The Regents of the University of California

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
September 28, 2021

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee met on the above date by teleconference meeting conducted in accordance with Paragraph 3 of Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20.

Members present: Regents Anguiano, Elliott, Lansing, Park, Torres, and Zaragoza; Advisory members Blas Pedral, Cochran, and Timmons; Chancellors Block, Larive, May, and Yang; Staff Advisor Tseng

In attendance: Regent Hernandez, Assistant Secretary Lyall, General Counsel Robinson, Provost Brown, Vice Presidents Gullatt and Maldonado, and Recording Secretary Li

The meeting convened at 9:45 p.m. with Committee Chair Park presiding.

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

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of July 21, 2021 were approved, Regents Anguiano, Elliott, Lansing, Park, Torres, and Zaragoza voting "aye."[1]

2. **UPDATE ON STUDENT BASIC NEEDS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

[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.]

Provost Brown stated that this presentation was an annual update that had been recommended by the Special Committee on Basic Needs.

Vice President Gullatt that the Special Committee's final report, "The University of California's Next Phase of Improving Student Basic Needs," presented November 2020, expanded the definition of basic needs to include equitable access to sufficient, nutritious food; safe, secure, and adequate housing; physical and mental health care; affordable transportation; personal hygiene resources; and emergency needs for students with dependents. The Special Committee set a goal of reducing food and housing insecurity by half by 2025. When the report was issued, 44 percent of undergraduate students and 26 percent of graduate students reported food insecurity, and five percent of undergraduate and graduate students reporting experiencing homelessness. In the spring 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, 39 percent of respondents reported experiencing low to very low food security, 20 percent reported experiencing very low food security, and four percent reported being homeless. In the spring 2021 UC Graduate Student Experience

[1] Roll call vote required by the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act [Government Code §11123(b)(1)(D)] for all meetings held by teleconference.

Survey, 20 percent of respondents reported experiencing low to very low food security, nine percent reported experiencing very low food security, and three percent reported being homeless. The University was assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to refine survey measures and benchmark progress toward the final report's goals. UC continued to collaborate with other segments of public higher education, focusing on CalFresh eligibility, outreach, enrollment, and student approval rates.

Genie Kim, Director of Student Mental Health and Wellbeing, stated that UC organized resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes from the final report into a roadmap to achieve shared goals. Campuses have implemented basic needs programs and services, and the Systemwide Committee on Basic Needs has identified the goals that these efforts could help meet, but assumptions and external factors could affect overall outcomes. For instance, assuming that all students used financial aid could affect financial stability, and external factors such as stable campus and community infrastructure were needed to ensure access to services and resources. The roadmap would be reassessed and updated as more information is shared. Since November, UC has submitted two legislative reports tied to State funding, received $650,000 in one-time funding for CalFresh outreach and $15 million in ongoing funding for student mental health from the State, and launched a new systemwide basic needs website to track progress toward the Regents' goals. The systemwide basic needs coordinating team conducted "roadshow" information sessions regarding the recommendations and goals in the final report, and the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee co-chairs worked with campus leadership on strategizing and goal setting. These goals and priorities would be added to a comprehensive strategic plan. In 2020–21, 52,883 students were served and 226,790 student contacts were made. Assembly Bill (AB) 1326 ensured that universities had a County liaison, which could improve equity gaps and access to public benefits.

Suzanna Martinez, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at UCSF, shared some results from a summer 2020 survey of graduate students regarding the impact of the pandemic on their basic needs. Students were recruited from basic needs listservs, and 791 students participated. Thirty percent of respondents reported a decrease in pay, 49 percent saw an increase in expenses, and 47 percent sent money home. Thirty percent had difficulty covering living costs, 23 percent applied for housing subsidies, and 22 percent could not afford food and housing necessities. Forty-seven percent reported high depressive symptoms, 45 percent experienced food insecurity, and 50 percent had accessed a food pantry. Graduate students who sent money home and could not pay for basic needs or afford housing costs were more likely to experience food insecurity. Students who were unable to pay for basic needs, had more time demands, such as errands and family responsibilities, and could not pay their utilities were more likely to have high depressive symptoms. Increased basic needs support for graduate students was needed, and programs and policies focusing on graduate students could remediate some of the negative impacts of the pandemic. Ms. Martinez recalled how subsidized housing helped her as a single parent and graduate student at UC San Diego.

Brittany Loofbourrow, UC Davis graduate student, stated that the majority of her colleagues noted delays in research and uncertainty regarding graduation and teaching

placements. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students could not return home to their families during the pandemic because they lived off-campus and commuted, had campus or family responsibilities, and had expensive leases. Ms. Loofbourrow had to maintain her teaching assistant position to financially support herself and her spouse, who was unable to work or attend university due to a medical disability. She could have lost her position if the class lost students, and her work could have changed at any moment. She had to exercise flexibility as a researcher and instructor while maintaining empathy and compassion toward her students. She regarded the last year as a "lost year" that highlighted the tenuous position of graduate students. Priorities shifted from producing the best research and being leaders in teacher to surviving and leaving. She felt trapped in an unaffordable situation in which she felt uncertainty and a lack of control.

Yulissa Peñaloza, UC Merced undergraduate student and food distribution lead at UC Merced Basic Needs, shared that having a reliable internet connection was a significant challenge for her during the transition to remote instruction, and she received assistance from the campus technology resource program. Other students also had connectivity issues through their entire virtual learning experience. Her family did not fully understand her need for privacy as a student, and she felt that she needed to support her family financially during that time. Her father was an undocumented essential worker who faced a higher risk of exposure to COVID-19 and lacked federal financial support. Ms. Peñaloza noticed that many of her UCM peers experienced food and housing insecurity, as well as a lack of mental health support. When students were notified that Merced Station, which was off-campus housing, was not ready at move-in, over 1,000 students were displaced, and those placed temporarily in hotels were unable to use produce from food distributions because they did not have access to kitchens. She regarded UC Merced as a food desert, and there were four campus counselors to support a student population of over 9,000. She looked forward to the incoming funding for mental health services and stressed the importance of supporting students not just as learners, but as individuals with basic needs challenges.

Committee Chair Park asked if Governor Newsom had signed AB 1326. Ms. Kim replied that the bill had been enrolled on September 10. Committee Chair Park noted that this meant it was pending the Governor's signature, and she suggested that the University send a letter asking Governor Newsom to sign AB 1326 into law. Ms. Gullatt noted that UC sent a letter of support for AB 1326 in late September.

Committee Chair Park asked if all campuses notified students of their CalFresh eligibility. Executive Director of Student Financial Support Shawn Brick replied that all campuses did notify students who appeared to be eligible for CalFresh. Under the temporary amendments to CalFresh requirements, anyone eligible for federal work-study could apply for CalFresh. About 90,000 notifications were sent to students.

Committee Chair Park asked whether a County-requested verification letter accompanied this notification. Mr. Brick responded in the affirmative. State Senator William Dodd had authored a bill seeking a common form letter that verified that a student qualified for CalFresh, and all campuses were using that form letter.

Regent Anguiano asked how tasks and upstream items were being tracked. Ms. Kim stated that Systemwide Basic Needs Committee Co-Chairs Ruben Canedo and Tim Galarneau worked with the campuses to identify their priorities and goals, which would be mapped to the Regents' recommendations. Stakeholders were informed of the final report and its recommendations as well. Mr. Canedo stated that he was discussing with campuses how Regental expectations would translate at the campus level while campuses shared their needs. Ms. Martinez also developed models that demonstrate what each campus needs. The pandemic changed how UC approached basic needs intervention. Mr. Galarneau added that the dashboard from Institutional Research and Academic Planning and the roadshow have helped campus leadership better understand their own campus' status and the final report. He and Mr. Canedo asked leaders to consider how campus-level goals and priorities related to the expanded definition of basic needs, and he hoped that campus spending plans would be aligned with that definition and campus priorities related to that definition.

Committee Chair Park suggested that progress made on each recommendation be reported so that each campus' position in the implementation process would be clear.

Regent Hernandez asked how the $650,000 in one-time CalFresh funding would be used, noting that the need would not go away after the money is spent. Ms. Gullatt stated that, in general, UC could spend one-time funding over multiple years. The University aimed to pursue ongoing funding to sustain the necessary basic needs infrastructure and services. Mr. Canedo added that the funding was used to adapt UC's CalFresh efforts during the pandemic. The Systemwide Basic Needs Committee was discussing with the campuses how these CalFresh efforts should evolve to serve students after the pandemic, particularly since students were living farther from campuses. The Systemwide Committee was also working with the State to include student access to BenefitsCal, an online portal for managing government benefits that recently launched.

Regent-designate Blas Pedral, referring to Figure 2 of the written materials, asked if UC was still tracking housing placements. Ms. Kim replied that the cutoff for those data was July 2021, but UC would continue to track campus progress. Regent-designate Blas Pedral asked about the students who did not secure permanent housing and if the permanent housing that was secured was on or off campus. Ms. Kim stated that some students received emergency housing grants and others received temporary assistance to secure on- or off-campus housing. Those who secured long-term housing were seeking long-term housing.

Staff Advisor Tseng remarked that staff were experiencing similar basic needs issues and asked what else could be done to better support the entire UC community. Mr. Galarneau replied that the food pantry at UC Riverside was expanding to provide staff-specific hours, and Chancellor Wilcox and UCR leadership determined that COVID-19 funding could go toward supporting staff and faculty. He saw an opportunity to use federal relief funds to expand the basic needs infrastructure.

Regent Zaragoza noted that some students could not afford basic needs because they had additional expenses, such as car payments, credit card payments, or financially supporting their families. While the University could not help students cover these expenses,

acknowledging them could create a more accurate picture of students' basic needs challenges, even if it does not lead to financial aid expansion. Mr. Brick acknowledged the need for a better assessment of the total cost of attendance (TCOA). UC has continued to refine how TCOA is estimated, but there were certain limits set by the State and federal government. UC must also determine whether it is appropriate to use tuition-funded financial aid to help students sending money home to their families, for instance. Mr. Brick remarked that this demonstrated a failure of the country's social safety net. In the UC Cost of Attendance Survey, 20 to 25 percent of students reported sending money home, which Mr. Brick felt was significant. UC might not have a solution yet but needed to understand the scope of the problem.

Regent Zaragoza suggested collecting data on students' additional expenses and the financial aid they received. These data could be used in future State or federal advocacy. Committee Chair Park suggested that the Office of the President provide a proposal on such a data collection effort, stressing the importance of students understanding the different costs outside of the official TCOA. Mr. Canedo noted that students were hesitant to respond to financial questions, because they were afraid that their answers could mean either less financial aid or the validation of a broken system. UC must explain to students that such questions were meant for advocacy. Ms. Martinez added that basic needs research revealed that today's emerging adulthood, with its various trajectories, was very different from what it had been 20 to 30 years ago. Determining what data were needed to examine these trajectories would be important. Mr. Brick and his team were looking at existing data in new ways.

Regent-designate Timmons asked what percentage of graduate and undergraduate students had their total cost of attendance covered. Mr. Brick stated that the systemwide policy for undergraduate students assumed that students would be working, borrowing, using financial aid, and/or receiving a parent contribution. This Committee has been discussing the possibility of a debt-free UC education. He stated that assumptions must be made when administering billions of dollars in financial aid, but they did not always match what students were experiencing. Parents might not be able to contribute, or students might be reluctant to take out student loans. Having looked at the data, Mr. Brick was reluctant to attribute not taking out loans to experiencing food insecurity. Graduate student financial models varied among graduate academic and professional students, even by program. Regent-designate Timmons remarked that UC seemed to know who was experiencing basic needs insecurities, but not necessarily why they were experiencing it. Mr. Brick stated that the financial aid offices knew who was more likely to be food insecure and were trying to treat basic needs insecurities as a data point to revise policies.

Regent-designate Blas Pedral asked how many students were receiving federal loan servicing and whether UC had communicated to students the upcoming changes. Mr. Brick responded that nearly all loans that UC students take out were through the federal program. He added that he would take the suggestion of communications to students back to his financial aid colleagues for consideration.

Committee Chair Park asked about progress toward the final report's recommendation of increasing the number students enrolled in CalFresh by 50 percent by 2022, as well as consulting with the California Policy Lab. Ms. Kim replied that UC was working with California Policy Lab, the California Department of Social Services, and California Student Aid Commission to analyze data. UC knew how many students it provided with enrollment assistance, but UC did not know how many students were enrolled in CalFresh. The California Policy Lab was matching student data to see how many were receiving benefits. These findings would be presented at a future meeting.

3. **STATE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

[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.]

Provost Brown began his remarks by expressing gratitude to Governor Newsom and the Legislature for supporting the University's requests for student success and well-being funding, allocating $15 million in ongoing funding for student mental health and $22.5 million in one-time funding for Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships (SAPEP). Advocacy for other funding requests continued. Mr. Brown explained the process for determining the use of new State funding. First, Academic Affairs worked with State Governmental Relations (SGR) and the Office of Budget Analysis and Planning (BAP) to understand the State's intent and goals. Then, Academic Affairs consulted with campuses and subject matter experts to identify strategies, objectives, and metrics to match this intent and meet these goals, and with campuses and BAP on funding allocation methodology. Funding was allocated on competitive or per capita bases. Academic Affairs reviewed and approved campus spending plans to ensure that they met funding intent, and templates were provided to the campuses to ensure consistent information and effective reporting. A vice chancellor or vice provost worked with program directors and deans to devise staffing and program plans. Academic Affairs provided feedback on campus implementation progress and outcomes, and summary reports were sent to the State, President Drake, and the Regents.

Vice President Gullatt explained that SAPEP was a portfolio of 13 programs, services, and tools that was designed to prepare California students for postsecondary education, including graduate and professional school. Current ongoing funding was $22 million, down from over $80 million in the early 2000s. The $22.5 million one-time allocation would double available SAPEP funding in 2021–22 and was the first time in 15 years that SAPEP has received substantial reinvestment. Ms. Gullatt thanked Regents for making it a budget priority. These new funds would go toward expanding college and graduate school advising, application assistance, and academic enrichment programs; supporting summer research and graduate school preparation; further developing UC Scout, data tools that address A–G course gaps, and A–G coursework; upgrade information systems for transfer students, such as ASSIST and the UC Transfer Admission Planner. The funds would support more student-initiated program volunteers and staff by expanding destination

college advising by recent graduates in high-need middle and high schools. Campuses could propose new approaches for competitive awards.

The State Budget Act allocated $15 million in ongoing funds to address student mental health, in addition to $5.3 million allocated in 2019. UC launched the Equity in Mental Health Funding Initiative, which would ensure the use of evidence-based strategies in addressing the behavioral health crisis and equity gaps, and divided the $15 million into four categories. The first category, comprehensive prevention and early intervention, included peer navigation and outreach programs that focus on transitions into and out of college, wellness, and resilience. The second category, comprehensive treatment and recovery support programs, included a treatment team that had crisis advocates, recovery specialists, clinical support, case management, and campus safety and conduct. The third category, collaborative community well-being programs, included academic support and ensuring equal access to care, and were aimed at underrepresented student populations that traditionally sought less care. The fourth category, research and data innovation, included a data warehouse and dashboards to help the University understand and benchmark its progress. Each campus was asked to submit a plan on the use of these new funds.

Vice Provost Susan Carlson stated that, while the State Budget Act did not specify how to apportion the $5 million allocation for culturally competent faculty and equal opportunity hiring, SGR noted that the intent was for $3 million to go toward the Advancing Faculty Diversity (AFD) program and the rest to go toward building more culturally competent faculty and leveraging 21st century technology to improve outcomes. AFD was established six years ago with a $2 million State allocation, and funds were awarded to campuses competitively. This year, AFD was funding six diversity recruitment projects from a range of disciplines. UC Santa Barbara planned to recruit new professors whose research focused on racial trauma in black communities. UC Riverside planned for a cluster hire for the Black Studies, Environment, Sustainability, and Health Equity, Religious Studies, and Political Science departments. UC San Diego had a Latino(a) cluster hire initiative to meet students' curricular, co-curricular, and cultural needs. To increase faculty cultural competency, the University was partnering with Sea Change, a program from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. This partnership would provide a framework for professional development that focuses on cultural competence and inclusion.

Mr. Brown added that the University saw an opportunity to diversify the professoriate beyond the state.

Committee Chair Park asked if the allocation of student mental health funding was done in consultation with a student advisory committee. Ms. Gullatt responded that the systemwide Student Mental Health Oversight Committee, which had student representation within it, and other student consultation was part of the Equity in Mental Health Funding Initiative.

Committee Chair Park asked if what was presented on hiring culturally competent faculty aligned with the State's understanding of how these funds would be spent. Ms. Carlson replied in the affirmative, adding that it came from discussion with SGR.

Regent Hernandez, noting that SAPEP funding peaked in the early 2000s, asked if there were plans to advocate for more ongoing funding. Ms. Gullatt replied that SAPEP funding decreased over time along with other parts of the University's budget, and campuses faced difficult decisions as funding eroded. One-time funding allowed UC to test new approaches or temporary expansion, but it did not support infrastructure or early and frequent student outreach. One-time funding could go toward advocacy of this type of early engagement. Ms. Gullatt expressed hope that this could be converted to ongoing funding in the future.

Regent Lansing emphasized the Regents' obligation to continue their advocacy work with Governor Newsom and the Legislature, as well as the urgency of this work. UC must show how the funding is used and how it continues to be needed.

Committee Chair Park asked about the implementation of a common learning management system (LMS), for which $1 million was allocated. Ms. Gullatt stated that this was ongoing funding that was contingent upon agreement across all segments of public higher education and UC campuses regarding the procurement of a common system. It was recommended that the LMS be adopted by 2023–24. Currently, eight campuses used Instructure's Canvas, while UC Santa Barbara and UCSF used Noodle, an open-platform LMS with a no-cost license. Chief information officers have met to discuss an approach, and UC needed to know what would make funding available in the first year of implementation, as this would be a multi-year effort. Memoranda of understanding would be needed among the UC campuses and with the other segments. Much more work had to be done.

4. **ACCOUNTABILITY SUB-REPORT ON DIVERSITY: SYSTEMWIDE SUMMARY OF UC STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF REPRESENTATION AND OUTCOMES**

[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.]

Provost Brown introduced the item, explaining that it was the result of the recommendation that UC report annually on the status of diversity of the University made in September 2007 by the Regents' Committee on Educational Policy.

Vice President Gullatt stated that the sub-report was based on data from the 2021 accountability report and additional data from various surveys. UC was beginning to see the impact of its investments toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. UC has made progress in admission and enrollment of underrepresented undergraduate students, as well as persistence among first-generation undergraduate students and African American and Latino(a) doctoral students. Graduate program enrollees were more diverse than the applicant pool for those programs. Ms. Gullatt presented a chart demonstrating the steady increase in the percentage of underrepresented undergraduate students, graduate students, and staff. The percentage of underrepresented undergraduate students rose from 17 percent in 1999 to 30 percent in 2020. During that time, in-state freshman students from underrepresented groups rose from 16 to 35 percent. Enrollment of first-generation students has kept pace with overall enrollment growth. Enrollment of African American

students in doctoral programs doubled from two to four percent since 2002, and enrollment of Hispanic/Latino(a) students in doctoral programs has doubled from five to ten percent. Overall hiring of UC faculty was outpacing the availability of U.S. doctoral degree recipients by race, ethnicity, and gender, with exceptions in the physical sciences, mathematics, and some professional fields. In 2020, the UC work force was 34 percent white, 25 percent Asian American, 24 percent Hispanic/Latino(a), eight percent African American, two percent identifying with multiple racial groups, and less than one percent Native American/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

There were four areas where UC was making less progress. The number of African American and Native American freshman students from California public schools was lower than the number of African American and Native American students who completed A–G courses. The $22.5 million one-time Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships (SAPEP) funding would go toward programs in those students' schools. The gap between representation of Hispanic/Latino(a) students in doctoral programs and their representation among bachelor degree recipients has widened. Five campuses were designated Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and the UC-HSI Doctoral Diversity Initiative provided grants for early research opportunities at HSIs and funding to Ph.D. students who graduate from California HSIs. Systemwide, senior management was the least diverse employee group. UC has employed bias-free recruitment and hiring processes, which included mandatory training for all search advisory committees and use of equity advisors. The proportion of women and underrepresented faculty lagged behind availability pools in some science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. UC continued to invest in strategies from the Advancing Faculty Diversity (AFD) program and the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. New strategies included contribution to diversity statements, supporting postdoctoral work, revising evaluation practices, and introducing new voices, like those of students, in the recruitment and evaluation process.

UC San Diego Vice Chancellor Becky Petitt presented a five-part process that UCSD used to track its progress in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts: strategic plans for inclusive excellence, comprehensive accountability profiles, division/unit self-analysis, accountability meetings, and performance-based incentives. The strategic plan for inclusive excellence had three core tenets—access and success, accountability, and climate—and every unit was expected to report on these tenets. A comprehensive accountability profile was created for every unit using data on access, presence, and climate from the unit's constituents. Ms. Petitt presented sample dashboards that units analyzed. One dashboard tracked the diversity of the faculty applicant pool through all stages of recruitment, while another dashboard displayed campus climate data from the faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students in the unit. There were dashboards that showed trends over time and comparator data. After analyzing these data, units would then submit a report and present their findings at accountability meetings to Chancellor Khosla, the executive vice chancellor, and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Council on the state of EDI in the unit, strategy effectiveness, and future strategies. To conclude the process, Ms. Petitt would share each unit's progress, best practices, and a toolkit for creating strategic plans in a campus-wide communication. Nearly every unit has

renewed its commitment to EDI, and many units have diversity-related roles. The campus launched an anti-racist pedagogy initiative and increased its focus on health equity.

UC Davis Vice Chancellor Renetta Garrison Tull shared some of the initiatives at the Davis campus. One of the goals in "To Boldly Go," the campus-wide strategic plan developed by Chancellor May in 2018, was to embrace diversity, practice inclusive excellence, make UC Davis a place of excellence for working and learning, promote wellness and sustainability, and cultivate the open exchange of ideas. The 2017 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Vision (D&ISV) and the 2019 HSI Task Force Report guided the campus' diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) actions, such as hiring its inaugural HSI director. Ms. Tull briefly described the following accountability programs: Harassment and Discrimination Assistance and Prevention Program, Audit Management Advisory Services, Police Accountability Board, Aggie Metrics, DEI Assessment and D&ISV, Campus Staff Experience Survey, Administrative Advisory Groups and Employee Resource Groups, and the Council of Deans and Vice Chancellors retreat. The campus coupled the Transformative Justice in Education Center's pedagogical stances on history, race, justice, language, and futures with D&ISV goals dedicated to students, faculty and staff, campus climate, DEI instruction and connection to neighboring communities, and accountability. The DEI office created five steps that units could take to develop an action plan: organizing a DEI committee, consulting with experts such as those in the Transformative Justice in Education Center, engagement and research, planning, and sustaining, assessing, and iterating the plan. Ms. Tull shared some strategic DEI investments at UC Davis. New associate deans were hired to take on DEI roles at UC Davis Health, one at the School of Nursing and two at the School of Medicine. There has been an increase in the number of DEI courses and committees, and in the number of federal or foundation applications in diversity. UC Davis has won several AFD grants, and the campus saw improvements in diversity rankings. From 2017 to 2020, DEI course participation rose by 447 percent. In October, Chancellor May was convening campus leaders for the annual retreat on the UCD strategic plan, with a focus on diversity metrics and initiatives.

Regent Hernandez asked if there was a summary of systemwide and campus key performance indicators that would demonstrate the University's progress. Ms. Petitt replied that such a summary exists on the San Diego campus. Mr. Brown stated that the campuses' goals and methods of data collection varied slightly, which made creating a systemwide summary challenging. However, DEI leaders from the different campuses were convening and sharing information. Ms. Gullatt added that the UC Information Center had diversity dashboards, but campus dashboards were more dynamic. The Office of the President was working to make the Information Center more user-friendly.

Regent Zaragoza, referring to the written materials, noted high rates of dissatisfaction among faculty who were women of color. Because certain departments had very few faculty or staff who were women of color, these women faculty were taking on the additional work of speaking at diversity events and running initiatives. More women of color were needed in these departments to support each other. Ms. Gullatt replied that the Academic Personnel Manual (APM) - 2010 was expanded to validate these kinds of contributions in the tenure and promotion process, but she acknowledged that policy and

practice differed. Ms. Toll stated that UC Davis has focused on women and women of color faculty, recognizing campus and nationwide trends of caregiving by women of students and family during the pandemic. The campus was trying to address this through AFD grants and through centers such as the Center for the Advancement of Multicultural Perspectives on Science and the Center for the Advancement of Multicultural Perspective on Social Science, Arts, and Humanities, both led by faculty members. Ms. Petitt stated that UCSD faculty of color were reporting that there was uneven and invisible labor. Unit leaders were asked to ensure that work loads are balanced and that expectations are consistent. UC San Diego had a Center for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion led by a tenured faculty member.

Committee Chair Park, referring to written materials, noted the low percentages of African American students who reported feeling respected or a sense of belonging and low percentages of faculty of color who would recommend their department. She asked why these numbers were so low and what was being done about it. Chancellor Khosla replied that UCSD was still trying to grow from the Compton Cookout, an off-campus event hosted by the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity in 2010 that intended to mock Black History Month. His conversations with then Speaker Pérez led to the creation of Ms. Petitt's position. The San Diego campus was becoming more focused on the black experience at UC. In the last eight years, the percentage of black students at UCSD grew from 1.8 percent to three percent. The campus was improving, but there was more work to be done. Chancellor Khosla stressed that inclusion was equally as important as diversity. Chancellor Block stated that he shared these concerns. This year, admission of African American students improved at UCLA, and the campus opened the Black Bruin Resource Center for students. He hoped that these were the types of actions that would improve student experience at UCLA. Chancellor May stated that, this year, *QS World University Rankings* rated UC Davis top in the nation in diversity, inclusiveness, and internationalization, which Chancellor May believed would not be possible if campus climate was not improving. He underscored the contribution of role models in the student experience, noting that the College of Agriculture and the College of Letters and Science both had African American women deans. The Center for African Diaspora Student Success and other campus centers were working to improve students' lived experience. Performance also affected the student experience, so UC Davis was working to close opportunity gaps, and Chancellor May believed significant progress has been made.

Regent Torres expressed strong disappointment in UC's admission rates of African American students. He underscored the need for more African American and Latino(a) professors, whose presence would encourage students to apply to the University. He had spoken to Arynn Auzout Settle, a project director at the California Community Colleges who helped students transfer to historically black colleges and universities. Regent Torres suggested that UC create a similar position that reached out to African American community college students and encouraged them to apply to UC. The University must concentrate on the admission of African American and Native American students. Chancellor May stated that UC Davis and UC Merced have partnered in Improve Your Tomorrow, an organization that aimed to increase the number of young men of color, especially African American men, by 1,300 on these campuses. Given that nonresident enrollment was limited to 18 percent and African Americans made up six percent of

California's population, Chancellor May opined that six percent might be the upper limit for African American enrollment. He suggested that the nonresident enrollment cap be reconsidered in this context.

Regent Zaragoza distinguished lived experience from numbers, adding that she had noticed very few black students in her own classes. She did not believe that these numbers would change until underrepresented students saw themselves reflected among their instructors and peers. Ms. Gullatt expressed her appreciation to Regent Torres and Regent Zaragoza, noting that sense of belonging was a multi-layered and nuanced issue. UC has partnered with the Umoja Community from the California Community Colleges to better convey the University to African American students. There might be messages UC was sending either intentionally or unintentionally. The temporary increase in SAPEP funding would place UC students in schools who could talk to students about the University. UC needed to disrupt the message at K–12 schools and community colleges that UC was too difficult.

Committee Chair Park asked the campuses to set specific goals to improve students' feelings of respect and sense of belonging such that surveys would reflect those improvements.

5. **FINANCIAL AID OUTREACH, COMMUNICATION, AND PROCESSING**

[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.]

Provost Brown explained that Regents Park and Anguiano had asked the University to work toward an action item regarding financial aid to be presented next spring. He underscored the importance of clear communication about the financial aid process from middle school to college graduation.

Executive Director of Student Financial Support Shawn Brick stated that UC reminded students to apply for financial aid during the application process and explained how to read and understand the financial aid offer letter. Then, campus financial aid offices helped entering students with the financial aid process through to graduation. Mr. Brick presented a timeline with the five messages conveyed to students at various stages of their UC journey. Every campus already had a financial wellness training program for current students. This summer, Enrollment Services and Outreach and Educational Partnerships at the Office of the President (UCOP) partnered with Beneficial State Bank to create pre-college financial literacy workshops. Hopefully, financial literacy resources would be available through all of UC's K–12 programs. UCOP commissioned uASPIRE to conduct focus groups in order to develop recommendations for the financial aid process, such as creating a common glossary, aligning how information is conveyed, improving the explanation of next steps, and providing translation services. UCOP has convened a work group to implement these recommendations, with milestones this fall and next spring.

