



Date: 26 February 2018
To: The Berkeley Academic Senate
From: Mateo Montoya, Chief of Staff to the Student Advocate; Sophie Bandarkar, Student Advocate; Alexander Wilfert, ASUC President; and Melany Amarikwa, ASUC Academic Affairs Vice President all with the affirmed consent of the Associated Students of the University of California
Subject: A Request for Greater Student Representation in Academic Senate Committees

The Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate (Academic Senate) shares governance with university administration, determining academic policy, setting conditions for admission and granting of degrees, authorizing and supervising courses and curricula, and advising the Chancellor on the campus budget. Those duties intersect with the experience of students, both undergraduate and graduate, on campus. **To ensure robust democratic discussion and greater transparency for students on campus we, as members of the Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) in partnership with the Graduate Assembly (GA), ask for greater representation and increased transparency in Academic Senate committees.**

We feel that the Academic Senate would best act in the interest of the institution, of faculty, and of students if it included more seats on these committees for informed students to represent the student population. We wish to ensure the continued richness and quality of education on campus as well as the betterment of the student experience on campus. We feel that these two goals work in tandem. **We cannot have a quality education on this campus without understanding the full and complex reality of the diverse student experience.** Notably, we are requesting additional seats in committees that both former and current students have identified as carrying significant impact on student experience and success. Greater student representation in the requested Academic Senate committees ensures an expanded, healthy

relationship between students and faculty on issues which affect students. We want to adequately represent ourselves alongside faculty.

At present, these committees have student designees:

Committee	Number of Seats	Designation of Seats if Specified
Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE)	2	-
American Cultures (AMCULT)	2	-
Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)	2	ASUC President, GA Campus Affairs Vice President
Committee on Course Instruction (COCI)	3	-
Committee on Teaching (COT)	2	-
Undergraduate Scholarships, Honors, and Financial Aid (CUSHFA)	2	-
Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate (DECC)	2	-
Demonstrations and Student Action (DSA)	2	-
Graduate Council (GC)	3	3 GA
Library (LIBR)	2	-
Prizes (PRIZ)	2	-
Student Athletics Council (SAC)	2	1 undergraduate student-athlete, 1 graduate student athlete
Undergraduate Council (UGC)	2, 1 invitee	2 ASUC, AAVP Invitee

The existing student seats on Academic Senate committees are inadequate in view of a growing, and increasingly diverse student body. Notably, students are left out of some of the most decisive and impactful committees, DIVCO and CAPRA, where student voice is vital to robust debate and decision making. We feel that specifically **the following committees lack adequate student representation:**

Divisional Council (DIVCO) has the final say over almost all important decisions within the Academic Senate's scope. Students need to be part of the final discussion on important policy changes and decisions. We recognize the importance that assigning certain proposals engenders, and we ask that students are in the room when the trajectory of proposals are decided and proposals are sent to specific committees. We would like to add two non-voting members to DIVCO so that, in the final analysis, students can articulate student positions on important matters. We understand that there are certain topics that are too sensitive for students to be in the room for and we request that students be asked to step out during those discussions, instead of being fully barred from participating in the council.

The Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA) lacks adequate student representation both on the undergraduate and graduate level. While the ASUC President and GA Campus Affairs Vice President both are important actors in these decisions, we also feel it is appropriate to include students who have more time required to engage in the committee's dense and extremely important material. These would be students for which the committee is their primary project. It is therefore crucial to expand student voice on this committee, and allow multiple students from different communities to engage in debate and add to the course of the committee's discussion.

The Undergraduate Council (UGC) currently lacks adequate student representation and we request that an additional student seat be added. The student representatives to UGC speak on behalf of the entire undergraduate population, and the addition of student seats would allow for better representation of the diversity of undergraduate life. As stated earlier, the undergraduate population is not one singular body. Instead, students have diverse experiences that cannot adequately be accounted for in such small numbers. Historically, this committee has many more applications than students who are allowed to sit on it, effectively silencing potential debate and insights. We believe that an additional seat is appropriate.

The Graduate Council (GC) would benefit from additional student representation and we request that another student seat be added. The student representatives to GC speak on behalf of the entire graduate population of 11,500, and the addition of student seats would allow for better

representation of the diversity of graduate life. Furthermore, because graduate students on Graduate Council are responsible for doing multiple graduate group reviews, it would be optimal to have an additional GA representative who can take on that task. To maintain the number of student votes, we ask that the GA Campus Affairs Vice President (CAVP) be a designated invitee.

Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate (DECC), Committee on Course Instruction (COCI), and Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE) all require greater student representation to reflect the diversity of student opinion on issues that pertain directly to the student experience. The committees have also historically generated the most interest from students.

The summary of our asks can be viewed here:

Committee	Number of Seats Requested in Addition	Number of Total Voting Seats	Designation of Seats
Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE)	1	3	-
Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)	2	4	2 ASUC, 2 GA
Committee on Course Instruction (COCI)	1	4	-
Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate (DECC)	2	4	-
Divisional Council (DIVCO)	2 non-voting members	2	1 ASUC, 1 GA (non-voting)
Undergraduate Council (UGC)	1	4	4 ASUC, 1 designated for the AAVP
Graduate Council (GC)	1	4	4 GA, 1 designated for the CAVP

In addition to requesting seats on these committees, we ask that the Academic Senate accommodate the following measures to increase its accessibility and transparency to students:

- 1) **We ask that Academic Senate committees share their agenda packets with student representatives.** Specifically, we request that **DIVCO and CAPRA share their agenda packets with the ASUC Executives** (President, Executive Vice President, External Affairs Vice President, Academic Affairs Vice President, and Student Advocate) **and their GA counterparts**, and that the remaining committees share their agenda packets upon request from any ASUC elected official. We understand that certain portions of agenda packets may be omitted or redacted from shared agenda packets due to reasons of confidentiality.
- 2) **We also request that students be able to add agenda and discussion items to committees which they sit on, pending a vote from the respective committee.**
- 3) **We ask that student designees have the ability to assign an alternate designee to their seat in the event that they must be absent.** Often times, students have required meetings, assignments, or classes that conflict with Academic Senate committee times, forcing them to choose between their professional or academic responsibility, and their ability to represent students in the Academic Senate. This is especially relevant for designated seats (such as CAPRA or UGC) in which the designated student is more likely to have a conflicting class or competing appointments. Allowing alternate designees would significantly help students remain present in committee meetings.
- 4) **We request that the Chair of the Divisional Council meet with students who sit on Academic Senate committees once a semester to gauge their concerns and field their questions.**

From the student perspective, the seats on these committees are often highly sought after, leaving many qualified students without a platform to communicate their position. We believe that greater representation on these committees would ensure better representation for all students. Moreover, it is an opportunity for the undergraduate students who sit on these committees to communicate faculty positions, campus initiatives, and policy to their respective communities, thereby increasing the overall literacy and cohesion of student efforts on campus. At the end of the day, these committees provide an extraordinary opportunity for students to engage and work with faculty on issues which affect students. We believe that everyone gains when more voices and perspectives are added to the discussion. The goal of any deliberative body should be to make intentional efforts to seek the opinions and experiences of those who have something to

add. Students have a lot to add to these committees. It is in this view that we ask for greater representation.



Senate Resolution No. 2018/2019-043

In Support of Increasing Student Representation in the Academic Senate

Primary Sponsor

Sophie Bandarkar (Student Advocate)

Cosponsors

Mateo Montoya (SAO Chief of Staff), Melany Amarikwa (Academic Affairs Vice President), Andy Theocharous (ASUC Senator), Teddy Lake (ASUC Senator), Zach Carter (ASUC Senator), Anna Whitney (ASUC Senator), Isabella Chow (ASUC Senator), Stephen Boyle (ASUC Senator)

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate (Academic Senate) shares governance with university administration, determining academic policy, setting conditions for admission and granting of degrees, authorizing and supervising courses and curricula, and advising the Chancellor on the campus budget; and,

WHEREAS, those duties intersect with the lived and academic experience of students, both undergraduate and graduate, on campus; and,

WHEREAS, students and faculty have many positions in common, such as interest in the funding and continued success of academics and research on campus, the adequate wages of faculty and staff on campus, and the betterment of campus experience for both students and faculty; and,

WHEREAS, in the pursuit of shared governance with university administration, the Academic Senate has access to valuable and sensitive information not available to the Associated Students of the University of California; and,

WHEREAS, representatives of the student body require the most up-to-date and pertinent information in order to make sound, informed, and salient decisions; and,

WHEREAS, Academic Senate appointments have given students the policy expertise and institutional knowledge required to make meaningful changes to academic policy on campus and broader campus initiatives in the past; and,

WHEREAS, in the current campus climate of budget cuts and discontinuing of programs, it is ever more imperative for students to have a seat at every table that affects us; and,

WHEREAS, greater student representation in Academic Senate committees effectively furthers this

aim, ensuring a healthy continued relationship between students and faculty on issues which affect students; and,

WHEREAS, currently many more students apply to sit on Academic Senate committees than get seats and willing student voices should not be silenced; and,

WHEREAS, the Academic Senate does not share its agenda packets and only share meeting minutes which detail very little of the proceedings and decisions of their committees; and,

WHEREAS, recent efforts to increase transparency, such as the publication of the Divisional Council Fortnightly, still largely lack published faculty opinion, decisions, and information on smaller initiatives; and,

WHEREAS, the decision of whether or not to add student seats to Academic Senate committees does not include the Associated Students of the University of California and could very possibly occur behind closed doors without the advocacy of students, making this bill even more important to unify student opinion on this matter; and,

WHEREAS, amending Academic Senate bylaws is an opaque, inaccessible process that is not conducive to making changes,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Associated Students of the University of California fully support and adopt in their efforts of advocacy the increase of student seats in Academic Senate committees listed in Appendix A; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Associated Students of the University of California find asking seats on the Divisional Council (DIVCO), where no students currently sit, especially imperative to the interest of students on campus and will push this item as the most critical to the mission of increasing student representation in the Academic Senate; and,


THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Associated Students of the University of California will send a formal memorandum to the Academic Senate asking them to share the agenda packets of the Divisional Council (DIVCO) and Committee on Resource Allocation and Academic Planning (CAPRA) with the ASUC Executives (President, Executive Vice President, External Affairs Vice President, Academic Affairs Vice President, and Student Advocate); and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Associated Students of the University of California urge the the Academic Senate to increase its transparency, allowing students to always be present when discussing student led initiatives and laying out transparent policies for the direction of bylaw changes in the future; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Associated Students of the University of California request the Academic Senate to allow other students to stand in for student designees in the event a student designee is not able to attend a meeting; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Associated Students of the University of California recognize the need to increase institutional memory of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, and will adopt measures to ensure that all elected officials are aware of the duties and powers of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate.

Appendix A:

Committee	Number of Seats Requested in Addition	Number of Total Voting Seats 	Designation of Seats
Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE)	1	3	-
Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)	2	4	2 ASUC, 2 GA
Committee on Course Instruction (COCI)	1	4	-
Diversity, Equity, and Campus Climate (DECC)	2	4	-
Divisional Council (DIVCO)	2 non-voting members	2	1 ASUC, 1 GA (non-voting)
Undergraduate Council (UGC)	1	3	4 ASUC, 1 designated for the AAVP