

**APPROVED MINUTES  
BERKELEY DIVISIONAL COUNCIL  
Monday, April 28, 2025 – 12:10-2:00 PM  
Stephens Hall, Conference Room 310**

Divisional Council (DIVCO) met on Monday, April 28, 2025, in Stephens Hall, room 310. Division Chair Nuru-Jeter presided. A quorum was present as shown on the attached attendance chart.

**I. A. MINUTES of the meeting of April 14, 2025**

**ACTION:** The minutes were approved as presented.

**II. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. EALC Request to rename the “Chinese Language” and “Japanese Language” majors**

**B. Proposal for a new Graduate Certificate (Option 2) in Global Public Health and Equity**

**C. Committee on Information Technology (CIT) letter RE: Berkeley Storage Crisis**

**ACTION:** The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

**III. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Division Chair Nuru-Jeter*

Chair Nuru-Jeter referenced the resolution passed the previous week at the Special Division meeting concerning the protection of academic and political freedom. The resolution is posted on the Academic Senate website. She also described the formation of a UC Berkeley joint admin-Senate research contingency work group, already underway, aiming to guide the distribution of funds to faculty affected by grant terminations or stop-work orders.

A systemwide university committee on academic disruptions has been established in response to federal activities impacting academia. This committee will work through June 2025 to produce recommendations related to various university functions impacted by federal actions.

Two other quick updates included the recent academic assembly vote against the proposed Area H, which would have required ethnic studies (Area H) for UC admissions. It did not pass largely due to unresolved funding issues. Finally, the Library Committee’s resolution presented at the Academic Senate Spring Division meeting passed unanimously. The resolution may be found on the Academic Senate website.

Chair Nuru-Jeter finished her announcements by recognizing elected member Ginsborg for receiving the prestigious Guggenheim award.

#### IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### A. **Discussion/action:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool roll out

Chair Nuru-Jeter proposed the motion to add this item to Unfinished Business to continue its discussion and next steps. Given time constraints, a full discussion was unlikely, prompting a proposal for a special DIVCO meeting on Monday, May 5, 2025. The urgency is driven by the need to finalize policy and implementation strategies ahead of the fall term, ensuring that faculty have sufficient time to prepare over the summer.

Six potential recommendations for the AI rollout included: allowing instructors to opt in, delaying campus-wide student access due to pedagogy concerns, requiring revised faculty training, developing standard syllabus language denoting classroom policies on the use of AI, implementing departmental policies with room for instructor-level variance, and forming a Senate-administrative task force. The task force would address broader concerns, including policy alignment with university mission, implementation logistics, procurement processes, and Berkeley's overall stance on AI in higher education.

#### V. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. **Discussion only:** Disability Accommodation Training Slide Presentation

*Guests:* Carolyn B Swalina, Senior Policy Analyst/Accessibility & Inclusion Expert Advisor  
Steve Johnston, Policy, Complaint, and Special Project Manager, Disability Access and Compliance

Organized in collaboration with the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) and the faculty liaison program, DIVCO member Jonah Levy presented a new foundational training program for faculty regarding student disability accommodations at the university. The presentation is intended to be compulsory and included the need for clear, consistent guidance to support both legal compliance and educational equity.

The presentation emphasized the limitations that faculty have in understanding what is legally required versus what is best practice when accommodating students with disabilities. DSP clarified that it acts as the authority in approving accommodations, and faculty should neither override these decisions nor grant accommodations not officially sanctioned. Faculty expressed confusion about their own rights and responsibilities, especially when faced with student demands or when accommodations potentially disrupt grading policies or academic integrity.

DIVCO members raised concerns about ambiguous guidance and past conflicts where well-meaning attempts to help students led to missteps or accusations. The training developers stressed the importance of sticking to approved accommodations and redirecting students back to DSP for questions and adjustments.

Graduate students were identified as a group needing special consideration due to their dual roles as both students and employees. This training plans to include references and resources for graduate students. Similarly, the discussion questioned whether students themselves should receive mandatory training. While this was deemed legally problematic if required only for students with disabilities, it was agreed that all students

would benefit from clearer, accessible information about their responsibilities and rights, which is folded into the the DSP intake process.

The training content was described as a foundational starting point, not an exhaustive manual. It was designed to set a baseline of understanding, encourage consultation with DSP for complex or case-specific issues, and assure faculty that they have a partner in the DSP. There was a strong push for faculty to access information when it's most relevant and ensure the material is practical and applicable. There was general agreement that the initiative was worthwhile, acknowledging that this third draft of the training appeared to strike the right balance between comprehensiveness and practicality. Some faculty noted that the training would not have to be taken every year, given the general stability of DSP; 3 years was suggested as a reasonable cadence.

Faculty were directed to provide any additional feedback to Jonah, after which he would revise the training deck and resubmit for DIVCO endorsement.

**B. Discussion/action:** Review of the Energy Resources Group (ERG)

DIVCO commended the program's strong impact on campus while identifying key areas for improvement.

A primary recommendation was to increase staffing and support positions, as ERG aims to grow from 6.5 to 8 faculty full-time equivalent (FTEs). Concerns were raised about faculty hiring and mentoring. DIVCO members advised to maintain its current four focus areas and explore partner hiring, emphasizing expanding mentorship for both junior and associate professors. However, while interdisciplinary work is valued, members cautioned against overburdening junior faculty and encouraged more involvement from tenured faculty. Despite memorandums of understanding (MOUs) in place, concerns remain about the real-life difficulty of managing service loads.

International students expressed confusion over transitioning from the master's to PhD program, highlighting the need for clearer communication. Additionally, concerns about unpaid student labor were discussed, with a call for better clarity on expectations and the professional value of such contributions.

ERG's 10-year Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DIB) plan was praised, but DIVCO members noted it should not rely solely on volunteers. They recommended dedicated staff support and better coordination of faculty affiliates, as students often struggle to identify committed mentors. They also noted ERG's undergraduate offerings, noting the importance of student feedback and the need to preserve key courses like "Energy and Society."

**ACTION:** DIVCO authorized Chair Nuru-Jeter to draft a letter forwarding committee comments to the Vice Provost of Academic Planning.

**C. Discussion only:** Delayed Personnel Cases

DIVCO expressed frustration over poor communication and slow leadership response. Comparing Berkeley's processes to peer institutions was suggested to help push reforms. Members agreed that real change requires concrete actions, increased transparency, and leadership commitment.

Members discussed persistent delays in processing academic personnel cases, with many noting the issue has spanned years with little improvement. Delays occur at multiple levels, particularly within departments and dean's offices, where 31% of current cases are still with departments and deans. Overall case delays have led to faculty morale and risks to retention efforts.

While recognizing systemic issues, DIVCO members noted uneven departmental performance and called for more support rather than blame. Some other recommendations included better resourcing for department chairs, clearer timelines, and sharing best practices. Some proposed linking performance to FTE allocations, though others warned this could unfairly affect departments.

There was strong support for formal action, including letters to leadership, calling for greater accountability, performance metrics, and transparency. Some suggestions included requesting quarterly performance dashboards and clearer expectations around timelines. DIVCO was in favor of Chair Nuru-Jeter to send to the Vice Provost for the Faculty expressing these concerns.

## **VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. AEPE: CDSS Proposal for Within-College, Alternate-Major Admissions**
- B. Systemwide Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on Dual Use Research of Concern and Pathogens with Enhanced Pandemic Potential (DURC-PEPP)**
- C. Systemwide Senate Review of Proposed Revisions to APM - 675, Veterinary Medicine Salary Administration**
- D. Systemwide Senate Review of Proposed Revisions to APM - 036, General University Policy Regarding Academic Appointees/Employment**
- E. Academic Support for Students Unable to Complete their UC Degree on a UC Campus**
- F. Academic Senate Task Force on UC Adaptation to Disruptions (UCAD)**
- G. Berkeley Resolution to protect Academic and Political Freedom**
- H. Administrative-Senate Working Group to advise on use of Research Contingency Fund**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

DIVCO – ATTENDANCE, SPRING 2025

[illegible]

INVITED GUESTS *	1/27/25	2/10/25	2/24/25	3/10/25	3/17/25	3/31/25	4/14/25	4/28/25	5/12/25
Johnston, Steve								P	
Swalina, Carolyn								P	

SENATE STAFF	1/27/25	2/10/25	2/24/25	3/10/25	3/17/25	3/31/25	4/14/25	4/28/25	5/12/2025
Banaria, Jocelyn Surla	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Hashimoto, Dorothy	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	

P=Present    A=Absent    \* Non-voting