

November 20, 2017

Shane White
Chair, Academic Council

RE: Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 (Area D)

Dear Shane,

The Executive Board of the UCLA Academic Senate discussed the proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 (Area D) at its meeting on November 16, 2017. The Executive Board solicited comments from standing committees of the Senate, as well as the Faculty Executive Committees, to maximize faculty feedback; the individual responses from our various committees follow.

The Board acknowledged the importance of bringing high school science requirements for admission to UC more in line with evolving standards for the teaching of science in high school. We applaud any efforts to better prepare students for success in college and a variety of career pathways. However, the Board echoed the concerns raised by both the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools (CUARS) and the Undergraduate Council (UgC). And although the College FEC voted to approve the revisions, the vote was 4 in favor, 2 opposed, and 2 abstained.

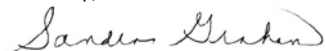
Some of the concerns raised are as follows:

- increasing the laboratory science requirement from two courses to a three-course requirement could disadvantage ethnic minority students
- removing “laboratory” from the name of the requirement could lead to watered down, non-scientific courses being taken as the third course (e.g., online courses), and in fact, CUARS and UgC suggest expanding the meaning of the term laboratory rather than removing it
- members agreed with UgC that “each class should require evidence-based learning activities where students make observations by gathering data themselves” to arrive at conclusions using the scientific method
- UgC noted concerns about online courses satisfying the third course requirement

Members suggested that there should be a strong evaluation plan to assess the impact of the proposed changes to high school science requirements and whether, indeed, they were making a difference in the operation of high school students and their eligibility for admission to a UC campus.

The Executive Board appreciates the opportunity to opine. Please feel free to contact me should have any questions.

Sincerely,



Sandra Graham
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

cc: Hilary Baxter, Executive Director, Systemwide Academic Senate
Susan Cochran, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Joe Bristow, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
Michael LaBriola, Principal Policy Analyst, Systemwide Academic Senate
Linda Mohr, Chief Administrative Officer, UCLA Academic Senate