UCLA Academic Senate

Committee on Data, Information Technology, and Privacy

February 23, 2024

Andrea Kasko, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: (Systemwide Senate Review) Proposed Regents Policy on Use of University Administrative Websites

Dear Chair Kasko,

Following its February 16, 2024, meeting, the Committee on Data, Information Technology, and Privacy (CDITP) reviewed the Proposed Regents Policy on Use of University Administrative Websites. Members made the following comments:

Following significant concerns about the earlier version of this policy, members found the new policy effectively clarifies the distinction between individual academic freedoms and the official use of University platforms. It balances, largely successfully, the need for individual and collective academic freedom and free speech with the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of University administrative units' communications. The committee found the disclaimer requirement prudent, and the approach to delegation anchored in designating specific administrators responsible an effective route to compliance.

Suggestions for the policy include greater guidance and specificity for the formulation of disclaimers and their location on unit websites. Examples of templates might help ensure clarity and consistency. Similarly, the Committee advises that some formal and transparent mechanisms for monitoring websites and a clearly articulated set of standards for evaluating compliance will be important. Periodic reviews may also identify incremental improvements to the policy across new technologies and platforms. The Committee encourages a proactive, rather than responsive, approach to aiding faculty to engage with alternative platforms upon which they might express their views individually and collectively.

Key concerns include clarifying the scope of "Official Business," an issue raised in CDITP's statement on the previous version of this policy. Given the extensive latitude for unit communications, more specific guidance is required. Moreover, we believe a feedback mechanism and a transparent dispute resolution process should be developed for instances where there may be disagreements about policy application.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed policy. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at fisher@humnet.ucla.edu or via the Committee analyst, Renee Rouzan-Kay, at rrouzankay@senate.ucla.edu.

Sincerely,

Matthew Fisher, Chair
Committee on Data, Information Technology, and Privacy

cc: Kathleen Bawn, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Academic Senate
        Jessica Cattelino, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
        April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
        Renee Rouzan-Kay, Senior Policy Analyst, Committee on Data, Information Technology, and Privacy
        Members of the Committee on Data, Information Technology, and Privacy