UC Santa Barbara Associate Vice Chancellor Michael Miller stated that financial aid offices had some flexibility under federal and State law in revising financial aid awards

under certain circumstances, such as a family member's unemployment or unexpected medical expense, but existing pressures on financial aid offices made timely responses challenging. In order to expedite the processing of financial aid appeals and provide counseling to students, UCSB worked with a third-party vendor to "go paperless," or digitize its financial aid operations. Students could now upload documents to the financial aid office using their mobile phones, which has saved weeks of processing time. The financial aid office was now able to review financial aid appeals much earlier, giving families more time to make financial decisions. Since the pandemic, the office has reviewed 45 percent more appeals, generating an estimated $3 million in additional grant eligibility for students in need.

Committee Chair Park, referring to the presentation materials, asked what metrics were used to measure the effectiveness or reach of the message "You can afford college." Mr. Brick replied that it was difficult to parse the effectiveness of this message as opposed to other factors affecting enrollment, but UC did compare the family income of enrollees and students with that of the California population. There was an opportunity to more broadly examine enrollment in higher education.

Committee Chair Park encouraged UC to consider whether the messaging campaign had the intended effect. She asked if campuses tracked financial aid appointments and whether they increased. Mr. Miller responded in the affirmative. Students were unable to make in-person or walk-in appointments since the pandemic, but telephone calls, emails, and appointments by teleconference have increased, and he expected the trend to continue.

Regent-designate Blas Pedral asked how much students had borrowed from the University per academic year. Mr. Brick replied that UC held about $44 million in outstanding debt for UC students compared with the hundreds of millions of dollars that students have taken out in federal loans. He stated that he could follow up regarding the number of students who have taken out UC loans.

Regent-designate Blas Pedral asked how much in receivables, such as parking or library fees, students owed the University, particularly since some students withdrew from UC during the pandemic. Mr. Brick stated that he would follow up with such information.

Regent-designate Timmons asked if this Committee has looked at the trajectory toward a debt-free education. Mr. Brown replied that UC student debt levels were low compared with other institutions. There was a way to go before UC could create a debt-free educational path, but President Drake was very interested in it, especially for students who were debt-averse. The University was determining whether there were alternate ways that students could generate their self-help contribution, which could involve increasing employment, internship, or service opportunities. Mr. Brick stated that a presentation on the changing landscape of federal and State financial aid programs was planned for an upcoming meeting. For instance, the State revised the Middle Class Scholarship program with the intent to create a debt-free pathway at the California State University and UC.

Regent-designate Timmons asked if there were systemwide programs at the undergraduate level like the postdoctoral or graduate funding programs. Mr. Brown replied that the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program incentivized later faculty hiring, and the Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program was the campus analog. Both programs were heavily oversubscribed and needed more resources. He was not aware of a similar undergraduate program at the systemwide level. Mr. Brick replied in the negative; the campuses all had their own scholarship programs, but it was systemwide policy that UC or outside scholarships could offset the need to work and borrow. Mr. Miller added that the UCSB financial aid office worked closely with its central development office to bring in as many outside and donor scholarships as possible to drive down the self-help contribution amount. Mr. Brown stated that alumni donated much to scholarships, but UCOP did not have a similar resource.

Committee Chair Park, referring to the written materials, noted that 37 percent of uASPIRE survey respondents were surprised by their college and bill and 61 percent were surprised by additional college costs. She called attention to the juxtaposition of and difference between the quality of UC communication on the one hand and student understanding on the other. While 100 percent of respondents thought their campus clearly communicated the financial aid process, 50 percent thought that students did not understand how much they had to pay after reviewing their financial aid offer, and more than one-third thought that students did not know the types of aid or what next steps to take. Committee Chair Park asked what would be done to address these and other findings in the uASPIRE survey. Mr. Brick stated that this was a persistent problem in the financial aid community. A national consensus had been reached regarding net cost of attendance, which was total cost minus any gift aid. Net cost helped students compare offers but did not help them determine how to pay for college. The University needed to communicate more of the latter. Mr. Miller shared that UCSB provided informational videos, but he agreed that there was much work to be done. Every student's situation was different, so effective communication was challenging. For instance, students living on campus went through the student billing system, while students who lived off campus did not. The campus was excited about feedback it had received on its financial aid award letters. Mr. Brick stated that the work group would look closely into this. uASPIRE also identified best practices for UC to consider.

Staff Advisor Tseng shared that she and Staff Advisor Lakireddy were working to promote UC as an employer of choice for students. About 50 percent staff were UC alumni, and not many knew that the University was part of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program or participated in it. Ms. Tseng suggested that student-facing staff could talk to students about the benefits of working at UC. She also stressed building a culture of philanthropy among students. Mr. Miller shared that UC Santa Barbara did remind staff about the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and how to participate. As the federal loan payment pause sunsets, UCSB would be reaching out to the campus community regarding next steps.

Committee Chair Park asked if students could choose monthly disbursements of financial aid with interest, remarking that managing a large lump sum over a period of many months

might be more difficult for a fairly young adult. Mr. Miller stated that there were rules against holding financial aid refunds on behalf of students. UCSB reached out to students receiving large refund amounts to offer them counseling. Students would have already made decisions about loans or employment even before they enter campus, so the financial aid office would have missed the opportunity to speak to them before they make those decisions. He was an advocate of partnering with organizations like the California Student Aid Commission to provide as much early education as possible.

6. **THE ASSIST PROGRAM: AN INTERSEGMENTAL PARTNERSHIP FACILITATING TRANSFER**

[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.]

Provost Brown stated that this presentation was part of an ongoing series about the transfer process. The University's priorities with regard to transfer were to ensure equitable access to UC, improve the quality of preparation, and support transfer student success. He emphasized the importance of infrastructure, such as tools that help students determine which community college courses were deemed equivalent to courses at UC or the California State University (CSU).

Monica Lin, Director of A–G and Transfer Policy and Chair of the ASSIST Executive Management and Oversight Committee, stated that, since 1985, the three segments of public higher education in California have been collaborating to provide information on transferrable courses, which has now become the ASSIST program. ASSIST consisted of a public site and data management site for maintaining and accessing transfer course information, and provided the most updated information for individual users and downstream systems in admissions and registrar offices. In 2020, the ASSIST Executive Management and Oversight Committee conducted a national review of transfer articulation systems from 15 other states and found that the majority of states had custom-built systems like ASSIST, relied on different methods of transfer articulation, and presented varying types of articulation information to end users. Information was typically coordinated at a centralized source, such as a State Department of Education or a flagship university. Only California, Arizona, and Florida had systems with a statewide transfer search site, statewide review process, and statewide data report functionality. California was the only state that had a course submission and review process and offered articulation by major, department, and course prefix. ASSIST's uniqueness could be attributed to the volume of students served in California. The Office of the President (UCOP) was the program's fiscal agent, so all ASSIST staff were UC employees but served the needs of all three segments. Every year, users accessed millions of articulation agreements, which showed how community college courses satisfied specific department or major requirements, and transferability lists, which showed the community college courses that satisfied CSU or UC elective or general education requirements. In 2019, about two million articulation agreements had been published. Backend users managed community college courses that were submitted and reviewed for transferability and articulation. The "Explore Majors" function was still

under development and would suggest majors to students based on their career goals, as well as the required courses.

The ASSIST technology project began in 2012 and aimed to redesign the legacy system, deliver core components, and provide additional features, such as the ability to import data into degree audit and student planning systems and to customize course and articulation reports. The new ASSIST was then launched in 2019 but had a fragile system architecture due to issues from its previous iteration. In response, the ASSIST Executive Management and Oversight Committee established parallel development streams to handle maintenance and modernization. Once the data management side functions more smoothly, the focus can shift to making the public site more user-friendly for students. Future goals for ASSIST were aligning operations with strategic goals to ensure sustainability, modernizing architecture and backend features, and delivering enhanced system features.

Ms. Lin provided a brief demonstration of the ASSIST public-facing website, which was used by students, advisors, administrators, and faculty. The system now supported access via mobile device and included answers to frequently asked questions and a support page. CSU and UC reviewed about 7,000 community college courses annually, and approved courses were displayed on the public-facing website.

Regent Lansing remarked that ASSIST could improve UC diversity and called on the University to keep refining it, because the transfer process was trickier than what was outlined. She added that ASSIST was likely to have a receptive audience in the Legislature.

Regent Anguiano asked if more resources were needed to improve this tool for students, noting that the system did not prepopulate transfer pathways. Ms. Lin replied in the affirmative. The data were available but needed to be structured, which required sufficient funding. Regent Anguiano asked UC to determine the dollar amount needed, which could then be used to approach foundations or the Legislature.

Regent Zaragoza recalled her experience with ASSIST as a community college student and encouraged Regents to visit the ASSIST website, where students had to check each college campus' requirements. There were also course requirements that were unique to each campus. She asked if there were data regarding the campuses where students wished to apply before and after viewing articulation agreements and how this could be fixed. Ms. Lin stated that the UC Transfer Pathways Initiative was created so that prospective transfer students had a clearer roadmap for the 20 most sought-after majors. The UC Transfer Pathways Guide, which mirrored the information in ASSIST, displayed the community college courses that applied to a particular major for all UC campuses that offered that major.

Committee Chair Park shared her experience on the ASSIST website. In her view, ASSIST was helpful for students who know what and where they wished to study, but this was not the case for many community college students. The intersegmental nature of the system and the various populations that the system served created complexity. Although they would not take the place of academic counseling, UC should aim to give students

21st century tools. UC had an opportunity to envision what it wished to provide to prospective students. Committee Chair Park called for a renewed focus on how fixing these issues related to the student experience with ASSIST.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff