect, allows a straightforward principle to guide course scheduling and registration: Online means that students need not plan to be in a specific place for class; in-person means that there is a specific place that students need to plan to be and that this physical place (usually a classroom) needs to be scheduled. We believe it is preferable, at least until this issue gets examined thoroughly through Senate review, to maintain the status quo, which is clear for planning purposes and maintains reasonable flexibility for instructors. This noted, we are enthusiastic about current informal practices followed by some departments of adding comments in the course schedule to clarify details about a given course (e.g. “lectures will be synchronous but recorded for later viewing”) whenever possible.

If this issue is taken up for further review, we note further that it will be necessary to explicitly define “hybrid”, as there are two common meanings at UCR but only one is captured in the Proposal. Hybrid can both mean “sometimes in person, sometimes remote” (where the entire group meets one way or the other for a given class session) **or** “with in-person and remote attendance possible at a given time”, where some people are gathered in a shared physical space but others participate remotely (e.g., by Zoom).

- 3) As for the Interpretation Questions raised the Proposal, we appreciate that the Registrar needs to clarify what counts toward “campus experience” in situations where a student’s completion of a given class is unclear. Our recommendation is to follow the existing norms that are used in similar cases for financial aid, where there is longstanding practice of evaluating whether the student completed enough of a course and outreach to instructors when needed to verify this detail. Our recommendation is based on the following basic principles: If a student is engaged in an in-person class (shows up to and does most work for), but gets an *F*, this should count towards the campus experience. If a student is registered for an in-person class but doesn’t attend any sessions, or goes to class only at the beginning of the term before unofficially dropping the course, this should not count. If a student mostly finishes an in-person class and takes a *W* late in the quarter, this should count. In a situation where there are withdrawals or *F*s across all courses in a given quarter, there can be a case-by-case evaluation that considers whether the student was around for most of the quarter or not, as well as other factors that are deemed relevant to the spirit of the campus experience requirement.

In summary, CHASS EC is concerned about the following: 1) a lack of a review process concerning the four proposed categories and the need for Faculty Senate expertise in crafting any curriculum changes, and 2) definitional ambiguity regarding the four proposed categories and what “hybrid” entails. CHASS EC also recommends that 3) existing norms of assessing course completion be leveraged for determining whether a student has met their “campus experience” requirement.