2016-17 Annual Report of the Committee on Courses of Instruction

In fulfilling the charge set by the Berkeley Division by-laws, the Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) accomplished the following activities during the 2016-17 academic year. Professor Leslea Hlusko (Integrative Biology) served as chair.

I. Actions on Course and Instructor Approvals, Variance Requests, Degree Conferrals, and Course Codes

A. Reviewed and approved 917 changes to campus courses, including new offerings and modifications. As authorized by COCI, Senate staff approved another 439 proposals for minor modifications and withdrawals. In total, 1356 courses and modifications were approved.

B. Reviewed and approved 16 new UCB Extension courses, and 176 new instructor/course pairings.

C. Reviewed 60 variance requests (59 approved, 1 denied), including 5 Acting Instructor-Graduate Student requests and 2 grade grievances.

D. Reviewed approximately 339 student-facilitated course proposals (spring and fall 2017).

E. Conferred degrees and honors on behalf of the Academic Senate for summer 2016, fall 2016, and spring 2017.

II. Key COCI Issues

A. COCI Representation
   Professor Elizabeth Honig represented COCI on the Coordination Board for Admissions, Financial Aid, and Enrollment Management

   Professor Neil Tsutsui represented COCI on the Academic Senate Advisory Committee to SIS

B. AMCULT Suffix Request
   In Fall 2016 the chair of the Subcommittee on American Cultures (AMCULT) presented COCI with a request to suspend the requirement that all American Cultures (AC) courses be designated as such with a course number suffix. COCI faculty considered the options presented and requested that AMCULT determine a single course of option. AMCULT
reconsidered the issue and reported back to COCI that they would continue to require the AC suffix, but outline specific conditions under which the suffix may be omitted.

C. Public Health 116
Bringing closure to an issue first brought up in 2015/16 COCI approved a new course proposal for Public Health 116: Seminar on Social, Political, and Ethical Issues in Health and Medicine. This proposal officially converted a course that had been approved as instructor-led, but run as a student facilitated course for many years, back into being instructor-led. The new course clearly outlined the integrated role of the instructor to oversee and mentor the student teacher scholars who would be predominantly facilitating the course.

D. American Institutions / American History Requirement
In Spring 2017 COCI was awarded the responsibility of reviewing and approving courses that meet the University’s American Institutions and the American History requirements. In conjunction with taking on this responsibility membership referenced older review guidelines and guidelines used by the previous review committee and currently used at the UC Office of the President for similar requirements. Membership devised and approved their own set of review guidelines.

E. Student Facilitated Course Proposals
In fall 2016 controversy emerged regarding a student facilitated course that COCI members had reviewed. The course approval was revoked by administration authority, which led to a discussion within COCI and with administration regarding the jurisdiction of course approval authority on campus. After a revised proposal was provided and discussion with all parties involved the course was reinstated.

In an unrelated, COCI members undertook the task across 2016/17 to review the course proposal form and related instructional materials. COCI consulted with multiple academic department representatives and the Undergraduate Course Facilitator Training and Resources (UCFTR) Director Elizabeth Keithley during the revision process. The results included an updated form with more focused questions; an updated and expanded checklist for each target population; and additional requirements. The two new requirements include a mandate that all student facilitators need to undergo facilitator training from UCFTR and faculty sponsors need to provide a letter of recommendation with the proposal packet effective Spring 2018. COCI believed that these two new requirements will help ensure that students are adequately prepared for the role they are undertaking and that faculty will have a more vested interest in their oversight of the course.

F. COCI Handbook Updated
In Spring 2017 membership reviewed changes proposed by the COCI Analysts to the 50+
page document that serves as a reference for COCI guidelines and related policies. The substance of the changes included updated contact information, grammatical corrections, and minor edits.

G. Four-Year Re-Review of Online Courses
COCI solicited follow-up reviews for twenty-six online courses approved four years ago, according to its procedures. Responses were received for twelve courses from the eight academic units included in the review. Of the twenty-six courses, six had never been scheduled for enrollment. COCI also reviewed enrollment data for the Office of the Registrar. COCI members discussed the narrative responses received and discussed the problems with how information is currently collected. Memberships decided to continue to conduct the review for at least one more year but to reframe the structure of the questions to collect more quantitative information; request the information earlier in the academic year; and compile a report that would be useful to campus partners that better analyzes that data collected.

H. UC Berkeley Extension
On 05/05/17 UC Berkeley Extension Dean Diana Wu met with COCI to report on UNEX initiatives, including a new partnership with Haas School of Business oriented towards international students and the expansion of the Fall Program for Freshmen program. Dean Wu also updated the committee on two initiatives she is affiliated with outside of her Extension role, the recently created New Academic Ventures at Berkeley (NAV-B) unit and the Berkeley Resource Center for Online Education (BRCOE).

I. Social Media
Several course proposals submitted to COCI this year included instructional activities that required students to use third party social media platforms not licensed by the University. COCI faculty raised accessibility and privacy concerns and returned these course proposals requesting that the activity not be a graded component of the course. To head off future similar courses COCI consulted with the Center for Teaching and Learning, Educational Technology Services, and the Office of Ethics, Risk and Compliance Services to craft a guiding statement on this issue. The Center for Teaching and Learning also created a website with resources for teachers to use.

J. Retroactive Grade Changes
In Spring 2017 the Associate Students of UC (ASUC) presented a memo to COCI concerning the issue of retroactive grade changes. As the Committee on Rules and Elections had recently clarified for the rules surrounding grade changes the matter was referred to R&E for response.

K. Course Management System (CMS) Integration with Campus Solutions (CS)
In October 2016, after several months of planning and testing, the Course Management
System (CMS) was integrated with the Campus Solutions (CS) student information system that the campus had begun using earlier in 2016. This integration effort included three distinct actions: enhancing CMS functionality to be compatible with CS; creating a real-time transmission of approved course data to CS; and updating the backlog of course modifications from August 2015 – October 2016 approved by COCI. This project entailed lengthy planning and development work with Senate staff, the Office of the Registrar, the SIS Project, and SAIT. Throughout Spring 2017 the integration functionality was closely monitored and adjusted.

III. COCI Correspondence for Review of Academic Senate Policies and Issues

A. Faculty Access to Student Records
   Comments submitted to Divisional Council 09/20/16

B. Replacing Incomplete Grades
   Comments submitted to Divisional Council 10/10/16

C. Clarification of Passed / Not Passed Grading Rules
   Comments submitted to Rules & Elections 11/28/16
   Comments submitted to the Council of Undergraduate Deans 12/21/16

D. Approval of PB HLTH 116
   Memo to School of Public Health’s Curriculum Review Committee 01/18/17

E. Changes to Senate Regulation 630
   Comments submitted to Divisional Council 02/02/17

F. Limiting Partial Credit Restrictions on Courses
   Comments submitted to Rules & Elections 02/07/17

G. Statement on Guidelines for the Use of Social Media as an Instructional Tool
   Memo distributed to CMS Users and posted to COCI website 05/01/17

H. Student-Facilitated Courses and Changes to Proposal
   Memo distributed to campus faculty 05/04/17