May 7, 2024

To: Andrea Kasko, Chair, Academic Senate
From: Catherine Sugar, Chair, Undergraduate Council
Re: Proposed Revision to Senate Regulation 424.A.3

At its meeting on April 12, 2024, the Undergraduate Council reviewed the proposed revision to systemwide Senate Regulation 424.A.3 that would establish an Ethnic Studies requirement for UC admission.

Members are broadly supportive of the proposal’s aim to foster critical skills and community engagement among students through the lens of Ethnic Studies. While the Undergraduate Council underscores the importance of the discipline, as well as its broad educational and social benefits to students, members offer the following comments regarding the proposed requirement:

- Some noted that the proposed content guidelines may be overly specialized for students at the high school level.

- Other members commented that the requirement may risk creating three different tiers of applicants to the UC: non-resident and international students for whom the requirement would not apply; California students from private schools and public schools which have not yet developed courses that fulfill the UC’s proposed criteria, who may be considered for admission by exception; and students who will have met the requirement through high school coursework. Having different groups may introduce inequities into the admissions process.

- Some observed that the UC requirement may be duplicative of the state-legislated Ethnic Studies requirement for high school graduation as mandated by AB101. The proposed Area H criteria may add to the burden on under-resourced school districts beyond the Model Curriculum associated with the AB101 requirement. Some members suggested that the University consider revising the proposed requirement as a recommendation, with the proposed criteria serving as recommended guidelines for high school Ethnic Studies courses in compliance with AB101.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine. With any questions, please contact me via committee 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