May 28, 2024

Darnell Hunt
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Re: Joint Rebuilding and Renewal Task Force Report

At the April 25, 2024, meeting of the Executive Board (EB), members reviewed the joint Rebuilding and Renewal Task Force report and the feedback of divisional Academic Senate committees and councils. EB members voted unanimously to approve a motion where the Executive Board:

- endorsed the fundamental conclusion of the joint task force to increase the number of faculty and provide new resources, contextualizing their endorsement in UCLA’s transformation (e.g., new pedagogy forms, research challenges);
- requested Administration to make and share clear-cut milestones, and share transparent data with the Council on Planning and Budget in order for the Academic Senate to advise on budget cuts needed to meet faculty rebuilding and renewal milestones;
- and recommended that UCLA implement UCPB Best Practices Report recommendations to increase Senate involvement in budget-related decisions and strategic planning.

Members concluded that both data and experience confirm the problems identified in this report go back decades; the campus needs to implement solutions. In addition to the shocking numbers that affect faculty workload, members observed that faculty have absorbed a lot of additional labor due to the recession and then the pandemic. They shared that it is harder than ever to recruit and retain faculty. It is time for the university to re-prioritize and support faculty better.

Members affirmed the need for clear data and milestones in order to make tough budget decisions that allow for sustained progress in rebuilding the Senate faculty. They observed that truly competitive salaries would solve a lot of the related concerns (e.g., high cost of housing and childcare), and that the millions of dollars of expenditures on systems (e.g., procurement, Ascend, UCPath) and other initiatives could have been used to hire and retain faculty. In order to achieve campus goals related to teaching and research, the campus need more faculty. As such, the Administration needs to create, and meet, specific and measurable milestones.

Lastly, members noted that faculty have thus far resisted using Senate authority to reset reasonable boundaries in the face of these ever-increasing demands. Initiatives such as increased enrollment, flexibility in instructional modality, establishment of new degree programs and class size need faculty buy-in to succeed.

The Executive Board requests a response that addresses Senate feedback and includes next steps to develop a plan for both data-sharing practices and achievable milestones in order to implement the report recommendations.
The Academic Senate appreciates the opportunity to advise on this important report.

Sincerely,

Andrea Kasko
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: Kathy Bawn, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
    Jessica Cattelino, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
    April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
    Adriana Rosalez, Administrative Analyst, UCLA Academic Senate
    Emily Rose, Assistant Provost & Chief of Staff to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost