

The Regents of the University of California

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

March 19, 2025

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee met on the above date at the UCLA Luskin Conference Center, Los Angeles campus and by teleconference meeting conducted in accordance with California Government Code §§ 11133.

Members present: Regents Anguiano, Beharry, Hernandez, Leib, Pack, Park, Robinson, Salazar, and Sarris; Advisory members Palazoglu and Wang; Chancellors Gillman, Muñoz, Wilcox, and Yang; Staff Advisor Emiru

In attendance: Regent Myers, Regent-designate Brooks, Regents Analyst Sheridan, General Counsel Robinson, Provost Newman, Vice Presidents Brown and Gullatt, and Recording Secretary Li

The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m. with Committee Chair Leib presiding.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of January 22, 2025 and the minutes of the Joint Meetings of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Finance and Capital Strategies Committee of January 25, 2024 and January 22, 2025 were approved, Regents Beharry, Hernandez, Leib, Pack, Park, and Robinson voting “aye.”¹

2. IMPROVING COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER OPPORTUNITY: A CAMPAIGN FOR TRANSFER EXCELLENCE

[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 Newman introduced the item, a discussion of the University’s efforts to expand transfer access and opportunity for students from the California Community Colleges. Even with transfer rates beginning to rebound to levels seen before the COVID-19 pandemic, there were opportunities for UC to better support and engage transfer students. In light of this goal and the recommendations of the UC-CCC Transfer Task Force and the Regents Task Force on Institutional Growth, UC has identified 69 California Community College campuses for the University’s Campaign for Transfer Excellence. These community colleges were chosen for their large numbers of Pell Grant eligible, first-generation, and underrepresented students as well as their low rates of transfer to UC. The campaign focused on advancing these students’ academic preparation and improving information and resources related to access and affordability. Over the next five years, UC aimed to increase transfers from these community colleges by 2,000 students. The

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

American Talent Initiative (ATI), which was co-founded by President Drake and helped public institutions increase Pell Grant enrollment, has provided \$460,000 to support both the systemwide campaign and individual campus partnerships. All nine UC undergraduate campuses were members of ATI.

Jody Greene, Associate Campus Provost for Academic Success at UC Santa Cruz, stated that, in early 2024, the Association of American Universities (AAU) invited UCSC to join other AAU institutions to develop partnerships with local community colleges to increase the transfer of low-income community college students to four-year universities. ATI gave UCSC a \$50,000 planning grant and the chance to compete for additional funding. UCSC chose to partner with Hartnell College, whose population of 9,000 students was 83 percent Latino(a) and which sent about 600 transfer students to a UC or California State University (CSU) campus every year. Only about 20 Hartnell students transferred every year to UCSC despite the campuses' proximity to each other. The goal of this partnership was to double the annual transfers from Hartnell College, improve UCSC's two-year transfer graduation rate, and to test this model for use at other community colleges.

Last August, ATI awarded UCSC with a two-year, \$250,000 grant to strengthen its partnership with Hartnell College, ease transfer, and improve pathways to high-demand fields. This was part of a larger campus effort to improve transfer outcomes. In 2022, 63.8 percent of transfer students graduated on time, up from 51.9 percent in 2020, and gaps in timely graduation among underrepresented transfer students have been eliminated. UCSC and Hartnell College were developing pathway maps for six majors that aligned with the goals of the funding Compact with the Governor and the Central Coast K–16 Regional Collaborative. These majors corresponded with workforce needs in the Central Coast region and could lead to long-term, well-paying, professional careers close to students' homes and families. Hartnell students had access to a dedicated student support specialist and a peer mentorship program, and Hartnell faculty, staff, students, and their families were informed about UCSC academics, financial aid, and guaranteed admission. Hartnell College has recently begun to ask applicants about their interest in transferring to UCSC. At the Santa Cruz campus, transfer students had their own orientation program and research and internship opportunities.

James Zimmerman, Special Assistant to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost for Transfer Initiatives at UC Merced, shared that, over the past five years, he led the UCM Transfer Curriculum Pathways Project to develop and align transfer pathways from multiple Central Valley community colleges to UC Merced. One of the deliverables was the UCM Program Pathways Mapper, a tool meant to eliminate barriers, reduce the accumulation of excess units, and improve the rate and efficiency of transfer from community colleges to UCM, with a focus on increasing diversity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. The Merced campus collaborated with the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium (CVHEC) to scale the Project. CVHEC played a key role in fostering regional engagement and ensured the Project aligned with the Central Valley's educational priorities. By promoting the value of clear, interactive transfer pathways and the Program Pathways Mapper, the Consortium leveraged its broad network of community colleges, universities, and stakeholders to build a shared

commitment to improved student outcomes and equity across the region. The Project has published 150 curriculum pathway maps that connect UC Merced to 15 of the 69 community colleges identified by the Office of the President (UCOP). As a result of the Project's reach and impact, it secured \$25 million in State funding to expand the Program Pathways Mapper to all segments of California public higher education. Mr. Zimmerman underscored the transformative potential of regional partnerships to drive systemic change.

Regent Park noted that UC Merced had been excluded from committing to a ratio of two California resident freshman students to one California resident transfer student because it was a newer campus. She asked when the campus would be able to make this commitment, what factors were preventing it from doing so earlier, and how the Regents could support the campus' efforts. Mr. Zimmerman noted that while several UC campuses are located within five to ten miles of nearby community colleges, UC Merced is surrounded by approximately 15 institutions spread across a 90- to 120-mile radius, making it more challenging to establish strong transfer pathways. Mr. Zimmerman expressed hope that, with an appropriate resource allocation, UCM would reach that two-to-one ratio in two to three years. Ms. Newman added that the vast majority of the 69 community colleges were far from UC campuses, and she expressed hope that technology would help address the constraints posed by distance. UCOP was working with the Merced campus to remotely offer these community colleges the mathematics courses that transfer students would need for STEM majors.

Regent Anguiano asked about the University's efforts to establish satellite campuses at community colleges. Ms. Newman responded that this was being considered, but UC was focusing more on smoothing the transfer pathway so as not to interrupt the existing institutional arrangements among the community colleges. A satellite campus might be more appropriate in Northern California, where there were enrollment issues.

Regent Hernandez noted UC Merced's recent R1 designation and the 45 percent increase in applications there. He underscored the importance of the success of these programs to sustain enrollment growth and thanked the presenters for their efforts.

Regent Salazar shared that East Los Angeles College students who transfer to UC campuses are revered when they return to their alma mater and inspire other students. He encouraged UC to continue reaching out to all California Community Colleges. Ms. Newman noted that the University admitted 77 percent of transfer applicants from community colleges, but many more students did not apply. The Campaign for Transfer Excellence could help increase equity in California.

Regent Beharry stated that community colleges needed to improve the transfer pathway as well. He shared that 65 to 70 percent of Merced College students did not graduate. A large percentage of those who did graduate took six to eight years to do so, which made them less inclined to transfer to UC. Regent Beharry asked how potential funding cuts would affect transfer. Ms. Newman replied that this was not known, noting outreach costs and the staff needed. A decrease in financial aid would have a significant effect on these students, who came from some of the lowest-income backgrounds. Mr. Zimmerman added that

research on over 15,000 students has shown that using the Program Pathways Mapper lowered the number of credits to degree, shortening time to an associate's degree. Associate Campus Provost Greene stressed the importance of communication and relationship building. The perceived high cost deterred many Hartnell College students from transferring to UC Santa Cruz. With incoming data from Hartnell on students' interest in transfer, UCSC would be able to identify and engage these students early. Associate Campus Provost Greene underscored the importance of listening to the priorities of community college students, who sought employment close to home. Ms. Newman stated that this was a national trend; students were balancing full-time work or childcare with school. Attending school improved their employment prospects even if they did not graduate.

Regent-designate Brooks emphasized that, without proper academic advising, transfer students would struggle to graduate in two years. She asked whether the University could apply for County or municipal grants in order to recruit more counselors for transfer students. Ms. Newman replied that the Program Pathways Mapper would reduce the need for additional counseling. Mr. Zimmerman stated that the Program Pathways Mapper was accessible via mobile phone, so students could show pathways to their families and counselors. The pathways published in the tool would be approved by UC Merced and community college faculty, and courses would have undergone the articulation process.

Chancellor Muñoz stressed the need for confidence in these pathways, which would not be subject to renegotiation within a few years. They were generated by faculty and endorsed by academic leadership through CVHEC, of which he was chair. Such a tool did not exist when Chancellor Muñoz worked as a community college advisor and a faculty member.

Regent-designate Brooks asked if transfer students had priority enrollment. Associate Campus Provost Greene replied that it would depend on the level of impact or demand within a given major.

Committee Chair Leib invited Student Observer Audrey Jacobs to make remarks.

Ms. Jacobs thanked the Regents for their support in promoting transfer, particularly for students from underrepresented backgrounds, and emphasized the importance of actively recruiting and admitting transfer students from such backgrounds. A January 2025 report from the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges found that about 157,000 California students were located in college deserts, areas that were 25 to 80 miles from a four-year university, and this disproportionately affected the transfer rates of low-income, Latino(a), Black, and first-generation community college students. Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships (SAPEP) were needed to address disparities caused by distance and could help make transfer seem more feasible to students from rural areas. UC must account for distance to ensure equitable implementation of policies pursuant to Assembly Bill 928, or the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act of 2021.

3. UPDATE ON SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES 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.]

Genie Kim, Director of Student Mental Health and Well-being, stated that in January 2024, the UC Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities released its report, “Transforming Culture and Practice: Serving Students with Disabilities at the University of California,” which included a strategic framework and recommendations for supporting students with disabilities that would account for intersecting identities and foster a sense of belonging. Established last year, the Systemwide Office of Civil Rights was recruiting a Systemwide Director of Disability Rights to set up a disability rights office. In November 2024, the Board approved amendments to Regents Policy 4400, Policy on University of California Diversity Statement. UC Graduate and Professional Council President Ryan Manriquez provided feedback on these changes. UC was working to ensure that emergency management procedures and evacuation plans are in place at all UC campuses and medical centers so those with disabilities can safely evacuate. The report also recommended the review of Academic Senate regulations regarding the application of incomplete or “I” grades and academic standing policies. The Academic Senate reviewed the report in May 2024, and campuses were examining their policies. Currently, all ten campuses had policies and processes to remove the “I” grade once coursework is completed, and no campuses charged fees to do so. Data sharing was an aspect of UC’s funding Compact with Governor Newsom, and the Office of the President (UCOP) remained committed to working with campus subject matter experts to improve data collection and ensure that services meet student needs. Ms. Kim stressed the importance of data privacy so that data are not identifiable or misused. The UC Electronic Accessibility Committee was drafting an update to the UC Information Technology Accessibility Policy to ensure that the University’s digital content meets accessibility needs. Campuses also received funding to expand the infrastructure needed to support students with disabilities.

According to the 2024 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) and the 2023 UC Graduate Student Experience Survey (UCGSES), 29 percent of undergraduate students and 31 percent of graduate and professional students reported having a disability. However, only about ten percent of the undergraduate and eight percent of the graduate and professional students sought accommodations, indicating that a significant number of students with disabilities did not pursue formal support. Students might choose not to seek accommodations because they developed their own strategies, faced stigma when seeking accommodations, or were overwhelmed by the process. The types of disabilities reported most frequently were learning disability, physical disability, chronic health condition, and neurodevelopmental or cognitive disability. Through State funding and campus efforts, campuses have increased staffing at disability services offices to reduce caseloads and offer a broad range of services and support.

Alexis Applebaum, UCLA student and 2024–25 Disability Justice Officer for the UC Student Association (UCSA), stated that she spoke on behalf of over 65,800 undergraduate

students with disabilities across the UC system. Despite the progress that has been made, disabled students at UC continued to struggle. Hourlong delays in campus mobility services caused students to miss classes and face academic consequences, while limited weekend dining options further affected their campus experience. Although “I” grades would be removed from transcripts at all UC campuses after coursework is completed starting fall 2025, the “I” grades from older courses created barriers to graduate school admission and internships; disqualified students from receiving fellowships, grants, and awards; and could compel students to disclose their disability to justify an “I” grade. Students who were waiting weeks to months for accommodation approvals were taking midterm examinations without extended time and attending lectures without notetaking support. Ms. Applebaum expressed concern about the effect of the systemwide hiring freeze on these issues. In her view, disability services staff were not to blame; they were overworked and underpaid, and there was high turnover. She emphasized that students were not struggling because of their disability, but rather because UC was not providing them with equitable access. Many equity policies did not account for students with disabilities. For instance, immunocompromised students were not able to attend Regents meetings due to the new masking policy. There was not enough discussion about student needs, and students were often not included in decision-making. Ms. Applebaum called for open dialogue to determine the reason for delays in services and how processes could be reformed, more investment to close these gaps, and publicly accessible data, adding that data privacy concerns could be addressed while still ensuring transparency. Millions of dollars have been spent on reducing disability services caseloads, but students still struggled to make appointments. A public dashboard was needed to track improvement and hold institutions accountable. Ms. Applebaum appealed to the University to be bold in its commitment to access and justice for students. She concluded with positive examples of support that students with disabilities have received.

Ryan Manriquez, UC Berkeley graduate student and President of the UC Graduate and Professional Council, shared his observations and experiences as a student with disabilities during his time at UC Davis and at UC Berkeley. Addressing the new masking policy during Regents meetings, he presented different types of masks and described their uses. He recalled being hospitalized after falling ill nearly every year of high school, which caused him to miss weeks to months of school. Addressing the new masking policy at Regents meetings, Mr. Manriquez stated that non-transparent KN95 masks offered more protection and could be deemed reasonable accommodations, and that he looked forward to partnering with the University. The deaths of Anthony Mitchell, Sr. and his son Justin, disabled community members who perished in the Eaton fire, were a reminder of the importance of emergency evacuation policies that specifically address the needs of individuals with disabilities. At the time, resources had been diverted to the Palisades fire, which left gaps in response in the Los Angeles community. Mr. Manriquez recalled his own emotionally distressing emergency evacuation last year. Since then, he has worked with campus partners at UC Berkeley to create the first emergency evacuation preparedness policy in the UC system, taking effect later this year. Included in this policy were individualized emergency evacuation plans after student consultation with staff and strategic and equitable placement of emergency evacuation chairs across the Berkeley campus. In catastrophic emergency situations, when the availability of first responders is

severely strained, building emergency coordinators could promote emergency preparedness and facilitate evacuations. Mr. Manriquez hoped that all ten campuses would enact emergency evacuation policies that address the needs of the disability community in the near future.

The significant gap between the 31 percent of UC graduate students who identified as having a disability and the eight percent who received accommodations highlighted unmet needs, lack of awareness, and systemic barriers. Graduate students with disabilities faced unique challenges, such as demanding research expectations, teaching responsibilities, and varying levels of departmental support. Without proper accommodations, these students risked falling behind academically and leaving their programs prematurely, contributing to disparities in degree completion. Outreach and increased staffing and resources were needed to meet the growing need. Disabled graduate students also needed academic and community space, as well as more robust mentorship roles. At UC Davis, 74 percent of disabled graduate students felt they had the space and resources to succeed academically, compared with 90 percent of nondisabled students, and 78 percent felt included by program faculty, compared with 91 percent of nondisabled students. Disabled students needed ongoing funding from UCOP and the Regents and a continued commitment to disability programs. Disability services staff were essential workers, and the systemwide hiring freeze would inhibit UC's ability to adequately support students.

Regent Hernandez asked whether disability services were standardized across UC and, if not, whether there was a campus that could serve as a model. Ms. Applebaum replied that there was a disjunction between what was known to students and what was occurring. Without access to data, she would not be able to accurately respond, and she reiterated the need for student access to this information. Data were needed to attempt to standardize services across the system. Ms. Newman emphasized the importance of wanting to be data-informed and endorsed Ms. Applebaum's comments. UC was working toward fully standardized data collection regarding this topic. Mr. Manriquez replied that UC Berkeley went above and beyond what was required to support students with disabilities. He suggested that UC focus on going beyond compliance to address issues of community, identity, and ableism. UC Berkeley was the only campus in the system with a disability cultural center and federal TRIO programs dedicated to serving students with disabilities, which were particularly helpful for transfer students. He recalled the physical challenges of transferring from a semester-system school to UC Davis, which had a quarter system.

Regent Hernandez asked what issue was of the highest priority. Ms. Applebaum responded that delays in providing accommodations were a pressing issue affecting students, faculty, and disability services staff. Mr. Manriquez replied that he would first address the issue of wait times to access disability services, especially on quarter-system campuses. This would require staffing. Disabled students needed more space to take examinations. Mr. Manriquez recognized UC Davis' Accommodated Exam Services. Regent Hernandez expressed hope that the Committee could work with the Provost and chancellors to rectify these issues.

Regent Anguiano asked if there were systemic interventions that could make all classes accessible. Ms. Kim responded that one Workgroup recommendation was to work closely

with faculty, centers for teaching and learning, and the Academic Senate to make courses accessible. Faculty Representative Palazoglu added that the Academic Senate has committed to remove potential burdens that disabled students might experience when accessing courses.

4. **INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP 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.]

Provost Newman introduced the item, an update on the University's progress toward implementing the 14 recommendations from the May 2021 report of the Regents Working Group on Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship. Because of the Regents' innovative thinking, the Office of the President (UCOP) was working directly with campus leadership.

Paul Roben, Associate Vice Chancellor for Innovation and Commercialization at UC San Diego and Chair of the President's Entrepreneurship Network Council, shared that the Council's goal was to advance the reach and volume of UC's commercialization, innovation, and entrepreneurship activities, as well as the efficiency, efficacy, and impact of those activities in the community. The campuses nominated external members of the Council. Four programs were managed by the Council: the Proof of Concept Program, the Mentor Networks Program, the Global Entrepreneur in Residence (EIR) Program, and UC-Wide Innovation Awards. The Proof of Concept Program was a fund meant to bridge the "valley of death," a term which describes the period between research and commercialization during which a company faced financial challenges. The Regents and the President approved \$2 million for the fund, and the Council developed processes and guidelines. As of last October, all ten campuses participated in the program, and reports on 50 projects would be submitted this coming October. One such project received a \$50,000 grant to design a rapid-spray bio-coating system to accelerate coral reef growth and was receiving additional support from the U.S. Department of Defense's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

Robert Chin, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology at UCLA, stated that he and Assistant Professor Ricky Savjani developed a novel device to treat bladder cancer, which affected 80,000 patients in the U.S. and was very expensive to treat due to its many recurrences. This type of cancer was not treated with radiotherapy, because the ever-changing shape and position of the bladder would require a very large field and an excess of toxicity. The balloon-like device developed by Dr. Chin and Dr. Savjani delivered radiation from inside the bladder, which prevented a change in bladder shape and radiation exposure to the rest of the body. Progress on this project, which has been running for some 12 years across multiple institutions, has not been steady, but the Proof of Concept program provided it with the necessary capital to produce a prototype in order to engage device makers and investors.

Mr. Roben explained that the Global EIR Program was designed to retain international graduate students, who might otherwise take their companies with them or see their

projects end when their visas expire. The program helped them start and grow their companies in California, thereby retaining the economic impact of these companies in the state. The Governor's office provided \$2 million for a two-year pilot program, which received 24 applications from UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UCLA, UC San Diego, and UC Santa Barbara. So far, President Drake has approved 12 applications for companies in areas such as artificial intelligence, health, transportation, and energy.

The Mentor Networks Program was developing a database to examine how the University was utilizing its engagement with investors and industry mentors. The program has asked the ten campuses to provide data on their mentor networks. With these data, campuses could further develop their networks and the Council could identify gaps and determine whether mentors should be engaged earlier in the research process regarding the market.

The Regents Working Group recommended Innovation Awards to recognize UC inventors, bring visibility to their work, and promote a culture of innovation. Mr. Roben reported that he and others have developed the award criteria, scoring rubric, and marketing strategy, which would be presented to the Regents for approval and sent to the chancellors for input. The Council would help review nominations submitted by the campuses.

Regent Park stated that the Regents were limited in their ability to advance this work and commended the Council's approach to the recommendations, as well as Chancellor Lyons and Provost Newman for assembling a top-notch team. She emphasized that, despite ongoing threats to UC's funding, innovation must remain a priority. It not only enhances lives but would also yield long-term benefits for the University.

Regent Park requested a future update on the Patent Tracking System. Ms. Newman replied that it was going well and that UC would continue to advance its innovation efforts. With the support of several Regents, she and Mr. Roben were seeking additional funding for the Proof of Concept Program.

Regent Beharry stressed that, despite the current budget outlook, UC must not abandon its innovation efforts. He indicated an opportunity to mentor undocumented students in launching their own businesses and securing financing.

Regent-designate Brooks stated that UC innovation highlighted its reliance on diversity and inclusion. She suggested that UC focus on programs that bridge education, practice, and mentorship, and increase access to the University, rather than on conversations about threats to UC.

Regent Robinson asked Dr. Chin for more information about the way Proof of Concept funding made a difference in his project and whether the project would benefit from a program that would help bring the product to broader commercialization. Dr. Chin replied that the project began when he was a young faculty member at the University of Chicago. The universities where he had trained or taught each had a different attitude toward intellectual property (IP) and commercialization. Previously, the project relied on miniatures and drawings, but the Proof of Concept Program gave the project enough

funding to produce a workable prototype in patients and could potentially be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In addition to funding, the Proof of Concept Program also provided innovation expertise. Mentors guided the project toward development, helping shape the questions to consider, and the program had vetted the device makers, investors, and prototyping company currently involved with the project.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff