

3125 Murphy Hall
410 Charles E. Young Drive East
Los Angeles, California 90095

April 5, 2022

To: Jessica Cattelino, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Kathleen Bawn, Chair, Undergraduate Council

Re: Recognizing Community-Engaged Scholarship in Academic Personnel Review

At its meeting on April 1, 2022, the Undergraduate Council reviewed the report from the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) on Recognizing Community-Engaged Scholarship in Academic Personnel Review.

Overall, members agreed that there is a need for institutional systems to formally acknowledge and reward community-engaged scholarship. Many felt that CCE's report sends an important and overdue message to UCLA faculty that such contributions are valued in teaching and research – distinct from *service*, importantly – underscoring the substantial time and methodological effort involved in community-engaged scholarly work. Noting that several peer institutions have moved in this direction, members pointed out that recognizing community-engaged work will keep UCLA at the forefront in developing a forward-looking vision of academic contributions and impact.

Members also commented that greater recognition for community-engaged work could help provide a wider range of opportunities for undergraduates to be involved in meaningful co-produced research that is relevant to the diverse communities from which they hail. Celebrating such activities may also support the recruitment top students from underserved and underrepresented populations, in fulfillment of the University's public mission.

The Council welcomes the opportunity to review future iterations of the report and offers the following suggestions and questions for further consideration:

- Members noted the need to more clearly articulate the boundaries of where engaged scholarship ends and service-oriented engagement in the community begins.
- Clarification was sought regarding mutually beneficial relationship between University and community, and the proposed benefits to the institution: Is it that community engagement promotes fewer disciplinary silos or greater collaboration? Moving away from focusing on peer review articles to other forms of academic contribution?
- How would the proposed evaluative criteria apply to adjunct instructors who may already have significant involvement in various professional communities?
- The definition of community engagement in the report suggests that “community” is primarily local. The notion of “community” could be broadened to include national and global

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contributions (e.g. research conducted for international organizations such as the United Nations; written testimonies for Congress; amicus briefs for major court cases, etc.)

- Members noted that some forms of engagement (providing testimony, writing white papers) involve monetary compensation. Policies should offer guidance on disclosure of support.
- Members appreciated that the “Continuum of Scholarship” and “Decentralized Criteria” models allow for the establishment of flexible standards across UCLA’s diverse research areas. However, some noted the need to ensure that evaluative criteria will be respected and agreed upon at the University level. A broader culture change within Academic Personnel Office and Committee on Academic Personnel must take effect in order for the recommendations to be truly meaningful.

If you have any questions, please contact us via the Undergraduate Council’s analyst, Julia Nelsen, at jnelsen@senate.ucla.edu.

cc: Julia Nelsen, Committee Analyst, Undergraduate Council
Peter Petersen, Vice Chair, Undergraduate Council