The Regents of the University of California

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
July 15, 2026

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee met on the above date at the UCSF-Mission Bay Conference Center, San Francisco campus.

Members present: Regents Batchlor, Hernandez, Hueston, Park, Reilly, Sarris, and Tokita; ex officio members Anguiano and Milliken, Advisory member Palazoglu; Chancellors Frenk, Larive, and Muñoz

In attendance: Regents-designate Lum and Roiland, Staff Advisor Hunter Baker, Regents Analyst Sheridan, General Counsel Robinson, Provost Newman, Chancellor Assanis, and Recording Secretary Li

The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Committee Chair Sarris presiding.

Committee Chair Sarris thanked Provost Newman for her service. Ms. Newman fueled the University as it advanced its priorities in research, teaching, and service, and the Board benefited greatly from the information, perspective, and counsel she provided. The Regents looked forward to the continued growth and success of the Degree Plus pilot program, which Ms. Newman led. Committee Chair Sarris expressed enthusiasm about Ms. Newman's upcoming book about unionization and foreign manufacturing plants in the American South and noted that she would continue to serve as Senior Advisor to the President.

Ms. Newman expressed deep gratitude to the University, which has given so much to her family as her and her relatives' alma mater. It has been an honor, pleasure, and privilege to serve UC.

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

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of May 6, 2026 were approved, Regents Anguiano, Hernandez, Hueston, Reilly, Sarris, and Tokita voting "aye."[1]

2. **UC EDUCATION ABROAD PROGRAM: GLOBAL LEARNING FOR CAREER AND WORLD IMPACT**

[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. The University was working hard to communicate that it was offering its best to the world and that it was open to visiting students, faculty, and researchers. Last month, UC hosted a UC Systemwide Academic Congress titled

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

"Shaping Global Futures – International Education in the California Context," which over 300 people attended. Keynote speakers Anne-Marie Slaughter, President of the New America Foundation, and Andrew Moravcsik, Director of the European Union Program and the International Relations Faculty Colloquium at Princeton University, regarded international education as a form of soft power and praised UC's decision to highlight the history and impact of global education. The UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) provided accessible and formative education abroad experiences while acting as a bridge between UC's ten campuses and global partners. Headquartered at UC Santa Barbara, UCEAP offered 300 programs in 40 countries and operated 18 study centers. UCEAP has rebounded since the COVID-19 pandemic, with enrollment reaching an all-time high this academic year. Ms. Newman noted that presenter Dan Waite, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director of UCEAP, had himself studied the history of study abroad, which had its roots in the anti-slavery movement and early 20th century German social sciences.

Mr. Waite recalled that his experience studying abroad at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China and working at UCEAP while pursuing a Ph.D. at UCLA had contributed to his commitment to expanding opportunities in experiential learning. These were complicated times for international education and study abroad, and UCEAP was evolving to meet the moment. UCEAP's fundamental mission was to expand access to study abroad experiences for UC students, and one metric for measuring success was enrollment growth among both incoming and outgoing students. After a decade of enrollment hovering around 5,500 outbound students followed by sharp enrollment declines during the COVID-19 pandemic, UCEAP reached its highest-ever enrollment of nearly 6,200 outbound students last year. UCEAP and faculty-led programs together sent about 12,000 students abroad per year, which was about 16 percent undergraduate participation. However, the increasing cost of travel and current geopolitical instability were significant obstacles to enrollment. Applications to study abroad increased significantly this year, but students were also withdrawing from programs before departure at unprecedented rates. If global disruptions continue, they could affect enrollment.

Among UCEAP participants, 25 percent were first-generation students, and participants' racial demographics were becoming more similar to campus demographics. Focused initiatives targeted the greatest barriers to student enrollment. Study-abroad courses did not necessarily count toward degree requirements, so UCEAP faculty and academic specialists partnered with campus departments to map study-abroad courses to the UC curriculum. As a result, for example, participation among science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors has increased significantly. UCEAP has also made progress in addressing cost, and nearly 40 percent of study-abroad programs were now at or below the cost of attending one's home campus. Many students even saved money by participating in UCEAP programs. The percentage of Pell Grant recipients studying abroad has grown as well, but there was more work to be done. This year, UCEAP offered over $1 million in scholarships and $800,000 in CalVet Veteran Services College Fee Waivers but still needed to increase scholarship support to keep pace with expected application and enrollment growth. UCEAP also sought to communicate the value of global learning through student perspectives and, in light of uncertainties in global affairs, to communicate

that these were safe learning experiences. UCEAP's International Health, Safety, and Crisis Management (IHSCM) Unit helped keep students and parents well informed.

The University also received a growing number of incoming exchange students through UCEAP, welcoming more than 1,400 this year. These were the top students from the world's leading universities, including the National University of Singapore, University College London, the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and the University of Melbourne. The exchange brought about a rich diversity of thought, culture, and experiences to UC campuses, long-term scholarly and diplomatic value, and helped create more affordable opportunities for UC students wishing to study at those campuses.

Global learning experiences produced critical outcomes in student learning. Students viewed studying abroad as a way to connect their classroom to the real world, shape their identities, provide workplace readiness skills in a highly competitive job market, and research findings matched the student perspective. A recent survey found that 92 percent of employers sought skills like curiosity, problem-solving, communication, adaptability, and confidence, skills that were nurtured and improved through study abroad, and more than half of alumni reported that their study-abroad experience helped them obtain their first job. Internships and research also accelerated the development of workplace skills. Internships were UCEAP's fastest growing category of programming, and 40 percent of UCEAP study-abroad programs now offered an internship option. As study abroad has evolved, intercultural skill development and language learning were no longer the only or primary things that students were seeking. Study abroad was a community-based learning experience that prepared students for local and global civic engagement.

Camila Morcate Enriquez, UC Santa Barbara and UCEAP alumna, shared that her own experience immigrating to the U.S. from Mexico challenged her perspective, helped her grow, and inspired her to study abroad. She had initially believed that she would not be able to afford to study abroad but learned about scholarship and financial aid opportunities through an advisor. With such support, Ms. Enriquez committed to a full academic year at King's College London. She interned at the UC Trust, a London-based charity that connected UC students, alumni, donors, and faculty with the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe, and she spoke at the ninth UC Alumni UK Gala. In this new environment, she learned how to adapt quickly, collaborate with others, and gain confidence in her abilities. As an art history and sociology student, Ms. Enriquez, was able to see the many works and artifacts she studied at the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. She was able to explore London with friends and visit new places and began to feel a sense of belonging in London. In addition to memories, Ms. Enriquez returned home with lifelong friendships, greater confidence, and the assurance that she could thrive anywhere in the world. She expressed deep gratitude to UCEAP for making her study abroad experience possible and expressed hope that many more students would have such an opportunity.

Mr. Waite stated that the University's 130,000 study abroad alumni, who were globally engaged business leaders, researchers, medical professionals, and more, were building a lasting network of social, academic, and professional connections between California and the world while fulfilling UC's mission. Each UC campus aimed to solve grand global

challenges, and study abroad prepared students for that work with a learning model that was interdisciplinary and based on challenges in the real world. Mr. Waite presented a video of perspectives from UCEAP students in Ireland and Scotland.

3. **THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF A UC DEGREE**

[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 Sarris stated that data demonstrated that a University of California degree continued to provide exceptional long-term value. UC graduates experienced upward economic mobility, little or manageable debt, and higher returns on the investment in their education. Committee Chair Sarris expressed hope that this could be communicated widely to high school students and their families.

Provost Newman noted that there were many questions about college degrees due to a challenging labor market. She presented a graph comparing unemployment rates over time among all workers, all college graduates, young workers, and recent college graduates. Historically, recent college graduates experienced lower unemployment rates than young workers and the overall workforce. The most significant spike in unemployment occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, and, for the first time in recorded statistical history, the rate of unemployment among recent college graduates has now risen above that of all workers. This demonstrated the greater difficulty that recent college graduates were facing.

Vice President Brown stated that, in 2021, Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP) produced *Fiat Lux: What Is the Value of a UC Degree?*, a report that examined the personal, public, economic, and social benefits of a UC degree. IRAP has continued to update and collect data to better understand UC alumni outcomes in and contributions to the labor market. The alumni career pathways dashboard, presented to the Committee last year, showed the top employers of UC alumni and the positions that alumni held in various sectors and industries. Today's presentation focused on postgraduate earnings and the University's efforts to promote affordability.

A UC degree provided a strong return on investment. The majority of Pell Grant recipients earned more than their families within three years of graduation, and UC bachelor's degree recipients earned more than high school graduates, with earnings doubling between two and ten years after graduation for most disciplines. Over a 20-year period, cumulative earnings of UC bachelor's degree recipients were projected to exceed $2 million, which would be $1.3 million more than California high school graduates and $439,000 more than all California bachelor's degree recipients. According to a study of postsecondary earnings in Texas, the earnings premium of a bachelor's degree exceeded the investment required to obtain the degree within 15 years, regardless of the program of study. IRAP simulated this study by comparing the total educational investment for a UC student—determined by combining tuition and fees less financial aid, the cost of books, and foregone earnings—with the postgraduate earnings premium for UC alumni and with the earnings of high school graduates in the same cohort. The resultant graph mirrored the trajectory of the

Texas study. On average, it took six years after enrollment for UC students to break even on their educational investment. By year 15, cumulative net value-added earnings exceeded $600,000. A graph that compared UC earnings by discipline indicated positive returns over time despite varying break-even points and cumulative net earnings. The UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) found that a higher percentage of engineering and computer science majors chose their majors for higher earnings than did arts and humanities majors. Engineering and computer science majors broke even five years after enrollment and earned a cumulative $1.3 million by year 15, while arts and humanities majors broke even by year eight and earned over $315,000 by year 15. Such a positive return on investment could be attributed to efforts to improve affordability and the predictability of costs; these included the Tuition Stability Plan, reducing non-tuition costs, and increasing the rates of timely graduation. In the last decade, the proportion of California undergraduate students leaving UC with debt has declined from 57 percent to 37 percent, and the amount of debt incurred by in-state students has decreased by $11,500. UC students were graduating with $10,000 less debt than students from public peer institutions. As a result, UC graduates entered the workforce with greater financial flexibility, enabling them to pursue a wider range of careers, pursue graduate school, and navigate the challenging labor market without the pressure of a higher loan repayment.

Sue Harbour, Associate Dean and Executive Director of Career Engagement at UC Berkeley, stated that students were seeking career and internship information from other resources, such as artificial intelligence (AI), school clubs, and family and friends. Hiring in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields rebounded from the COVID-19 pandemic while business and public service sectors have not. As a result of budget cuts, companies were spending less time on campus and doing more recruiting online. With AI, students could apply to large numbers of jobs at once, but this removed a more strategic, individualized approach, and employers were using applicant tracking systems to sort through applications. Career services staff were helping students navigate the commotion in the job application process and educating the campus and students about the way AI was redefining entry-level work and the need for some AI fluency.

UC Berkeley offered experiential learning with academic credit through the Public Service Center, Student Environmental Resource Center, and Social Science Career Readiness Internship Program, and the campus tracked students' summer activity, which included internships, study abroad, and volunteer work. A survey of UCB students' first destination after they graduate found that a higher percentage of the class of 2025 was working than in previous cohorts and that a lower percentage of graduates stayed in California than before the pandemic. UC Berkeley also surveyed employers about career-readiness competencies demonstrated by UCB graduates, and intellectual curiosity and problem solving ranked the highest. Compared with other students, employers reported that UCB students were more prepared for immediate contribution and more analytically rigorous. UC Berkeley's biggest competitors included Stanford University, the University of Massachusetts, UC Davis, and the Georgia Institute of Technology, many of which were schools with strong STEM programs, which reflected the rebounding of STEM hiring. Last year, the UC Berkeley STEM Career and Internship Fair hosted 95 companies and over

2,200 student attendees. Ms. Harbour expressed optimism about employment opportunities.

Ms. Newman added that there were similar efforts being made across the UC system and stressed the importance of making resources available to students in a challenging labor market. While UC degrees prove their worth over time, it would help to complement them with practical experience and trusted references. UC was working to increase experiential learning opportunities, which was a goal in the funding Compact with Governor Newsom. According to the most recent data, about 80 percent of UC senior students reported participation in research, creative projects, internships, or active service. For example, over 25,000 UC undergraduate students have explored careers in teaching mathematics or science through CalTeach, and about 3,100 participants later received mathematics or science credentials. Through Arts Launch, UC students interested in a career in the arts participated in internships and registered in the Orange County Pathways Apprenticeship. Upon completion, students received a skill certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor and the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards. The Degree Plus program offered paid internships with skill certificates through UC Extension in such areas as the arts, business, and technology. Students reported participation in Degree Plus because they believed that it would increase the likelihood of employment after graduation. The Governor has allocated $5 million in next year's budget to expand Degree Plus. Next week, Ms. Newman planned to visit the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education to pursue the new Workforce Pell Grant program for the UC system. She expressed hope that the program could be adapted to support Degree Plus.

4. **THE HISTORY AND ROLE OF A–G IN UC ADMISSIONS**

[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 Sarris recalled Regent Anguiano's announcement the prior day that the Academic Senate has convened working groups to review standardized testing in admissions and A–G requirements. The University aimed to assess whether A–G requirements still prepared applicants for success and to strengthen alignment with the K–12 system. This item was the first of a series of presentations about college readiness in the coming year.

Provost Newman introduced the item. Recently, college preparedness and University admissions have received much attention from UC faculty and the media. In forthcoming months, this Committee would hear a series of examinations and analyses of data related to standardized testing and academic preparation for college. The series was meant to help Regents make an informed decision when the Academic Senate presents its recommendations following review of UC admissions procedures. The completion of A–G courses was a metric for college and career readiness and a requirement for admission to the UC and California State University (CSU) systems. Academic Affairs has done much to expand educational opportunities throughout the state. The University's Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships (SAPEP) programs, such as UC

Compass, UC Scout, and Mathematics, Engineering, Science, Achievement (MESA), sought to improve academic preparation and college readiness and close gaps in A–G completion, especially in lower-income communities and rural schools. The steady increase in access to A–G courses and rates of A–G completion has demonstrated the success of these programs. In particular, A–G completion in public high schools has risen from 45 percent ten years ago to 54 percent in 2024–25, due in large part to dedicated teachers and outreach from the Office of the President.

Associate Vice Provost Han Mi Yoon-Wu indicated that the A–G high school course pattern (A–G), California's college preparatory curriculum, went beyond the State's graduation requirements of three years of English and two years of mathematics, up to the completion of Algebra 1. A–G required four years of English and three years of mathematics, up to the completion of Geometry and Algebra 2. A–G requirements were the same for the UC and CSU systems, but CSU offered more flexibility in how the subject requirements could be fulfilled. A–G was designed to ensure that students have the breadth, perspective, and sufficient foundational skills that enable them to participate fully in advanced learning in their first year at UC or CSU in a wide variety of academic disciplines. UC faculty developed A–G course criteria that describe the content and skills that should be incorporated into California high school curricula as strong preparation for college. Such courses were expected to foster the development of study skills, critical thinking, and analysis, which would help students succeed in their college studies and future careers.

The University has reviewed the curricular content of California public and private high schools since the 1880's. The State's adoption of new curriculum standards, such as the Common Core State Standards for mathematics and English language arts and the Next Generation Science Standards, triggered review by UC faculty for consistency and alignment with A–G. The University supported a number of academic enrichment programs and initiatives that sought to enable more Californians to complete A–G. Under the delegated authority of the Academic Senate's Board of Admission and Relations with Schools (BOARS), the Undergraduate Admissions High School Articulation Unit at the Office of the President had the authority to confer with schools and approve or disapprove courses submitted by schools. Using subject-specific criteria, courses were assessed against content and skills guidelines for a particular subject. On occasion, schools were asked to resubmit courses with additional information or submit a course for a different subject area. This process of postsecondary review and approval was unique to California. Most public and private schools in the state maintained a list of approved courses that fulfilled A–G.

The vast majority of public comprehensive high schools offered the full array of A–G courses, and small and rural schools could also offer the full array of A–G courses through online course providers such as UC Scout or Apex Learning. Schools that offered fewer than the required 15 A–G courses were alternative or continuation high schools or newly established schools, but even 60 percent of alternative and continuation schools offered the full suite of A–G coursework. Of the more than two million public high school students in California, 98 percent had access to the full A–G curriculum in their school, and high schools often offered curricula that exceeded the minimum A–G requirements. UC data indicated that less than one percent of applicants and students admitted to UC took the

minimum 15 A–G courses; the vast majority were taking between 20 to 30 A–G courses, demonstrating rigor throughout their time in high school.

Linda Darling-Hammond, President of the California State Board of Education, stated that much of the current A–G curriculum came from the 1904 report by the National Education Association of the United States Committee on Secondary School Studies (Committee of Ten), a group of educators that convened in 1892. Following the advice of the report, the University's Board of Admissions, which later combined with other groups to create BOARS in 1939, developed the A–F requirements separated by discipline. Area G, Visual and Performing Arts, was later added in 2002. UC also added to A–G standards adopted by the K–12 system. The Common Core State Standards in mathematics were incorporated from 2013 to 2016, and the Next Generation Science Standards were incorporated from 2018 to 2019. The latter allowed for courses in integrated science such as biochemistry and molecular biology, which had previously not been possible under the original divisions between biology, chemistry, and physics set by the Committee of Ten report and adopted by high schools in California and throughout the country.

A–G requirements had wide reach. According to California Education Code Section 51228, school districts with grades seven to 12 must make A–G courses available to all qualified students in those grades. However, schools offering A–G courses were not always able to make them available to every student. To increase A–G course completion, many local education agencies have expanded A–G course offerings, replaced non-A–G courses with alternatives that were A–G-approved, adjusted course sequences, and aligned graduation requirements with A–G requirements. In fact, a number of school districts now required A–G passage for graduation. Ms. Darling-Hammond remarked that, as A–G evolves, the K–12 system would work to align itself and incorporate changes, noting that any change in A–G was significant for high schools.

For the last decade, there have been shortages in the appropriately credentialed teachers required to teach A–G courses, especially in mathematics, science, and world languages; these were associated with a sharp decline in the production of teachers in California. The K–12 system has been working with UC and CSU to offset these shortages, using scholarships for recruitment and retention, program incentives, and more. There have been concerns about college preparation, especially since the pandemic, related to course design, teacher qualifications, and the crowded high school curriculum in California. The State Legislature added subjects such as ethnic studies, financial literacy, and civics/government, and there has been a rise in experiential learning and internships. The split between vocational and academic pathways was fading away, as there was growing interest in students with experiential learning, and students understood the potential need for lifelong learning in response to a rapidly changing economy. As a result, the State was working to align A–G coursework and experiential learning and has invested in dual enrollment programs. For example, programs could offer community college certifications through dual enrollment to students who might pursue a degree later in life.

Ms. Darling-Hammond presented considerations for both the UC and K–12 systems. First was how one could enable a rigorous curriculum. The UC system needed its entrants and

graduates to meet very high standards, so one must ensure that students were truly prepared for what would be expected of them. At BOARS meetings, Ms. Darling-Hammond has shared her concern that students might not be entering college with the needed research, analytic, writing, and problem-solving skills. She wondered whether there were ways to strengthen learning and content specifications. Next was the acknowledgement of new and interdisciplinary fields that were not part of the knowledge base in 1904. For example, despite repeated legislative initiatives to require computer science, only 50 percent of California high schools and one-third of high schools serving concentrations of students of color offered it. This was due in part to the difficulty of fitting computer science within A–G. Interdisciplinary fields have broken through some existing silos, but Ms. Darling-Hammond asked whether courses must be deemed electives if they were interdisciplinary. The third consideration pertained to the evolution of "seat time" to allow for applied and experiential learning. The final consideration was ensuring that teaching and assessment adequately captured the thinking, performance, and learning ability that students would need in this new age of rapid knowledge expansion and economic disruption. The California K–12 system was grappling with these issues, as were states across the country. Ms. Darling-Hammond stated that the K–12 system looked forward to being partners and supporting California's unique process of postsecondary review and approval of courses according to college admissions requirements.

Committee Chair Sarris asked whether rural and inner urban schools had less access and equity. Ms. Darling-Hammond replied that small, rural, and high-poverty schools had less access but added that both the UC and K–12 systems have engaged in much outreach.

Committee Chair Sarris stated his conclusion that access to the University was related to opportunity, not ability. Ms. Darling-Hammond noted that some of this could be attributed to the lack of qualified teachers to teach the courses that should be available to students.

Regent Hernandez asked, in light of observations that computer science was becoming less popular because of artificial intelligence (AI), whether AI should be added to A–G. Ms. Darling-Hammond responded that deep knowledge of technology would still be needed. Basic coders were being replaced by AI, but people who understand technology and how to manage AI would need pathways that should be included in the curriculum.

Regent-designate Roiland asked if high schools counted credits from UC Scout and Apex Learning toward graduation. Ms. Darling-Hammond responded in the affirmative. Schools have often found that they needed teachers to provide accompanying support for those online courses. Ms. Yoon-Wu added that students were also contributing to high school graduation requirements through dual enrollment in local community colleges. Ms. Darling-Hammond stated that, sometimes, a dual enrollment course was not approved for A–G, which presented the challenge of ensuring that students were not duplicating their efforts.

Regent Anguiano expressed her wish for the Committee to consider throughout the year the issues raised by Ms. Darling-Hammond during the presentation.

Committee Chair Sarris invited Student Observer Teesha Sreeram to make remarks. He noted that this was Ms. Sreeram's last meeting as Student Observer and thanked her for her thoughtful contributions to the Committee's discussions over the past year.

Ms. Sreeram, noting that 98 percent of California public high school students now had access to the full A–G curriculum, emphasized the need to work with the K–12 system to ensure high A–G completion rates as well. In the conversation about A–G, completion and access were two very different things. Expanding access to rigorous coursework was one of the most impactful investments UC could make in California students. Ms. Sreeram expressed hope that, as discussions continued about college readiness in subjects like mathematics, the University would continue to focus on strengthening pathways like A–G rather than revisiting standardized testing. She did not believe that bringing back the SAT was the answer. Reinstating the SAT would not improve mathematics preparation, but it would change how students are sorted. If UC was concerned that students were underprepared for college-level mathematics, it should focus on solving that problem instead of creating another admissions barrier. Ms. Sreeram believed that the University should continue working to expand access to A–G coursework, supporting teachers and schools, and helping more students complete those requirements. Once students arrive at UC, the University should continue to provide support through tutoring, supplemental instruction, redesigned mathematics pathways, bridge programs, and faculty committed to helping students succeed. In her view, success should be measured by both admission and graduation rates, as well as those who are empowered to pursue fields like STEM. California students were capable, and as a public university, UC had a responsibility to identify and cultivate their talent. Ms. Sreeram concluded by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to speak and observe and the Regents for making room for students to participate in such conversations.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff