

The Regents of the University of California

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

July 21, 2016

The Committee on Educational Policy met on the above date at UCSF–Mission Bay Conference Center, San Francisco.

Members present: Regents Island, Kieffer, Lansing, Ortiz Oakley, Ramirez, Reiss, and Varner; Ex officio members Lozano and Napolitano; Advisory member Chalfant; Staff Advisors Richmond and Valdry

In attendance: Regents Blum, Brody, De La Peña, Makarechian, Pattiz, Pérez, Schroeder, Sherman, and Zettel, Regents-designate Lemus, Marcia, and Monge, Faculty Representative Hare, Secretary and Chief of Staff Shaw, General Counsel Robinson, Chief Compliance and Audit Officer Vacca, Chief Investment Officer Bachher, Provost Dorr, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Brostrom, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Nava, Senior Vice President Henderson, Vice Presidents Brown, Budil, Duckett, and Humiston, Chancellors Block, Blumenthal, Dirks, Hawgood, Khosla, Leland, Wilcox, and Yang, Acting Chancellor Hexter, and Recording Secretary McCarthy

The meeting convened at 9:45 a.m. with Committee Chair Island presiding.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of May 11, 2016 were approved.

**2. FOOD ACCESS AND SECURITY: AN UPDATE**

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Committee Chair Island briefly introduced this discussion of the serious issue of food security for UC students.

President Napolitano commented that in order to gain a deeper understanding of food security at UC and to develop an effective plan to address food insecurity, the Office of the President funded the University's first in-depth food security survey of UC students in 2015, one of the largest surveys of its kind in the United States. This online survey, using the six-item United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food security module with questions about instances when students had to skip meals or lacked money to purchase food, was sent to 66,000 students across all ten UC campuses; 9,000 undergraduates and graduate students completed the survey. In addition, the Office

of the President provided \$75,000 to each UC campus in 2015 to support student food access and to immediately enhance existing food security projects. She recalled that food security was a key initiative of former student Regent Saifuddin. The survey found that 19 percent of student respondents had “very low” food security which the USDA defines as “experiencing reduced food intake at times due to limited resources.” The survey also found that an additional 23 percent of respondents had “low” food security, experiencing “reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet” but with “little or no indication of reduced food intake.” The survey found that 57 percent of food insecure students were experiencing food insecurity for the first time. The findings indicate that students may require additional support and education in areas such as money management, financial literacy, existing financial aid options, and making healthy choices on a limited budget. The survey findings were peer reviewed by outside experts and the USDA’s Economic Research Service.

In response, the Office of the President has committed more than \$3 million to UC campuses over the upcoming two years to address food security challenges. In collaboration with students, faculty, staff, administration, and community experts, the Global Food Initiative’s (GFI) Food Access and Security Subcommittee has developed an action plan supported by funding from the Office of the President. The plan includes: expanding food pantry storage and access; integrating food preparation and secure storage space into new housing design and construction; increasing collaboration with State and County offices to register students for CalFresh, the State’s nutrition assistance program; establishing and expanding campaigns for students on support services and food access awareness; providing access to mobile kitchen services; enhancing financial aid communications about housing and food costs; expanding existing economic crisis response teams and creating new teams to provide support and guidance for students experiencing immediate financial hardship; expanding existing Swipe Out Hunger programs that allow UC students to donate excess meal plan dollars to students in need; and developing food voucher benefits and financial aid guidelines to support increased resources for UC students.

Provost Dorr commented that the University takes the issue of food insecurity most seriously. GFI Food Access and Security Subcommittee Co-Chair Ruben Canedo expressed appreciation to President Napolitano and the Regents for their support since the Subcommittee’s last presentation the prior year about food insecurity among UC students. Over the past year, the Subcommittee has worked closely with UC leadership.

GFI Food Access and Security Subcommittee Co-Chair Tim Galarneau shared data helping to deepen understanding of these challenges faced by UC students. The President’s initial \$75,000 commitment to each UC campus had been put into place in the past year. The USDA estimates that one of every seven U.S. households is food insecure, meaning that a lack of money or other resources limits its access to food. In 2014, 11.1 percent of UC students indicated on the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey that they skipped meals “somewhat often” to save money and 14.8 percent indicated that they skipped meals “often to very often” to save money.

Mr. Canedo commented on the Student Food Access and Security Study commissioned by President Napolitano and conducted in 2015 by the Nutrition Policy Institute within UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Students were asked to think about times during the past 12 months when they had to skip meals or lacked money to purchase food. Food insecurity can encompass issues from a poor-quality diet that lacks variety to a diet with irregular eating patterns and reduced food consumption. UC's survey found that, in addition to the statistics cited by President Napolitano earlier, students have a desire for information about food assistance, food pantries, budgeting, and how to cook inexpensive, healthy meals. Graduate students reported lower rates of food insecurity than undergraduates, but the survey confirmed that food insecurity does not affect only undergraduates. The survey indicated that students reporting "low" and "very low" food security were more likely to have lower grades and suspend their studies because of financial hardships. These students were also likely to buy the least expensive food available knowing that it is not the healthiest food option, and were twice as likely to report feelings of depression.

Mr. Canedo stated that understanding the causes of food insecurity remains challenging. California ranks among the most expensive states in the nation and the cost of housing is a factor that students consistently cite. Students sometimes have to choose between paying their rent and buying food. He expressed appreciation for President Napolitano's addressing students' housing concerns by launching the Student Housing Initiative, which he looked forward to supporting, as food and housing security are intertwined.

Mr. Galarneau added that the Office of the President's student financial support team conducted a cross analysis of UCUES data regarding food insecurity with financial aid data that yielded two major insights. The notion that Pell Grant or DREAM Aid recipients are the only students struggling with food insecurity is not accurate. In fact, both students who received aid and those who did not reported having to skip meals because of a lack of money. Second, students who reported skipping meals the most were more likely to take out loans, although one-third of these students chose not to borrow.

Mr. Galarneau reported that the UCUES, the Graduate Student Happiness and Wellbeing Report, and the Undergraduate Cost of Attendance Survey would all be updated to include revised food and housing security questions that would provide essential ongoing systemwide food and housing security data to assess progress toward making UC a basic-needs secure system. Food security committees that include undergraduate and graduate student leadership, staff, faculty, administrators, and community experts had been established at all ten UC campuses. Each campus had established operating emergency relief resources and support services for students in need. Some campuses had launched efforts that involve campus food production, nutrition education, and health and wellness efforts. Data was being collected to evaluate and report on these pilot services. Work would continue with faculty and research experts to establish high-quality, innovative systemwide data collection. To date, more than 50,000 service contacts had been provided to UC students, such as emergency food vouchers, food pantry visits, CalFresh training and registration, workshops and training on essential life skills, and farming and cooking classes.

Mr. Canedo added that the Food Access and Security Subcommittee would work collaboratively with systemwide and campus committees to establish a UC food access and security model that would focus on research and data collection, systemwide coordination, campus coordination, on-campus student services and programming, and off-campus partnerships. On-campus efforts would be guided by a student experience framework that would make holistic, preventive education available to all students to increase their ability to remain basic-needs secure throughout their time at UC and beyond. The goal of the framework is to target education and training efforts broadly, while funneling additional resources such as access to CalFresh, campus pantries, and emergency relief to students with the most need. The ultimate goal of the model is to ensure that each campus proactively minimizes states of emergency and chronic basic-need insecurity among its student population. Student food insecurity is a national challenge for higher education.

Mr. Canedo had participated in the 2015 Closing the Hunger Gap national conference and the 2016 #RealCollege, a national meeting about college student food and housing insecurity. He commented that UC's work to proactively address these challenges was pioneering. At the state level, the Subcommittee had engaged the California Community Colleges and California State University systems, and Mr. Canedo looked forward to establishing a formal cross-segment basic-needs security partnership. He expressed appreciation for President Napolitano's continuing support by pledging funding of more than \$3.3 million over the next two years, including \$171,000 per campus.

Regent Ramirez expressed enthusiasm about this work that continued the work of former student Regent Saifuddin.

Regent Pattiz commented that the connection between high housing costs and food insecurity indicated that the Regents should focus on housing affordability, assistance with textbooks, and generally improving the affordability of the University.

Chairman Lozano congratulated Mr. Canedo and Mr. Galarneau on their work. She said it would be helpful to have data on food insecurity disaggregated by campus so that programs can be targeted to areas of greatest need.

Staff Advisor Richmond added that staff would be willing to contribute support to food pantries at the campuses.

Regent-designate Lemus asked how the UC Alumni Associations could help in this effort.

Regent Zettel commended the educational efforts included in the Subcommittee's program and asked how many campuses had student farms. Mr. Galarneau responded that UC campuses had a wide range of farming projects that helped to engage students in farming and healthy food preparation.

Regent-designate Monge recalled that as a UC Santa Barbara student he had worked in 2011 to establish its food bank, which had since greatly increased the number of students it serves. He affirmed that student need is real and consideration of UC affordability should include housing and food access.

Regent Varner said that he and Regents Makarechian and Pérez work with several food chains that could possibly donate excess food to the University. He would follow up on this and provide information to the presenters.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff