May 5, 2015

To: Professor Joel Aberbach, Senate Chair
   Academic Senate

From: Prof. Clyde Spillenger, Chair
   Academic Freedom Committee

Re: CAPS Contact on Syllabi

   The Committee on Academic Freedom [“Committee”] reviewed “Proposal: CAPS Number & Resources on UCLA Academic Syllabi” at their April 27, 2015 meeting. While the proposal does not necessarily impinge on any academic freedom issues that the committee could see, committee members did think it raises some questions/concerns:

   • If the proposal passed, would including the information be a CAPS request or a requirement? If the latter, whose responsibility would it be to enforce it?

   • If the CAPS notice goes on the syllabus, is a professor required to discuss or announce the notice? Would any training be needed to do so?

   These concerns suggested to the Committee that the consequences, some of them potentially troubling, of requiring the proposed notice may not have been fully thought through by those drafting the proposal. For example, University counsel should review the proposal to determine whether inclusion of the information on the syllabus would expose faculty members and/or the University to the risk of liability in cases where the faculty member does not effectively notify a student of the availability of the CAPS services and tragic events ultimately occur.

   The Committee members were supportive of the idea of more visibility for CAPS. Several, including the students serving on the committee, thought that some sort of online notice might accomplish the same purpose with a wider audience. Since a great many UCLA courses now make use of an online platform for the posting of assignments and other materials, it might be sufficient to require inclusion of the CAPS as part of the course web page, rather than on the syllabus as such. Other suggestions included having the information permanently at the top of CCLE, on the back of a Bruin card, at the top of MyUCLA, etc.

   Last, faculty on the committee thought it would be helpful to post in an equally visible location CAPS guidelines for faculty who deal with students who are struggling in some way. The Committee noted that faculty have in the past received a file folder that had extensive guidance on how to assist to students in distress and found that was a useful resource.

cc:
Jack Feldman
Hilary Godwin
Jill Klessig
Melissa Spencer
Richard Yarborough
Serge Chenkerian, MSO/Executive Assistant, UCLA Academic Senate
Linda Mohr, CAO, UCLA Academic Senate
May 6, 2015

To: Joel Aberbach, Chair
    Academic Senate

From: Alex Bui, Chair
    Graduate Council

Re: USAC Proposal to include CAPS contact on syllabi

At its meeting on April 3, 2015, the Graduate Council reviewed and briefly discussed the Undergraduate Student Association Council’s (USAC) proposal to include Counseling and Psychological Services’ contact information on all syllabi. While supportive of the proposal in principle, members were not supportive of mandating such a policy. However, we would be comfortable with encouraging faculty to comply. If the proposal moves forward members feel that the CAPS office should be consulted and endorse, if not provide, suggested language for such a statement. Members also felt that there were potential academic freedom issues, if not legal repercussions, that must be considered.

Council members feel that syllabi have a very specific academic function, so USAC may wish to consider an alternative medium that reaches all students more reliably and effectively. One member suggested using myUCLA, which would be easy to engineer and is used by all UCLA students.

Graduate Council is very supportive of informing UCLA students of the valuable mental health resources available to them through the Counseling and Psychological Services Center, but we are not convinced that such a mandated measure is entirely appropriate for inclusion on course syllabi.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment.

cc: Serge Chenkerian, MSO, Academic Senate
    Kyle Cunningham, Principal Committee Analyst, Graduate Council
    Linda Mohr, CAO, Academic Senate
May 6, 2015

Joel Aberbach, Chair
Academic Senate, Los Angeles Division

Re: Request to include CAPS Information on Course Syllabi

Dear Joel,

The Undergraduate Council (UgC), at its meeting on April 24, 2015, reviewed and approved the attached response from our Student Welfare Committee regarding the Undergraduate Student Association Council (USAC) request to include the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) phone number and list of resources on every academic syllabus at UCLA.

If you have any questions, please contact me (x69449; jwg@chem.ucla.edu) or Undergraduate Council Analyst Matt Robinson (x51194; mrobinson@senate.ucla.edu).

Sincerely,

Jim Gober, Chair
Undergraduate Council

Enclosure

cc: Serge Chenkerian, MSO/Executive Assistant, Academic Senate
Linda Mohr, CAO, Academic Senate
Matt Robinson, Committee Analyst, Academic Senate
April 17, 2015

To: Jim Gober, Chair
Undergraduate Council

From: Mariko Tamanoi, Chair
Undergraduate Council Student Welfare Committee

Re: Request to include CAPS Information on Course Syllabi

The Student Welfare Committee, in its April 10, 2015 meeting, considered a request from the UCLA Undergraduate Student Association to include the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) phone number and list of resources on every academic syllabus at UCLA. The committee recognizes the goal of this proposal as laudable and important, but feels that this information would not be appropriate or useful on course syllabi. Including this information instead in course CCLE websites or the MyUCLA portal could better achieve the stated goal.

In general, we found the proposal rather informal, but appreciate the willingness of USAC representatives to reach out to the Academic Senate with initiatives like this. We would like the proposal to be formalized and adapted to include the CAPS information on CCLE or MyUCLA instead of on course syllabi. This formal proposal should include proposed language from the CAPS office.

We look forward to receiving the updated, formalized proposal. At that time, we will be better positioned to recommend a policy to the relevant administrative offices.

Enclosure