December 5, 2014

Mary Gilly
Chair, UC Academic Council

Re: Doctoral Student Support Proposals and Recommendations

Dear Mary,

The Executive Board of the UCLA Academic Senate discussed the Doctoral Student Report Review and Recommendations at its meeting on December 4, 2014. I am attaching the views from our various committees on the subject and note that two of them (from the School of Medicine and School of Engineering) arrived after our meeting. I urge that these be read and considered, and will confine myself to highlighting the major issues raised at our meeting.

Discussion at the Board meeting focused on the Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition recommendation. There was overall agreement that the current system --with nonresident tuition charged until foreign graduate students advance to candidacy -- presents problems in attracting and funding such students, with unequal impact across departments. However, there were numerous questions about what would follow from a decision to eliminate non-resident tuition for foreign graduate students. How much income would be lost by such a decision? (One estimate we heard for our campus was $17-20 million or more.) If the campus has to cover the expense, where will the funds come from? Is the timing right for a decision to eliminate tuition for a group of students at the same time as UC proposes to increase tuition for undergraduates? Under the circumstances, it seemed advisable for now on NRST to allow individual campuses to develop their own plans and then share them with other campuses.

Please note the suggestion from our Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity that there be a more thorough and comprehensive examination of diversity development and recruitment programs beyond those listed in the report.

Please feel free to contact me if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,

Joel D. Aberbach
Chair, Academic Senate

cc: Dan Hare, Vice Chair, Academic Council
Hilary Baxter, Executive Director, Systemwide Academic Senate
Todd Giedt, Associate Director, Systemwide Academic Senate
Michael LaBrriola, Principal Policy Analyst, Systemwide Academic Senate
Linda Mohr, Chief Administrative Officer, UCLA Academic Senate
December 1, 2014

To: Joel Aberbach, Chair  
Academic Senate

From: Alex Bui, Chair  
Graduate Council

Re: Doctoral Student Support Proposals and Recommendations

At its meeting on November 14, 2014, the Graduate Council reviewed the recommendations in the report that was compiled following the UC-Wide Doctoral Student Support Conference held on April 15, 2014. Graduate Council members appreciate the time and attention being given to this critical issue and we are pleased to provide you with the following feedback, with our strongest endorsements listed first.

- **Diversity Proposals**: The Graduate Council concurs with the steering committee’s emphasis on improving diversity among UC graduate students and fully supports the promotion of the UC HIS-TCU and UC LEADS proposals. Members recognize the valuable resource of, and potential of collaborating with, the CSUs and acknowledge the clear benefits of focusing some recruitment on these institutions to increase diversity. UCLA has already benefited greatly from the UC-HCBU initiatives and summer bridge programs and the Council supports broadening these programs even further. With respect to other sources of URM support, members felt that UC-wide programs such as the Cota Robles fellowship should provide uniform offers to minimize competition between the UCs.

- **Net Stipend Competitiveness, Multi-Year Funding, and Transparent Offer Letters**: Given the ever-increasing competition with securing the best and brightest graduate students, the Graduate Council endorses the recommendations to improve net stipend competitiveness, to offer multi-year funding, and to provide transparent offer letters to increase interest and matriculation into UC graduate programs. Standardized templates or examples of “best practices” for multi-year support offer letters would be a good step forward. In particular, departmental or campus-level backing with short-term funds to support shortfalls in faculty funding for such students would provide a needed “safety net” in making such offers. Above all, addressing this issue relies upon increased funding, which is critical to maintaining the excellence of UC doctoral training and research and which we hope the Regents will take into serious consideration.

- **Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition**: While members agree that the rising costs of non-resident supplemental tuition (NRST) serve to deter recruitment of international students, the loss of this revenue would be detrimental to UCLA. Members felt strongly that a one-size-fits-all policy would not work for all ten campuses, and that the campuses should be encouraged to engage in “work-arounds” as opposed to implementing a formal change to UC or Regental policy so that local strategies can be tailored to their own graduate student populations. This being said, the Graduate Council encourages our campus and its leadership to move forward quickly on establishing a framework that can help address these issues; concerns were raised by several faculty given their firsthand experience in funding graduate students’ NRST via faculty research grants, who find that such a mechanism is increasingly problematic and could be untenable in the future due to increasingly limited federal funding and ever-increasing tuition costs.

- **Professional Development**: Members agree that the professional development of graduate students is becoming an increasingly important issue, but we do not agree that the UC should develop a system-wide graduate
student career portal, as this prospect sounds both costly and cumbersome, if not redundant to what many of the campuses already provide in some manner. The challenge in part is to make students and faculty aware of what resources exist, and what services can be leveraged to aid in professional development (e.g., the use of the broadly advocated myIDP for STEM and health science fields). The Regents’ insights into graduate professional development would be useful, particularly whether they would encourage greater investment in this area. Professional development activities are, and should remain, within the purview of the campuses with respect to determining capacity and needs, identifying appropriate resources, and organizing the efforts.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me via the Graduate Council’s committee analyst, Kyle Cunningham, at ext. 51162 or kcunningham@senate.ucla.edu.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine on this matter.

Cc: Serge Chenkerian, MSO, Academic Senate
    Kyle Cunningham, Principal Committee Analyst, Graduate Council
    Robin L. Garrell, Dean and Vice Provost, Graduate Education
    Linda Mohr, CAO, Academic Senate
November 25, 2014

Joel Aberbach
Chair, Academic Senate

Re: Systemwide Review: Doctoral Student Support Proposals and Recommendations

Dear Professor Aberbach,

The Council on Planning and Budget discussed the Doctoral Student Support Proposals and Recommendations at its meeting on November 17, 2014.

CPB members raised the issue that the high cost of non-resident tuition affects the ability to recruit international students. There are existing discrepancies between departments, as some do not possess necessary funds to stop charging tuition.

Based on the discussions regarding tuition increases that took place at the last UCPB meeting on November 4, CPB members believe this is not the time to reduce fees.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposals. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at sears@issr.ucla.edu.

Sincerely,

David O. Sears, Chair
Council on Planning and Budget

cc: Leo Estrada, Vice Chair, Academic Senate
Jan Reiff, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
Linda Mohr, Chief Administrative Officer, Academic Senate Office
Elizabeth Feller, Committee Analyst, Council on Planning and Budget
Members of the Council on Planning and Budget
November 25, 2014

Professor Joel Aberbach
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Re: Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity’s Response to Doctoral Student Support Review

Dear Professor Aberbach,

CODEO was pleased to hear of the meeting that took place on April 24th at UC Irvine to discuss non-resident supplemental tuition, competitiveness in net stipends, professional development and partnerships, and competitiveness in diversity and student recruitment. CODEO concurs that Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) remains a barrier to recruiting the most talented doctoral students as it might deter some students from even applying, and faculty may be reluctant to recruit non-residents due to the financial burden of covering NRST. If UCOP cannot eliminate NRST altogether for graduate students, we encourage the development of a means by which campuses can share their strategies for offsetting the NRST burden. We further agree that stable, multi-year funding articulated clearly in offer letters must be codified as a system-wide best practice if UC hopes to recruit the most talented students.

Of greatest interest to CODEO in this report, however, was the discussion of efforts to increase the diversity of the UC graduate population. We are heartened to read of the programs at other campuses, and all committee members present for the discussion were excited to learn of plans to expand the UC HBCU partnership to include Tribal and Hispanic Serving Institutions. Many more programs exist, however, than were discussed in this report, and we noted that no data was offered with which we could evaluate the effectiveness of the UC HBCU partnership. Is the UC HBCU partnership the best candidate for expansion or do other extant programs achieve better results? Lacking sufficient information to answer this question, CODEO has reservations about moving forward with the plan. If resources are limited, we encourage a more thorough and comprehensive examination of diversity development and recruitment programs before investing further.

Sincerely,

Marissa Lopez,
Chair, Committee on Diversity and Equality Opportunity

cc: Members of the Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity
    Linda Mohr, CAO, Academic Senate
    Serge Chenkerian, MSO/Executive Assistant, Academic Senate
    Annie Speights, Policy Analyst, Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity
December 5\textsuperscript{th}, 2014

TO: Joel Aberbach, Chair, Academic Senate

RE: HSSEAS FEC Input on Doctoral Student Support Proposal

Professor Aberbach:

I distributed the Doctoral Student Support Proposal to the HSSEAS Faculty Executive Committee, and received feedback from one Department. I realize that our feedback is too late to be considered for the Dec. 4\textsuperscript{th} meeting, but I hope it will still be useful for future decisions regarding this effort.

Regarding Non-Resident Tuition, faculty would be happy to eliminate it or reduce it. It is often a hardship for us to bear on our research grants, and is sometimes even illegal for us to pay from State-supported contracts, for example. However, we are concerned that the loss of revenue achieved by eliminating NRT could result in less fellowship money being available, and that the loss of revenue may unfairly adversely impact campus units that generate significant revenue from research overhead. These impacts should be considered carefully and transparently prior to making a decision regarding this matter.

Regarding the stipend and competitiveness of offers, we believe that mechanisms are already in place to improve financial offers by, for example, increasing the step of a GSR appointment. We do not favor making multi-year offers mandatory because we rarely have research funding guaranteed for a duration of time to fully support a student’s PhD. Again, faculty members can already do this if they have the funding in place. Forcing the issue could cause funding problems down the road.

Sincerely,

Scott J. Brandenberg
HSSEAS Faculty Executive Committee Chair
Dear Senate Chair Aberbach,

In response to your request for comments relating to the Doctoral Student Support Proposal & Recommendations, the UCLA Anderson Faculty Executive Committee consulted with Professor Francis Longstaff, Senior Associate Dean & Faculty Director of the Doctoral Program. In response, Professor Longstaff provided the following comments in relation to the proposal:

1. Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition: We like the idea of eliminating the nonresident supplemental tuition. In particular, we like Option 1. The other options wouldn't reduce our costs since the doctoral office pays these fees directly.

2. Net Stipend Competitiveness Multi-year Funding & Transparent Offer Letters: We support, but we are already doing this.

3. Professional Development: Seems like a fine idea.

4. Diversity Proposals: Seems fine to us.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,
Laurie Summers
The Faculty Executive Committee of the School of Dentistry met to discuss the report on Doctoral Student Support. Members of our committee were quick to point out that, when compared with other prestigious research universities, UCLA does not fare well when considering support for doctoral students. The main issues raised by those members of our committee who are well acquainted with doctoral student support offered at other prestigious institutions were already identified in the report. These key concerns, as voiced by members of the Dental FEC, are the lower stipends, the lack of multi-year support, and the supplemental tuition for international doctoral students. The Dental FEC also discussed the other issues raised in the report related to professional development and diversity. Our FEC members expressed no concern with either of these issues, and supported these recommendations as well, but felt that the lower stipends, non-resident supplemental tuition, and lack of multi-year funding are the most pressing issues when trying to recruit the best and brightest doctoral candidates.

The Dental FEC encourages the UCLA Academic Senate to offer its strongest support at the Regents’ meeting in January for the recommendations included in this report. As any substantive changes to address these concerns will have direct financial implications, we hope that the severity of this problem will be made clear to the Regents, and that funding should be given high priority.
Hi Linda,

The DGSOM FEC met yesterday evening (12/3) and discussed the "Doctoral Student Support Proposals and Recommendations".

The committee fully supports the proposal and recommendations and has no other comments.

Thank you,

Roberta

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Begin forwarded message:

From: "Mohr, Linda" <mohr@senate.ucla.edu>
Subject: Senate Item for Review: Systemwide Review: Doctoral Student Support Proposals and Recommendations
Date: October 31, 2014 4:49:17 PM PDT
To: "Bui, Alex A.T." <buia@mii.ucla.edu>, "David O. Sears (sears@issr.ucla.edu)" <sears@issr.ucla.edu>, "Lopez, Marissa" <mklopez@humnet.ucla.edu>, "Bates-Jensen, Barbara" <batesjen@sonnet.ucla.edu>, "Brandenberg, Scott" <sjbrandenberg@ucla.edu>, "Crane, Randall D." <crane@ucla.edu>, FEC Chair SEAS <fecchair@seas.ucla.edu>, "Freymiller, Earl" <efreymiller@dentistry.ucla.edu>, "Gabriel, Stuart"