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To

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SubjectNew Titles for Adjuncts, DSA on People's Park, 2021-22 Senate
Priorities**Body**

TO: ACADEMIC SENATE MEMBERS

The Fortnightly, vol. 4, no. 1

October 4, 2021

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome back to all! For many of us the first few weeks of this fall semester have been marked by apprehension and uncertainty, but also by the great pleasure of seeing our students in person again, running into colleagues unexpectedly, and reacquainting ourselves with this beautiful campus. As the delta-driven spike in infections seems to be subsiding locally, this feels like a time when it might become possible to begin to assess the impact of the pandemic, although a true reckoning will take years or decades.

In addition to the tragic losses of life ([more than 700,000 in the US](#), and [approaching 5,000,000 worldwide](#) at last count), the lasting effects of long COVID, and the inequities and failures of education it has laid bare, the pandemic has initiated a way of life that involves constant refreshing of data dashboards, calculation of one's "risk budget," and

the uncomfortable awareness that we're compelled to make many quotidian decisions based on incomplete evidence. In the context of our work on campus that has led to some frustration about the university's various communication systems: who receives a notification of possible exposure and who doesn't when a student tests positive? how many of the total campus cases are captured by the UHS testing counts? In the Academic Senate this nexus of pressures and concerns prompted a lively debate about the value of in-person meetings for Senate committees, during the course of which we discovered that Senate bylaws very sensibly state that each committee has the authority to decide on the best format for its own meetings. As hard as things have been and continue to be, at Berkeley we have been lucky in many ways, and our tradition of shared governance and the high level of trust between the administration and the Senate have been important in getting us through this as well as we have. Dare we hope that we're on the downhill slope now, and things will get easier?

This newsletter includes:

1. a message from the Ron Cohen, Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, on his priorities for the year;
2. announcement of the October 19 Division meeting;
3. news from the Senate staff about the Anti-Racism Challenge they completed this summer;
4. update from DIVCO on working titles for adjunct faculty;
5. Spotlight on a Senate committee: Demonstration and Student Actions.

1. From the Chair: Priorities for 2021-22

As Chair this year I have four priorities: health, supporting faculty excellence, campus finances, and fostering a robust and inclusive discussion of the proposed College of Data Science and Society. I'll discuss the first two of those here and leave the others for the next issue of *The Fortnightly*.

Health: As we return to campus and begin to learn how to live with the COVID-19 virus, we need to learn how to teach, do our research and enhance the sense of collective engagement and belonging that make UC Berkeley a magnet for the best scholars and students from around the world. It is not easy--and COVID-19 is the newest health challenge, but it is not our only one. This past July the *Daily Cal* published an editorial calling for the campus to devote more attention to addressing what it called "[UC Berkeley's mental health pandemic](#)." Some valuable support systems have been put in place, but there is far more work to do and we are only beginning to assess and respond to the effects that the stresses and losses associated with COVID have placed on faculty, as well as students.

Supporting and Emphasizing Faculty Excellence: For much of the last 18 months, the urgent need to respond to immediate needs in our families and our teaching have directed

energy away from research. Research and creative projects have timelines that are more fluid than end-of-semester grades or tomorrow's lecture. Yet it is the new ideas and discoveries--as manifested in research outcomes and as they filter into our teaching--that are the essence of Berkeley. One of my key goals for the year is to support faculty in rebalancing priorities and finding more time to focus on research. This means elevating the search for new ideas as a core value in our mentoring relationships with graduate and undergraduate students, and in some situations it may also mean pushing back against the perceived need to devote increased time to teaching. My plan starts with remembering to speak often about our research. By calling out the need to refocus on research, we will feel emboldened to make time for it.

There are also practical steps that can make it easier to focus on ideas. I will be joining with the Committee on Research to explore some specific proposals to help some of our colleagues who have been most severely impacted by the pandemic (including those whose research relies on international travel).

One of the ways we recognize faculty excellence is through awards, both those given by our campus and those from professional societies and other philanthropic organizations. Last year, some prominent external awards went to groups of our colleagues that were noticeably less diverse than our faculty. Nominations for awards are not centralized (nor should they be). That said, we can do better. I'll be working with our faculty awards committees and with the committee on Diversity, Equity and Campus Climate to create some guidelines and structures to help our community recognize the excellence of all of our colleagues in our nominations for awards.

Last in this category, we have learned a lot about remote teaching. Now that we are not teaching remotely under emergency conditions, we have a moment to pause and reflect on how we can best experiment with and evaluate aspects of remote instruction that improve teaching and learning. I will be looking for support in thinking about these issues from the Undergraduate Council and from the Committee on Teaching.

--Ron Cohen, Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

2. Announcement of Division Meeting

The Fall meeting of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate will take place on Tuesday, October 19, on Zoom. The agenda includes two panels on "Recruitment, Retention and Supports for Success at Berkeley," one focusing on undergraduate education and another on graduate education. Speakers will include Chancellor Carol Christ; Femi Ogundele, Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment and Dean of Undergraduate Admission; Jennifer Johnson-Hanks, Executive Dean of the College of Letters & Sciences; Lisa García-Bedolla, Vice-Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate Division; and Anne Baranger, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion in the College of Chemistry. A Zoom link will be posted on the [Senate website](#) on the morning of October 19.

3. Academic Titles

The main piece of business done by the Divisional Council of the Academic Senate (DIVCO) so far this year has been the approval of a report on working titles for adjunct faculty prepared by a working group towards the end of the 2020-21 year. The working group was chaired by Kris Gutiérrez, Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Education. The charge from then-Senate Chair Jenna Johnson-Hanks was to consider possible working titles that could be used by adjunct faculty who were contributing substantially to research and teaching at Berkeley, but whose professional stature and ability to secure external funding was sometimes hindered by their designation as “adjunct” faculty. The group was also asked to consider whether there were any other categories of academic appointees who should be offered a new working title in the same spirit of inclusiveness and respect.

In its report the working group made four recommendations:

- that adjunct faculty who are employed full-time on campus and whose primary responsibility is research be permitted to use the working title of “Research Professor” (with the ranks Assistant, Associate and [Full] Research Professor).
- that the existing title of “Professor of Practice” be adopted more widely for full-time adjunct faculty whose primary responsibility is teaching.
- that full-time Cooperative Extension (CE) Specialists be given the working title “Professor of Cooperative Extension ‘X’” (with “X” designating the faculty member’s home department or research area).
- that Above-Scale faculty be able to use the working title use the working “Distinguished Professor.”

The group’s initial recommendation was that the working titles for adjunct faculty and CE Specialists would be granted following a recommendation from the Chair or Dean of the faculty member’s unit and a vote of faculty in the unit, but discussion with DIVCO led the group to clarify its thinking and to suggest that bestowal of the working titles should be automatic for all adjunct faculty working full-time or very close to full-time on campus. The group pointed out that since the terms of appointment for adjunct faculty outlined in the Academic Personnel Manual require that 50% of the salaries for all adjunct faculty come from funds other than state funds, all adjunct faculty are substantially funded by research grants, which is an indication of their centrality to and success in campus research efforts. The proposal has been forwarded to Vice Chancellor for the Faculty Benjamin Hermalin for approval.

4. Academic Senate Staff Completes Anti-Racism Challenge

In September the Academic Senate staff completed [UC San Diego’s 21-Day Anti-Racism Challenge](#) over the course of 21 weeks. The challenge consisted of weekly readings, items

to read, watch, or listen to (articles, journals, YouTube videos, etc.), followed by an hour-long meeting — facilitated by Senate staff — to process and delve further into the topic. We covered many topics; just to name a few, the group broached intersectionality, medical racism, true allyship, and how to support colleagues of color at work. After completing the challenge the team reported feeling closer and more comfortable talking to each other regarding racial issues (and this despite the bulk of meetings being via *Zoom*). Some of the changes that resulted from the conversations are including pronouns on committee members' tent cards, reading a land acknowledgement in each Senate committee at the beginning of the year, and providing a more welcoming space at Stephens Hall Senate space. Although it's over, the Senate staff will continue to have monthly meetings around different DEIB topics.

--Haniya Ferrell, Administrative Assistant, Academic Senate

5. Spotlight on a committee: Demonstrations and Student Actions Committee

In 2020-21, members of the Demonstrations and Student Actions Committee (DSA) realized that the University's plans to build housing on People's Park were opposed by increasing numbers of students. We met virtually with leaders of student action groups, and interviewed them to better understand their concerns. We also met with VC Marc Fisher to understand what campus was planning to do, and why.

The campus leaders and student leaders disagreed on matters of fact as well as on the goals of the People's Park plans. The campus leaders found it very difficult to listen to the students, who sometimes engaged in disrupting meetings as an opposition tactic. The students felt so committed to the goal of protecting vulnerable campers in People's Park that they said they would consider destroying property to disrupt site development, and would wear hoods and masks to avoid punishment that they were concerned might include loss of scholarships. Campus leaders had decided to go ahead full steam with the plan to start by building student housing, in spite of significant student opposition. The students said they would protest with all the tools at their disposal if supportive housing for park campers was not built at the same time.

Since a bystander was killed at the original People's Park protests in 1969, we felt that it was potentially a matter of life and death for us to persuade the campus to avoid a head-on collision with student protests. We avoided taking sides within our committee, and instead asked to meet with Chancellor Christ, who brought her entire real estate leadership team to hear our dispassionate presentation of what we heard from the students. We also shared our views of how serious a clash between students and police could become.

After we met with the Chancellor and her team, she decided to improve fact-based communication with all students using an updated, information-rich website, and--perhaps more importantly--to move the supportive housing project into Phase 1 of the development plan. Chancellor Christ thanked our committee for sharing both information

and persuasive arguments, and we thanked her in return for listening to our perspective.

Overall, we felt that our work gathering information, writing letters, and asking for meetings had an impact that supported our charge to protect students' right to free expression. Of course, there will still be protests, but now the project clearly includes supportive housing up front, and students have more information to make a better choice about whether to oppose the project.

--Kristina Hill, Chair, Demonstrations and Student Actions Committee

Fiat Lux,

Ron Cohen

Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate

Professor of Chemistry and Earth and Planetary Sciences

Mary Ann Smart

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