

April 4, 2022

Jeff Roth
Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Planning and Budget

Re: **Bruin Budget Model White Paper**

Dear Associate Vice Chancellor Roth,

At its meeting on February 17, 2022, the Executive Board reviewed the Bruin Budget Model (BBM) White Paper created by the Academic Planning and Budget (APB) office as well as the feedback of Academic Senate committees and councils. Although we recognize that the BBM is on hold, this feedback should apply whenever its launch is resumed, and it may also be relevant to budgeting regardless of what happens with the BBM.

The Academic Senate appreciates the opportunity to review the White Paper, and to provide feedback. Members of the Executive Board praised an overarching goal of the BBM to decrease administrative growth and reduce bureaucracy. They also appreciated the intentions to provide greater transparency and introduce more flexibility.

The Executive Board identified three important underlying issues that were inadequately addressed in the White Paper and the BBM itself: accountability and transparency to the Academic Senate; measuring activity and incentive structures; and funding distribution by the deans.

Accountability and Transparency to the Academic Senate

Executive Board members concur with the importance of creating the metrics and dashboards. How will the Academic Senate participate effectively in shared governance by reviewing the metrics and dashboards? When will the Academic Senate itself and Faculty writ large see the simulations that you have presented already to deans?

Measuring Activity and Associated Incentive Structures

Executive Board members continued to express concern about how academic activity is measured. How will student credit hours capture academic quality? What will be done to account for small intensive courses that cannot scale up because of the nature of the pedagogy (e.g. language or writing courses)? Members expressed concern about measuring research activity in ways that fail to recognize large segments of UCLA's productive and respected research faculty who work in fields that typically are not funded by grants. While the Academic Senate appreciates that APB recognizes its role in maintaining academic excellence in teaching and learning, members are concerned that the BBM establishes incentive structures that work against some aspects of teaching and learning excellence, and that the Academic Senate will be expected to hold the line against these pressures.

Funding Distribution by the Deans

The BBM is predicated on trusting the divisional and school deans to distribute funds equitably and with the academic mission of the university as their first priority. What concrete steps will the campus take to ensure actual accountability and transparency for decanal decisions? Moreover, the White Paper fails to adequately address Summer Sessions and the Health System, both of which contribute significant revenue to the university.

Members were divided on the timing of the BBM launch. Some members of the Executive Board questioned whether it was appropriate to launch the BBM while there is no permanent Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost. They asked whether faculty want more money at the “center,” during a time of uncertainty and transition. These member suggested tabling BBM until a new EVCP is in place. Other members noted that the increased flexible and money available at the “center” would be important for recruitment of the new EVCP.

Please find attached the responses from Senate committees and council that provide important and detailed feedback for consideration. We look forward to receiving answers to our questions and concerns.

Sincerely,



Jessica Cattelino
Chair
UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: Allison Baird-James, Interim Chief Financial Officer
April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Rebecca Lee-Garcia, Director of Financial Analysis and Decision Support, APB
Michael Levine, Interim Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP
Shane White, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate