

Executive Board

White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

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June 9, 2026

Darnell Hunt
UCLA Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP)

Re: Graduate Student Employment and Doctoral Education White Paper and Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education White Paper

Dear EVCP Hunt,

At the June 4, 2026, meeting of the Executive Board, members reviewed the white paper titled “Graduate Student Employment and Doctoral Education” and the white paper titled “Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education.” Members agreed to share the attached feedback from Senate committees and councils along with their feedback below and that of participants who attended a Senate faculty conversation on June 2, 2026, and a conversation with the Senate chair on June 3, 2026.

The Los Angeles Division of the UC Academic Senate shares your recognition that it is a time of change in graduate and undergraduate education due to external pressures and internal realities ranging from the federal government to technology to new fixed costs. Senate committees and councils have been considering and advising and making legislative decisions based on the evolving needs for teaching, research and creative activities. Senate faculty understand the value of Teaching Professors or Learning Assistants in supporting our massive pedagogical enterprise. Many faculty consider if and how to deploy Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in classrooms, studios, and labs.

At the same time, the divisional Academic Senate consensus is that the white papers are misguided efforts that fail to prioritize the academic mission and, if implemented, would weaken not only graduate and undergraduate education but also the research productivity of the campus. The white papers propose changing the financial architecture of graduate education without recognizing the immediate and potentially detrimental restructuring of graduate and undergraduate instruction. They fail to provide any evidence that the recommendations will improve teaching and learning or realize financial savings.

Many members fundamentally disagreed with the premise that there must be cuts to graduate education funding. They recognized the current campus financial situation is serious and needs solutions. However, given that Senate faculty have authority over curriculum and instruction, they advocated for Senate faculty in a leading role in the working groups that produced these white papers. Rather than share the financial constraints and ask Senate faculty to offer solutions, the working groups (comprised almost exclusively of administrators despite repeated request to you for Senate faculty representation) offered recommendations seemingly divorced from the academic mission.

Members warned that reducing the number of Teaching Assistants (TAs) would weaken the university's academic mission and research output, as graduate students provide invaluable contributions to labs, studios, and other research venues and represent the future professoriate. Structurally severing the

relationship between research and teaching so that undergraduates are increasingly taught by contingent staff who are uncoupled from UCLA's research would fundamentally change the value of a UCLA degree. Some feedback agreed that Learning Assistants (LAs) can and do play valuable roles, noting however, that they do not function in the same capacity as TAs.

Members recommended that departments should make decisions for their own disciplines including deciding if and how to integrate Large Language Models (LLMs) pedagogically. They agreed that wholesale deployment of LLMs would be pedagogically inferior or inappropriate. Due to broad differences across disciplines, courses, and graduate degrees, which were not sufficiently addressed in the current white papers, members agree that pedagogical decisions need to be left to individual faculty and disciplines.

Although it appeared to members that the motivation for the white papers was to address campus financial concerns, nowhere in either white paper are finances addressed. It is not clear how mandatory graduate student training will be financed. There is no analysis of costs involved to develop LLM support, increase Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) "services," sustain more online programs, or develop specialized TA training still needed within departments. Moreover, members noted that the money saved by shrinking graduate cohorts may be immediately lost to the rising costs of lecturer salaries and benefits, resulting in zero net savings for the university while introducing severe programmatic instability.

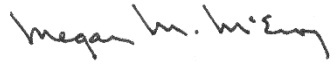
At a conversation on June 2, 2026, attended by 115 Senate faculty, the consensus was that the white papers are a top-down, financially motivated overreach rather than a genuine pedagogical effort. Faculty members denounced the deliberate exclusion of the Academic Senate from the working groups, calling it a direct usurpation of the authority delegated to them by the UC Regents. They strongly rejected proposals to centralize teaching under the TLC and to replace TAs with LLMs or LAs. Participants argued that the white papers devalue discipline-specific expertise, will damage undergraduate education, and dampen research productivity.

The event participants called out masking long-standing budget deficits as pedagogical issues, pointing out that the administration has vastly expanded its own size since 2008 while simultaneously demanding that academic units do more with less. A number of attendees voiced views that the proposals were bad-faith, technocratic attempts to undermine unionized labor. In response to a participant's question, almost half of attendees supported the idea of organizing a formal vote of no confidence in university leadership if administration was unresponsive to the deeply held concerns of Senate faculty about the white papers.

In light of this extensive feedback, the Executive Board recommended that the administration convene work groups comprised of primarily Senate faculty along with key administrators to revise the white papers based on the voluminous Senate feedback. And that those revised white papers receive thorough review by the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils where the authority for curricular changes resides.

Thank you for your engagement on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan M. McEvoy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Megan McEvoy
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: Kathy Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Julio Frenk, Chancellor, UCLA
Tim Groeling, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
Samantha Luu, Executive Assistant to the EVCP, UCLA
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP, UCLA
Julie Sina, Chief of Staff to the Chancellor, UCLA

Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

Implementation of Graduate Education Task Force Recommendations

Prepared by

Working Group on Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

April 2026

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Context and Goals

In Spring 2025 the Graduate Education Implementation Task Force¹ was convened to evaluate and reimagine how UCLA supports doctoral education and undergraduate instruction in a sustainable, equitable, and future-facing manner. At the direction of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, the Task Force charged a working group to prepare a white paper advancing the recommendations focused on elevating the quality and sustainability of undergraduate education, particularly in light of projected undergraduate enrollment growth and the need to reduce reliance on the instructional employment of graduate students.

This working group² consisted of diverse members from across campus who brought a critically informed lens to the discussion, including research faculty with experience as department chairs; teaching faculty; administrators; and professionals with leadership experience in pedagogy, academic personnel, technology, and division-level finances. We also engaged with Academic Planning and Budget (APB), Employee Labor Relations (ELR), and the Academic Affairs and Personnel Office (AAPO). Working group members contributed to sections of the white paper aligned with their expertise and/or institutional role on campus.

The working group was charged to translate Task Force recommendations related to undergraduate instruction into an implementation framework for UCLA. As implementation priorities evolve, leadership, governance bodies, including the Academic Senate, will play a role in shaping support, resourcing, and defining measures of success. Within the broader implementation effort, other working groups have been charged to address different dimensions of the Task Force's report; this document focuses specifically on the recommendations related to the instructional workforce, Teaching Assistant (TA) allocations,

¹ Task Force members included: Vera Bakman, Director of Financial Analysis & Decision Support, Academic Planning and Budget; Paul Boutros, Vice Dean for Research (Interim), David Geffen School of Medicine; Adriana Galván, Dean and Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education; Reem Hanna-Harwell, Senior Associate Dean, Finance and Administration, Division of Humanities; Brian Kite (Chair), Dean and Vice Provost of Graduate Education; Jeff Lewis, Special Assistant to the EVCP for Academic Planning and Budget; Kim Picon, Manager, Labor Relations; Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost; and Erin Sanders O'Leary, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning.

² Working Group members included: Erika Chau, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs and Personnel Office; Dory DeWeese, Assistant Teaching Professor, Chemistry; Leigh Harris (Co-Chair), Assistant Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education; Ilana Intonato, Executive Director for Academic Technology, Digital and Technology Services; Rachel Kennison, Executive Director, Center for Education Innovation and Learning in the Sciences; Beth Lazazzera, Chair of Life Sciences Core, Professor, Microbiology, Immunology & Molecular Genetics; Kem Saichaie (Co-Chair), Executive Director, Teaching and Learning Center; Steven Schweitzer, Associate Dean and Finance and Administration, Division of Life Sciences; Barbara Van Nostrand, Executive Director of Academic Programs and Student Affairs, Division of Humanities.

and course delivery strategies, paired with the assessment and support needed to implement proposed changes.

The scope of these three topics is substantial, and each could warrant its own white paper. The goal of this report is therefore to set out a structure and direction for action, with greater specificity in areas where existing campus efforts or infrastructure already provide a foundation for implementation. Consistent with feedback provided to the Task Force, the working group has incorporated targeted assessment strategies across its action plans to ensure that the quality of undergraduate education is sustained. Doing so will require UCLA to strengthen the institutional capacity and support needed to make effective use of the pedagogical services already available through centralized and distributed teaching and learning resources.

This paper's goal is to provide campus leaders with a framework for instructional models and operational changes that maintain quality in undergraduate education at UCLA while strengthening long-term sustainability. Substantive change will require strategic resource investments and sustained leadership from deans and divisional leaders, along with active engagement by department chairs and academic program directors, to carry these recommendations into local planning, staffing, assessment, and instructional redesign in ways that are responsive to disciplinary contexts while also advancing broader institutional goals.

Efforts recommended in this paper build on UCLA's existing leadership in evidence-based teaching and learning in ways that position the campus to scale proven practices across disciplines. For the purposes of this paper, "evidence-based instruction" refers to teaching practices grounded in research on learning and informed by evidence about student outcomes in particular contexts. Since the ratification of the [2026 ASE/GSR contract](#), implementation of these recommendations should be understood in light of the current collective bargaining agreement, in effect through December 2029, which may impact appointment structures, cost assumptions, and flexibility of staffing models discussed in this paper.

As this working group was asked to help prioritize these recommendations, this white paper presents those priorities with the following time frames:

- **0–12 months:** Begin work immediately through charge, directive, recommendation or catalyzing action
- **12–24 months:** Start preliminary work and accelerate activities as information/resources becomes available for implementation
- **24+ months:** Begin explorations to lay the groundwork for significant change efforts

To complement these time frames, the working group also developed an Implementation Priority Matrix (see [Appendix 1](#), and [Resource Allocation Summary](#)) that clusters recommendations by resource intensity and implementation effort. The matrix is intended as a planning tool to distinguish lower-cost foundation steps (i.e., the quick wins) from recommendations that will require broader strategic coordination, targeted and new resources

or other significant investments, or longer-term structural reform. Finally, the content presented below is interconnected and has multiple dependencies that are complex and embedded in existing structures. For example, course delivery depends on who is responsible for instruction (e.g., research-stream faculty, Teaching Professors, Continuing lecturers, adjunct faculty), the roles and number of people involved in delivering that instruction (e.g., teaching assistants leading secondary sections), and factors associated with the course context (e.g., enrollment and modality). We remind readers that student learning outcomes are central to UCLA's academic mission and must remain primary as the balance of instructional resources, including labor, TA allocations, and course delivery models, is determined. Systematic assessment must also be central to the work, ensuring that we understand the impact of the recommendations and their implementation meanwhile enabling us to be nimble and change course if necessary.

Relevant Task Force Recommendations

The Task Force recommendations that served as the departure point for this white paper identified the need for UCLA to maintain the quality of undergraduate education while reducing structural reliance on doctoral-student instructional employment and planning for continued undergraduate enrollment growth. Broadly speaking, the recommendations urged the university to diversify the instructional workforce, reconsider how TA support is allocated, and redesign course delivery in ways that make better use of effective pedagogy, academic technologies, scheduling, and campus instructional infrastructure. The Task Force also emphasized that such changes should attend to faculty workload and be assessed for their effects on instructional quality. They further recommended drawing on central resources, including the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), as well as distributed teaching support units such as the Center for Education Innovation and Learning in the Sciences (CEILS), HumTech, and the Social Sciences Center for Education, Research, and Technology (SSCERT), Digital & Technology Solutions (DTS), and the UCLA Library, to help design, implement, and assess new teaching practices, modalities, and technologies.

Executive Summary

This white paper addresses a set of challenges in undergraduate instruction at UCLA while also identifying an opportunity to sustain and strengthen the quality of undergraduate education for more than 33,000 students. The proposed changes aim to move the institution toward a comprehensive instructional strategy that is intentional, sustainable, and aligned with a campus commitment to the academic mission. UCLA's current instructional model combines faculty teaching, TA-supported secondary sections, local departmental practice, and a range of central and distributed teaching support. The existing model has enabled the university to meet instructional demands at scale but, in some instances, has reflected employment commitments made to matriculating graduate students rather than being driven primarily by pedagogical

considerations or the equitable experience of undergraduates. Projected enrollment growth, concern about long-term reliance on doctoral-student instructional labor, uneven adoption of educational technology, and the current Academic Student Employee (ASE) collective bargaining agreement (CBA) make clear that instructional workforce decisions, TA allocation practices, and course delivery strategies must now be addressed together to support the long-term sustainability and enhance the quality of undergraduate education.

This paper proposes that UCLA advances a more strategic instructional model that enhances pedagogical practice, builds other forms of instructional capacity to improve quality and sustainability, and strengthens the planning and support structures needed to make both incremental and immediate changes at the course, department/program, and school and divisional levels. It advocates for better alignment of staffing, pedagogical practice, workload, enrollment planning, assessment, technology, and infrastructure; the paper looks to the deans, department chairs and key campus partners to coordinate collective action in service to the university's academic mission.

As mentioned, the Graduate Education Implementation Task Force identified three strategic priorities for the working group, who was charged with developing implementation plans: reconsidering the instructional workforce, redesigning TA allocations, and reimagining course delivery strategies.

With respect to the instructional role of TAs, their contribution should be preserved and prioritized where it is most clearly tied to student learning, safety, and active engagement, including laboratories, studios, writing-intensive courses as well as high-enrollment courses in which TAs help make large classes feel smaller by creating more opportunities for facilitated engagement and collaboration.

To maintain UCLA's stellar reputation in both pedagogical and research excellence, the University should make strategic use of the Teaching Professor series to strengthen evidence-based instruction and provide leadership in curriculum development and pedagogical research/assessment within departments. Growth in this Senate faculty series should complement investments in the Regular Professor series, ensuring the opportunities for UCLA students to engage in original research and creative activities with leaders in the field continues as a hallmark of the undergraduate experience at a leading R1 university.

Campus should consider building on the demonstrated success of the Learning Assistant (LA) program, especially where LAs can strengthen collaborative learning and enhance peer-to-peer and instructor-student interactions. TA allocation processes, in turn, should become more explicit, consistent, and better aligned with instructional purpose, enrollment, workload, and review processes across units.

Relatedly, course redesign and delivery should focus on redesigning assessments and giving instructors better support and clearer incentives for pedagogical work. It should also include building thoughtful capacity around AI in teaching and learning and approaching online and

hybrid offerings in a more coordinated and data-driven, research-informed fashion. UCLA also needs to treat scheduling, classroom use, testing services, capacity, and learning-space infrastructure as part of the academic strategy.

The paper recommends a phased approach to implementation. Across these phases, the work moves from reviewing current TA use, instructional roles, allocation practices, and course delivery, to piloting revised models and support structures, to scaling those effective approaches that demonstrate improved quality and sustainability. In the near term (0–12 months), UCLA should clarify current practices, identify where change is most needed and most feasible, and build the groundwork for larger-scale implementation. In the medium term (12–24 months), the campus should move into targeted resource investments in pilot projects, planning tied to assessment, and better alignment among academic, budget, and teaching support structures. Over the longer term (24+ months), UCLA should selectively scale what proves effective and embed it in more durable staffing, funding allocations, and instructional planning practices. The accompanying Implementation Priority Matrix (see [Appendix 1](#)) complements this phased approach by distinguishing lower-cost foundational steps from recommendations requiring targeted investment, broader coordination, or longer-term structural change. Together, the implementation plan and accompanying matrix seek to clarify what UCLA can do immediately and what will require more significant investments over time.

Ultimately, this paper aims to provide a coherent framework for making more effective decisions across disciplines within broader and clearer institutional goals that sustain and strengthen undergraduate education at UCLA.

Current Models for Instructional Workforce, TA Allocation Process, and Course Delivery

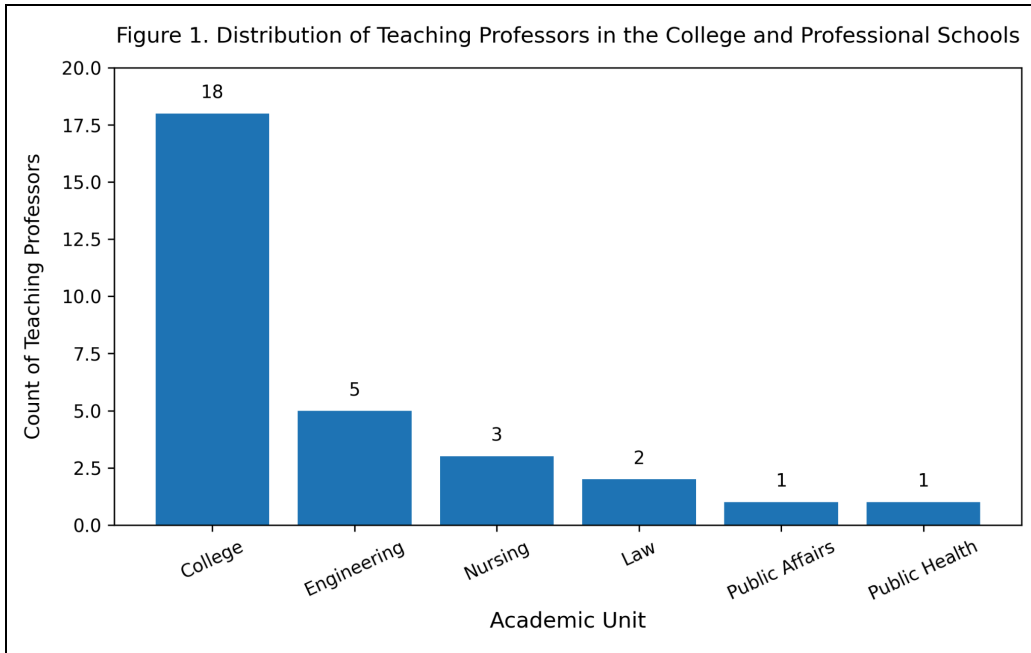
Current Instructional Workforce Model

Undergraduate instruction at UCLA is currently delivered through a distributed workforce model that combines Senate faculty (i.e. Regular Professors, Teaching Professors), non-Senate instructors (e.g., Unit 18 lecturers, adjuncts, and academic administrators) and Academic Student Employees (ASEs) such as graduate student teaching assistants (TAs) and Readers. Across the College and Professional Schools, teaching loads and assignments vary; in practice, the distribution of teaching among instructional roles tends to reflect historical departmental norms and evolving resource limitations, including employment commitments made to matriculating graduate students.

