



320 STEPHENS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

April 29, 2019

MATEO MONTOYA  
Chief of Staff to the Student Advocate

SOPHIE BANDARKAR  
Student Advocate

ALEXANDER WILFERT  
ASUC President

MELANY AMARIKWA  
ASUC Academic Affairs Vice President

*Subject: Request for greater student representation on Academic Senate committees*

Dear ASUC Leadership,

On April 15, 2019, Divisional Council (DIVCO) discussed the proposal cited in the subject line, informed by the commentary of the committees on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE); Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA); Courses of Instruction (COCI); Diversity, Equity and Campus Climate (DECC); Graduate Council (GC); and Undergraduate Council (UGC). The commentary is appended in its entirety for your information.

DIVCO considered each of the proposals in your request.

**Increasing the number of student representatives on Senate committees; adding student representatives to DIVCO**

With the exception of GC, there was little support on DIVCO, and among the reporting committees, for increasing the number of student representatives on Senate standing committees. The reporting committees noted that attendance and participation of student representatives can be quite variable. We believe that the ASUC could make better use of its existing representation. We discussed a number of measures to facilitate this, including beginning your own appointment process earlier, so that students can participate in committee orientations, and thus participate more fully, and ensuring that student representatives are informed of standing meeting times when they are appointed, in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.

GC was an exception in this regard. It welcomes increasing student representation.

We do not believe it is appropriate to add student representatives to DIVCO, which is the executive body of the Senate. Our discussion underscored that committee chairs, in their announcements during standing meetings, provide summaries of DIVCO's deliberations and decisions, and that approved minutes of DIVCO meetings are available on the Senate website.

#### **Sharing agenda packets with ASUC officials**

Agenda packets are confidential and may not be widely shared or circulated. This practice has served the Senate well and we do not see the value of changing it. We also note that full agenda packets are available to student representatives on Senate committees.

#### **Adding items to committee agendas for discussion**

Current practice allows committee members, including student representatives, to ask the chair to add an item to the agenda. Informing Senate staff, by way of copy, facilitates such requests.

#### **Assigning alternates**

For a variety of reasons, we do not support allowing alternates to attend on behalf of student representatives. Without the background and context for discussions and deliberations, we do not believe that alternates are able to make substantive contributions. We also note that faculty members serving on standing committees are not able to send alternates. Finally, while we appreciate the difficulty ASUC and GA officials may have in prioritizing Senate committees given their other commitments, we note that several high-level campus administrators serve ex-officio on Senate committees and face similar scheduling issues. They, too, are not allowed to send alternates.

#### **Chair of DIVCO meetings with student organizations**

We believe regular meetings of the Berkeley Division chair and the leadership of the ASUC and GA will improve communication between the Senate and student organizations. We support this proposal.

In sum, while DIVCO does not support a number of the proposals in the ASUC request, we believe that improvements to existing mechanisms for student participation in the Academic Senate will result in more robust engagement going forward. The appended committee reports elaborate on the key points of this response. Please refer to the enclosures for the complete committee commentary.

Sincerely,



Barbara Spackman  
Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate  
Cecchetti Professor of Italian Studies and Professor of Comparative Literature

Encls. (6)

Cc: Ignacio Navarrete, Chair, Committee on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education  
Jennifer Johnson-Hanks, Chair, Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation  
Robert Ashmore, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction  
David Ahn, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate  
John Battles, Chair, Graduate Council  
Jonah Levy, Chair, Undergraduate Council  
Sumei Quiggle, Associate Director staffing Graduate Council and Undergraduate Council  
Sumali Tuchrello, Senate Analyst, committees on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education, and Courses of Instruction  
Deborah Dobin, Senate Analyst, Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation  
Linda Corley, Senate Analyst, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate



320 STEPHENS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

March 20, 2019

PROFESSOR BARBARA SPACKMAN  
Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

*Re: ASUC's Proposal to Increase Student Representation*

Dear Barbara,

At the March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Committee on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE) considered the February 26<sup>th</sup> proposal from the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) and the Graduate Assembly (GA) to increase student representation on Senate committees. Members declined to take a vote on the specific requests of the proposal, opting rather to send to Divisional Council a series of concerns and suggestions that were raised during the discussion.

In looking at the attendance patterns of AEPE student members in recent years, it is clear that the opportunity has not been utilized well. While this year has been exceptional, with the sole remaining student representative being well attuned and engaged with the committee business, in previous years seats have been vacant and overall attendance has been low. If the goal of ASUC is to increase the engagement that students have with Senate committees, there should be first a consideration to increase the engagement via the currently available seats. Members are in agreement that there is a value to having student voices in the room, but the overall lack of participation has historically minimized that voice. Members are concerned that a corrective action is being proposed without fully identifying the correlative problem.

An opportunity for improvement that was suggested would be to move up the timeline by which students are appointed to Senate committees. Currently, student appointments are often not finalized until mid-fall at the earliest. In the AEPE context, this means that the student representatives miss out on the preliminary orientation and discussions that happen. If the student representative appointment process could occur earlier in the previous spring this would help to onboard the student members at the same time as with faculty members. Related, AEPE would not be opposed if the ASUC wanted to reappoint a sitting student representative for multiple years.

The second suggestion is that there should be some consideration by ASUC to create a method by which historical and institutional knowledge is passed from one student representative to the next. AEPE, as is the case for many of the Senate's committees, deals with complex and multi-year issues that require a certain level of understanding. Joining the committee late and as a relative novice to these issues does little to set the student representative up for the success that ASUC is likely trying to achieve. Having a system of continuity between representatives would be supportive of any policy goals that ASUC may be working towards.

In sum, members are of the mind that making tweaks for improvement would be an appropriate first step before upturning current structures so to better the level of engagement ASUC representatives have on the Academic Senate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ignacio Navarrete". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ignacio Navarrete  
Chair, Committee on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education

IN/st



320 STEPHENS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

March 20, 2019

PROFESSOR BARBARA SPACKMAN  
Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

*Re: CAPRA comments on a proposal to increase student  
representation on Senate Committees*

The Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA) discussed the proposal from the ASUC and Graduate Assembly to increase student representation to a variety of Senate committees, including CAPRA, at its meetings on March 13 and March 20, 2019. The meeting on March 13 included our current ASUC and GA representatives, as well as Mateo Montoya, who drafted the proposal. This memo conveys the content of that discussion.

**Background and scope questions**

CAPRA currently includes one representative of the Graduate Assembly (GA) and one representative of the ASUC. At the ASUC's request, we changed our bylaws a few years ago to change the ASUC representative from being the Vice President, Academic Affairs to the ASUC President. The GA representative is the Campus Affairs Vice President. Overall, the student members have often made meaningful contributions to the work of the committee, and Senate CAPRA members have been very happy to work with them. However, it has been a challenge for the ASUC President to prioritize CAPRA meetings in what is clearly a very demanding schedule, and as a result we very often meet without a representative of the ASUC. In thinking and discussing this issue, we returned to our own by-laws and found this rather striking line: "Upon three unexcused consecutive absences, student members will be automatically withdrawn so that their absences will not affect quorum. (En. 11.3.10)" If we enforced this, we would have no participant from the ASUC.

CAPRA members note that two of the students' requests are already in force. Under normal rules of order, any member--including a student member--may request to add items to the agenda. Under our current bylaws, student members do indeed vote (on the very rare occasions that CAPRA votes). We therefore did not discuss these issues further.

The committee also observes that two other requests are either outside our purview or are impossible. CAPRA does not comment on whether the Chair of the Senate should meet regularly with student members of Senate Committees. Secondly, because of the confidential nature of CAPRA agenda packets, they cannot be shared beyond members of the committee (of course, student members of the committee already have full access to the agenda packets). This is not

negotiable, as we receive a variety of draft materials that we are not at liberty to share. Again, these two topics received limited discussion.

### **Key issues discussed**

The committee focused on the related questions of how many student representatives would be suitable for our committee, whether they should be specific office-holders within ASUC and GA, and whether substitutes would be accepted. There was no support for having substitutes; all members need to receive some basic orientation to rules of confidentiality and become familiar with the work of the committee, and it is quite disruptive to have different people come and go,. Indeed, faculty committee members who do not attend regularly are not renewed for the same reasons.

Regarding the number of permanent representatives and who they should be, two alternative proposals received support from approximately equal numbers of faculty CAPRA members. One plan would keep only one ASUC and one GA member, but eliminate the constraint that the representatives hold specific roles in those organizations. Indeed, some CAPRA members would go farther, and explicitly encourage ASUC and GA to nominate people for CAPRA who are NOT otherwise officers, and who would therefore have more time to commit to CAPRA. A second plan would sustain the existing ex-officio roles (ASUC President and GA Vice President for Campus Affairs) and *also* add one representative for ASUC and one for GA, to be selected by each organization. Under this plan, when the ex officio members could attend, the student organizations would each have two representatives.

Although neither of these proposals captured universal support, each has a considerable minority of people who prefer it, and each wins the acceptance of a majority. Absent a request from the students to add representation, faculty members on CAPRA would be happy to leave things as they are. However, in response to this request, there is more support for either of the revisions noted above than for the status quo.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Johnson-Hanks', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jennifer Johnson-Hanks, Chair  
Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation



320 STEPHENS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

April 09, 2019

PROFESSOR BARBARA SPACKMAN  
Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

*RE: ASUC's Proposal to Increase Student Representation*

Dear Barbara,

At its March 15th meeting, the Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) considered the February 26<sup>th</sup> proposal from the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) and the Graduate Assembly (GA) to increase student representation on Senate committees. Committee members were broadly in sympathy with the proposal's underlying aims of diversifying student voices on Senate committees and enhancing the quality of student representative engagement in committee business. At the same time, however, members were uncertain as to how effectively such aims might be served by adding another student representative. There were, moreover, small-scale but concrete concerns about possible unintended consequences and complications that could result from such a move—most specifically, in terms of COCI's ability to consistently meet quorum over the course of its rather heavy meeting schedule in a given semester. In short, while COCI would support the move to increase student representation if the Senate as a whole opts to do so, from its own perspective and experience COCI does not actively advocate such a move.

Some background regarding student representation on COCI may be useful in elucidating this position. Under current Division Bylaw 33, there are three student representatives appointed to COCI; historically, the Committee on Committees has appointed two undergraduates and one graduate student to fill these seats. Senate members of COCI strongly concur that student representative members on the committee bring a vital perspective to COCI. As a committee that has direct influence on how policies around grades, course credit, instruction, and related matters is administered, the student voice on COCI rounds out the perspective on many of the complicated issues we address in a given year. Committee members were equally in agreement that the current student members of the committee have provided exemplary service, and have on numerous recent occasions raised points and perspectives that have materially shaped the committee's final decisions in positive ways. In past iterations of the committee, however, there have been issues with engagement and, more specifically, attendance, on the part of student representatives, and COCI's institutional memory in this regard inevitably also played a role in the committee's assessment of the possible long-term effects of the proposed change.

COCI's discussion of the ASUC proposal focused on the items of most pertinence to COCI: 1) the proposed increase of student representation on COCI to four seats; 2) the proposal to allow student representatives to add discussion items to the meeting agendas of committees on which they sit; and 3) the proposal to allow student representatives to designate alternates in the event that an appointed representative is unable to attend a given meeting. On the other items, including the sharing of agenda



packets and once-a-semester meetings with the Divisional Chair, there were no specific comments from COCI members. We defer to our Divisional colleagues on those items.

1) Regarding increasing the number of student representatives, members generally were, as several members stated, agnostic. There was no overwhelming objection to the idea of increasing the number of seats to four. However, faculty members were unconvinced that adding one more seat would in itself foster a more diverse student voice on COCI, as the proposal purports. There are no specific provisions in the proposal about how this diversity of student opinion would be facilitated. Our graduate student representative alluded to an ongoing split between ASUC and the Graduate Assembly, and while also ambivalent regarding the merits of the proposal, suggested that if an extra student representative were to be added that it be a second graduate representative, so as to bring ASUC and GA representation to an even two apiece. After considering the historical attendance of student representatives, which in recent memory has included seats remaining vacant for the entirety of a semester, the suggestion that there be a focus on increasing the quality of engagement, while maintaining the same numerical representation, gained significant traction in the discussion (we hasten to reiterate in this regard however that our current student representatives exemplify an exceptional level of student engagement that in recent years has often been lacking).

As alluded to above, another reason for members' hesitancy about the idea of adding another student representative relates to the committee's mundane but nonetheless very real challenge of meeting quorum consistently. COCI has a high minimum number of seats (the current bylaw calls for 18 voting members), and a relatively dense (biweekly) meeting schedule, and also takes a series of procedural votes at each meeting as part of its core function. Meeting quorum is therefore essential to our ability to carry out the committee's business in a timely manner. In a given year, there are almost inevitably occasions (as for example immediately and after the summer and winter recesses) when we do not meet quorum, and therefore have to suspend business across two meetings; there are also typically at least one or two meetings in which we meet quorum exactly, or with only one or two attending members to spare. The addition to the target needed to meet quorum that would be entailed by adding an additional member (at current levels of committee staffing, an extra seat would add one to the quorum number) would thus have a potentially significant impact on this ongoing, albeit mundane, concern.

2) On the request that student representatives be allowed to add items to their committees' meeting agendas, there was some uncertainty as to the proposal's exact implications. Currently, the COCI agenda (as, we understand, with the agendas of at most or all Division committees) is drafted by the committee analyst, on the basis of incoming requests (from members, including student members, as well as broader campus entities) as well as the ongoing discussion items under consideration by the committee. The chair then makes final decisions about which specific items to place on a given agenda, and works with the analyst to coordinate timing and guests. If this channel for proposing business and discussion items to the committee meets the intent of the ASUC proposal, then what is needed is simply a clarification of these guidelines, so that student representatives are aware of the existing process. Some members, however, interpreted this aspect of the proposal as a request that student representatives be allowed to add items directly to the agenda without consultation with the committee chair. This would amount to granting powers to the committee's student representatives that neither the broader campus community, Senate faculty, nor for that matter the Senate members of the committee itself enjoy. Such a scenario therefore struck committee members as anomalous and inadvisable from a policy and procedural viewpoint, and—if this stronger construction of the intent of the ASUC proposal is indeed correct—the committee does not endorse such a move.

3) Lastly regarding the request that student representatives be allowed to assign an alternate in the

event the appointed representative is unable to attend, COCI members reached a strong consensus in opposition to such a move. At the procedural and policy level, the committee's reasoning on this point echoes that laid out above under point (2): such a move would in effect grant to student representatives a power that Senate faculty members do not enjoy. On a practical level, there was also opposition stemming from concerns about the continuity of engagement. Across a given year, COCI considers a number of highly complex issues related to instruction, academic policy, and basic campus processes for course scheduling and enrollment. In order to facilitate these nuanced discussions, campus experts are often invited to provide technical or historical context and to engage in discussions with COCI to inform final decisions the committee makes. It is far from clear that an alternate student representative, attending on an intermittent and single-meeting basis, could possibly be in a position to meaningfully and effectively represent a coherent student perspective on such matters. Related, there are issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest. COCI, like many Senate committees, routinely deals with confidential matters relating to student records (e.g. rescission of degrees and grade grievances). At the beginning of each year, COCI reviews principles of confidentiality, and discusses and formally adopts a conflict of interest policy, in order to ensure that members with a material interest in a specific issue under consideration recuse themselves from discussion and voting. The burden of briefing alternates on both ongoing committee business as well as policies of confidentiality and conflict of interest is one that COCI members, via Senate staff, would be reluctant to undertake.

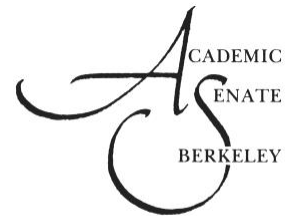
If there are any questions please contact me or Senate Analyst Sumali Tuchrello.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Ashmore", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert Ashmore, Chair  
Committee on Courses of Instruction

RA/st



320 STEPHENS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

April 9, 2019

PROFESSOR BARBARA SPACKMAN  
Chair, 2018-2019 Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

*Re: DECC's Comments on the Greater Student Representation in Academic  
Senate Committees Proposal*

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate (DECC) reviewed the Greater Student Representation in Academic Senate Committees Proposal via email.

The DECC committee does not see the value of adding more students to the committee. Last academic year 2017-2018, the undergrad representative attended three of the six meetings and the graduate representative did not attend any before resigning in the spring. So far, this academic year 2018-2019, the undergrad representative attended one meeting and the grad representative has not attended any meeting. For reasons of continuity and institutional memory, we would prefer having consistent attendance by the current two representatives to having only occasional attendance by four representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DAhn'.

David Ahn  
Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate

DA/lc



April 10, 2019

BARBARA SPACKMAN  
Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

*Re: ASUC request for greater student representation in Academic Senate committees*

Dear Chair Spackman:

At its meeting on April 1, the Graduate Council reviewed the ASUC request for greater student representation in Academic Senate committees. One of GC's graduate student members collaborated with the ASUC on the proposal and clarified that the request for GC is, as noted at the top of the fourth page, to "maintain the number of student votes," not to increase it to four as listed in the table. Because GC's graduate student members do have work assigned to them, such as graduate group reviews, SSGPDP reviews, and participation on various subcommittees, maintaining three voting student members is desired. The committee agreed that the addition of the Graduate Assembly Campus Affairs Vice President as an *ex officio* nonvoting member of GC would be acceptable. Given the charge to Graduate Council, we think it is important to engage with the democratic governance that graduate students have chosen to represent them.

As for the other requests regarding agenda packets, agenda items, and alternates, these have already been discussed and settled between the graduate student members and the committee. In general, we support their request for greater transparency. In specific, we have agreed to consider requests to share internal documents on a case-by-case basis. We will consult with the Graduate Division before sharing any documents and we will impose the same confidentiality conditions expected of faculty members.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'John J. Battles'.

John J. Battles  
Chair, Graduate Council



320 STEPHENS HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

April 8, 2019

PROFESSOR BARBARA SPACKMAN  
Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

*Re: ASUC request for greater student representation in Academic Senate committees*

Dear Chair Spackman,

The Undergraduate Council (UGC) received two documents relating to student representation within the Academic Senate: a memo from ASUC leaders entitled “A Request for Greater Student Representation in Academic Senate Committees,” and ASUC Senate Resolution No. 2018/2019-043, “In Support of Increasing Student Representation in the Academic Senate.” At the UGC meeting 3 April 2019, three student members presented the proposals and fielded questions. The response of UGC members was mostly negative, although the ASUC proposals contain a number of specific items, and some garnered a degree of support.

At a general level, the main objection to the ASUC proposals is that the Academic Senate is an institution for faculty self-governance. The purpose of the Academic Senate is to allow faculty to engage with other faculty on issues of shared concern and to advise the Administration, not to represent every constituency within the University. More than one faculty member stated that the Academic Senate is “our institution” and that there should be no presumption that students or other groups would have significant representation within it. Indeed, many stakeholders within the University, such as administrators and untenured faculty, do not sit on Senate committees.

Faculty resistance was especially strong with regard to the ASUC request for more student representatives on Senate committees. The student members noted that they were not making a generalized power grab, but rather asking for greater representation on those Senate committees that most directly affect students (DIVCO, CAPRA, UGC, GC, and DECC). They also contended that expanding student membership would allow for greater diversity of student perspectives. UGC faculty were skeptical that adding one or two students to committees that already had student representatives would fundamentally enhance the diversity of opinions presented and were highly critical of the premise that students are underrepresented on what are supposed to be institutions of faculty self-governance.

The two ASUC documents contain a number of other proposals. The request that DIVCO and CAPRA share their agenda packets with ASUC Executives and their GA counterparts was rejected, as these packages are confidential, and even faculty committee members are not allowed

to share them with outsiders. The request that student members be able to add agenda and discussion items to the committees on which they sit did not seem like a departure from existing practice, at least on UGC. Finally, the request that student members be allowed to have alternates was rejected on the grounds that no such provisions exist for faculty members and that the schedule for committee meetings is known far in advance, so students should be able to arrange their schedules so as to avoid conflicts.

The one area in which there was some support for the student positions concerns DIVCO. The students requested two non-voting seats on DIVCO as well as having the Chair of DIVCO meet with the students sitting on Senate committees once per semester to gauge their concerns and field their questions. At the UGC meeting, student members voiced frustration that the ideas and reforms that they advocate in the various Senate committees are ultimately decided by DIVCO, yet the students have no representation on DIVCO, hence no understanding of why certain proposals are or are not adopted. The student members voiced the sentiment that they are shut out of the forum where the real decisions on campus are made.

UGC faculty countered that the students have an inaccurate view of the powers possessed by DIVCO, which mainly advises the Administration, and that the real powers are lodged within the Administration. Consequently, placing student representatives on DIVCO would provide little or no increase in the students' ability to influence University decisions. In addition, the members of DIVCO represent specific committees, whereas student members represent the student body. Finally, from an administrative standpoint, adding student representatives to DIVCO would require a change to Berkeley Division bylaws.

While there was little enthusiasm for adding student representatives to DIVCO, there was some support among the UGC faculty for giving student members more access to information about DIVCO decisions that concern them. There was also some support for instituting regular meetings between student representatives and DIVCO leadership. Still, opinion was divided, and in the end, no vote was held on these proposals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jonah Levy".

Jonah Levy  
Chair, Undergraduate Council