February 20, 2024

To: Andrea Kasko, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Catherine Sugar, Chair, Undergraduate Council

Re: Proposed Regents Policy on Use of University Administrative Websites

At its meeting on February 9, 2024, the Undergraduate Council reviewed the proposed Regents Policy on the Use of University Administrative Websites.

Members had mixed reactions to the proposal. Some members generally supported the policy’s intent and agreed in principle on maintaining institutional neutrality in University communications. Others, however, voiced strong opposition to the proposed policy and expressed concerns about overreach by the Board of Regents into matters of academic freedom.

Members sought clarification on several areas of the proposal and offered the following questions:

- What constitutes a “viewpoint” and an “opinion”? Who determines these definitions?
- What is the definition of a “main landing page”?
- Does the policy apply only to academic departments or will it also cover research units?
- Does the policy apply to personal faculty webpages hosted on University platforms?
- To what degree does the policy apply to course descriptions posted on departmental websites? Who determines what counts as a “viewpoint” in a course description?
- Why does the policy exclude communications by University leadership?
- Under “Compliance/Delegation,” what is the definition of the “administrator responsible for maintaining the website”? Members note that “administrator” could refer to an external vendor, or individual IT staff, or the department chair; clarification of this role is needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine. If you have any questions, please contact me via the Undergraduate Council analyst, Julia Nelsen, at jnelsen@senate.ucla.edu.

cc: Kathy Bawn, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Academic Senate
Jessica Cattelino, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Julia Nelsen, Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate
Alexander Spokoyny, Vice Chair, Undergraduate Council