DATE: April 4, 2024

TO: Andrea M. Kasko, Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

RE: Accessibility and Instruction Working Group Report

The Faculty Executive Committee for the Luskin School of Public Affairs expresses strong disagreement with requiring faculty to accommodate by live streaming or providing recorded lectures and providing universal remote options. This infringes on academic freedom, faculty autonomy, and creates an undue and uncompensated burden on their time. There is concern that this will create disincentives for students to come to class and will result in faculty teaching to empty rooms, which greatly diminishes the learning outcomes of all students and especially the students who are live in the room. It is believed that faculty will leave the profession over time in even greater numbers if this becomes the new norm.

Members of this committee also believe that the incentive/optional approach described here certainly is better than any requirement for online accommodation or other course elements. Note that it has already been observed that customizing the student experience in ways outlined in this report requires a large amount of staff time (in addition to uncompensated faculty time), jeopardizing faculty recruitment and retention.

Online courses can be taught as online courses, which is a separate issue and should not interfere with the teaching of regular in person courses.

Overall, there should be a division between fully online and fully in-person classes so that all parties involved are in full agreement from the start.

Thank you for your considerations.

Veronica Herrera
Associate Professor of Urban Planning and Political Science
Faculty Executive Committee Chair, Luskin School of Public Affairs, UCLA