Committee on University Extension 2002-03 Annual Report

To the Academic Senate, Los Angeles Division:

The committee focused this year on potential avenues of collaboration between UNEX and the university community. Interest in the topic reflects a broad spectrum of shared interests among the campus administration, the leadership of Extension, and UCLA’s departments and schools. The sources of their common interests include the following:

1. Long term trends that invite non-traditional modes of delivering education, including the growing demand in society for “life-long learning,” growing space constraints and enrollment pressures on campus, emerging digital technology for education, and growing demand for educational opportunities in the Los Angeles community.
2. The desire of the University Administration to extend the UCLA’s involvement in the community.
3. The desire of Extension’s leadership to forge closer relationships with the campus and to leverage UNEX’ special skills in distance learning, educational marketing, digital courseware, and community service to achieve wider benefits.
4. Budgetary pressures that encourage departments and schools to seek new sources of revenue by extending their teaching and knowledge to broader audiences. This imperative, reflected in the departments’ growing dependence on summer session revenue sharing, dovetails with Extension’s long history of providing education in the community and in managing the summer session program.

To consider these questions, the committee undertook a series of meetings that considered various dimensions of the issues. The major themes and finding are described below.

UNEX Finances and Budget [December 2, 2002]

1. Extension suffered a considerable loss of revenues from the crash of the technology sector, and it has retrenched to make ends meet. Though the committee has no resources to audit Extension’s budget and finances, we have the impression that its financial management is careful and prudent, and that current revenue shortfalls are manageable.
2. Other Extension units in the UC system recently suffered dramatic financial setbacks because they were forced into long term commercial lease arrangements that created high fixed costs. Extension is not immune to problems like these, and its facilities needs remain unsecured.
3. Extension’s course fees have remained essentially flat for a long period. One consequence is that relatively few UCLA faculty members give courses in Extension, when formerly many did. In most cases, the compensation UNEX can offer is no longer attractive to UCLA faculty. This adverse trend has two damaging consequences:
   a) The erosion of direct collaboration, information exchange, and mutual support between campus and Extension.
   b) A markedly diminished opportunity for members of the wider Los Angeles community to learn from UCLA faculty, and for faculty to work with highly motivated students who are deeply involved in “real world” problems.*

   *[Enrollment of concurrent students in campus courses has not changed, but these comprise only 2% of the total in Extension.]

4. Finding ways to engage campus faculty in teaching to a community audience through Extension’s auspices would advance all of the objectives listed above. We support measures like the following, and hope that others can be found:
a) Formally recognize that teaching in Extension fulfills the Service Mission of the faculty.

b) Secure support from the Development Office to generate endowment funds to pay higher rates for UCLA faculty teaching in Extension.

c) Advertise campus courses that meet during late afternoon and evening for concurrent enrollment through Extension.

d) Distribute campus courses with digital technology for concurrent enrollment through Extension.

\textit{UCLA in LA [January 27, 2003]}

1. The committee met with Associate Vice Chancellor Franklin Gilliam to discuss his Center for Community Partnerships. The conversation included a lengthy briefing, and an exploration of possible avenues of collaboration with UNEX.

2. The Community Partnerships Program focuses on funding research projects that address community needs and issues. The Dean of Extension sits on Chancellor Gilliam’s advisory committee, affording an opportunity for occasional interaction.

3. Notwithstanding [2], Extension’s mission to bring knowledge to the community is quite different, and operates largely independently.

4. Recommendations:

   a) Extension should be recognized as a major strategic asset in the effort to bring UCLA into LA. With nearly 100 years experience in community service and education, and a close knowledge of the community’s educational needs, Extension can lend significant resources to the Chancellor’s initiative.

   b) Greater efforts should be made to institutionalize collaboration and to cement a partnership among UCLA’s many participants in community outreach and service, including those involved in the arts, athletics, health care, public relations, strategic planning, community research, and, of course, education. By fostering their mutual awareness and support, the Chancellor’s vision could be pursued with greater coherence, energy, resourcefulness, and effectiveness.

\textit{Revenue Enhancement for Departments and Schools on Campus [May 14, 2003]}

1. The summer session revenue sharing plan was developed by Extension and has become a vital source of revenues in virtually every department.

2. Departments are seeking new streams of revenue, and have been encouraged by the Administration to become more entrepreneurial.

3. The committee met with representatives of the Political Science Department, including the Chair, Michael Lofchie, and faculty who are working on projects to generate new revenue sources. The group considered models that might allow the department to offer revenue producing courses to audiences outside the university.

4. The discussion covered Extension’s resources for promotion, distance learning, its credentials programs for educators, and its broad familiarity with local markets for continuing education. Many different models were considered, including summer training institutes like Michigan’s program in statistical methods, post-baccalaureate programs like the Classics Department’s, interdisciplinary masters of liberal studies programs for older audiences, teacher credential programs for the social sciences, Center X programs for teacher training in mathematics, the Education School’s Leadership program, among others.

5. The conversation did more to clarify the complexity of such undertakings than to identify easy
opportunities for departments to generate new revenues by finding wider audiences for their courses.
None of the alternatives presented the same mix of incentives to faculty, departments, the College,
and Extension that made the summer session model so successful and easy to implement.
6. Distributing existing campus courses by digital means through concurrent enrollments in Extension
is perhaps a more promising opportunity, and one that Extension would like to explore. Doing so
requires no new course preparations from faculty, and creates the possibility to generate new
revenues from the existing curriculum.
7. The decision of the Chancellor’s Office to move the summer sessions program from Continuing
Education into Murphy Hall has recently emerged as a strong possibility. The new arrangement no
doubt affords important benefits, but will further erode Extension’s collaboration with campus and
faculty.

Recommended Agenda Items for Future Consideration by the Committee and the Eight Year Review
[March 10 and June 11, 2003]

1. Relationship between Extension and Campus.

Because Extension is configured as a stand-alone entity, with self-supporting finances, little
participation from UCLA faculty, and no authority to offer professional degree programs,* it confronts a
series of difficulties. It has become increasingly and uncomfortably isolated from campus. In addition, it
cannot compete effectively in the potentially huge marketplace for professional degrees and credentials.
A variety of arrangements exist elsewhere, including at other UC campuses, that forge closer
connections between universities and their extensions, and create collaborative opportunities for degree
programs that address a wider spectrum of needs in the community. Such models may be appropriate at
UCLA, or may become so, as public education evolves to accommodate changing economic and social
conditions. These models should be studied and evaluated.
[*Many Extension courses convey degree transferable credit, upon admission to other programs.]

2. Facilities for Extension

Extension could face serious financial difficulties, if it does not secure facilities that provide
affordable and well-located quarters. The withdrawal of Extension from some of its satellite locations
has diminished access to the community. Both issues should be reviewed carefully.

3. Trends in Digital Technology for Education

Extension has become a laboratory for digital teaching methods, and its experiences and
wherewithal could be helpful to those on campus considering on-line education. A careful review of
possibilities may open new avenues of collaboration between Extension and campus.

Respectfully Submitted,

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