For the purposes of this paper, Academic Planning and Budget (APB) enrollment bands used to track classroom utilization trends provide a helpful reference point for identifying “high-enrollment” undergraduate primary sections, including those enrolling 50-99 students and sections enrolling 100 or more students, while recognizing that the meaning of the term

may vary across disciplines and pedagogical contexts. According to APB's [Common Data Set 2024-25](#) ("Undergraduate Class Size"), UCLA offered 2,658 undergraduate primary class sections in Fall 2024. Of these, 290 enrolled 50-99 students and 344 enrolled 100 or more students. In addition, the campus offered 3,471 undergraduate subsections, meaning secondary sections such as labs and discussions. Based on this information, 23.9% of undergraduate primary class sections in Fall 2024 enrolled 50 or more students and 12.9% enrolled 100 or more. Separate APB data further indicate that high-enrollment undergraduate primary sections are concentrated in a relatively small number of areas. In Fall 2024, for example, the College accounted for 71.5% of undergraduate primary sections enrolling 50 or more students and 80.1% of those enrolling 100 or more students, with the largest concentration of high-enrollment sections in the Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Life Sciences. The School of Engineering accounted for an additional 12.5% of sections enrolling 50 or more students. See [Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 3](#) for figures showing Fall 2024 undergraduate primary sections enrolling 50+ and 100+ students, respectively, by School and College Division. In these high-enrollment settings, instructional delivery often relies on faculty providing primary instruction with support from TAs and Readers.

Across UCLA, undergraduate teaching is supported by Senate faculty and non-Senate instructional faculty, including Unit 18 lecturers, and, in some units, Senate faculty in teaching-focused roles (Teaching Professors). The Academic Affairs and Personnel Office (AAPO) maintains Unit 18 workload pages for a wide range of units, indicating that both teaching-focused Senate faculty and Unit 18 lecturers are established parts of undergraduate instruction. Unit 18 lecturers are a represented group of instructors and serve as instructors of record for their own courses across the disciplines, including high-enrollment, composition, and language courses, on a year-to-year or continuing appointment basis according to contractual obligations. Teaching Professors carry higher teaching loads relative to research-focused faculty and, unlike lecturers, can contribute to curriculum development and program administration. The number of Teaching Professors and Unit 18 lecturers varies across departments in the College and Schools. According to AAPO data shared with the working group, there are currently 30 appointees to the Teaching Professor series at UCLA (Figure 1). The majority are in the College (18), with 3 in the Humanities, 6 in the Physical Sciences, and 9 in the Life Sciences. There are no appointments in this series in the Social Sciences. The remaining Teaching Professors are distributed across the Schools: Engineering (5), Nursing (3), Law (2), Public Affairs (1) and Public Health (1). With regard to Unit 18 lecturers, there are 739 unique Unit 18 appointments on campus, with nearly 27% housed in the College and the rest distributed across every School except for the David Geffen School of Medicine (DGSOM). Recent campus discussions have highlighted the uneven adoption of the Teaching Professor series across UCLA, with strong support in some areas and less in others depending on departmental priorities and longer-term staffing strategies.



The extent to which Readers (who typically have grading-focused responsibilities) and Learning Assistants (undergraduates trained in pedagogy to enrich learning in lectures and secondary sections) are leveraged to supplement instructional capacity and quality also varies across campus. Per AAPO data shared with the working group, UCLA employed nearly 460 individuals as Readers in AY2025-26, which may not include Spring hires that have not yet been captured by the payroll system. Of these, approximately 50% are employed in the College.

Academic Student Employees (ASE), including Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Readers, play a central role in supporting undergraduate education. TAs commonly lead discussion or laboratory sections, hold office hours, and assist with grading and student support under the supervision of faculty instructors of record. Data from APB indicate that TAs overwhelmingly teach undergraduate secondary sections at UCLA. In Fall 2024, for example, TAs taught 95.3% of undergraduate secondary sections, which enrolled 90.9% of students in those sections.

Readers are not permitted to engage in independent teaching, such as leading discussions. Instead, they are assigned grading-specific responsibilities, including grading or providing rubric-based feedback, particularly in larger courses or where an instructor needs additional support. Readers are ASE appointments governed by collective bargaining agreements, and their role is embedded in the existing structure of many large lower-division and GE courses.

In laboratory and performance-based disciplines, TA-to-student ratios are often determined by safety, equipment, and space constraints and not only (or even primarily) by pedagogical need. In certain Life and Physical Sciences laboratory courses, for example, section ratios are driven by compliance requirements and physical capacity limits rather than solely enrollment demand.

It is important to note that all of these positions are expected to use physical and digital environments (e.g., Bruin Learn) for instruction.

Current TA Allocation Model

TA allocation is generally managed at the departmental or divisional level, taking into account enrollment, instructional needs, graduate student availability and commitments, and budget. Departments receive TA resources through internal allocation processes that reflect historical patterns, projected enrollments, and available funding. Allocation decisions often consider course size, traditional secondary section-sizes, availability of graduate students who need teaching assignments, and discipline-specific pedagogical requirements (e.g., laboratory and studio work, writing instruction).

Data from APB show that there are substantive differences in undergraduate secondary-section size across units campus-wide and, in some cases, within the College itself. This pattern suggests that TA allocation practices have often developed in response to disciplinary differences and local norms rather than through a more uniform campus-wide framework. In Fall 2024, for example, average undergraduate secondary-section enrollment within the College ranged from approximately 18 students in the Social Sciences to about 33 in the Physical Sciences, with Humanities and the Life Sciences averaging roughly 22 and 24 students, respectively.

In practice many large lower-division and GE courses are structured with a primary lecture assigned to a faculty member supported by multiple secondary sections led by TAs. Section sizes vary by discipline, with smaller enrollments typical in writing-intensive or laboratory-based courses and larger enrollments more common in discussion sections attached to lecture courses. TA assignments are generally course-specific, and duties are defined within the terms of the ASE contract, departmental expectations, and the supplementary letter provided to ASE appointees.

TA assignments are typically fixed for the duration of the quarter (or for the year, in the case of some programs) and tied to specific courses. TAs appointed at 50% time are expected to work no more than 220 hours over the course of the academic quarter, with informal adjustments

often made to accommodate peak grading periods.³ Current contractual and funding structures limit the ability to pool or rotate TA resources across courses or departments. Under the newly ratified contract, most new TA or Associate Instructor (AI) appointments for graduate students in PhD or MFA programs must total 50% FTE, with limited exceptions, which may further constrain departments' flexibility to structure TA appointments across courses.

Undergraduate enrollment projections inform TA planning, but adjustments frequently occur close to the start of term as actual seat enrollments become settled. Coordination between academic units and central administrative offices, such as APB, helps guide resource planning, although allocation practices may vary across schools, divisions, and departments.

In addition to enrollment pressures, TA allocation decisions are influenced by graduate student funding commitments and continuation guarantees made as part of admission offers.

Current Course Delivery Model

At UCLA, undergraduates are taught principally through large lectures paired with smaller, instructor- or TA-led secondary sections. In high-enrollment courses, including GE courses, many lower-division courses, and some upper-division offerings serving as core introductory courses for a major, faculty typically deliver primary instruction in lecture format, while secondary sections provide opportunities for discussion, problem-solving, laboratory work, or writing support. The design and integration of these instructional components differ by discipline, department, and instructor. In many cases, the secondary section structure has evolved incrementally over time, with section size, meeting duration, and meeting frequency sometimes reflecting pedagogical considerations and at other times reflecting available TA resources rather than intentional curricular design.

Undergraduate courses are delivered primarily in person, with hybrid or online modalities used selectively based on programmatic needs, instructional context, and as approved by the Academic Senate. Data provided by APB indicate that online and hybrid undergraduate primary sections currently represent a relatively small percentage of regular academic-year offerings at

³ Currently, Teaching Assistants (TAs) have three related components that define their appointment: (1) *Service period* - The timeframe during which instructional duties are performed, typically aligned with the academic term (e.g., beginning with the start of instruction during 0 week in the fall); (2) *Appointment and payroll period* - The official appointment dates used for payroll purposes, which may span the full academic term (e.g., October–December for fall quarter); and (3) *Workload expectation* - For a 50% appointment, TAs are assigned a total of 220 hours per quarter, which corresponds to an average of approximately 20 hours per week over the instructional period (including finals). While TAs are expected to fulfill the total assigned hours, workload may vary from week to week based on instructional needs. However, assignments should be managed so that the overall workload remains consistent with the 50% appointment level of 220 total hours and does not regularly or systematically exceed the intended weekly average of 20 hours per week for a 50% appointment.

UCLA. In Fall 2024, for example, 1.4% of undergraduate primary sections were online and 1.8% were hybrid, for a combined total of 3.2%. The combined share was 3.7% in Winter 2025 and 3.2% in Spring 2025. Summer terms show a different pattern, with a substantially higher share of online and hybrid course offerings as a consequence of the policies that regulate summer instructional modality.

As mentioned, course modalities are governed by the Academic Senate's [Undergraduate Distance Education](#) policy and by WSCUC accreditation limits on the proportion of online instruction UCLA may offer without a substantive change review. Bruin Learn, the campus ecosystem that encompasses Canvas, the learning management system (LMS), and other academic technologies, supports instruction through course delivery, administration, digital communication, and assessment. Notably, adoption of instructional technologies varies across departments. Assessment and grading practices fluctuate across campus but often include a combination of high-stakes midterms and final exams, written assignments, and problem sets, with grading support distributed among faculty, TAs, and Readers.

Recent campus discussions have highlighted increasing pressures related to exam administration, including concerns about academic integrity in the context of the expansion of generative AI tools and the growing need for proctored testing spaces for many courses, including online courses with on-site testing needs. Pilot efforts in the UC and elsewhere are exploring centralized testing services, but these are not yet institutionalized. A multi-campus UC pilot is planned for summer 2026 in which participating campuses will share proctored testing capacity across institutions for online and in-person courses, using [PrairieLearn](#) as the assessment platform. The pilot appears to be motivated by concerns about academic integrity as well as by interest in improving student access to proctored testing environments. Operational questions are still unresolved, however, including scheduling, local site administration, cross-campus coordination, and funding commitments. These developments suggest that centralized testing models may become more relevant to UCLA's planning, although they are still at the exploratory stage.

Central support units, including the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), Digital & Technology Solutions (DTS), the UCLA Library, as well as school- or discipline-specific support centers such as the Center for Education Innovation in the Sciences (CEILS), HumTech, and the Social Sciences Center for Education, Research, and Technology (SSCERT) provide professional development, instructional design support, and pedagogical resources. However, course design and assessment frameworks are typically determined at the instructor or departmental level. Physical assignment of General Assignment (GA) classroom spaces is coordinated centrally through the Registrar's Office, while departments manage additional non-GA classroom spaces typically under their proximal control.

As will be discussed later in the paper, classroom assignment and scheduling constraints impact course delivery decisions, including pressure on large-capacity rooms, differences in

classroom infrastructure and technological capabilities across instructional spaces, and alignment with [Policy 870](#) scheduling blocks, which guide the Registrar’s Office in assigning GA classrooms. Briefly, current classroom utilization patterns, visible via [APB dashboards](#)⁴, indicate that larger GA classrooms are more heavily used than smaller rooms during peak scheduling periods. In Fall 2025, for example, utilization rates increased with room size, from 76.6% for rooms with 61–100 seats, 77.4% for rooms with 101–200 seats, and 81.1% for rooms with more than 200 seats. In some cases, instructors have shared that mismatches between enrollment and assigned classroom capacity can lead to compressed instructional time or adjustments to course delivery modality. The Subcommittee on Academic and Learning Spaces, part of the [Space Oversight Committee](#) chaired by the EVCP, is currently reviewing Policy 870 and developing recommendations to improve the efficient and effective use of GA classrooms.

Overall, the current instructional model relies on a layered instructional workforce, discipline-specific norms for section size and delivery, and a combination of centralized and decentralized support. Many high-enrollment courses are structurally dependent on TA-led secondary sections and established TA allocation practices that have evolved over time in response to enrollment growth, collective bargaining agreements, graduate student availability and funding packages, and institutional finances.

At UCLA, faculty adoption of emerging instructional technologies, particularly newer AI-supported tools, and initiatives related to redesigning assessment practices remains uneven across disciplines. This variation reflects differences in local support capacity, institutional guidance, and pedagogical and disciplinary culture, as well as, in some cases, still-emerging evidence about effectiveness in specific teaching contexts.

Reimagined Models for the Instructional Workforce, TA Allocation Process, and Course Delivery

The proposed models for UCLA’s instructional workforce, TA allocation processes, and course delivery strategies prioritize implementation approaches that identify accountable entities, resource implications, assessment metrics, and practical steps for the units responsible for carrying the work forward. The topics below are organized to move from the most immediate and actionable opportunities to those requiring more time, resources, and coordination. This sequence reflects a practical order of execution given the dependencies among actions, in which some efforts establish the conditions necessary for others, as detailed within the implementation plans. To support effective implementation, many of the steps outlined below will require coordinated leadership by the EVCP, deans and department chairs in partnership

⁴ Access to building utilization dashboard can be granted by contacting APB_IR@ponet.ucla.edu with the completion of FERPA training (<https://www.registrar.ucla.edu/Faculty-Staff/FERPA/FERPA-Training>).

with the Academic Senate, particularly the Undergraduate Council (UgC), and other relevant campus entities including IT governance groups to support effective implementation.

1. Reconsider the Instructional Workforce

Principles

In response to the Task Force recommendation to reduce structural dependence on graduate student teaching labor, the working group proposes the following principles to guide consideration of new instructional workforce models:

Instructional Quality

- Prioritize evidence-based instruction for undergraduate students, i.e., teaching practices informed by research in student learning.
- Prioritize TA support for courses where sections are pedagogically essential.
- Assess any reallocation or reduction of TA support to ensure that student learning outcomes, or other disciplinary proxies of student success, are not diminished.

Workload

- Ensure that instructional workload is allocated in ways that are fair, transparent, and appropriate to the role, recognizing that TAs and faculty perform different kinds of teaching-related labor under different appointment structures.
- Engage departments and academic programs as decision-makers in determining instructional support needs and redesign opportunities.

Governance

- Ensure that any workforce redesign complies with collective bargaining agreements and is implemented in consultation with Employee Labor Relations (ELR), the Academic Affairs and Personnel Office (AAPO), and the Academic Senate, in addition to substantive, ongoing consultation with departments and relevant teaching support units. Implementation should honor shared governance on all academic issues, including research programs, academic progress, and degree requirements.

Implementation Roadmap for Reconsidering the Instructional Workforce

This section outlines priority actions that draw on existing campus programs and infrastructure to advance undergraduate educational quality and sustainability. Recommendations are organized across near-, medium-, and longer-term timeframes to signal actions that build on current practices, pilot new approaches, and require structural change.

1.1. Optimize the Use of Teaching Assistant Appointments

Implementation Leads: Departments in coordination with Deans

Efforts to reduce structural reliance on ASE-supported instruction should begin with a review of how TAs are currently assigned to courses. Departments and academic programs are best positioned to determine where TA support is pedagogically essential, where there are legitimate safety, equipment availability, and space constraints associated with delivery of instruction in the case of labs or performance-based classes, and where current secondary section structures may reflect longstanding practice rather than a clearly articulated instructional purpose integral to the course design. Implementation should focus first on prioritizing TA support for courses in which small sections are central to learning, especially laboratories, studios for performance-based instruction, writing-intensive courses, and other experiential formats, as well as for large courses in which TAs help create smaller-scale opportunities for discussion, feedback, collaborative learning, and student engagement. Implementation should also include a review of whether TAs in courses are being used in pedagogically effective ways that are intentionally aligned with course learning goals and support the quality of undergraduate education. In some cases, this review may also help identify course-support functions that in time could be performed by other instructional roles, such as Readers to grade assignments with rubrics, when pedagogically appropriate. When TA support is reduced or reallocated, departments and programs should assess whether student learning remains consistent (and ideally improves in some cases) under a revised framework.

1.1.1 Review Current TA Use Considering Pedagogical Needs (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Departments should inventory the courses that currently use TAs and identify the instructional role TAs play in those courses. Particular attention should be given to whether student attendance in TA-led sections is required or optional and whether TAs are providing structured application of course material, formative feedback, laboratory or studio supervision, writing support, or other clearly defined pedagogical purposes. To support consistency across units within a division or school, this review should be conducted through a structured process using common criteria and, when useful, information from syllabi and Bruin Learn. Priority should be given to identifying courses in which student attendance in TA-led secondary sections is required and TA support is essential because of safety considerations, the need for intensive feedback, or student-centered pedagogical practices that depend on active engagement. Priority should also be given to courses in which TA-led sections are needed to create smaller-scale settings for discussion and engagement within high-enrollment courses. Where TAs are determined to be a necessary component of effective instruction, appropriate training in evidence-based practices is vital so that they can support student success (see current [UCLA TA Training Requirements](#)).

Departments should also identify courses in which the current use of TAs may warrant reconsideration, particularly where attendance in discussion sections is optional and TAs

primarily repeat lecture content rather than advancing course learning goals through guided practice, interaction, or other forms of active engagement and structured learning. This review should distinguish between courses that require small sections for pedagogical reasons and those in which TA sections have not been intentionally designed to support students in achieving the learning outcomes or other defined measures of student success. Other instructional titles might be considered (e.g., Readers) when a department's review determines that additional instructional support, such as grading, is necessary to sustain the quality of instruction but does not necessarily require TA-led secondary sections to provide that support.

For courses assigned TAs, those appointments should be reviewed for workload parity so that students in similar appointments across different courses are not carrying materially different instructional burdens without clear pedagogical justification.

1.1.2 Assess Courses Where TA Support Is Reduced or Reallocated (Medium Term: 12–24 months)

Departments should evaluate whether a course can responsibly operate with fewer TAs or a different allocation of TA (or other) support. Assessment of student learning outcomes or another disciplinary proxy of student success should remain consistent (or improve) under the revised instructional model of course delivery. This assessment may include customized questions on the end-of-quarter [student experiences of teaching \(SET\) surveys](#), performance-based metrics such as final grades or scores on high-stakes assessments, and other direct evidence of learning. Departments should document the rationale for the change, the revised instructional model, and the evidence used to assess its effects on students.

Departments may consider collaborating with teaching support units with assessment expertise, such as the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) or the Center for Educational Innovation and Learning in the Sciences (CEILS), to obtain data from APB and to ensure that assessments are reasonably consistent and, when possible, evaluated against appropriate comparable benchmarks (e.g., before and after adjustments to TA support model). Assessment findings should be shared beyond the individual course level so that decisions about TA usage can be understood in broader departmental, divisional, or school contexts.

1.1.3 Use Assessment and Existing Data to Refine TA Deployment Over Time (Longer Term: 24+ months)

Departments should engage their deans in reviewing the results of course-level assessments over time to determine whether TA support is being concentrated in the courses where it contributes most directly to instructional demand and quality, thereby justifying sustained deployment of TAs in those courses.

APB data and ASE commitment data may also be used, when available, to support a more transparent long-term review of TA deployment patterns, particularly in relation to enrollment growth, departmental practice, and the sustainability of current staffing models.

1.2. Expand Strategic Use of Teaching Professors

Implementation Leads: EVCP, Deans, Vice Provosts, and Departments

Teaching Professors are an existing Senate faculty series that can expand instructional capacity while also contributing to curriculum development, evidence-based teaching, and, in many cases, broader departmental or divisional efforts to systematically improve the quality of undergraduate instruction (see [research documenting impacts of teaching-focused faculty](#)).

Given current and projected undergraduate enrollment growth, UCLA should consider whether more strategic deployment of this series across selected disciplines and instructional contexts would strengthen undergraduate education. For example, Teaching Professors could have broader instructional impact than Unit 18 lecturers because, in addition to carrying higher teaching loads than many research-focused Senate faculty, they are able to extend their expertise beyond the classroom through instructional leadership, program development, assessment, and other forms of academic administration, as determined by and in support of departmental, divisional, and school needs. At the same time, expansion of this series should not be treated as a substitute for broad faculty engagement in undergraduate teaching, even where teaching responsibilities differ by role, workload, and disciplinary context. It should also not be assumed that hiring more Teaching Professors will necessarily eliminate the need for discussion sections in large-enrollment courses. Roles and responsibilities for Teaching Professors should be explicitly defined by departments and aligned with tenure and promotion expectations, and efforts should be made to clarify these expectations with faculty serving on their departmental academic personnel committees.

1.2.1 Review Current Use and Identify Strategic Roles for Teaching Professors (Near Term: 0–12 months)

As a first step, the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP), in consultation with deans and vice provosts of academic units, should convene to discuss a campus strategy for more intentional hiring and deployment of Teaching Professors across the College and Schools, including where incentives, planning, or clearer guidance may be needed.

UC policy defines Teaching Professors as a Senate faculty series intended to meet long-term instructional needs with primary responsibility for teaching and teaching-related work and secondary responsibility for scholarly or professional activity related to instruction and pedagogy. As of Fall 2025, UCLA has the fewest Teaching Professors among the undergraduate-serving UC campuses (see Table 1). Senior leadership should examine the rationale other UC campuses have used to expand this series in order to identify best practices and incorporate lessons learned into a UCLA strategy. This is especially important in fields with

high instructional demand and in areas of broad campus need, including curriculum design, pedagogical research, educational programming, and academic leadership.

Table 1: UC Teaching Professors By Campus (as of Fall 2025) ⁵

Location	Teaching Professors
San Diego	165
Irvine	114
Santa Barbara	85
Riverside	80
Davis	68
Santa Cruz	52
Berkeley	51
Merced	48
Los Angeles	30
Grand Total	693

Departments should identify whether and where Teaching Professors might uniquely address instructional needs and help sustain quality in an increasingly resource-constrained environment. Such roles may be particularly valuable in high-enrollment courses, multi-section course sequences, and programs that need stable leadership in curriculum coordination, revision, and assessment. Priority should be given to areas where Teaching Professors could strengthen pedagogical leadership, support more coherent delivery across course sequences or multiple sections, and/or contribute to research-based course design and rigorous assessment.

⁵ Notes: (1) Data source: UCPath, as of October 2025; (2) In case of concurrent appointments, employees are counted in their primary job positions to avoid duplicate counts; (3) UC Teaching Professors are identified by CTO codes 210, 211, 214, and 224; 4) For more information, please refer to <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/uc-employee-headcount>

Thanks to Amit Prayag, Institutional Research and Academic Planning University of California, Office of the President for Table 1 data.

A growing body of [UC-based research](#) suggests that Teaching Professors can positively support the student learning experience through direct instruction as well as providing pedagogical expertise, increased use of evidence-based educational practices, and constructively influence the teaching practices of their peers.

Departments should specify what instructional, programmatic, and administrative responsibilities Teaching Professors would assume, with emphasis on curriculum development, assessment, research-based course design, and broader pedagogical leadership. This analysis should emphasize where Teaching Professors can help shape instructional policy, support coherent curricular design across courses and sequences, and strengthen connections among teaching practice, assessment, and curricular improvement, in addition to supporting routine course coordination and providing administrative oversight. Departments may also consider, when appropriate, how Teaching Professors might contribute to pedagogical research within their respective disciplines. The departmental analysis should make clear that the rationale for hiring in this series is not simply adding teaching capacity, but to support a combination of teaching, administrative or programmatic coordination, and pedagogical leadership. Where such responsibilities are part of the role, departments should also ensure that they are clearly aligned with appointment, merit, and promotion criteria.

At the same time, the Teaching Professor series may not be the ideal fit for every discipline and instructional context. In some units, other instructional titles or hybrid roles may better align with local training and staffing goals. For example, the Department of Chemistry uses a combined Lecturer / Postdoctoral Researcher position that expands teaching capacity while also supporting postdoctoral research training. A fuller comparison of these options would help clarify the advantages of the Teaching Professor series and the barriers to its broader use in UCLA's hiring plans.

Deans should consider how to support more comprehensive and effective use of the Teaching Professor series across units. This includes clarifying how Teaching Professors would be incorporated across campus, how their contributions to curriculum and pedagogy would be evaluated, how their role would differ from other instructional titles without compromising their status as Senate faculty, and how expectations for the series would align with appointment, merit, and promotion criteria. Deans should also consider opportunities for department leadership to compare approaches and establish clearer shared expectations, particularly around governance, role definition, and evaluation. Additionally, deans should identify what professional development support new Teaching Professors may need to optimize their contributions to UCLA's educational mission.

1.2.2 Evaluate Impact on Instructional Quality, Equity, and Staffing Practice (Longer Term: 24+ months)

Departments and divisions and schools should assess the extent to which the strategic use of Teaching Professors improves course delivery, supports evidence-based teaching, and strengthens curriculum, especially in areas under sustained enrollment pressure. This assessment also should examine whether the series is being used in ways that meaningfully improve course and program quality rather than simply absorbing teaching that might otherwise be assigned to other faculty or instructors.

Longer-term implementation should also monitor the effect of Teaching Professor hiring on teaching equity across the faculty. In particular, divisions and schools should ensure that expansion of this series occurs with continued attention to equitable teaching engagement across faculty ranks and does not exempt other faculty from teaching responsibility.

1.3. Leverage Readers for Rubric-Based Grading and Feedback Support

Implementation Leads: Individual Instructors, Departments, and TLC

Readers are already used effectively in some courses and offer a practical way to shift grading and rubric-based feedback away from TAs in cases where direct instructional interaction is not the primary pedagogical need. Readers are best utilized when courses need help with providing feedback on papers or projects based on a rubric or grading exams, given that Readers cannot lead secondary sections or perform independent teaching work. Implementation should begin by building on existing Reader-supported models and expanding them selectively in courses where grading can be standardized without compromising instructional quality. This will also require attention to institutional implementation, including how courses are coded and entered into the Schedule of Classes so that Reader needs can be identified and planned for in advance. Instructional technologies will undoubtedly support this model in courses where grading processes can be structured and automated to some extent without reducing quality.

This guidance is consistent with the Fall 2023 report on the [Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support \(FGPGSS\)](#), which suggests that in courses where TAs spend a disproportionate amount of time grading papers and exams, increased use of Readers, along with use of instructional technologies where feasible, may be a more cost-effective and instructionally appropriate model. However, any expanded use of Readers should also take into account updated compensation tables under the newly ratified ASE contract.

In addition, if graduate student availability declines, departments may need to explore whether undergraduate instructional roles can appropriately support select course needs. Under current practice, undergraduate students may serve in limited Reader-type capacities, and some UC campuses have reported limited use of undergraduate TAs under specific conditions. Any

broader exploration of undergraduate instructional roles at UCLA would require review with AAPO, Employee Labor Relations, and the Academic Senate, as well as careful attention to supervision, role clarifications, and collective bargaining constraints.

1.3.1 Build on Existing Reader-Support Examples (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Departments should identify courses in which Readers are already being used successfully for grading and written feedback and comparable courses in which TAs currently spend most of their time grading papers, exams, or other assignments. Initial expansion should focus on courses where shifting grading to Readers is likely to make a difference in instructional efficiency, for example in courses in which grading, rather than leading secondary sections or supervising labs, is the main reason TAs are assigned to that course.

Instructors in those courses should identify which assignments or assessments can be supported by Readers, what other clearly defined course-support tasks may be appropriate (not involving independent instruction), how Readers will be trained on faculty-developed rubrics and grading criteria, how supervision will be maintained, and how Reader responsibilities will remain within applicable workload parameters.

1.3.2 Selectively Expand Reader Use and Assess Results (Medium Term: 12–24 months)

Departments should pilot and assess broader Reader use in courses where grading demands are high and direct instructional interaction is less central to the TA role. The assessment should gauge whether Reader-supported models maintain the quality and timeliness of feedback and reduce grading burden on TAs and instructors.

Where Reader-support models prove effective, deans should work with departments to incorporate them more systematically into staffing plans for appropriate courses.

1.3.3 Inventory Reader-Supported Courses and Best Practices Across Course Types (Near to Medium Term: 0–24 months)

The Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) should inventory Reader-supported course models already in use across a range of disciplines, including: which assignments are graded by Readers; how rubrics are developed by faculty and grading criteria are communicated Readers; how consistency and timeliness of feedback are maintained; and how grading work is divided among Readers, TAs, and instructors. These examples should be gathered into a practical resource guide shared with individual instructors and departments seeking to expand Reader use in courses when pedagogically appropriate.

1.4. Expand the Learning Assistant (LA) Program

Implementation Leads: Individual instructors, departments and divisions/schools in consultation with CEILS

The Learning Assistant (LA) program already has an established track record and administrative infrastructure through UCLA's Center for Education Innovation and Learning in the Sciences (CEILS), offering a strong existing model for undergraduate education in STEM. According to CEILS program data shared with the working group, LAs have worked with more than 200 faculty members across 18 STEM departments since 2000, and in Winter 2025 there were more than 1,000 applicants for 575 LA positions. The same data indicate that in approximately half of LA-supported discussion, lab, or lecture sections, instructors reported implementing active learning only because LAs were present to facilitate it. Surveys of thousands of students found that 96% agreed that LAs helped them learn. A summary of the LA program is provided in [Appendix 4](#).

When used strategically, particularly in large-enrollment courses, LAs can improve instructor-learner ratios and support student-centered pedagogical interventions by assisting with small-group work, in-class activities, and other structured forms of learner engagement. LAs may also help TAs manage larger secondary sections by creating more opportunities for active engagement among students within them. At the same time, the program is valuable for the undergraduate students who serve as LAs, and any expansion should continue to assess its impact on their roles and educational experience.

Expansion beyond STEM courses should unfold selectively, build from existing LA-supported models, and account for the staffing required for the training, coordination, and supervision of high-impact peer-to-peer education. Broader adoption would also require identified resources to support program administration and the LAs themselves. CEILS provides a demonstrated model within STEM, and consideration of growth beyond STEM would also need to take into account the need for an appropriate administrative home and support structure for effective deployment of this program. In the near term, expansion of the LA program is likely to be most feasible as an incremental, opt-in strategy where there is administrative capacity and pedagogical value.

Notably, this recommendation is consistent with the FGPSS report, which indicates that LAs cannot replace ASEs but may help reduce ASE workload by supporting larger sections and increasing personalized attention to students when effectively implemented.

1.4.1 Build on Existing LA Infrastructure, Identify Appropriate Courses Beyond STEM, and Pilot the LA-Supported Course Model (Near to Medium Term Pilot: 0–24+ months)

Departments, in coordination with CEILS, should identify courses in which the LA model is most likely to translate effectively. Priority should be given to large-enrollment courses in which additional in-class support in lecture or sections could improve active learning engagement

(e.g., through structured small-group problem solving or discussion of theory), and to courses in which TAs are supporting large secondary sections that may benefit from additional pedagogical support.

CEILS staff should consult with instructors to specify how LAs might be utilized effectively in their courses, what activities they would support, how they would work alongside TAs and instructors, and which responsibilities would remain with TAs and instructors.

With implementation of select LA-supported courses, CEILS should support assessment addressing whether the planned use of LAs was actualized, how responsibilities were divided among instructors, TAs, and LAs, and whether the model increased instructor–student interactions.

1.4.2 Evaluate Results and Expand Where Effective (Medium Term: 12–24 months)

Where assessment demonstrates that the LA-supported model improves student engagement and helps redistribute instructional effort in useful ways, departments should engage their deans to determine, in consultation with CEILS, the EVCP, and the CFO, how to expand staffing to sustain administration of the LA program beyond STEM.

2. Redesign TA Allocation Process

As UCLA reconsiders its instructional workforce, TA allocation will need to become more explicit, transparent, and consistent across units while remaining responsive to curricular differences and disciplinary context. The goal is to align TA allocations more closely with pedagogical needs, student learning, safety, enrollment demand, and the practical constraints of workload rules, graduate student availability, budget, and course scheduling.

Principles

The following principles should guide any redesign of TA allocation processes:

Instructional Purpose

- Align TA deployment with documented pedagogical and safety needs rather than historical precedent or graduate funding patterns alone.
- Preserve TA support for courses where sections are instructionally important, including laboratory courses, writing-intensive courses, field-based instruction, studios, and other experiential formats, as well as high-enrollment areas in which TAs help create smaller-scale settings for discussion, feedback, collaborative learning, and student engagement.
- Pilot allocation changes and assess impact on student learning and experience before scaling.

Workload and Section Size

- Establish transparent, discipline-sensitive guidelines for section sizes that reflect differences in instructional types across campus.
- Ensure that TA workload is assigned within and across departments in ways that are transparent, fair, and consistent with ASE workload provisions.
- Integrate enrollment projections and trend data into TA allocation decisions to improve financial planning.

Review and Oversight

- Engage faculty governance bodies at the department, divisional and school levels in reviewing instructional categories and proposed changes to secondary section enrollments.
- Ensure that allocation adjustments comply with collective bargaining agreements and are implemented in consultation with ELR, AAPO, APB, Graduate Division, and the Academic Senate. Because TA allocation is at the intersection of pedagogy, enrollment planning, and budget, this work will require coordination by deans and divisional offices, with department chairs helping to implement it locally.

Note that efforts to redesign TA allocation processes will also need to take account of existing and projected ASE and GSR commitments, which may impact the pace and look of implementation. See [Appendix 5](#) for data on ASE and GSR financial commitments 2025-31.

Implementation Roadmap for Redefining TA Allocations

2.1. Optimize TA Use Based on Discipline-Specific Instructional Needs

Implementation Leads: APB, Deans and other Divisional and School Leadership

TA allocation should be closely aligned with documented pedagogical and safety needs through a structured review of two complementary approaches: seat minimums by course type and by instructional category (“banding”) models. These approaches may be used separately or together depending on the disciplinary setting. Their effective use will rely in part on developing a clear, consistent framework for describing course types and instructional needs.

2.1.1 Review and Clarify Current TA Allocation Practices (Near-Term: 0–12 months)

APB and deans’ offices in the College and Schools should gather current practices across departments, including seat thresholds, sections per TA, and typical TA assignments and responsibilities, in order to provide the campus with a comprehensive picture of where approaches are similar across units and where they vary.

Deans’ offices should ask departments to describe the instructional purpose of secondary sections and create a simple template through which departments can identify the purpose of

secondary sections, the role the TAs play (e.g., lab supervision, writing feedback, structured problem-solving), and whether secondary section attendance is required.

Deans' offices should engage appropriate faculty, informed by departmental input and their commitment to evidence-based teaching, to review how secondary sections are being used, including whether they provide intentionally structured supplementary learning opportunities or primarily repeat lecture content, and to identify courses for which the structure may need to be reconsidered.

2.1.2 Pilot Seat-Minimum Models (Medium Term: 12–24 months)

Working with departments, deans' offices should pilot clear enrollment thresholds for TA support in a select set of larger-enrollment courses of the same type, testing whether more explicit seat minimums required to assign a TA compromises instructional quality. Relevant local examples, including experience with seat minimums in the Humanities, may provide useful points of reference for divisions and schools considering adoption of this model. See [Appendix 6](#) for the seat minimum framework in the Humanities.

Where revised seat minimums lead to larger or fewer secondary sections, departments should revisit course design to ensure that syllabi, assignments, and grading timelines remain instructionally manageable and aligned with TA workload limits. Any course redesign should be assessed in partnership with campus or unit-level teaching support unit(s). Case studies from Sociology and History may also help inform how seat-minimum models are interpreted and adapted across different instructional contexts (see [Appendix 7](#) for seat minimum best practices with data and case studies from Sociology and History).

As seat-minimum pilots move forward, divisions and schools should work with departments to assess whether the revised thresholds maintain instructional quality before deciding whether to implement them more broadly. The assessment may draw on metrics including student feedback from SET surveys, performance data such as grade outcomes, and other direct evidence of learning, as well as TA workload reports.

2.1.3 Pilot Instructional Category (Banding) Models (Medium Term: 12–24 months)

Deans should work with their respective associate deans and appropriate faculty committees to develop a limited set of instructional categories that reflect meaningful differences in course design and support needs across the disciplines. These categories could include, for example, wet labs, computational labs, writing-intensive discussions, and lecture-based discussion sections, and should be defined with attention to the varying levels of supervision, feedback, and safety oversight they require. Examples already developed in the Life Sciences may offer a practical reference point for how instructional categories can be described and applied while recognizing that divisions and schools will want to adapt them to their specialized disciplinary context. See [Appendix 8](#) for examples of course categorization from the Life Sciences.

Within that framework, divisional and school leadership should lay out a more consistent basis for TA assignments across similar course types. This may include, for example, identifying the average number of students a TA supports, the number of secondary sections they teach, or other common features that can make TA staffing practices more transparent and consistent across comparable courses.

At the same time, these category-based models should leave room for exceptions where appropriate. When a course does not fit the typical range for its category because of safety needs, unusual grading demands, or other clearly defined instructional considerations, departments should provide a brief rationale for review by their respective deans.

2.1.4 Integrate and Scale TA Allocation Models (Longer Term: 24+ months)

Over time, deans' offices should determine whether seat minimums, instructional categories, or some combination of the two provides the most effective and sustainable basis for TA allocation in their local contexts. Where these models prove useful, they should become a more standard practice of how departments plan for and justify TA support.

As such models come into more frequent and regular use, associate deans of finance, along with APB, should incorporate them into annual academic planning and budget processes so that TA assignments, course scheduling, and resource decisions are more tightly aligned in advance of the next fiscal year.

2.2 Align TA Allocation Standards with Enrollment Projections

Use APB enrollment data to support more proactive and predictable TA allocation.

Implementation Leads: APB and Deans and other Divisional and School Leadership

2.2.1 Build on Existing Data and Planning Processes (Near Term: 0–12 months)

A more proactive approach to TA allocation will depend partially on making more effective use of enrollment data already available through APB. In the near term, APB could share projected enrollments with divisions and schools by course and section type before each fiscal year so that departments are on a stronger footing for estimating how many TA-supported sections they are likely to need.

APB could also provide to divisional and school leaders a summary of recent TA allocation patterns across their respective departments, including students per TA, number of sections assigned per TA, and the total number of TAs assigned by course. These data would clarify current practices and provide a more informed basis for future allocation decisions.

2.2.2 Standardize Access to Trend Data and Adoption of Review Process (Medium Term: 12–24 months)

As these processes become more established, TA allocation planning should become more straightforward for divisions and schools to carry out annually. To support that work, APB

should develop straightforward planning tools (e.g., templates or dashboards) that combine enrollment projections with TA workload limits so that divisions, schools, and departments can more effectively estimate TA needs under different scenarios. Each year APB and divisional and school leadership should compare planned TA allocations with actual outcomes, including the number and size of sections offered and the number of sections assigned to each TA, to identify where adjustments are needed. This review should also consider how TAs were used across courses so that allocation decisions continue to align with pedagogical and other justified instructional needs.

2.2.3. Strategically Integrate into Institutional Planning (Longer Term: 24+ months)

Over the long term, TA allocation planning should become more fully integrated into broader campus budget and enrollment cycles. APB and deans' offices should link TA allocation planning more directly to budget development and enrollment management so that decisions can be made earlier in a more coordinated and transparent way.

Longer-term planning should also be informed by continued review of how TA allocation practices evolve across campus units. APB should monitor trends over time, including changes in section size, TA workload, and consistency across departments, divisions, and schools, in order to refine TA allocation practices and support long-term sustainability.

3. Transform Undergraduate Course Delivery

As UCLA reconsiders the instructional workforce responsible for course delivery, instructional modalities, technological infrastructure, and related systems (e.g., course scheduling and the LMS) must also adapt to reflect how instruction is delivered now and in the future. This is especially important given the mounting presence and integration of AI in the teaching and learning ecosystem. A renewed focus on undergraduate course delivery also must build institutional capability as a core component of an implementation strategy. What is best for UCLA learners should remain the central consideration as evidence-based pedagogies are adapted across disciplines and instructional modalities. Because course delivery decisions are made within schools, divisions, and departments, in consultation with appropriate Academic Senate bodies, this work will require deans and department chairs to help set priorities, align local action with campus policies and strategic priorities, and identify where change is most needed and viable.

Principles guiding the recommendations in this section include systematizing assessment to ensure instructional quality given its centrality to the student academic experience; prioritizing incentives for instructors that are aligned with advancement/merit review; and investing in infrastructure as a vital element to ensure success and sustainability of implementation plans.

Principles

Instructional Quality and Student Experience

- Articulate and assess strategic priorities for using AI in teaching and learning.
- Prioritize ongoing efforts that elevate and/or accelerate course delivery alternatives and their components that enhance the student learning experience for AI-era futures.
- Systematize assessment of instruction to ensure alignment with evidence-based teaching practices and the quality of the student learning experience in a course is sustained or improved.

Incentives, Cost, and Implementation

- Prioritize instructor incentives to engender buy-in, address concerns about workload, and align with merit review and advancement processes.
- Recognize that course delivery models have inherent trade-offs between cost categories and may ultimately redistribute costs rather than reduce total costs.
- Acknowledge that implementation of the recommendations affecting course delivery may merit their own working groups to further develop project plans and assess their impact.

Infrastructure, Technology, and Delivery

- For AI and educational technology-related recommendations, require Explicit Build vs. Buy Analysis⁶ where appropriate.
- Align instructional workforce diversification with available physical and digital infrastructure through the adoption of a revised campus scheduling strategy.

Implementation Roadmap for Transforming Undergraduate Course Delivery

3.1. Scale AI Capabilities and Capacity in Teaching and Learning

Before scaling AI capabilities and support, UCLA should articulate clear strategic priorities for the use of AI in teaching and learning. This includes support for faculty and students, while also addressing the pedagogical, ethical, and practical concerns raised by the adoption of evolving educational technologies and their instructional applications. Implementation should also systematically incorporate ongoing assessment and critical evaluation of pedagogical

⁶ A build vs. buy (BvB) analysis is a structured decision process used to determine whether a university should develop a technology solution internally or adopt an existing vendor product. In higher education, this evaluation aligns with institutional strategy by considering total cost of ownership, speed to deliver value, integration with enterprise systems (e.g., LMS, SIS, data platforms), data governance, accessibility compliance (e.g., WCAG/ADA), and the ability to scale across diverse academic units. Embedding BvB into governance ensures that technology investments support long-term academic, research, and student success priorities—promoting shared services, reducing duplication, and enabling a cohesive digital ecosystem rather than fragmented, unit-level solutions.

tradeoffs, ethical implications, and possible unintended impacts of AI use in teaching and learning and support structures.

3.1.1 Articulate Strategic Priorities for Using AI in Teaching and Learning at UCLA (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Leads: EVCP, Academic Senate, VPTL, TLC AI in Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee, UCLA AI Advisory Committee, Academic Technology Committee

The expansion of AI use in teaching and learning has outpaced the development of clear, shared institutional priorities. Multiple surveys of both [faculty](#) and [students](#) consistently indicate a need for greater clarity on expectations, appropriate use, and the role of AI in the academic experience. In the absence of coordinated guidance, practices are emerging unevenly across disciplines, creating uncertainty and potential inequities for both instructors and learners. A coherent institutional framework is therefore needed to align pedagogical innovation with UCLA's values, academic integrity expectations, and student success goals. Establishing this direction will enable UCLA to support the responsible adoption and integration of AI technologies. It is worth noting that the articulation of a vision and accompanying strategic priorities should reflect a diverse set of dispositions on AI to ensure pedagogical flexibility and account for the wide-range of instructional and disciplinary contexts.

Moreover, strategic priorities should align teaching policies, Academic Senate guidance, and student AI literacy initiatives with evolving UC system recommendations to ensure responsible, equitable, and pedagogically grounded AI adoption (see the [Report of the Academic Senate Workgroup on Artificial Intelligence](#)). Several campus-level initiatives are engaged in strategic planning (UCLA AI Advisory Committee, VPTL AI in Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee, Academic Technology Committee) and are nearing broader dissemination of their recommendations. For example, in Spring 2026, the VPTL AI in Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee will deliver recommendations on strategic directions to support four distinct areas of support for instruction related to AI: 1) AI Literacy; 2) Accessibility and Impact of GenAI for Teaching and Learning; 3) Asset-based applications of GenAI; 4) Instructor Upskilling and Training. The Task Force recommendations, elaborated below, align with these four areas and focus attention on actionable and immediate next steps along with the responsible campus units for implementation.

3.1.2 Require Inclusion of an AI Policy in All Course Syllabi (Near term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Leads: Academic Senate (UgC, GC), TLC, faculty subject matter experts

The Academic Senate, specifically the Undergraduate Council (UgC) and Graduate Council (GC), should consider incorporating a requirement for an AI policy in course syllabi, which are required for all undergraduate and graduate courses, including undergraduate tutorials, independent study courses, and graduate research courses (see [UCLA Academic Senate Policy on Course Syllabi](#)). An inclusive AI policy would allow for a wide range of disciplinary and

pedagogical approaches to using AI tools (or not) based on course learning goals. The UC Instructional Design and Faculty Support group created an [AI in Instruction decision-making map](#) to aid in determining AI usage in the classroom. A common framing for AI syllabus policies includes the following categories:

- **Not Permitting AI in Class:** The use of AI writing tools (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT) is not permitted in this course. The use of AI may violate Section 102.01a (Cheating) and/or 102.01c (Plagiarism) of the UCLA Student Code of Conduct.
- **Limited Use of AI:** Students may use (or are encouraged to use) AI writing tools (such as ChatGPT) to generate ideas for their writing and coursework in this class. A modification to this approach is to allow for Limited Use of AI with Citation.
- **Permitting Use of AI:** To prepare students for AI-assisted work, the use of AI writing tools is permitted in this course with no restrictions. Note that this policy may be revised in light of other policies and novel technological developments in AI tools.

The syllabus policy should be aligned with the UCLA Student Code of Conduct (see the [Interim 2026 Code](#)). Any new policy language should be ready during the 2026-2027 academic year.

3.1.3 Ensure All UCLA Students Have Equitable Access to AI Tools and Opportunities to Develop Baseline Proficiency in Educational Contexts (Near Term: 0–12+ months).

Implementation Leads: DTS, Academic Technology Committee, TLC, and UgC

One immediate issue is that, even with UCLA’s expanding institutional access to approved AI tools, student access still varies across platforms, license tiers, and course expectations, which can create inequities when instructors expect or require the use of specific tools or premium features. These differences can create inequities for undergraduate and graduate students who cannot afford additional licensing costs or do not see premium tools as worthwhile investments for a single course. It also is not as simple as granting access to all students to one tool as different disciplines and courses are utilizing different generative AI tools, a “one-size-fits-all” approach is thus not recommended. DTS, with guidance from the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) and TLC, should develop and implement a strategy for scaling student access to AI tools in ways that align with disciplinary demands and pedagogical needs across courses. DTS will need to engage the EVCP and CFO in budget planning to identify a sustainable funding model for this critical student resource.

UCLA also needs to elevate the issue of basic AI literacy and the anticipated disparities students will have matriculating to college with different levels of proficiency using AI tools depending on their pre-college experiences. It is recommended that every student undergo a basic AI training, which could be required during Orientation and/or integrated into courses (such as General Education) as a Bruin Learn module. TLC, in consultation with UgC, can take the lead in developing an eLearning module that can be plug-and-play in a variety of contexts starting Fall 2026.

3.1.4 Pilot Custom AI Tools for Instruction (Near to Medium: 0–24 months).

Implementation Leads: DTS, Academic Technology Committee, Academic Senate

Pilot a tiered approach to custom AI tool development for instruction (See [Table 1. AI Tiered Support Levels](#)). DTS, with input from the Academic Technology Committee and in consultation with the Academic Senate (UgC, CDITP, and other relevant Senate committees), should consider a tiered approach to scaling AI capabilities and capacity; however, solutions must be flexible to accommodate a range of disciplinary and pedagogical backgrounds and dispositions toward AI, thus enabling adaptation to teaching in an era of AI. The development and implementation of such tools can streamline administrative tasks instructors (and TAs) encounter so they can focus on the more complex aspects and human-centered dependences of a course and curriculum. There are also implications for personalized learning experiences through the integration of AI-learning assistants and tutors (see 3.1.5, below for additional details). A pilot period with this approach is appropriate. This approach would involve Explicit Build vs. Buy Analysis (BvB) (see Principles, above), though some tools might be more primed for rapid development through Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI). DTS will oversee this BvB analysis with collaborative support from relevant campus partners (e.g., APB, TLC) and in consultation with relevant advisory committees (e.g., ATC, UCLA AI Advisory Committee, VPTL AI in Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee) and the Academic Senate (e.g., UgC).

In the near term, investments in AI-enabled instructional innovation need to continue and potentially expand. By supporting instructors as pedagogical innovators and responsible adopters, this recommendation goes beyond tool adoption to the strategic redesign of instructional workflows to reduce administrative burden and reallocate faculty time toward higher-impact teaching practices (e.g., mentorship, active learning, and formative assessments). For example, AI “tutors” can be deployed to offer students with real-time and/or formative feedback as part of a scaffolded, personalized learning experience (i.e., AI tutors provide feedback at lower levels of cognitive work whereas instructors provide feedback at expert/higher-levels of cognitive work). These types of personal learning experiences can test knowledge in spaced and massed learning sessions, interleave course concepts, and offer scenarios where students develop explanatory reasoning skills. Additionally, such platforms provide alternative ways to demonstrate knowledge through different assessment formats (e.g., multiple-choice, short-answer, case-based scenarios). Additionally, AI tutors can calibrate and account for a variety of learner characteristics (e.g., primary language, performance with prerequisites, etc.) and may even advance digital accessibility (embedded captions, language assistance). These efforts should be paired with clear evaluation metrics such as reductions in grading consistency and turnaround time. Developing a robust infrastructure to support this range of instructional activities will take continued investments in grant programs, opportunities for upskilling/peer learning, and dedicated staffing to ensure sustained support.

3.1.5 Continue Investing in Programs Supporting Instructional Experimentation with AI (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Lead: TLC

The TLC's tiered [Educational Innovation Grants](#) program supports faculty experimentation with AI-enabled pedagogical approaches (including the impact on the teaching and learning experience), course redesign, and discipline-specific AI teaching tools. TLC should continue to carve out funding from this program to support faculty-led, AI-focused educational innovation projects. To date the TLC has invested in five AI-focused projects for a total of approximately \$200K in awarded funds.

Either as a program to rapidly upskill, or as a program to further propel those who have deeply integrated AI into their course/curriculum, TLC should deploy an AI Accelerator program that allows instructors to quickly propose, implement, and assess the impact of an AI intervention. TLC currently has a [Course Accessibility Accelerator](#) program that is being piloted, which aims to rapidly upskill and support digital accessibility remediation, while also embedding accessibility best practices.

Additional staffing with AI expertise (e.g., AI Education Specialists) is needed to rapidly scale and dedicate efforts to leading, developing, coordinating, curating, and collaborating on the design and implementation of AI-oriented program and resource development. The TLC has already invested in limited term staff appointments to support these efforts and will rely on longer term institutional investments in career appointments to sustain or expand this work,

3.1.6 Expand On Demand AI Teaching Resources for Instructors (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Leads: TLC with faculty subject matter experts

Access to on-demand resources (across multiple modalities and formats) to ensure instructors have a variety of content to learn from, inform, inspire, and engage with in continuous development within a rapidly changing environment. Topics should include AI literacy, prompt engineering, assignment design using AI, leveraging AI for assessing student learning, and trade offs with using AI (including human-in-the-loop principles). TLC should expand their portfolio of online Teaching Guides with best-practice recommendations that frame AI as a tool for augmenting learning and teaching rather than solely as a risk, drawing on UC system AI reports and scholarly asset-based approaches to AI/educational technology adoption ([Ocumpaugh, et al., 2023](#)). Development of Teaching Guides and other on-demand resources should be done in partnership with other teaching support units and draw on instructor experiences with AI tools.

Compile and curate teaching artifacts (e.g., syllabi, AI course policies, assignments, case studies, and tool demonstrations) from instructors and units across disciplines to highlight existing AI-enabled teaching practices and provide practical examples for faculty. An AI Instructional Showcase can provide a means for faculty to show strategies “under the hood” of their teaching and lessons learned in the process of implementing their AI interventions. Leverage relevant AI committees, the UCLA Library, and AI-oriented teaching support units (e.g., HumTech) and initiatives to gather, curate, and maintain content.

3.1.7 Expand Faculty Training Programs (Near to Medium Term: 0–24 months)

Implementation Leads: Teaching support units, DTS, faculty subject matter experts

Provide structured learning opportunities to help instructors develop AI literacy, experiment with AI, share pedagogical strategies, and address ethical or instructional concerns about the technology. The teaching support units on campus could partner with faculty who actively use AI in their instruction and/or incentivize those who actively integrate it to be designated “AI Fellows” in their respective departments/units. Research and/or professional development funds should be provided for program participation and/or completion.

The assessment of outcomes from training programs and documentation of faculty experiences with AI and its effect on teaching and learning will be critical. The TLC should continue to include AI items on the Senior Survey to deepen the university's knowledge of the impact of curricular experiences with AI on students. Consistent engagement with faculty through formal needs assessments, town halls, AI symposia (e.g., [TFT AI + Storytelling Summit](#), [Anderson School of Management Embracing AI](#), [TLC Adapting Instruction in the Age of AI](#)), and other events designed to spur conversations, make visible different perspectives, and elevate expertise on the topic and its emerging impacts on various disciplines and careers.

3.1.8 Engage in Continuous Assessment and Pedagogical Research on the Educational Impacts of AI (Near to Medium Term: 0–24+ months)

Implementation Leads: TLC and faculty subject matter experts

As AI becomes increasingly embedded in teaching and learning, UCLA faces a growing need for a coordinated strategy to systematically assess and engage in pedagogical research on AI's impact on student learning and experiences. Faculty across disciplines hold a wide range of perspectives on the role of AI (from a transformative learning tool to a potential disruption to disciplinary pedagogy), making consistent assessment both necessary and complex. Measuring AI's instructional impact is inherently challenging, given the variability in pedagogical approaches, course designs, access to AI tools, and student engagement across a decentralized institution. Additionally, isolating the effects of AI from other instructional variables presents methodological difficulties that require careful, multi-faceted approaches,

thus research expertise is needed to understand underlying constructs. Ongoing assessment and research is therefore essential to generate reliable evidence, inform instructional practice, and guide responsible adoption across the university.

3.2. Support Faculty and Incentivize Their Participation in Course and Assessment Redesign

Faculty who teach undergraduate courses will play a critical role in addressing UCLA's instructional challenges. The university should acknowledge course and curriculum development as a substantive form of academic contribution and reward faculty for pedagogical innovation that enhances the student educational experience. In practice, this may include more explicit recognition of faculty engagement in evidence-based teaching, course redesign, assessment revision, and other pedagogical work in workload expectations, merit reviews, and department-level decisions related to teaching and curricular improvement. This work often requires investment in specialized teaching development, time to coordinate and implement structural changes to courses, and institutional affirmation that these activities are a core and valued part of the faculty role. Implementation should build from existing campus support structures, incorporate tangible incentives, and align with divisional, school, and departmental programmatic priorities.

3.2.1 Identify Courses for Pedagogical Review (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Leads: Departments

Departments should identify courses or course sequences in which the current instructional model could be revisited, particularly courses with discussion sections, large-enrollment formats, or ongoing coordination needs. Priority should be given to courses in which departments and academic programs need to assess whether TA-led secondary sections are being used appropriately, whether they remain necessary in their current form, and whether the course has been updated to reflect evidence-based teaching practices.

3.2.2 Build Capacity for Course Redesign Through Collaborations and Faculty Incentives Appropriate for Workload (Near to Medium Term: 0–24 months)

Implementation Leads: Departments, Deans, and units supporting faculty review process

Departments should encourage and coordinate the formation of faculty teams to engage in curriculum development and course redesign, with particular support for cross-disciplinary collaboration where shared instructional challenges or common course structures make that approach effective. Faculty teams should build on existing resources by engaging with teaching support units for examples of effective course models and guidance on evidence-based teaching practices, course structure, and assessment. For instance, TLC [Track 2 Planning Grants](#), including the [Inquiry 2 Action](#) program, offer support to faculty teams within departments in developing data-informed and evidence-based plans for collaborative programmatic and curricular action.

Departments and divisional/school leadership should identify how faculty participation in pedagogical enhancement and instructional redesign could be recognized in practice. Tangible incentives might include stipends, summer salary, or professional development funds. Alternatives to direct monetary compensation, such as updated technology, could also be considered. Incorporating credit for exemplary redesign efforts into criteria for divisional/school and/or university awards might help to motivate faculty to participate and lead curricular redesign efforts. Temporary modifications to teaching loads (e.g., course release) or adjustments to other responsibilities such as mentoring, advising, or service could also be considered. Ultimately, the incentive structure for this work should be situated within a unit's budgetary constraints and factor in workload, which may vary depending on the magnitude of and timeline for the course (re)design project.

Deans may catalyze capacity for department-level course redesign efforts by investing in a division/school-level teaching support model for a limited but concentrated period of time, particularly with IT-related needs to implement design changes. If it is in compliance with the new collective bargaining agreement, units might consider hiring graduate student course builders who are trained by professional instructional design staff based on the successful [Humanities RITC model](#).

Exemplary course redesign efforts should be acknowledged in merit review. Departmental personnel committees, AAPO, and the Academic Senate (CAP) as well as those units administering faculty information products supporting the review process should be consulted early and substantively on any changes that affect formal review processes associated with tenure and promotion. Given that course redesign and pedagogical leadership often require significant time, departments may need to develop workload plans that account for the differing demands of teaching and curriculum (re)design as workload may vary for lecturers, labs, seminars, multi-section courses, and upper- vs lower-division courses.

3.2.3 Support Faculty in Adopting Tools and Pedagogical Strategies that Facilitate Instructional Efficiencies (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Leads: DTS, TLC and other disciplinary teaching support units

Existing technologies within the Bruin Learn ecosystem, as well as some third party providers, can support the redesign of instructional workflows in ways that reduce administrative tasks and free faculty time for direct interaction with students and support of their learning. As a first step, DTS, in collaboration with campus teaching support units, should expand awareness, programming, and training for instructors on such tools, prioritizing those that streamline grading workflows and support consistent feedback practices across courses. A number of resources exist (e.g., [DTS Gradescope Resources](#); [TLC Resource | Using Gradescope for Efficient Grading](#)) and could be the focus of further awareness and disciplinary-specific grading

scenarios. New resources should directly address ways faculty might integrate technology effectively in assessment and grading practices.

The TLC should focus on building digitally accessible and readily deployable templates and examples (such as artifacts, sample syllabi, course multimedia). The constellation of campus teaching support centers could collaborate on the development of a repository for these types of on-demand resources within the TLC website and/or Bruin Learn as a centrally-supported commons for instructors to access.

Workshops and other professional learning opportunities should be offered to help instructors redesign course(s) and/or assessment(s), build awareness of other assessment practices (e.g., writing equitable multiple choice questions, developing rubrics for quantitative student work), and develop competencies with educational technology that supports assessment effectiveness. Programming should include working with AI and assessment tools specifically. Additional topics might include digital accessibility and leveraging course-level learning analytics to actively monitor student performance and engagement.

3.2.4 Provide Wrap-Around Support for Learners Enabling Faculty-led Curricular Change (Near to Medium Term: 0–24 months)

Implementation Leads: TLC, DUE, and Student Affairs

Wrap-around programs (WAPs) are defined as an integrated, institutionally coordinated ecosystem of academic (e.g., skill building, tutoring) and non-academic supports (i.e., advising, mentoring, financial assistance, mental health support). From an academic standpoint, WAPs can increase students' ability to navigate the broader educational landscape on topics such as metacognition, self-regulation (i.e., learning how to learn), time management, applying effective and research-based study skills, navigating the hidden curriculum, successful learning in online settings, engaging productively in group work, and basic AI literacy.

UCLA offers courses that cover some of these topics (i.e., [University Studies 10](#)) and career development (i.e., [Life Sciences 110](#)). WAPs, however, are not stand-alone courses but are constructed as eLearning modules developed for any instructor to “plug-and-play” in Bruin Learn (or other web-based platforms; see the [UCLA Library's Writing Instruction + Research Education tutorials](#) as an example) and that are accessible to all students in their classes. For example, instructors are provided support to develop various teaching interventions, yet we do not typically invest similar resources in ensuring the students understand how to react to or navigate said changes to instruction. This may lead to student resistance to teaching and learning strategies that are intended to improve instruction. Thus, faculty-led teaching interventions could be more effective when complemented by a student-facing resource (such as a Bruin Learn eLearning module on an appropriate topic or skill). eLearning WAPs create an economy of scale where hundreds of individual instructors can selectively integrate topics based on their courses and other situational factors (e.g., enrollment, level, modality).

Topics related to AI should be an immediate priority given the embedded nature of AI in numerous instructional settings. In the longer term, however, the TLC should lead a needs assessment to surface specific instructional challenges and prioritize development of commensurate eLearning WAPs. This effort should be done in collaboration with campus partners that include the Division of Undergraduate Education (advising and other support offices), relevant units in Student Affairs, and DTS (Bruin Learn). Identified needs should be mapped against existing support structures and incorporated into eLearning WAPs.

3.3 Strategically Expand Online and Hybrid Course Options

A coordinated institutional effort is needed to better understand and strategically define the role of online and hybrid course modalities within the curriculum. Divisions and schools need to think strategically about how online and hybrid course options can support undergraduate enrollment growth while also responding to constraints on physical classroom space. This should begin with a systematic analysis of course offerings, incorporating enrollment data trends to identify curricular bottlenecks that impede student access and degree progression, alongside measures of student performance and satisfaction. These efforts should inform opportunities for targeted course redesign and help ground modality decisions in evidence. This work will require direct engagement with the Academic Senate on distance education policies to support well-designed, technology-enabled courses and ensure compliance with WSCUC accreditation requirements. Course approvals and/or redefining course modalities also involve College or School Faculty Executive Committees.

At the same time, administrative leadership in DTS, in consultation with the Academic Technology Committee and VPTL, must articulate and advance a coordinated academic technology strategy (that includes budget planning) to support instructors by enabling scalable, high-quality course delivery. Support for instructors and TAs to design and teach effectively in online learning environments, together with eLearning WAPs for students enrolled in these courses, should be treated as part of the infrastructure required for high-quality online and hybrid delivery. The TLC, as well as HumTech and SSCERT, are campus hubs for instructional design and media production that should be leveraged to guide instructors in these efforts and ensure high-quality instructional standards are applied.

3.3.1 Develop Criteria for Effective Online and Hybrid Courses (Near Term: 0–24 months)

Implementation Leads: Academic Senate Committees (UgC, GC), Divisional/School Leadership, and TLC

Consistent with shared governance principles, an *ad hoc* campus working group with diverse faculty representation and experience with evidence-based teaching across modalities should be charged with articulating criteria for effective online teaching and identifying exemplars based on those criteria. Integrating the Dimensions of Effective Teaching embedded in the [Holistic Evaluation of Teaching \(HET\)](#) framework is a suggested starting point. The HET framework, which emerged from faculty committee work, defines effective teaching through

[four principles](#): 1) engages students, 2) is equitable, 3) is learning-centered and responsive, and 4) involves striving to improve. Additionally, Ugc recently included an [Online/Hybrid Course Quality Review and Attestation](#) “checklist” as additional guidance for instructors to plan their courses and submit them for review. This document serves as a formal review of a proposed online/hybrid course by the TLC that helps instructors review course materials when converting/revising courses for different distance education modalities (e.g., hybrid, online). Given the recency of this form, TLC should lead a strategic communication effort to raise awareness and provide greater clarity to instructors navigating the process for teaching online courses. For example, educational technology tools, platforms (e.g., Zoom, Gradescope), and instructor implementation can all affect the “quality” of the learning experience and should be thoughtfully and intentionally integrated in the course design.

3.3.2 Require Training for Students Appointed as ASEs to Teach in Online and Hybrid Courses (Near Term: 0–12 months)

Implementation Leads: TLC, Graduate Council, DGE, AAPO

A corresponding white paper outlining the new models for graduate student pedagogical training suggests both mandatory and elective approaches with allowances for centralized and discipline-based programs. It is prudent to consider online and hybrid modalities in developing those training models, particularly what is required for employment as an ASE. The Graduate Council (GC) has established training requirements for TA training but they do not specify preparation minimums for a particular modality of instruction. Thus it is critical for GC to consider amending current TA training requirements to include some minimal competencies with respect to teaching online. Responsibility to track employment-related training requirements resides with AAPO; coordination with hiring units, TLC, and DGE would enable compliance tracking for any new training requirements to remain up-to-date.

The TLC, in collaboration with Humtech, SSCERT, and faculty subject matter experts, should lead a coordinated effort to develop and offer programming specifically focused on teaching in online and hybrid settings. These should be available to all instructors including TAs assigned to online or hybrid courses. Topics such as fostering student engagement in asynchronous online sections and maintaining an online presence are described in the TLC on-demand resource, [Teaching Online Sections as a TA](#), and have been incorporated into select TA training programs at UCLA. This resource is poised for redesign into a modular eLearning format that could be readily integrated into evolving campuswide TA training efforts and customized for teaching online in particular disciplines.

Conclusions and Next Steps

UCLA is well-positioned to successfully address the array of priorities presented in this white paper as there is momentum to build on existing campus efforts, support infrastructure, and local models. We suggest elevating the following areas given the immediacy of enrollment

growth, the need to reduce structural reliance on graduate-student instructional labor, and the budgetary realities created by the newly ratified ASE collective bargaining agreement.

Instructional workforce: The most accessible first steps are to review current TA use more systematically, clarify within departments where Teaching Professors can play strategic roles in more divisions and schools, expand Reader use when grading and rubric-based feedback are the primary instructional needs, and build incrementally and selectively on the demonstrated success of the Learning Assistant program. To move this work forward, the EVCP could begin in Spring or Fall 2026 by asking Deans to convene department chairs and relevant faculty stakeholders to undertake a focused review of current TA use, identify where Readers deployment can be effectively expanded, and articulate a strategy for expanding the Teaching Professor series where it can have greatest impact on undergraduate education. At the same time, Deans can ask departments, in consultation with CEILS, to identify courses where the Learning Assistant model could be introduced or expanded to enhance undergraduate learning and explore appropriate administrative support as part of campus-level budget planning.

TA allocation: The most tangible actions are to make current practices more transparent, clarify the instructional purposes served by TA-led secondary sections, and use APB data to strengthen review and planning. Here the EVCP could charge APB and Deans in Spring or Fall 2026 to establish a more regular process for gathering and sharing current TA allocation practices, projected enrollments, and baseline-use data with departments. Deans should review these data trends to gain a clearer sense of where practices are aligned across their respective division/school, where they vary, and where more standardized practices should be considered.

Course delivery: Campus should coordinate and make immediate use of existing teaching support resources, identify courses appropriate for redesign, and improve alignment of scheduling and classroom use (see [Policy 870](#)), assessment practices, and technology-enhanced instructional support. The EVCP could accelerate these efforts by asking the Academic Senate, TLC and other disciplinary teaching support units, and DTS in Spring or Fall 2026 to coordinate a set of lower-lift actions based on existing initiatives, such as incorporating a requirement for an AI course policy into all syllabi, curating an AI teaching resource hub, issuing practical AI teaching guidance and support, expanding awareness of grading technologies, organizing shared assessment resources, and launching a needs analysis for student-facing wrap-around support. These support units could also be asked to coordinate with Deans and their respective departments to identify courses where there are strategic opportunities for redesign.

Taken together, these more immediate and actionable steps should be seen as the first phase of a broader institutional effort to implement the recommendations in this white paper. Over time, departments, divisions and schools can build on these pilot efforts and associated assessments to make more informed decisions about scaling interventions and reimagining how UCLA provides education to its undergraduates, including TA allocation redesign, the

strategic deployment of Teaching Professors and other instructional roles, broader support for course redesign and assessment revision, and more intentional approaches to course modality, AI in teaching and learning, and instructional-space management (see [Appendix 1](#), Implementation Priority Matrix). The goal is to move toward a more coherent academic model in which staffing, pedagogy, technology, and fiscal planning are better enabling effective teaching and inclusive undergraduate learning experiences.

Effective implementation will depend on clear accountability structures, phased coordination, continuous assessment, and sustained and committed leadership. Deans and other divisional and school leaders will be critical to translating campus priorities into academic planning, staffing decisions, budgeting, and assessment processes within their respective disciplinary contexts, with department and academic program chairs playing a key role in local decision-making, implementation and assessment. Campus partners, including APB, AAPO, ELR, the Academic Senate (in particular, Undergraduate and Graduate Councils), TLC, DTS, the UCLA Library, and other central and distributed support units will be essential in providing governance, oversight, data, consultation, and infrastructure support required to move this work forward. In many cases, convening key academic and administrative partners, clarifying practice, and identifying a limited number of areas for more structural reform and strategic programming can begin by Winter 2027. Leveraging this collaborative and coordinated approach, UCLA can begin to make substantive progress while laying the foundation for deeper instructional change over time to enhance the quality and long-term sustainability of undergraduate education.

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[Appendix 4](#): Learning Assistant Program Summary

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[Appendix 8](#): Category Descriptions and Course Categorization from Life Sciences

UCLA MEMORANDUM

FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
College of Letters and Science

A265 Murphy Hall
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To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, Academic Senate, UCLA
Fr: Erin Debenport, Chair, College Faculty Executive Committee
Date: May 28, 2026
Re: **Response to the White Paper Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education**

The College Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) at UCLA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the White Paper *Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education*. After a review of the recommendations, we offer the following comments, critiques, and requests for clarification.

Overview

First, the committee would like to comment on the grossly insufficient review time for this white paper. This was one of several high-stakes items recently sent to the FEC with an inadequate window of time for the thorough analysis these recommendations require. Shared governance is not a matter of simply informing faculty of changes; it requires that faculty remain the primary drivers of the educational mission. By treating departmental needs as secondary to administrative expediency, these recommendations signal a move to consolidate authority without any data, which is a direct erosion of the faculty's governing mandate. Given the far-reaching changes it proposes to the university's fundamental academic mission, it deserves wide circulation and opportunities for rigorous faculty feedback.

Additionally, despite the paper stating that this "working group consisted of diverse members from across campus who brought a critically informed lens to the discussion," the membership listed was almost entirely high-level staff and administrators. Within the list, there were only two faculty listed, one from Physical Sciences, and the other from Life Sciences. There was no representation from other divisions. The lack of input from regular teaching faculty substantially reduces the credibility of the document.

Instructional Workforce and Metrics

The document is filled with virtuous phraseology about student learning and pedagogical appropriateness. The danger is that when the university is in a situation where there is tremendous pressure to reduce graduate teaching funding and the number of students in graduate programs, this fiscal need will in turn dictate administrative evaluation of student learning and

pedagogical appropriateness. It is easy to foresee a situation where the former drives the latter, rather than the reverse.

While the FEC appreciates the recommendations for a tiered implementation and the acknowledgement that TA-ships must be preserved in courses with mandatory sections, large enrollments, labs, and writing courses, the document's data is lacking. It would also be helpful to have a breakdown of how many classes are taught by Teaching Professors, Lecturers, and tenure-track Faculty, in addition to the TA teaching data. An overall breakdown, as well as by School, Division, and Department would also provide a better overview of the big picture. In terms of separating out summer data and academic year data, sharing that information both disaggregated by term and overall, would allow for these models to be evaluated together. The white paper also suggests adopting a campus-wide framework for TA allocation. The administration has provided no evidence or comparative data demonstrating that a rigid, top-down allocation model functions better than a localized, department-specific model. Finally, in a situation such as this, where budgetary and financial information is critical in order to make informed decisions, it is imperative to have access to real budgets, expenses, and projections.

The report provides data on primary and secondary sections but lacks a breakdown of how many individual classes rely on TAs. A single primary course can account for ten or more TA-led secondary sections; evaluating capacity requires understanding the specifics.

Limits and Labor Realities

The theme throughout the document is the reduction of TA support for undergraduate classes and a suggested shift to Readers and Learning Assistants (LAs). The idea is that "if graduate student availability declines, departments may need to explore whether undergraduate instructional roles can appropriately support select course needs." It seems clear that the goal is to decrease graduate student instruction, and replace it, where possible, with readers (and even AI tutors).

The white paper takes an entirely operationalized approach to the relationship between graduate student teaching and undergraduate education. Reducing graduate student instructors to quasi-mechanized reader roles where they are essentially just applying a rubric to student work (p. 20) deprives them of meaningful curricular roles in the education of undergraduates and hence essential professional development as future educators. The paper also seems to think that TAs are necessary only in, among other places, "writing-intensive courses." Even non-writing-intensive courses, in many departments, require student papers, scaffolded learning, and significant feedback. This is not a job that can be outsourced to undergraduates or automated rubrics. Anyone with recent experience grading undergraduate papers in GE courses knows that many students struggle to evaluate their own sentence structure and argumentation, let alone anyone else's. Rubrics are a helpful guidance, but only for people who already understand the core disciplinary concepts they are evaluating.

While the report helpfully notes the essential role that TAs play in the specialized contexts of lab and writing instruction, it does not acknowledge courses that are entirely TA-designed and taught (e.g. English 4W and 20W, History 96W, Comp Lit 4W, Clusters seminars, CUTF seminars, some additional summer courses). While these courses might not be the most cost-efficient from a purely budgetary perspective, they provide profound learning opportunities for undergraduate

students not only because of the small class sizes but also because of the unique expertise that graduate students bring to these courses. When graduate students have opportunities to take ownership over instruction and integrate their research with their teaching, their intrinsic motivation (beyond a paycheck alone) often translates into richer educational experiences for undergraduates. While sustainability is important, so too is quality.

Expanding the Reader and LA programs to replace TAs introduces serious operational and legal liabilities. The report ignores the labor implications of passing more work to undergraduates. On page 21, the report heavily pushes the use of LAs but fails to clarify their classification or compensation (course credit vs. hourly student employment). If LAs or Readers take over tasks that have been traditionally handled by TAs, it will likely bring about union grievances and charges of unfair labor practices for replacing unionized graduate labor to cut costs.

Hiring readers is a difficult process that often takes weeks. Because Readers are hourly employees who are not contractually required to attend lectures, they are frequently completely unfamiliar with the course content. This adds uncompensated training and oversight burdens to the instructor of record. Because these appointments rarely cross the threshold for tuition remission, workload is distributed unevenly, often resulting in retention and communication barriers.

While the LA program is highly effective in large STEM courses, the report provides no data showing how LAs would function in non-STEM contexts, such as a Sociology lecture or a Humanities discussion section. Suggesting a blanket expansion to buffer TA reductions or artificially inflate lecture sizes is completely premature. The report fails to specify who will pay for these expanded readerships and LA expansion.

Teaching Professors, Workload, and LMS realities

The FEC supports hiring more Teaching Professors but strongly objects to using the series as a quick fix for cutting TAs or as a mechanism to absorb displaced instructional labor. Before the university expands this, it needs to establish clear, fair criteria for promotion and security of employment. It must also fix the glaring off scale pay inequities and ensure Teaching Professors have equal governance and voting rights on personnel cases within all departments.

Instructor workload is notoriously hard to define and scale in a linear way. Designing an active-learning syllabus, managing discipline-specific assessments, and prepping a course for the first time require more preparatory hours than a course that one has already taught before. The report also ignores the actual labor involved in setting up and managing a course on BruinLearn.

AI and Distance Education

The white paper's push to invest in AI tools and AI tutors misses the mark on what the undergraduate experience should be like. The idea of an AI tutor strips the human element out of teaching. Leaving basic concepts to an automated interface deprives students of the chance to build intellectual relationships with faculty and TAs. It also cuts professors off from seeing where students struggle most with introductory material, making it harder for them to refine how they teach.

In practice, current AI tools do a poor job of writing high-quality free-response or multiple-choice assessments in place of instructor constructed questions even when providing direct course materials. The technology is overhyped, highly vulnerable to security and academic integrity failures (as highlighted by the recent Canvas hack), and seems to be a step back in education. While the FEC supports clear, campus-wide policies regarding AI in teaching and syllabus AI policies, we strongly oppose spending university resources to replace human instruction with AI.

The push to expand online and hybrid courses requires more justification and thought. The paper treats online education as an automatic fix for classroom space shortages. UCLA should solve this constraint by creating more classrooms, not by moving classes online. It is worth noting that the university has recently bought major new properties, without faculty input, that remain largely empty and could easily be developed to expand our in-person teaching capacity.

Conclusion

The proposed timeline is incredibly rushed. Forcing under-resourced departments to run micro-level audits to determine which of their own courses do not need TAs will create problems. With shrinking departmental budgets and growing demands on instructors, academic units will naturally protect their TA allocations. They would do this to protect the financial commitments they made to their graduate students, not out of stubbornness.

The College FEC cannot endorse the recommendations as presented until specific budgets, data, and financial information are provided.

As always, our membership appreciates the consultative process and welcomes the opportunity to participate in the discussion of important matters like this. You are welcome to contact us with questions.

The College Faculty Executive Committee

May 20, 2026

To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

From: Jeff Maloy, Undergraduate Council Chair

Re: White Paper on Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

At its meeting on May 15, 2026, the Undergraduate Council reviewed the White Paper on Undergraduate Education. The Council recognizes the pressures driving this effort, including enrollment growth and a reduced structural reliance on graduate student instructional labor, and we thank the working group for its efforts to grapple with these issues. While we appreciated the clear organization of the document around principles, implementation roadmaps, and continuous assessment strategies, our comments focus on areas where we believe the recommendations would benefit from greater grounding in faculty governance, disciplinary expertise, and the realities of intentional instructional planning within academic units.

The Council is supportive of the recommendation to expand the strategic use of the Teaching Professor series, both to add instructional capacity as well as support curriculum development and course design.

In Section 2, however, members take issue with the principle to “Align TA deployment with documented pedagogical and safety needs rather than historical precedent or graduate funding patterns alone” (p. 22). We are skeptical of the assumption implied in this statement that TA allocations are *not* currently aligned with educational needs. Pedagogical and academic considerations are in fact central to the course planning work done by department faculty and curriculum committees, which are the bodies with direct responsibility for academic program design. The white paper’s characterization of current TA allocation practices warrants particular care given the existing collective bargaining environment. Language suggesting that TA assignments have historically reflected graduate funding commitments rather than instructional need could misrepresent the decisions of individual departments and programs.

Members note that while evidence-based approaches to teaching and learning are valuable, the white paper’s implementation structure raises questions about who is positioned to evaluate that evidence and determine what teaching practices may be appropriate in specific disciplinary contexts. Faculty with subject-matter expertise are best positioned to assess how pedagogical research may apply to their fields, yet the document largely elides the role of faculty and disciplinary expertise and routes implementation authority through administrative and teaching support units rather than through faculty and departmental curriculum committees. This concern is reflected in the minimal representation of Senate faculty among the authors of the white paper. While the Teaching and Learning Center can offer pedagogical support and resources, administrative units must not singlehandedly take on large-scale reforms without robust faculty consultation and involvement.

Regarding the recommendation to align TA allocation standards with enrollment projections, members note that course enrollment is not necessarily the best indicator of instructional need or

instructor workload. Some departments may have higher TA-to-student ratios due to specialized instructional needs (e.g., safety constraints in laboratory settings, the demands of writing-intensive instruction, or the centrality of Socratic pedagogical engagement in certain disciplinary environments), while some high-enrollment classes may have more room for efficiency. TA allocations should not be standardized across different fields or based solely on enrollment projections but on the hours necessary to support effective teaching and instructional engagement as determined by faculty with subject-matter expertise. We note that it would be useful to analyze additional enrollment data for secondary sections in academic units outside the College in order to make more complete comparisons across campus units.

Members acknowledged the demonstrated success of the Learning Assistant (LA) program while voicing skepticism about broad expansion of the program as a partial substitute for graduate student instructional labor. LAs are undergraduate students whose participation in the program plays an educational role for them, but they are not a workforce and cannot be positioned as functional replacements for TAs.

We would also welcome a more substantive treatment of the distinctive features, goals, and outcomes of TA-led sections. Discussion sections are not simply smaller versions of lecture; they create conditions for student questioning, conceptual rearticulation, peer-to-peer reasoning, and Socratic exchange. These features are not easily replaceable through increased reliance on Readers, Learning Assistants, or AI tools, and their value should be explicitly weighted in any assessment framework.

Members have significant concerns about Section 3 of the white paper. Many of the principles and implementation plans outlined in this section appear oriented primarily towards promoting AI in teaching and learning. We disagree with the underlying assumption that using AI in the classroom is inherently beneficial for instructional quality and the student experience. The white paper notes that “UCLA ... must also adapt to reflect how instruction is delivered now and in the future” (p. 26), as if the future of instruction will be handed to students and faculty ready-made rather than being the direct result of active decisions being made here and now. Members were also concerned that language describing faculty “upskilling” in the use of AI tools presumes that faculty resistance to AI in the classroom reflects a knowledge deficit rather than considered pedagogical judgment. While the University should support faculty who wish to experiment with AI tools in the classroom, it has an equal obligation to support faculty who have determined that such tools do not serve their pedagogical goals.

The use of AI should not be a foregone conclusion. The Council recommends that University investment in AI tools be matched by a concurrent investment in rigorous evaluation and assessment regarding whether and how AI tools are meeting pedagogical needs, what impacts they have on student learning and equity, and how faculty can be empowered to make informed, autonomous decisions about the possible use of AI in their courses.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. The Undergraduate Council looks forward to continued robust consultation and engagement on these important topics, particularly before implementation steps affecting undergraduate curricula or instructional standards are advanced. With any questions, please contact the Undergraduate Council Analyst.

cc: Kathleen Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Tim Groeling, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Academic Senate
Julia Nelsen, Principal Policy Analyst, Undergraduate Council

To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

From: Raphael Rouquier, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Date: May 28, 2026

Re: White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

At its meeting on May 5, 2026, the Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CODEI) discussed the white paper on Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education. Members shared the following feedback for consideration.

Members expressed serious concerns about the white paper's suggestions to rely on AI in the absence of TA support, and suggested that resource allocation prioritize additional TAs and not the use of AI tools or resources. Members agreed that decisions about how AI tools may be implemented in the classroom must be made in consultation with faculty members, and faculty members must maintain their academic freedom to determine when and how to use those tools. They were concerned that the white paper appears to delegate the authority to determine how AI may be used in the classroom to the Administration and Teaching & Learning Center rather than to departments.

Members expressed surprise that the working group is mostly comprised of administrators with few Senate faculty members. Given the focus of the white paper and the significant impact that its recommendations may have on teaching and learning at UCLA, members agreed that Senate faculty members who are the subject matter experts must be included in the process of determining the appropriate pedagogical research and paths forward. Members were also concerned that no graduate or undergraduate students were involved and suggest that the working group solicit student involvement and feedback.

Members agreed with the white paper's assertion that TAs "be preserved and prioritized where it is most clearly tied to student learning, safety, and active engagement, including laboratories, studios, writing-intensive courses as well as high-enrollment courses" (5). However, members noted that current levels of TAs are often not adequate even in lab-intensive or high enrollment courses. They reported significant cuts to TAs in their departments which are at levels that may fail to support undergraduate students.

Although the report is focused on undergraduate students, members discussed the importance of senior graduate students who previously served as TAs in graduate courses. The unilateral cut to TAs for graduate courses has meant that students who struggle and, in particular, underrepresented graduate students in the field, have been hurt.

Members commented on how the white paper discusses the role that TA's play and does not mention the mentor role that TAs can play for undergraduate students. The white paper and recommendations would benefit from a more holistic understanding of the role that TAs play in undergraduate education.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at rouquier@math.ucla.edu or via the Committee analyst, Tara Hottman, at thottman@senate.ucla.edu.

cc: Kathy Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Tim Groeling, Vice Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Tara Hottman, Senior Policy Analyst, UCLA Academic Senate

May 26, 2026

To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Dorota Dabrowska, Chair, Graduate Council

Re: Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education White Paper

At its meeting on May 15, 2026, the Graduate Council discussed the Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education white paper. Members offered the following for consideration.

Regarding Section 1, many departments have already reduced their graduate cohort sizes in response to fiscal constraints and further reductions may lead to unmanageable burdens on both TAs and faculty.

Members were concerned about using attendance as a potential indicator of instructional quality and a factor in determining TA priorities. Some courses may not include discussion section attendance as a requirement but offer a variety of assignments supported by discussion sections activities and participation in them advances student learning. The attendance should not determine pedagogical needs.

Members noted that the use of teaching professors will depend on the instructional needs of individual departments. Some members were concerned that increases in FTEs for teaching professors will lead to increased graduate student advising loads resulting from reduction in FTE lines for other Senate faculty positions.

Some members expressed interest in the concept of expanding learning assistant program beyond STEM programs. However, learning assistants and readers can only facilitate some aspects of course delivery and expanded reliance on them does not resolve the shortage of TA support.

During the discussion of the first white paper, members noted that students may hold TAships not necessarily in their home department or school. One member noted that it is not clear if the present proposal takes this into the account and how the new TA allocation model will allow departments and schools to share TAs.

In regard to Section 3, members had concerns regarding the push to use AI instruction without sufficient data on AI supported teaching. The members questioned the order of recommendations regarding the use of AI and lack of information about funding needed to expand AI supported instruction or development of online and hybrid course delivery.

Top priorities needed for expansion of the use of AI include guidance on the use of AI, training of instructors (i.e., ladder and non-ladder faculty, lecturers, TAs), exploring discipline-specific effective models, and developing pilot programs.

The faculty retain authority over all aspects of courses they teach, including content, structure, and evaluations. Specific policies on the use of AI such as 3.1.2 should account for disciplinary norms, learning objectives, and include provisions for disclosure of AI usage by both students and faculty.

In regard to the proposal for expansion of online and hybrid course option, members understand there is a desire to streamline and maximize teaching but raised concerns about the impact on instructional quality. The proposal does not specify what training will be offered to faculty and lecturers to develop or upskill their abilities to teach in an online or hybrid modality.

Members would appreciate clarification regarding the role and training for TAs teaching online or hybrid courses. The corresponding white paper on graduate student employment and doctoral education proposed a mandatory 8-hour training course and recommended that discipline specific pedagogy training courses be no longer required as a condition for TA employment. As online/hybrid teaching will fall into employment duties, we seek clarification how the online teaching training will be included in the mandatory course and how discipline-specific needs will be incorporated in it.

Instructional design, production, and maintenance of online and hybrid course content often come at a considerable cost. Members had questions about how development of such courses will be funded and what criteria will be used to determine which courses to prioritize.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our views on this matter. If you have any questions, please contact us via Graduate Council Analyst, Emily Le, at ele@senate.ucla.edu.

May 22, 2026

To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Gregory Leazer, Chair, Committee on Data, Information Technology, and Privacy (CDITP)

Re: **White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education**

At its meeting on April 30, 2026, the Committee on Data, Information Technology and Privacy (CDITP) reviewed the white paper, Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education.

Members focused on the sections most relevant to CDITP, relating to the piloting of custom AI tools (3.1.4), investment in programs supporting instructional experimentation with AI (3.1.5), expansion of AI teaching resources (3.1.6), expansion of faculty training programs (3.1.7) and assessment on the educational impacts of AI (3.1.8). Some members of the committee agree with the commitments and investments in these areas; indeed, AI is and will be an integral part of undergraduate education. Other members of the committee expressed concern about a headlong rush toward AI tools that undermine the purpose and value of university-based learning. Overall, members note that these sections of the white paper are relatively brief, emphasizing the potential benefits and strengths of AI without engaging some of the fundamental questions, risks, and challenges associated with AI integration.

Presumptive models of knowledge between AI and higher education. There are various perspectives on how students are to be educated and evaluated in the AI era. These perspectives are foundational to understanding the more specific AI uses, tools, and considerations that comprise the remaining sections of this response. The white paper does not address whether the forms of knowledge that AI instructional tools are designed to support are compatible with the pedagogical commitments across the university. AI instructional tools are optimized to provide determinate answers that foreclose inquiry, and are mismatched with the open-ended and contestable questions that organize instruction in humanistic learning. The evaluative criteria embedded in AI grading and feedback systems presuppose that responses can be ranked along a single axis of correctness, an assumption that is incompatible where the point of an assignment is precisely to navigate genuine interpretive difficulty, to take a defensible position among several reasonable ones, or to demonstrate the capacity to hold a question open. For example, a significant portion of what higher education cultivates--interpretive judgment, the capacity to sustain productive uncertainty, the ability to revise one's understanding through dialogue--is tacit in character and resists summarized forms of knowledge. The idea that students should challenge what they are told is often how major breakthroughs, innovations, and scientific advances occur. False confidence in authoritative sounding AI programs might reduce the student's natural curiosity to challenge what they are being taught. This may degrade individualization of thought. Furthermore, student errors and instructor feedback are a major means of learning. This type of error-correction interaction might be detrimentally reduced.

The use of AI in higher education creates a type of hybrid student-AI, where students use AI to support their learning and educational performance and are evaluated based on this hybrid student-AI output. This raises questions about how student assessments and evaluations correspond to the development and assessment of individual critical thinking. If one assumes that grades are partly determined by the quality of turned-in assignments, how are we evaluating the hybrid student-AI output? Can we accept that some students will be more skilled in using AI and/or use more advanced AI tools? Is the hybrid student-AI “brain” (“extended mind hypothesis”) mostly advancing System 1 (intuitive) thinking and reducing the student’s capacity/potential for System 2 (analytical) thinking (Chiriatti 2025, Shaw 2026)? AI might facilitate student-AI output that is assessed well using instructor-AI tools. While these short run assessments—e.g., on individual assignments, tests, classes—might produce higher grades, the concern is degradation in the long-run educational impacts, where students are less able to think of complex and counterintuitive solutions on their own. In designing class assignments, we as instructors are molding our students about how to think. Recent research on how the internet is changing our cognition provides some evidence that the flood of information (mostly true, but some false) is encouraging more multi-tasking rather than sustained focus, an issue related to breadth of knowledge vs depth of knowledge (Firth 2019). These frameworks about the models of knowledge and learning frame and undergird specific questions and issues raised below:

- Definition of AI. Members asked about the definitions of AI, as used in the sections of the white paper. Where possible, the report would be strengthened by definitions when discussing specific sections and contexts. As currently stated, AI is treated as a single undifferentiated category, whereas the appropriate use of AI tools will vary by kind and type, and in reference to their context of use. Characterization of AI tools might be assessed based on such attributes such as their transparency, availability, cost, error handling and trust.
- Training and assessments in pedagogy. Throughout the white paper there are references to training, pedagogical strategies, and assessments. The indicators for these markers, their associated learning objectives (whether outcomes based, process based etc.), as well as the design of assignments, tests, and other course materials, depend on the approaches and assumptions about models of knowledge described above. Similarly, students need guidance regarding models of knowledge and their distinctions to ensure their intellectual development is progressing satisfactorily. Monitoring whether students can perform deep thinking on their own may be necessary to avoid declining System 2 abilities.
- AI tools in complex situations: the white paper discusses the use of AI “tutors”, grading and assessment tools, and other AI-supported changes to instruction, discussing the benefits of reduced administrative burden and the potential to focus faculty time to higher-impact activities (e.g., page 30; Table 2). Members raised questions about the use of AI tools in classroom settings and student interactions, especially when these involve complex and context-dependent situations. For example, in the case of AI tutors, there is the potential for tools to provide inaccurate, incomplete, or faulty information. TAs and faculty encounter challenging and unique student situations where AI fails to address the contextual and relational complexity of student situations that faculty and TAs routinely navigate.

- Bias in AI: the white paper does not address how bias will be identified, assessed, and rectified throughout the development and adoption of AI tutors, grading and assessment tools, and other AI-supported changes to instruction. As relating to race, gender, religion, health, and disability rights, among other characteristics and statuses, LLMs have been found to exhibit implicit bias and decision bias, influencing assessments (e.g., Bai et al. 2024). Case studies of the consequences of algorithmic bias have been documented, including faulty accusations of students cheating who were having trouble with software (Buolamwini 2024). There is also bias in AI tools for identifying and elevating particular research articles in searches, which influences and reifies student access to particular types of knowledge. Citation recommendations can be biased by gender, recency, specific publishers, open access policies and article popularity (Algaba 2025).
- Reallocation of faculty time to training, troubleshooting, and scale up: members noted that the report is optimistic about the benefits of AI to reduce administrative and grading burdens. There is a lack of consideration about the challenges for faculty to adopt AI tutors and tools, to troubleshoot problems, and to quickly scale up to large undergraduate classes. While AI tools can alleviate some of the burden that will come with reduced instructional support and larger undergraduate class sizes, they entail other tasks and activities that will not clearly reduce burden but instead, may reallocate faculty time and attention. Moreover, the challenges encountered by current users, who are often early adopters with an interest in AI, are likely different from challenges encountered by the broader UCLA faculty community. For these tools and supports to work at the scale envisioned by the white paper, investments in programs, resources, and faculty training will require acceleration and expansion beyond those described in the white paper.
- Federated model: members emphasized the importance of a federated, localized IT model given the various changes and challenges described in the white paper and in this memo. While there is a role for centralization in the administration and assessment of some AI tools and supports, the disciplinary range of the university exceeds what any centrally administered AI tool can adequately serve. Laboratory sciences, clinical training programs to humanities lectures and seminars, and social science instruction in interpretive or data-centered modes differ not only in their computational requirements but in their pedagogical norms, data practices, and in the faculty-student interactions where AI will mediate. These concerns go beyond questions about inequitable technology access across campus, discussed in the report, and relate to the design, use, implications, and assessment of AI tools. CDITP therefore recommends that the white paper articulate explicit mechanisms for departmental decision-making in AI tool selection, design, implementation and assessment, and give them substantial decision authority over its use. The white paper should also be frank in understanding the costs associated with these activities, and not overstate the efficiencies of AI, and be prepared to enable localized expertise.
- Accountability: with the adoption of these various tools, it is unclear who or what is accountable in the case of inaccurate, incomplete, faulty, or biased information and decision making. Members raised questions about the feasibility of faculty bandwidth for monitoring and oversight, in the context of large undergraduate classes and lower TA support, in light of the various challenges described above.

- Data privacy and third-party vendor risks: The recent breach of Canvas illustrates with particular clarity the data exposure risks inherent in the institutional adoption of third-party instructional technology. The breach exposed the private communications between faculty, students and advisors, information that should be treated as privileged and confidential. The use of AI tutors will expand the volume and sensitivity of the data shared with third-party systems. As the UC Academic Senate AI Workgroup Report has noted, FERPA establishes a floor, not a ceiling, for evaluating whether data-intensive technologies should be procured and deployed in instructional contexts. The extensive use of integrated third-party applications such as those that are prevalent in social networking and with Canvas risks further distribution and exposure of data, leaving students and faculty unaware of how their data is being distributed. The Canvas incident should be treated not as an anomalous external event but as evidence of structural risk in the current use of instructional technology.
- Dataveillance, political surveillance and the consequences of AI in instruction: We note that the routine collection of instructional data such as course materials, communications and chatbot interactions create systems that are not only vulnerable to external breach, such as the recent Canvas incident, but are also susceptible to extramural risk. In North Carolina, the Heritage Foundation's Oversight Project compelled the disclosure of faculty syllabi for ideologically and non-academic scrutiny of course content at state universities. Texas A&M University System deployed AI tools in fall 2025 to search syllabi and course descriptions that resulted in restrictions on teaching about race and gender. AI is predicated on data whose collection and codification enables the conversion of academic work into a form open to political scrutiny. Such codification has also enabled derivative AI-based instructional products, such as Arizona State University's Atomic, that displaces faculty authority and contradicts academic interests. Members urge the white paper to address explicitly what categories of instructional data will be collected, by whom, under what governance structures, and with what protections against both external breach and institutional misuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our observations, comments and recommendations. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at leazer@g.ucla.edu or the Committee analyst, Renee Rouzan-Kay, at rrouzankay@senate.ucla.edu.

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May 21, 2026

To: Megan McEvoy
Chair, Academic Senate

From: Dimitri Shlyakhtenko
Chair, Council on Research

Re: White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

At its meeting on May 6, 2026, the Council on Research (COR) discussed the white paper on Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education.

COR members noted that it was reasonable to establish clearer standards, particularly for high-enrollment laboratory courses, and they found the Teaching Professor across UC campuses information to be helpful. At the same time, members urged caution in expanding Teaching Professor hiring, as there would be potential competition with research faculty and possible impacts on the university's research mission.

COR members also discussed the growing influence of AI on instructional work. They observed that AI may change the efficiency, cost, and nature of current TA duties, raising questions about whether responsibilities should be readjusted as AI tools increasingly assist with tasks such as generating materials or coordinating instructional workflows. Members agreed that the impact of AI on TA roles should be monitored carefully and that any adjustments should avoid creating a separate cohort of teaching-only faculty. They also acknowledged the constraints created by fixed-state FTEs, which have led campuses to rely more heavily on teaching-focused faculty.

If you have any questions for us, please do not hesitate to contact me at shlyakht@ipam.ucla.edu or via the Council's analyst, Elizabeth Feller, at efeller@senate.ucla.edu.

cc: Kathleen Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
Tim Groeling, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Elizabeth Feller, Associate Director, Academic Senate
Members of the Council on Research

May 20, 2026

To: UCLA Academic Senate

From: Catherine Crespi, Chair, Faculty Executive Committee

Re: White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

The Faculty Executive Committee of the Fielding School of Public Health discussed the white paper on Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education at its meeting on May 4, 2026 and at a meeting with members of our Undergraduate Steering Committee on May 20, 2026. We also received feedback from departments where it was discussed at departmental meetings. We offer the following input.

We appreciate the recognition of the important challenges facing undergraduate education at UCLA, including enrollment growth, evolving instructional technologies, and financial pressures. Faculty participants in our discussion broadly agree that thoughtful reform is needed to sustain high-quality undergraduate as well as graduate instruction. At the same time, our discussion raised significant concerns regarding the process, clarity, assumptions, and feasibility of the proposed framework. Addressing these concerns will be essential to ensuring that any reforms are effective, equitable, and consistent with UCLA's principles of shared governance and academic excellence.

Process and Shared Governance

A central concern is the limited role of the Academic Senate and actively teaching faculty in the development of this proposal. The recommendations appear to have been developed primarily by administrators and support units, with insufficient input from faculty currently engaged in undergraduate teaching. Faculty expressed concern that the white paper is presented at a relatively advanced stage, leaving the Senate in a reactive role rather than as a partner in shaping the vision. Given that the proposals directly affect curriculum, pedagogy, and instructional practice, meaningful Senate consultation, particularly from instructors actively teaching undergraduate courses, is essential at earlier stages of development. Faculty strongly recommend that additional input be solicited from instructors across disciplines to ensure that the proposals reflect the realities of the classroom.

Clarity of the Problem and Instructional Vision

Faculty repeatedly noted that it is unclear what specific problem the white paper is trying to solve and what the proposed future instructional model would look like in practice. Although the document outlines broad strategies, it does not clearly articulate a coherent alternative to the current instructional model, nor does it provide sufficient detail about how proposed changes would function in specific disciplinary contexts. The absence of concrete examples and clear

evidence makes it difficult to evaluate whether the recommendations will improve instructional quality or simply restructure existing systems. Faculty would benefit from a more explicit definition of the core problems being addressed, along with discipline-sensitive examples and clearer criteria for evaluating success.

AI, Technology, and Infrastructure

The white paper places significant emphasis on AI, instructional technology, and course redesign, yet faculty raised serious concerns about the feasibility of these recommendations given current infrastructure constraints. Many classrooms lack adequate equipment, updated technology, and the flexible layouts necessary to support active learning approaches. The report does not address the substantial infrastructure investments that would be required to support these changes at scale. In addition, the guidance on AI is viewed as vague and insufficiently specified. Faculty noted the absence of clear boundaries, practical use cases, and implementation examples, particularly in relation to assessment. Concerns were raised about how to redesign assessments in ways that are equitable for students, how to maintain academic integrity, and how differential access to AI tools might affect student outcomes.

Underlying Assumptions and Resource Alignment

Faculty expressed concern that the proposal may be driven primarily by financial pressures and system-level priorities, particularly the rising cost of graduate student labor. While financial sustainability is an important consideration, there is concern that pedagogical goals may be secondary to cost containment. The recommendations propose substantial structural changes without clearly identifying the resources required to support them. In particular, the white paper does not specify funding strategies, infrastructure investments, or staffing support needed for implementation. Without such alignment, there is a significant risk that these recommendations will function as unfunded mandates, placing additional burden on departments and faculty members without enabling meaningful or sustainable change.

Role of Teaching Assistants and Graduate Training

Faculty strongly emphasized the central pedagogical role of Teaching Assistants in undergraduate education. TAs facilitate discussion, reinforce course material, provide individualized feedback, and support student engagement, particularly in large-enrollment and writing-intensive courses. Some language in the white paper appears to characterize discussion sections as redundant or inefficient; however, faculty disagreed with this characterization, noting that repetition and interaction are essential components of effective learning. Engagement in a classroom environment also teaches students essential professional and social skills that will benefit students as part of the work force.

In addition, the white paper treats TA appointments primarily as instructional labor and does not fully account for their role in doctoral training and professional development. In many disciplines, TA appointments are the primary means by which doctoral students gain teaching experience and prepare for academic careers that increasingly include undergraduate teaching. Reducing TA opportunities without developing alternative training pathways risks undermining both graduate education and the broader academic mission.

Workload, Feasibility, and Administrative Burden

Faculty raised significant concerns about the workload and administrative burden associated with the proposed changes. The recommendations would require substantial effort in course redesign, justification of TA allocations, and adoption of new technologies and assessment strategies. This work is time-intensive and is not clearly supported by additional resources or compensation. Faculty noted that these responsibilities would likely fall disproportionately on department chairs, program directors, and other faculty with administrative roles. Units with fewer resources or more constrained structures may be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes. Attention to these differences will be critical to ensuring equitable implementation across campus.

There is also concern about the potential for increased oversight and bureaucratic processes, particularly in relation to TA allocation. Past experience suggests that such processes can be time-consuming and of limited value. Without careful design, the proposed changes risk increasing administrative burden without improving instructional quality.

Path Forward

Faculty participants expressed openness to reform and acknowledged that the current instructional model may face sustainability challenges. However, there was strong consensus that successful reform should be faculty-driven, grounded in disciplinary expertise, and developed through robust Senate engagement. Proposed changes should be clearly specified, supported by evidence, and aligned with realistic assessments of institutional capacity and resources. Meaningful progress will require coordinated investments in infrastructure, technology, and staffing, as well as careful attention to both undergraduate education and graduate training missions.

Conclusion

The white paper raises important issues and identifies areas where change may be necessary. However, in its current form, it is perceived as insufficiently specified, not adequately grounded in faculty input, and lacking alignment with the structural supports necessary for successful implementation. We recommend that the Academic Senate work collaboratively with campus leadership to refine the proposal through a more iterative and consultative process. A revised approach grounded in shared governance, clear goals, and realistic implementation planning will better position UCLA to achieve its shared objective of high-quality, sustainable undergraduate education.



Response to the White Papers “Decoupling Graduate Student Employment from Doctoral Education: Implementation of Graduate Education Task Force Recommendations” and “Elevating the Quality & Sustainability of Undergraduate Education: Implementation of Graduate Education Task Force Recommendations”

Submitted by the SE&IS FEC
May 28, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to reply to these white papers. In the opinion of the SEIS FEC, these are substantial proposals that recast fundamental elements of education at UCLA. We are thus dismayed at the extremely brief timeframe to compose our response.

Our first and most fundamental concern is procedural, and it bears directly on the legitimacy of everything that follows in both papers. The Graduate Education Implementation Task Force, which issued the recommendations these white papers translate into operational frameworks, appears to have been composed entirely of administrators acting solely in administrative capacity.

Under the principles of shared governance for this university, decisions bearing on curriculum, degree requirements, and conditions of instruction fall within the Senate's primary sphere of authority. The appropriate posture for the administration, when it identifies fiscal or operational pressures affecting those areas, is to bring those concerns to the Senate for shared deliberation--not to constitute a task force, generate recommendations, move expeditiously to implementation working groups, and present the resulting frameworks to faculty bodies on a compressed timeline for comment.

The proposed solutions in both papers have a consistent direction: functions currently distributed across departments and governed by faculty are to be standardized, centralized, or placed under administrative units such as APB, DTS, and the TLC. Whatever the merits of individual recommendations, this pattern warrants scrutiny. The administration has, in effect, contributed to constraints affecting the delivery of instructional programs and proposed solutions that expand administrative authority. The Senate should examine that pattern before engaging the substance of any specific proposal.

Had faculty members been fully involved in formulating the Task Force's recommendations, they likely would have explained that the notion of “decoupling graduate teaching from doctoral employment” is absurd and unworkable. Teaching and research are deeply intertwined undertakings; a scholar's research informs her teaching and vice versa. This is the premise of an R1 university: that students benefit when their instruction is provided by teachers who are at the



forefront of research in their fields.¹ Thus the recommendation to “decouple” graduate employment from undergraduate or graduate education is incoherent on its face and suggests a deep misunderstanding of scholarly work.

Intellectually, teaching is irrevocably connected with research. Pragmatically, too, the two are (and should be) intertwined. First, academic employment for Ph.D. graduates depends a great deal on their teaching experience. Without a demonstrable, discipline-specific, and substantial track record of teaching assistantships, our Ph.D. students will be deeply disadvantaged in an already difficult academic job market. Graduate students are, of course, aware of this relationship. Without the ability to guarantee and allocate TAs, departments are likely to struggle to attract and retain the best graduate students. This, in turn, lowers departments’ reputation and prestige, which of course in aggregate reflects on the entire university.

Learning Assistants

[Learning Assistants](#) (LAs) are undergraduate students who, with the assistance of the Teaching and Learning Center, receive course credit to serve as unpaid “peer learning collaborators” in undergraduate classes. The LA program was conceived and is billed as a learning experience for LAs. These undergraduate students are explicitly prohibited from providing instruction or replacing TA labor—and rightly so, since they have neither the experience nor the education to instruct their fellow undergraduate students. Thus any suggestion that LAs might amplify TA labor is inconsistent with the stated purpose of the LA program and potentially in violation of the ASE CBA. The white paper avoids recommending outright that LAs replace TA labor, but the intention is clear. Why otherwise mention the program in this context?

Artificial Intelligence

Scholarship on the role and efficacy of artificial intelligence in student learning is still emerging.² The outlook for AI in education is ambiguous at best, but one thing is clear: the use

¹ For historical background, see Harold Perkin, “History of Universities,” in *International Handbook of Higher Education*, ed. James J. F. Forest and Philip G. Altbach (Springer Netherlands, 2007), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-4012-2_10.

² This literature includes Joshua Weidlich et al., “Teacher, Peer, or AI? Comparing Effects of Feedback Sources in Higher Education,” *Computers and Education Open* 9 (December 2025): 100300, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2025.100300>; Mark Steyvers et al., “What Large Language Models Know and What People Think They Know,” *Nature Machine Intelligence* 7, no. 2 (2025): 221–31, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42256-024-00976-7>; J. Weidlich et al., “ChatGPT in Education: An Effect in Search of a Cause,” *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 41, no. 5 (2025): e70105, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.70105>; Taryn Eames et al., “Computer-Assisted Learning in the Real World: How Khan Academy Influences Student Math Learning,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 123, no. 1 (2026): e2507708123, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2507708123>; Hamsa Bastani et al., “Generative AI without Guardrails Can Harm Learning: Evidence from High School Mathematics,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 122, no. 26 (2025): e2422633122, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2422633122>; Conrad Borchers and Tianze Shou, “Can Large Language Models Match Tutoring System Adaptivity? A Benchmarking Study,” arXiv:2504.05570, preprint, arXiv, April 7, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2504.05570>.



of AI in any educational capacity is a hugely consequential decision, and one with the potential to completely reshape students’ ability to learn and faculty’s ability to reach them. Individual departments or faculty members may choose to use AI in their research and teaching, in accordance with guidelines devised by the faculty-led working group on AI. It is not the administration’s role to recommend the use of these tools in education or research, and emphatically not as a substitute for paying for TA labor. We reject this suggestion out of hand as detrimental to the very heart of what UCLA offers to its students.

We note, also, that measures like ensuring “equitable access to AI” and “AI literacy” are not widely agreed-upon, commonsense imperatives but hugely controversial efforts to cast LLMs as a neutral or even universally beneficial technology. It’s not clear, for example, that the best way to ensure technological equity is to supply every student with a tool whose biases are deep and well-recognized.³ Similarly, one might ask if the best approach to “AI literacy” is to encourage the use of a tool whose effects on cognition are extensively documented and whose interior workings are opaque by design.⁴

Teaching and Learning Center (TLC)

Throughout both white papers, the TLC is cited as the campus’s experts on education. The papers suggest that UCLA should follow the TLC’s recommendations for redistributing academic labor, subscribe its doctoral students to TLC’s centralized control of pedagogical training, and assure us that, according to the TLC, instructional quality will be maintained. This is not the TLC’s job to determine. There are significant shortcomings of this approach. The TLC reports directly to campus administration. The faculty do not. We are dismayed at what we view as a move toward positioning TLC staff as our ‘antagonists’ in the attempt to preserve the strength of teaching at UCLA.

While we respect the integrity and expertise of our colleagues within the TLC, we reject these measures to increase this administrative unit’s control over education at UCLA. Members of the faculty depend on TLC staff as collaborators and consultants. TLC staff members are not, however, qualified or authorized to make consequential decisions about curriculum. Fortunately, UCLA boasts one of the world’s top Education departments, should the administration wish to benefit from expertise in that domain.

The white paper emphasizes the importance of “evidence-based instruction” practices in university teaching. We agree. Fortunately, faculty are well-trained at gathering, weighing, and analyzing evidence. One of the faculty’s particular strong suits is identifying the corporate

³ Yufei Guo et al., “Bias in Large Language Models: Origin, Evaluation, and Mitigation,” preprint, arXiv, November 2024, <https://doi.org/arXiv:2411.10915v1>.

⁴ Again, this literature is vast and growing, but examples include Jenna Burrell, “How the Machine ‘Thinks’: Understanding Opacity in Machine Learning Algorithms,” *Big Data & Society* 3, no. 1 (2016): 2053951715622512, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951715622512>; Nataliya Kosmyna et al., “Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt When Using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing Task,” arXiv:2506.08872, preprint, arXiv, December 31, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2506.08872>.



capture of public educational institutions and the incursion of market-based priorities into educational infrastructure.⁵ Indeed, these factors are part of the reason that decisions about curriculum rest with the faculty rather than with staff: we are demonstrably able to meet reflex- and market-driven teaching initiatives with our own priorities of disciplinary rigor and long-term educational integrity. Moreover, as experts in our own disciplines, we bring to our teaching a deep understanding of the different—often drastically different—teaching methods demanded by our various fields.

Allocation of Teaching Assistants

“Elevating the Quality and Sustainability..” claims that lecture courses’ “secondary section structure has evolved incrementally over time, with section size, meeting duration, and meeting frequency sometimes reflecting pedagogical considerations and at other times reflecting available TA resources rather than intentional curricular design” (10). This is a troubling allegation to cast without supporting evidence. We contend that the reason that student:TA ratios and staffing mechanisms differ across disciplines and departments is that different disciplines have different priorities and teaching models. Teaching assistants are not modules that can be snapped in and out of different disciplines, but highly trained, carefully mentored disciplinary experts who are becoming field-leading scholar-teachers in their own right. Centralized control over the allocation of teaching assistants threatens departments’ ability to respond to the needs and abilities of their student populations.

The white paper also recommends the collection of metrics about TA allocations: it suggests a “structured process using common criteria” in order “to support consistency across units within a division or school” (14). We view the collection of these metrics as a step toward the algorithmic apportionment of TA labor, a possibility we reject. Moreover, within the Information Studies discipline, UCLA is fortunate to boast experts on how the collection of even statistically valid metrics can distort our understanding of reality and skew our priorities.⁶ This is particularly true in cases in which reality is subtle, case-dependent, situational, highly contested, and likely to fluctuate. We do not, of course, reject data out of hand, but we understand the critical importance of maintaining local control over the collection, conception, and use of metrics. We therefore recommend against this ill-conceived effort to collect and centralize teaching data across the university.

⁵ Luke Herrine, *The Neoliberalization of Higher Education: Changes in State Funding and Governance Throughout the 20th Century* (The Roosevelt Institute, September 30, 2020), <https://rooseveltinstitute.org/publications/the-neoliberalization-of-higher-education/>; Ben Williamson, “Big EdTech,” *Learning, Media and Technology* 47, no. 2 (2022): 157–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2022.2063888>.

⁶ For an introduction to this vast and robust literature, see Bernard J. Jansen et al., “The Illusion of Data Validity: Why Numbers about People Are Likely Wrong,” *Data and Information Management* 6, no. 4 (2022): 100020, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dim.2022.100020>.



Teaching Professors

Recommendation 1.2 of “Elevating the Quality and Sustainability...”, “Expand Strategic Use of Teaching Professors,” suggests the more widespread “strategic deployment” of faculty in the Teaching Professors professional series (16). Teaching professors at UCLA are talented, highly trained professionals, and we are fortunate to benefit from their presence within the Faculty Senate and at UCLA. However, the Teaching Professor series represents a shift from UCLA’s historical conception of professors as scholar-teachers; that’s why Teaching Professors have their own professional series.⁷ We therefore observe that increasing the ranks of teaching professors is likely to change the substance and composition of faculty labor at UCLA, and even the nature of UCLA as an institution. This, therefore, is a conversation that the larger Faculty Senate must have among itself. It is not sufficient for “senior leadership” to “examine the rationale other UC campuses have used to expand this series in order to identify best practices and incorporate lessons learned into a UCLA strategy” (16).

Instructional Technology

In both white papers, instructional technology is treated as an administrative component of university infrastructure, akin to BruinBuy or PeopleAdmin. Faculty understand, however, that “course delivery” technology is enormously consequential for our ability to teach as our disciplines, expertise, and principles demand. In our view, the campus is long overdue for a discussion about faculty control over the purchase and deployment of educational technology. We have already witnessed how decisions in which we have had no hand have changed the nature of teaching at UCLA; the recent Canvas outage is just one example of how IT decisions can erode faculty control over methods of course delivery.

We are currently witnessing—but not determining—the implementation of technologies that are deeply consequential for our ability to teach. For example, future upgrades to Canvas may include an AI “research assistant” that offers to summarize course materials.⁸ Some faculty members may find such a product helpful, but for faculty members in other disciplines, this tool directly threatens the ability to engage students in the way their disciplines’ principles require. It should not be the Campus IT department or other administrative units’ role to introduce or decline to introduce these tools, as recommendation 3.1.3 (“Ensure All UCLA Students Have Equitable Access to AI Tools and Opportunities to Develop Baseline Proficiency in Educational Contexts,” 29) suggests. As a 2025 AAUP report concludes, “faculty members are best positioned to understand and improve teaching and learning conditions, including the development and implementation of institutional policies around educational technology.”⁹

⁷ See Perkin, “History of Universities.”

⁸ “Introducing IgniteAI,” Instructure, accessed May 22, 2026, <https://www.instructure.com/en-au/resources/webinars/introducing-igniteai>.

⁹ AAUP Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Academic Professions, *Artificial Intelligence and Academic Professions* (American Association of University Professors, 2025), <https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/aaup-policies-reports/topical-reports/artificial-intelligence-and-academic>.



Thank you again for the opportunity to share these comments.

For questions and/or additional information, please contact:

Teresa L. McCarty, 2025-2026 SE&IS Chair

Distinguished Professor and G.F. Kneller Chair in Education and Anthropology

Teresa.McCarty@ucla.edu

May 28, 2026

To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Elizabeth Rose Mayeda, Chair, Faculty Welfare Committee

Re: **White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education**

At its meeting on May 5, 2026, the Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) reviewed the Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education White Paper and offers the following comments.

General Concerns

FWC members expressed concern about the proposed changes to instruction at UCLA. While the Committee recognizes current fiscal pressures, any restructuring must not compromise the university's academic mission or impose additional burdens on faculty who work to uphold it.

Teaching Assistant Allocation and Undergraduate Learning Assistants

The White Paper questions current TA allocation practices. The FWC emphasizes that any reductions in the TA workforce and the criteria by which TAs are distributed across departments must be transparent. Undergraduate Learning Assistants (LAs) cannot substitute for TAs and should not be counted as equivalent in allocation decisions. LAs can serve specific functions in peer advising contexts, but they lack the academic training to grade or provide deep instructional support. A paired model, in which LAs supplement rather than replace TAs, may work for selected courses, but only if implemented carefully. Coordination between TAs and LAs creates supervisory burdens that could offset any cost savings. Any such model should be piloted on a limited basis and rigorously assessed before broader adoption.

Expansion of Teaching Professor Roles

The FWC sees potential in expanding Teaching Professor lines but urges a cautious, deliberate approach with departmental input. Rapid growth in this category risks displacing research faculty hiring and eroding UCLA's R1 identity. The Committee recommends establishing defined ratios between teaching-focused and research-focused faculty, which may vary by department, with phased implementation and meaningful departmental input. Furthermore, it is essential that responsibilities for teaching faculty versus research faculty are clearly defined.

Instructional Innovation and AI Integration

The FWC supports thoughtful experimentation with instructional models, including online formats and AI integration, provided they complement rather than replace in-person instruction. It bears emphasizing that many students choose UCLA specifically for the experience of learning in a vibrant residential research university, and that live classroom interaction is a core part of that experience. For many faculty, direct engagement with students is a source of deep professional fulfillment—one of the primary reasons they entered and remain in academic life. The pedagogical and workload implications of expanded online and AI-integrated instruction are not yet well understood, and any such initiatives must be accompanied by formal evaluation structures that assess both costs and instructional effectiveness. These evaluations should employ clear, agreed-upon metrics for student learning outcomes, faculty workload, and program costs before decisions to scale are made. The FWC recommends that no innovation in this space be expanded beyond a

pilot phase without documented evidence of efficacy—and that decisions remain attentive to what is lost, and not only what might be gained, when in-person teaching is reduced.

Conclusion

The FWC recommends an incremental, evidence-based approach to any instructional reforms. Piloting proposed changes, assessing outcomes, and ensuring robust shared governance throughout the process are essential to preserving instructional quality while responsibly managing costs.

We appreciate the opportunity to opine. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at mayeda@g.ucla.edu or the Committee analyst, Renee Rouzan-Kay, at rrouzankay@senate.ucla.edu.

CC: Tim Groeling, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Academic Senate
Kathleen Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Renee Rouzan-Kay, Senior Policy Analyst, Academic Senate
Members of the Faculty Welfare Committee

To: Megan McEvoy, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Jennifer Wagman, Chair, Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction

Date: May 28, 2026

Re: White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

At its meeting on May 27, 2026, the Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction (CR&J) discussed the White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education. Members offered the following comments:

- Both white papers on Doctoral Education and Undergraduate Education propose dramatic changes to graduate and undergraduate education, yet the composition of the working groups was almost entirely administration, despite these areas being central to the purview of Senate faculty. Together, these documents propose a dramatic reduction, if not elimination, of TAs, and that any pedagogical or teaching training for graduate students to happen through the Teaching and Learning Center, rather than in departments with subject matter expertise.
- It is unclear how these reports intersect with the [2023 Report of the Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support](#).
- The document fundamentally proposes moving from unionized labor sources (e.g., Unit 18 Lecturers, TAs) to non-unionized labor sources (e.g., Professors of Teaching, Learning Assistants). This is a stopgap solution that ignores the reality that instruction is and always will be the most expensive piece of university education.
- Moving TA allocation to administrative units instead of departmental units is problematic, as is moving training of TAs to an administrative unit (the Teaching and Learning Center) when these are intimately related to what is Senate purview.
- The paper suggests the use of AI, when most data still suggests that AI learning is not as effective as more traditional pedagogical models. It is not proven that this will be inexpensive in the long run, particularly if many faculty feel that large-scale AI solutions will not help them pedagogically. If and how professors own their own teaching content and intellectual property is also not well articulated, which is a concern given the overall tone of the paper.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jennwagman@ucla.edu or via the Committee's analyst, Lori Ishimaru, at lishimaru@senate.ucla.edu.

cc: April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Lori Ishimaru, Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate
Members of the Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction

May 28, 2026

To: Megan McEvoy
Chair, Academic Senate

From: Richard Desjardins
Chair, Council on Planning and Budget

Re: White Paper: Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education

At its meeting on May 18, 2026, the Council on Planning and Budget (CPB) discussed the white paper on Elevating the Quality and Sustainability of Undergraduate Education. Members offered the following comments.

CPB members noted that the white paper does not adequately address how decisions about TA allocations are made or why significant disparities exist across units. Members emphasized that courses differ widely in disciplinary demands and the level of hands-on support students need; a single campuswide framework cannot capture these differences. Members stressed that the paper lacks nuance about how TA labor is actually used and how instructional needs vary across fields.

Several members observed that parts of the document appear driven more by cost reduction than by a commitment to improving undergraduate or graduate education. Members questioned whether the document reflects an effort to reduce TA numbers without fully considering the impact on instructional quality. They also noted that appropriate use of readers, TAs, and teaching professors varies by unit, and that the implications of shifting these roles are not clearly addressed.

Members further commented on the organization of the document and recommended consolidating implementation responsibilities into a single table to clarify roles and support cost-benefit evaluation. They also raised questions about the growing role of AI tools in grading and instructional support, noting that these developments could reshape cost structures and require significant investment. Members stressed that the white paper does not address how such investments would be funded or how faculty would be trained to use these tools.

Finally, members expressed concern that a document making recommendations about pedagogy included minimal Senate representation and limited faculty involvement. They noted that decisions about the future of undergraduate education should be led by faculty and should balance budget considerations with educational quality. Members also observed that the paper appears heavily

weighted toward budget allocation rather than academic priorities, and that this imbalance should be addressed before moving forward with decisions.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at desjardins@ucla.edu, or via the Council's analyst, Elizabeth Feller, at efeller@senate.ucla.edu.

cc: Kathleen Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
Tim Groeling, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Elizabeth Feller, Associate Director, Academic Senate
Members of the Council on Planning and Budget