The Regents of the University of California

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BASIC NEEDS
January 15, 2019

The Special Committee on Basic Needs met on the above date at UCSF–Mission Bay Conference Center, San Francisco.

Members Present: Regents Anguiano, Butler, Cohen, Graves, Morimoto, and Ortiz Oakley; Ex officio member Kieffer; Advisory members Bhavnani and Weddle; Chancellor May

In attendance: Regents Anderson and Leib, Regent-designate Um, Secretary and Chief of Staff Shaw, General Counsel Robinson, Provost Brown, Vice President Brown, and Recording Secretary Johns

The meeting convened at 3:30 p.m. with Committee Chair Graves presiding.

Committee Chair Graves thanked Chair Kieffer and Regent-designate Weddle for their help in establishing this Special Committee. He recalled that the charge of the Special Committee was to produce a report at the end of two years with an overview of basic needs at UC and ways in which the campuses and the Office of the President were solving these complex issues. Committee Chair Graves stated his personal goal that the Regents would consider basic needs when discussing other areas, such as housing and academic affairs. He looked forward to working with the Special Committee and others to support UC students.

1.   **REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BASIC NEEDS EFFORTS**

    [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.]

    Associate Vice President Jerlena Griffin-Desta recalled that President Napolitano had launched the Global Food Initiative in July 2014 with the goal of providing nutritious food in a sustainable manner for the growing world population. The Initiative also included the challenge of addressing the food insecurity of UC students. At this point, all UC campuses had established robust basic needs committees comprised of UC students, faculty, staff, and administrators. These committees focus on campus models that are based on prevention, sustainable institutionalization, advocacy, and research.

    In 2016, questions about food and housing were added to both the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) and the Graduate Student Well-Being Survey (GSWBS) to further examine the issue of basic needs. From these surveys, the University learned that 44 percent of undergraduate students and 26 percent of graduate students reported having experienced food insecurity. UC took a first internal step of preliminary assessment of housing challenges by including one question on homelessness in its 2016 UCUES and GSWBS surveys. Five percent of both UC undergraduate and graduate student respondents

indicated that they had experienced homelessness at some point during their enrollment. The question used had not been validated to ensure it is an accurate measurement of homelessness and the issue of defining "homelessness" and how to correctly measure housing insecurity was still being addressed nationally. To address the validity of questions about housing, the Initiative had begun funding the necessary research to produce validated questions that can accurately measure housing security by spring 2019.

During the 2015-16 academic year, President Napolitano allocated $75,000 per undergraduate campus to immediately support student food access and enhance existing campus food security projects. Following that initial support, the Office of the President (UCOP) committed more than $3 million to UC campuses over a three-year period to comprehensively address basic needs challenges. The California State Legislature has also provided $4 million in funding since 2017 to support UC's efforts to address student hunger. Funds from the State have helped UC campuses to expand emergency meal services, host CalFresh enrollment clinics, invest in one-time infrastructure and equipment needs, and hire temporary staff such as student and contract employees to bolster overall basic needs efforts at the local level.

Ms. Griffin-Desta noted that the University has also tackled basic needs challenges by working to ensure sufficient and affordable student housing availability systemwide. In January 2016, President Napolitano announced the UC Student Housing Initiative, which aimed to add 14,000 new affordable beds by 2020. In support of that initiative, a one-time allocation of $27 million was approved in July 2017 to support campus efforts to address housing needs for students, faculty, and staff. A second allocation for the same purpose was approved in May 2018, allocating an additional $30 million in one-time funds to campuses.

Systemwide Basic Needs Committee Co-Chair and UC Santa Cruz Community-Engaged Education Coordinator Timothy Galarneau outlined elements of UC's basic needs efforts. One area was research, deepening UC's understanding of the student experience, securing data to map the problem as well as the positive impacts of UC efforts. With the addition of questions about food insecurity and housing to the UCUES and GSWBS surveys, the University now had the largest dataset on college food insecurity in the nation. These data would help the University understand its student demographics, determine who the most vulnerable students are, and target its solutions. Another area was sustainability and institutionalizing this work. In this context, the University had created a joint task force with the California Community Colleges and the California State University to learn from one another. In the area of advocacy and policy, California was in the forefront of introducing policies to remove barriers to enrollment in CalFresh and supplemental nutrition assistance programs and in the forefront of examining student and youth homelessness. The U.S. Government Accountability Office had recently issued a report on food insecurity among college students and had included data and insights provided by UC.

Systemwide Basic Needs Committee Co-Chair and UC Berkeley Research and Mobilization Coordinator Ruben Canedo remarked that no other university system in the U.S. was making quite the same effort as UC to address student basic needs. He stressed

the importance of prevention efforts aimed at students to avoid crises, such as contemplating dropping out of college or suicide. All students should be aware of basic needs support available on campus. Student homelessness rates increase after the freshman year. Students sometimes think they can do without food or housing in order to lower their debt on graduation. The University wishes to intervene by educating, guiding, and presenting strategies. Students might still fall short because the federal Pell Grant was at a 40-year low in terms of purchasing power, while the cost of attending UC and cost of living were only increasing. Because not all students are eligible for the CalFresh program, the University has its own Food Assistance Program. Mr. Canedo outlined the University's efforts to teach basic needs skills, provide emergency relief, and resolve crises. He stressed that just having a food pantry on campus was not sufficient to address student basic needs.

Regent Leib noted that he had visited UC Riverside the previous week. Students reported that the CalFresh application was cumbersome for UCR students while easier for students at other campuses. He asked why the UC system did not have a single program for all the campuses. If there were an issue at the County level, the University should be able to approach County officials, who should not be opposed to expediting the application process. Mr. Canedo observed that in order to qualify for CalFresh, college students must not only meet certain federal poverty criteria but also work 20 hours per week. Efforts were under way to persuade the federal government that the socioeconomic profile of college students had changed since the 1970s and that these requirements should be changed. The situation at UCR was due to lack of software infrastructure. Students at some campuses can use an online platform to apply for CalFresh. Some counties were still updating their systems and could not yet process online applications. An encouraging development had been announced the previous day by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. The decision tree mechanism for sharing financial aid data had been updated to include public assistance. Financial aid offices should now be able to share data with counties in support of public assistance interventions for students. Mr. Canedo anticipated that it might become possible to automatically enroll eligible students in CalFresh.

Regent Anguiano remarked that the University appeared to have a comprehensive framework for addressing student basic needs. She asked where UC had the most work to do and where UC had made the most progress. Mr. Galarneau responded that the University was learning as it proceeds with this process. The next readily achievable goal would be messaging to students before they come to UC and during the admissions process. The University can communicate to students and parents that it has resources to support student basic needs. UC's creative crisis resolution models and emergency aid responses were well developed. Mr. Canedo added that UC had been making efforts to support students for a number of years but not in a strategic way, as a system. At this point, the University needed to increase its efforts to address existing student needs. He estimated that campuses were not even addressing 30 percent of existing needs. It was important to sustain current efforts and begin scaling them toward the magnitude needed.

Regent Morimoto asked how often the University surveys students in order to track and measure basic needs. Mr. Galarneau responded that this depends on the student population.

The University carries out the UCUES, GSWBS, and Cost of Attendance surveys. In addition, UCOP administered a Got Food? Survey to measure student food access and security. Mr. Canedo added that the UCOP Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning would be making these basic needs data public.

Regent Morimoto asked if student basic needs had changed over the last several years. The current discussion was focused on food insecurity and housing needs. He asked if any other trends had emerged indicating other basic needs in the future. Mr. Canedo responded that as the cost of attendance increases, students prioritize tuition and fees, followed by rent, books and educational materials, and food. Food was the last priority in this list, and students are willing to sacrifice food if the other priorities have been taken care of. He noted that the University had developed robust structures to support student mental health. Mr. Galarneau observed that medical co-pays and security deposits were not included in the financial aid model. Emergency aid was related to basic needs in many ways.

Chair Kieffer asked if the Regents should be most concerned about tuition increases, financial aid, or basic needs. Mr. Canedo responded that these issues are closely interwoven and could not be separated. One could not consider tuition and fees without considering the total cost of attendance, which includes basic needs. He suggested that the Pell Grant should be adjusted for inflation. Calls for tuition-free college neglect the fact that the largest contributor to debt for middle- and low-income students is the cost of living, not tuition and fees. UC pantries were being used not only by low-income students, but by middle-income students as well.

2.   **CONSULTATION WITH CAMPUS AND SYSTEMWIDE BASIC NEEDS COMMITTEE LEADERS**

[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.]

Systemwide Basic Needs Committee Co-Chair and UC Berkeley Research and Mobilization Coordinator Ruben Canedo began the discussion by noting that all campuses were involved in developing the UC systemwide basic needs model and strategy. Every campus has the autonomy to operationalize the strategy as it sees fit. This allows campuses to innovate and learn from one another. Systemwide Basic Needs Committee Co-Chair and UC Santa Cruz Community-Engaged Education Coordinator Timothy Galarneau explained that the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee hosts monthly calls with basic needs leadership at all the campuses. This group meets in person twice a year. Mr. Galarneau summarized some of the progress that had been made. UC had published the largest study to date of student food and housing security at a four-year research university. Four campuses had completed qualitative studies of food insecurity risk factors and lived experiences. All campuses had established basic needs committees and started to build basic needs prevention models. All campuses had made efforts to facilitate applications and enrollment in the CalFresh program. All campuses had begun emergency food provision efforts. These efforts included pantries and mobile distribution. Most campuses had launched basic needs skills development, regular programming about food preparation,

housing, financial aid, and other basic needs topics. Half of UC campuses had Basic Needs Centers, either online or on site. These basic needs efforts had served approximately 52,000 students systemwide in fiscal year 2017-18.

UC San Diego Basic Needs Coordinator Alicia Magallanes discussed the basic needs security program at UCSD. In order to destigmatize this topic and to ensure that its activities are proactive rather than reactive, the campus regularly engages student leadership for feedback. Collaborative planning includes students, faculty, and staff, and off-campus community partnerships critical to achieving goals. The most notable community partners were the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, the San Diego Hunger Coalition, and the San Diego Food Bank.

Regent-designate Weddle, a graduate student at UCSD, presented three data points regarding the UCSD program: over 3,000 students used the UCSD food pantry in fall quarter 2018; 18 percent of pantry users were graduate students; and 16 students received short-term emergency housing in fall quarter 2018. The UCSD food pantry is a free service open to all registered students. Students can visit weekly and receive the equivalent of about ten to 15 meals. The UCSD emergency housing protocol offers students free housing for up to a month.

Ms. Magallanes presented quotes from students that described situations of eating once a day to save money, giving money to help his or her family and not having enough money to pay rent, and sleeping in a car and on a friend's couch.

Regent-designate Weddle presented a timeline and outlined how UCSD's basic needs program evolved from 2014 to 2019. She stressed that having a full time staff coordinator was critical to these efforts. In 2018, UCSD opened the HUB, its basic needs center on campus. Ms. Magallanes presented pictures of the HUB, a comfortable space for seeking resources and building community that has the atmosphere of a small home.

Regent-designate Weddle noted that international and undocumented students are not eligible for CalFresh, so UCSD has implemented a campus-based meal assistance program to address this gap. She described UCSD food recovery efforts, which take leftover food from campus events as well as off-campus stores and farmers markets and route this food to the basic needs center. The campus also offers skills education, such as financial literacy workshops. Many of these resources were developed in consultation with systemwide basic needs partners. These initiatives were funded primarily with State funds and funds from the Office of the President. UCSD had also dedicated campus resources for basic needs.

Ms. Magallanes displayed a slide showing the basic needs assistance form, which is filled out by UCSD students and reviewed by Student Affairs case managers. The form is a starting point for directing a student toward the appropriate assistance and resources. She presented positive student testimonials that demonstrated the success of UCSD's basic needs program.

Regent-designate Weddle remarked that in spite of successes so far, the University was still far from serving the full population of students facing food and housing insecurity. She outlined three recommendations for the Special Committee. First, the University should examine the intersection between federal and State policy and basic needs insecurity across UC. At a recent CalFresh application clinic at UC Davis, 181 students applied for benefits. If all of these students were to receive full CalFresh benefits this would represent more than $400,000 in food benefits for the year. The University could be a leader in reform of the CalFresh program and expand access for UC students. Second, UC should consider which data are needed to properly understand and address food and housing insecurity. The previous UC systemwide report was very helpful in guiding basic needs efforts, but there was currently no expectation that this reporting would continue. Third, the Special Committee should explore long-term, sustainable funding strategies to support basic needs services.

Regent-designate Um asked about the short-term housing provided for students and how many campuses had a basic needs coordinator like Ms. Magallanes; he stated that every campus should have such a staff member. Ms. Magallanes responded that campuses needed more dedicated staff but that the campuses were working together as a team. With regard to temporary, emergency housing, she explained that when housing funds were allocated to UCSD, some funding was allocated to support emergency housing needs. Regent-designate Weddle added that four campuses currently had basic needs coordinators but cautioned that these positions had been funded with one-time funds. Mr. Galarneau noted that efforts were under way to stabilize funding for basic needs services. There was a need for dedicated funding.

Staff Advisor Main asked how faculty and staff can help educate campuses about basic needs and advocate for this work. Regent-designate Weddle reported that all faculty at UCSD were presented with short slides they can present at their first class meetings to make sure students are aware of basic needs resources. Ms. Magallanes described basic needs training for staff and faculty. Mr. Canedo noted that some UC staff themselves are in need. The UC Berkeley pantry was now also available to staff and in the fall 2018 semester, 14 to 18 percent of pantry users at UCB were staff. Sometimes, faculty and staff assist students with their own money; he observed that this money should be directed to campus basic needs programs, which can maximize the value of this support. Mr. Galarneau added that every campus has a website with information about basic needs resources.

Faculty Representative Bhavnani asked if it was possible to work with campus authorities when projects for student housing are developed so that emergency housing is included in new projects. She asked what kind of emergency housing UCSD had. Regent-designate Weddle responded that UCSD keeps a certain number of campus apartments available for emergency housing. The campus also has partnerships with local hotels. Mr. Canedo observed that some campuses have empty beds in existing housing and suggested that these could be made available to students with basic needs at a sliding scale cost; campuses would be earning some revenue rather than no revenue for these beds. He encouraged the

Special Committee to develop a University basic needs statement or policy including a commitment to providing a certain quality of life for students.

Ms. Bhavnani urged the University to not only seek to make empty beds in existing dormitories available but to set aside a certain number of beds for emergency housing in new student housing projects. Mr. Galarneau expressed support for this idea and for setting beds aside at sliding scale cost.

Regent Cohen asked what actions UCSD was taking to facilitate students' enrollment in CalFresh. The University should make the most of this program. Ms. Magallanes responded that UCSD had a strong partnership with the County administration and that this work was a collaboration between the Hunger Coalition, the County Health and Human Services Agency, and the campus. The County had supported the campus when UCSD launched a campus web page for student enrollment in CalFresh. County employees come to campus to carry out group enrollment clinics. A smaller clinic takes place two weeks later when students can apply and submit verification. The campus basic needs website provides an assistance form for CalFresh. Ms. Magallanes stressed that the success of these efforts was due to working with the County from the beginning. Regent-designate Weddle noted that enrollment of UCSD students in CalFresh had not really happened until there was a dedicated staff member to build this initiative.

Regent Cohen underscored that there has to be a link to the County, which is responsible for providing this benefit. Mr. Canedo reported that UC Davis had a full-time eligibility worker on campus and that many students were able to enroll in CalFresh. It was important to provide students with the ability to interview on campus for CalFresh benefits. He emphasized that many graduate students were eligible for CalFresh and that UC needed to do more to enroll them.

Regent Leib observed that some graduate students were represented by unions and asked if these unions could assist in facilitating graduate students' enrollment in CalFresh. He asked if UCSD could help UC Riverside in its work with Riverside County. Mr. Canedo responded that UC communicates about these issues with relevant State and County officials. The decision-making authority in this matter rested with the counties, and if a county does not want to implement software it is not required to do so. Student enrollment in CalFresh functioned particularly well at UC Santa Barbara and this should be replicated systemwide. Committee Chair Graves noted that not all graduate students are members of a union and that these efforts must support all students.

Regent Leib stated that the University should work with and put pressure on the counties to provide this monthly benefit of $200 for needy students. The University is an important constituency in the counties where UC campuses are located.

Regent Anderson asked why automatic enrollment of eligible students in CalFresh was difficult. Mr. Canedo responded that the most significant obstacle was a lack of awareness that college students were eligible. It was essential for students to conduct interviews and

provide a mailing address. He suggested that this mailing address could be the campus financial aid office.

Regent Anderson emphasized that this was an achievable goal and should be a priority for the University. Mr. Canedo remarked that all campuses must have basic needs centers and dedicated staff to enroll students in CalFresh.

Regent Anderson suggested that the University should seek the support of the new Governor and Lieutenant Governor for these efforts. With regard to students who were not eligible for CalFresh, he asked what programs campuses had, such as subsidizing meal cards. Mr. Galarneau responded that this varies by campus. Campus dining programs have partnered with basic needs programs, but consistent funding was needed to support these efforts. It was also important to have emergency aid for students in unique circumstances when other sources of support were not available. Regent-designate Weddle confirmed that UC was providing support for students not eligible for CalFresh, but there needed to be long-term, sustainable funding for this support.

3.   **SPECIAL COMMITTEE FUTURE ITEMS AND PRIORITIES**

[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 Graves stated that the Special Committee would discuss available data on basic needs in greater detail at future meetings.

Regent Anguiano observed that in addition to examining data, the Special Committee should take a systemic approach, examine the progress made by each campus in terms of executing basic needs strategy, and identify gaps.

Regent-designate Weddle stated that the Special Committee needed to establish an expectation for a baseline level of support at each campus. Another topic for future discussion would be current efforts on legislation to combat student homelessness and for rapid re-housing.

Regent Cohen remarked that the Special Committee should have a sense of urgency and be cognizant of the State budget calendar. The Special Committee should determine which plans or projects would be ready by June 2019, the beginning of the next fiscal year, and which plans could wait until the next fiscal year.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff