February 13, 2015

**Members of the Academic Senate**

Dear Colleagues,

You will soon be asked to vote on a motion presented by the Undergraduate Council at the November 20, 2014 Legislative Assembly meeting. Voting members of the LgA approved the following motion by a vote of 85 in favor, 18 opposed, and 4 abstained. Previously, the Undergraduate Council had voted to approve the proposed new undergraduate diversity requirement in the College of Letters & Science by a vote of 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstain, and 1 recused.

**MOTION:**
To approve Divisional Regulation A-458(C)(6), thus establishing an undergraduate Diversity Requirement in the College of Letters and Science, to be effective for freshmen students entering in Fall 2015 and transfer students entering in Fall 2017.

This proposed requirement received unanimous support by the College of Letters & Science Faculty Executive Committee at its meeting on May 30, 2014. In an October 2014 electronic ballot, Academic Senate members of the College approved the requirement by a vote of 332 in favor, 303 opposed, and 24 blank ballots.

**Background**

On December 11, 2014, the Academic Senate received a petition requesting that the November 20th Legislative Assembly vote on the adoption of an undergraduate diversity requirement in the College be submitted to the entire Senate membership by an electronic online ballot, following the procedures described in **UCLA Senate Bylaw#155** in Section 2, Chapter V.

On January 8, 2015, the Senate received a counter petition, challenging the interpretation of UCLA Senate Bylaw 155, asking the Senate to reconsider its “recent decision to validate as legitimate the faculty petition received on December 11, 2014 asking for a vote of all Senate faculty on the proposal to amend Divisional Regulation A-458(C) in the College of Letters and Science.” This request was referred to UCLA Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction (R&J) and on January 25, 2015, **R&J responded** with its finding that “Nothing in the history of SB 155 supports a different interpretation of the bylaw.”

On January 30, 2015, an appeal was made to the University Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction challenging UCLA R&J’s interpretation of UCLA Bylaw 155. **UCR&J’s response** was received on February 5, 2015, and its findings were consistent with those of UCLA’s R&J; UCLA Senate Bylaw 155 was correctly interpreted.

On February 6, 2015, the Academic Senate received a **new petition**. (The initial December 11 petition was withdrawn.) An issue about a wording discrepancy in the petitions sheets signed by petitioners was
sent to the Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction for review. The R&J Committee recommended that petitioners submit additional forms with signatures sufficient to reach the number required. Petitioners did that prior to the deadline for submission. Signatures were verified as members of the Academic Senate and that the threshold of petitioners met the minimum requirement as specified in Bylaw 155. The timeline and procedures for the divisionwide vote have now been established.

**Voting Timeline**

The **voting period will be open March 30 – April 10, 2015**, and the results of the vote, should they differ from the LgA action on November 20, 2014, will supersede the decision of the LgA. The issue will be decided by a simple majority of votes cast.

- The minutes of the November 20, 2014, LgA meeting were distributed with the February 5, 2015 LgA Notice of Meeting on January 29, 2015, as is our practice.
- **Pro/Con Period.** During a three-week period (15 instructional days), **February 17 through March 9, 5:00 pm, Divisional members may submit pro and con statements** to the Secretary of the Division, Professor Neal Garrett, at senateoffice@senate.ucla.edu. Statements received later than March 9, 5:00 pm, will not be considered and included in the summary.
- **If you submit a statement, please designate on your submission whether your statement is pro or con the establishment of the undergraduate diversity requirement in the College.** (See the motion above.)
- **After the pro and con period closes on March 9,** arguments pro and con will be summarized by Secretary Garrett and accompany the ballot and voting instructions to all Academic Senate members of the UCLA Division. At the same time, the text of the pro and con statements submitted will be posted to the website.
- The bylaw requires that the voting period be open for 10 instructional days, and to facilitate a clearly defined and continuous voting period, the voting will begin when instruction resumes for the Spring Quarter. The **voting period will open on March 30 at 8 am and remain open for a two-week period (10 instructional days) until April 10, 2015 at 5:00 pm.** The results of the vote will be announced soon thereafter.


Sincerely,

Joel D. Aberbach
Chair, Academic Senate

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1The December 11, 2014, petition was withdrawn on January 29, 2015.