

January 27, 2024

Andrea Kasko, Chair  
Academic Senate

**Re: Future of Doctoral Programs at the University of California: Academic Planning Council Workgroup Interim Report**

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Dear Chair Kasko,

At its meeting on January 8, 2024, the Council on Planning and Budget (CPB) discussed the **Future of Doctoral Programs at the University of California: Academic Planning Council Workgroup Interim Report**. Members offered the following comments.

First, members were deeply appreciative of the time and energy that the authors devoted to the preparation of this report, and understood the difficulty of the request that had been made of them. There was, however, a general consensus that the resulting document reads more like a wish-list than a plan with a well-defined strategy for implementing ideas. They highlighted the absence of a clear solution to the pressing issue of graduate student housing, which might be regarded as the fundamental issue driving the UAW strike.

Overall, there was a sense of confusion among members regarding the workgroup's overarching goal. While they acknowledged the importance of 'big picture thinking,' they stressed the need to clarify the aim of the workgroup's efforts and present concrete, actionable plans. Some members went further, characterizing the report as an exercise in futility, particularly considering the university's challenging budget situation, suggesting that there was little point in merely seeking additional funding without offering viable solutions.

Looking ahead, members expressed the need for business plan numbers over vague generalities, and emphasized the importance of incorporating model funding scenarios to provide clarity. Additionally, both members and student representatives identified contradictions throughout the report, such as advocating for shorter time-to-degree while simultaneously expecting an increased demand for services.

If you have any questions for us, please do not hesitate to contact me at [emmerich@humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:emmerich@humnet.ucla.edu) or via the Council's analyst, Elizabeth Feller, at [efeller@senate.ucla.edu](mailto:efeller@senate.ucla.edu).

Best regards,

Michael Emmerich, Chair  
Council on Planning and Budget

cc: Kathleen Bawn, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, UCLA Academic Senate  
Jessica Cattelino, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate  
April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate  
Elizabeth Feller, Associate Director, UCLA Academic Senate  
Members of the Council on Planning and Budget