May 3, 2021

To: Academic Senate Division Chairs
From: Mary Gauvain, Chair, and Robert Horwitz, Vice Chair, Academic Senate
Re: Systemwide Guidelines and Recommendations for Fall Campus Re-Opening

SYSTEMWIDE GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAMPUS RE-OPENING

Over the last several months, we have talked with faculty, staff, and students about plans for re-opening the campuses in fall. They have raised many questions and concerns and, based on this information, we offer the following systemwide guidelines and recommendations for fall re-opening planning.

Our aim is to make this transition as successful as possible by reducing apprehensions that many in the campus community have about the re-opening. We also want to alleviate the need for individuals on the campus to have to handle such issues on their own. These issues should be anticipated and planned for in advance in collaborative fashion. As leaders of the Academic Senate, we stress that shared governance is a vital part of the University of California. Many decisions about the fall re-opening pertain to educational matters, and shared governance requires consultation with faculty on decisions about education, even in times of crisis.

We divide our recommendations into four areas: ***Process, Mode of Instruction, Research and Creative Activity,*** and ***Operations***. We understand that any systemwide guidelines and recommendations must allow for campus flexibility, and our recommendations strive to do so.

PROCESS

RECOMMENDATION: Meaningful and ongoing involvement of faculty, students, and staff in campus planning for fall re-opening is essential.

Representatives of the faculty, students, and staff must be involved in campus re-opening planning in a meaningful and ongoing way. Their involvement is critical to the success of these plans. Not only will they be expected to abide by them, as regular users of the campus they will be able to anticipate many of the challenges in resuming onsite activities. Their involvement should include, but not be limited to, participation in planning committees and oversight of any policies developed to direct this process. Their involvement must be ongoing and not restricted to a cursory review of plans or policies after they have been developed or set in place.

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

RECOMMENDATION: Options available regarding mode of instruction will be limited in fall and perhaps further into the academic year. No mode of instruction, other than in-person, will be

determined for a course without consultation with the faculty or instructor of record and the graduate student instructors or teaching assistants assigned to the course. Any mode other than in-person instruction must be evaluated to determine if it is suitable for the course and also whether the faculty or instructor merits more than one course credit.

The rapid and effective shift by faculty and instructors to remote instruction in March of 2020, along with its continuation since that time, ironically makes invisible the fact that it has not been easy. Many difficulties have occurred with remote instruction, and it has taken faculty and instructors substantial time and effort to adapt a course to this mode and use it successfully throughout a term. This experience is important to draw on in planning for the fall and beyond as the University considers various modes of educational delivery.

We understand that in-person instruction cannot always be accommodated in fall due to classroom space limitations or public health guidelines. However, any decisions about mode of instruction for a course must be made in consultation with the faculty and instructors, including graduate student instructors, responsible for the course. There may be expectations or demands for flexibility in mode of instruction from individuals other than the faculty or instructor teaching the course (e.g., students, administrators). It is essential that faculty and instructors be able to choose the method of delivering course material as well as the lectures and assignments used in the course. To remove or bypass this responsibility is a violation of academic freedom – it would violate the right of faculty/instructors to choose the most appropriate pedagogy for the course. This principle is underscored in various scenarios including any requirements that faculty and instructors record, caption, and/or post lectures for an entire class of students, rather than to meet ADA requirements for a specific student.

Mode of instruction also directly affects faculty experience and workload. It is very time-consuming and stressful to accommodate multiple modes in one class, often referred to as a hybrid class.[1] The practical demands associated with any hybrid class are substantial and affect faculty workload, which again raises the question of whether instruction of a multi-modality course should count for more than a single course credit.

Resources and support for instruction are also needed, especially for courses that rely on certain instructional modalities that are not in-person (solely or partially). The resources and support need to be available and reliable, which has not uniformly occurred over the last year. During the pandemic, many faculty and instructors provided the resources they needed to teach effectively (e.g., adequate computer set up, expanded internet bandwidth) from personal funds.

Some modes of instruction increase concerns about intellectual property and academic integrity. When instances of intellectual property theft or violations of academic integrity occur, they require faculty and instructors to expend extensive time and effort to address. Guidance and support in this regard are needed. It is also important to appreciate that these concerns do not pertain solely to individual courses. When they occur on a broad scale, made possible by the widespread use of remote technologies, they can undermine the collective intellectual

property of the University and the value of the degree itself. The University must make sure that instructional platforms such as Canvas do not control the teaching material conveyed using their technologies.

Finally, planning and carrying out some modes of instruction impinge directly on the time and effort faculty have available for research. As we know, faculty research has been greatly affected by the pandemic. Therefore, any decisions about mode of instruction in fall need to be made judiciously and with a clear eye on equity and professional advancement, especially for faculty at junior ranks in a department. This point leads directly to the next item.

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

RECOMMENDATION: Research work spaces, laboratories, and performance spaces can be re-opened sooner than fall. Campus procedures need to be established to support the ability of faculty and students to use these spaces as soon as possible.

Plans for re-opening the campuses have concentrated on getting students back into the dorms and classes. As a result, the re-opening of research as well as performance and other spaces where faculty do their creative work has been subsumed into this timeline. However, there is no reason that these spaces, and possibly libraries, need to wait until fall to re-open. To our knowledge, there have been zero cases of COVID infections in campus laboratories and other performance and research spaces that have been used at various times during the pandemic. Additionally, the use of these spaces is already subject to all manner of safety and operational protocols; these rules can be expanded to include COVID protections.

OPERATIONAL

RECOMMENDATION: Operational details that affect the ability of faculty and instructors to carry out the academic mission of the University need to be in place before fall. These details include the establishment of campus-wide practices regarding the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions (npi), and would consist of an explicit code of conduct, clear expectations regarding npi use in all campus settings, and information about the consequences of non-adherence. The identification of those responsible for these activities, and especially for enforcing them, must be clear, transparent, and widely known across campus, and not fall on individual faculty, staff, or students.

There are many operational details required for a smooth transition to campus activities in fall. It is important that any operations with the potential to disrupt academic activities be anticipated and a plan of action for how to address them is in place before campuses re-open.

Of particular concern are disruptions that can occur in the classroom that would affect the ability of the University to provide the instruction it prides itself on and the students pay for in tuition. We cannot overstate how important it is to plan for these concerns in advance. The

added burden and distress for faculty, instructors, staff, and students if concerns are not preemptively and appropriately addressed will jeopardize the success of any re-opening plans. Operational details that require attention in advance of re-opening include npi use (e.g., masks, physical distancing) and enforcement (e.g., what should be done if a student in a class refuses to wear a mask or physically distance from a classmate?) as well as classroom sanitizing and safety precautions (e.g., to the extent that surface cleaning of classrooms is part of public health guidelines, who will clean classrooms before and after use? What should the instructor do if the classroom has not been cleaned? Who will arrange/rearrange movable desks between each classroom use?)

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The difficulties of fall reopening require the creative collaboration of shared governance. In summary, the guidelines presented here recommend the following:

- Senate faculty must be part of the policies around reopening, and responsibility for classroom NPI/disruption issues cannot fall on individual faculty.

- The administration cannot tell faculty how to teach or what platforms they must use; it would be a violation of academic freedom for the administration to determine teaching platforms.

- Instruction cannot continue to crowd out research as it has during Covid, and research spaces should open quickly.

- We understand that there needs to be flexibility in a lot of areas given how mixed and complicated the fall is likely to be. However, faculty, instructors, graduate students, TAs, and staff must be an integral part of the conversation. Such flexibility should encompass the question of whether faculty have a right to refuse to return to campus and be able to continue to teach and meet their service obligations remotely. The Senate believes that faculty with well-founded, COVID-related hesitancy to return to campus should be given latitude for the fall term. But this latitude should not be extended beyond fall without a serious discussion within Departments, Divisions, and between the Senate and the Administration.

- Whatever policies get adopted, their impacts should be evaluated along the way and thus be open to change.

[1] Various forms of hybrid instruction have been discussed as options for fall, they include:

(1) <u>hybrid with synchronous delivery</u> *(some students have in-person delivery, some watch the real-time lectures remotely; it is unclear how students are assigned to delivery mode and if assignment would be fixed for the entire course);*

(2) <u>hybrid with asynchronous delivery</u> *(some students in-person, lectures recorded, students view the lectures whenever they choose);*

(3) <u>alternating hybrid</u> *(pre-arranged groups of students alternate in-person and remote delivery; some students are in-person and some remote for each class, with the two groups alternating over the term and, thereby, having a similar class experience; and*

(4) <u>hybrid-by-class sessions</u> *(some sessions in-person and some remote for all students).*

There may be yet other forms of hybrid instruction being considered on the campuses. It is important to stress that the practical demands associated with each mode vary substantially and, also, that none of them has been tested for effectiveness as a mode of course delivery or for student learning.