Committee on University Extension 2001-02 Annual Report

To the Academic Senate, Los Angeles Division:

Over the past year, the committee had productive and frank discussions. These discussions focused in two areas:

Interaction of faculty, UCLA Extension, and our "community". In particular, the committee carefully considered the role in conjunction with the "UCLA in LA Initiative".

Relationship between UCLA Extension and department/school-based academic programs. The committee felt that explicit attention to certain strategic decisions is requisite.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE "COMMUNITY": UCLA IN LA

UCLA Extension is one of the most important interfaces between the campus and the "community". Annually, 65,000 students participate in programs offered by UCLA Extension. There is heavy emphasis upon "professional education", leading to career advancement. There are particular strengths in the area of continuing teacher education; this includes 20,000 annual enrollments as well as prominent and innovative programs such as the urban intern program. UCLA Extension also addresses needs of other segments of the Southern California community by partnership with other organizations, such as the Workforce Investment Boards, which provide educational courses for workers and middle level management. The committee recognized that although UCLA Extension focuses on professional education, there are indirect benefits as those educated provide benefit to a broader cross-section of the Los Angeles community.

UCLA Extension is in a unique position in providing that additional window of opportunity and learning to the Los Angeles community. Historically, UCLA Extension has provided professional advancement and personal enhancement to thousands of participants in the programs offered over the years. UCLA Extension has many certificate programs, programs that provide that necessary link to advanced learning and personal enhancement.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The committee spent considerable time carefully considering commonalities and differences between Extension and "regular" academic programs. In the past, the distinction was clear, but more recent national trends have the potential to blur this distinction. For example, "traditional" academic programs are increasingly using distance learning formats, experiential learning, and nonstandard scheduling (e.g., "executive" Masters degree programs in business, public health, nursing).

TIDAL WAVE

UCLA will face significant pressures of increased enrollment and decreased resources. University Extension has the potential to play a significant role in addressing these needs. However, there are some clear policy implications and decisions that the committee believes should be addressed explicitly, rather than on a de facto basis. Explicit and open planning is requisite to mitigate adverse impact upon faculty activities and to optimize collaboration.

Potential roles for University Extension to relieve the pressure include:

1. Summer Sessions may be expanded and made an inherent part of the undergraduate experience.
2. Physical facilities: UCLA Extension has significant off-campus locations in Westwood. If scheduling permits, use of these for regular classes of may be considered.

3. Distant physical facilities: UCLA Extension has experience with facilities distant from Westwood (satellite locations). Providing "regular academic instruction" in satellite locations would decompress pressure on campus facilities. Extension may contribute by directly providing the courses, by cohabitating the facilities, or by providing consultative expertise. There are practical benefits and limitations of such an approach; it would facilitate access to UCLA undergraduate study for individuals who cannot live on-campus for personal/financial reasons, but it would also impose a significant burden for on-campus faculty and students.

4. "Mirror courses": Basic, general education courses for credit might be taught through UCLA Extension, using UCLA Extension instructors rather than full-time academic faculty.

5. Distance learning: UCLA Extension has experience in the use of this modality. UCLA Extension might directly provide education in this way, or alternatively, UCLA Extension might serve as a vehicle for courses taught by regular faculty. At the very least, UCLA Extension has valuable experience from which the Academic Senate could benefit if distance learning becomes a central part of any of the individual academic schools/colleges.

6. Possible alternative "suite of general courses": Currently, the UCLA Extension model is that of an ad hoc series of course substitutions. The committee considered whether a formal parallel suite of courses rather than ad hoc course substitutions might be beneficial. For example, this would allow students to spend one or more quarters in their home locations; conversely, the problem of assuring "separate but equal" quality would be challenging.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **UCLA Extension should play a significant role in meeting the "Tidal Wave" challenge.**

2. ** Explicit plan: Academic Senate, UCLA Extension, and administration should develop an explicit strategic plan for UCLA Extension role. Specific policy decisions should be made collaboratively:**

   a. Is there a need to change the UNEX "charter" for Extension to permit a greater role?
   b. Should University Extension provide courses or simply "facilitate" courses (e.g., facilities, technical support for distance learning)?
   c. Should the current UCLA Extension focus in "professional advancement" be changed or broadened to include considerable emphasis upon providing academic basic courses?

3. **Organizational relationship:** If required education courses are taught through Extension, should UCLA Extension have control over courses "with approval of departments" or should departments control courses, "purchasing support services" from UCLA Extension?

   a.

4. **Instruction:** Academic departments should select and provide instructors for courses required for matriculated students rather than relying upon existing UCLA Extension instructors. This will generate a need for appropriate financial support to add necessary faculty. UCLA Extension has contributed to academic programs in the past and should be encouraged to do so in the future.
5. Encourage UCLA Extension to address basic academic courses in addition to "professional development."

6. Consider whether the requirement that UCLA Extension be completely self-supporting is counterproductive.

PART-TIME PROFESSIONAL DEGREES

The committee carefully considered the role of part-time professional degrees (particularly at the Masters level). Currently, no degrees are awarded through UCLA Extension. The committee had clear consensus that this should not be changed. However, UCLA Extension already plays significant roles, which may be further expanded. There are many professionals who would benefit from the opportunity to engage in classroom instruction and attend UCLA part-time. These include: (1). Complementary courses, particularly those which are "practically oriented"; these may be taught through UCLA Extension and incorporated as a formal requirement in the Masters program or offered as options. (2). Interaction with active practicing professionals is a significant benefit. The role of UCLA Extension in enhancing this further should be explored.

Committee recommendations:

1. Masters degree programs should remain under the control of departments/schools.

2. UCLA Extension should not develop parallel degree programs.

3. UCLA Extension should be encouraged to collaboratively develop a specific proposal for its role in professional degree related education.

4. The role of UCLA Extension in facilitating the offering of such degrees should also be reviewed by graduate programs at UCLA (e.g., within Schools and by Graduate Council).

Respectfully Submitted,

Ali Behdad, English, ex-officio
Ed Condren, English, ex-officio
James DeNardo, Political Science
Steven Khan, Cedar-Sinai Medical Center
Robert Lapiner, Dean, Continuing Education & Extension, ex-officio
Herbert Plutschow, East Asian Languages & Culture
Ali Jihad Racy, Ethnomusicology
Jane Valentine, Public Health
PHILIP HARBER, Family Medicine, Chair

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