March 27, 2008

Michael Brown
Chair of the Academic Council
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

In Re: UCLA Response to the Regents’ Taskforce on Diversity Reports and Recommendations

Dear Michael,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Regent’s Taskforce on Diversity Reports and Recommendations. Upon receipt of the request for review, I specifically asked that the following committees and councils review, with all other Senate committees and councils invited to opine at their discretion. UCLA’s response is varied depending upon the report. If the reports are to be considered as a whole, then UCLA cannot, at this time, support the reports and recommendations as written. If, however, the reports and recommendations can be disaggregated, then UCLA’s response is as follows.

Undergraduate Student Diversity Report (reviewed by the Undergraduate Council, Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools, and the Executive Board). Both the UgC and CUARS voted to endorse the report and its recommendations. The Executive Board concurred. However, it should be noted that the UgC believed it was beyond its charge and expertise to comment on those aspects pertaining to K-12 preparation. Its support, therefore, was in relation to those aspects that dealt with matriculated University of California Students.

Graduate and Professional Student Diversity Report (reviewed by the Graduate Council and the Executive Board). The Graduate Council and the Executive Board found the report’s recommendations to be helpful and insightful, but limited, and cannot support them in their current form. By focusing on the whole of the University of California, the report apparently overlooked not only the leadership role that the Graduate Divisions on every campus have assumed in addressing diversity issues within the University of California’s graduate and professional student communities, but also the wide range of efforts already underway elsewhere on individual campuses. One notable instance in the report is its apparent exclusion of some of the more diverse student bodies on our campuses, such as nursing, education, public health, and public affairs. This oversight contributed to the GC’s and Executive Board’s sense that this report neither sufficiently addressed the future of existing or possible diversity initiatives nor provided a suitable foundation from which to build a solid implementation strategy.
Additionally, the report seems to overlook any consideration of resources required to plan, implement, and execute such a far-reaching and worthy initiative. The report would benefit by use and reference to the successes and failures of individual departments and campuses to begin to formulate effective strategies that might meet the challenges confronting particular segments of the University of California. Therefore, UCLA recommends a more serious analysis with effective and constructive recommendations that will assist in executing the most ideal of outcomes.

Faculty Diversity Report (reviewed by the Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity [CODEO], and the Executive Board) & Campus Climate Report (reviewed by the Faculty Welfare Committee [FWC], CODEO, and the Executive Board). CODEO, FWC, and the Executive Board applaud the efforts and goals reflected in these reports, but believe that 1) more consistency is needed in complying with the definition of what diversity entails; and 2) specific plans are needed, particularly with regard to implementation of changes and accountability for results (CODEO, Executive Board). Moreover, The Faculty Welfare Committee and Executive Board found the Campus Climate Report to be well written, but believe that additional data and specific plans would strengthen the approach. Additional data will be available via the results of the 2008 Academic Senate’s Faculty Welfare Survey and the Higher Education Research Institute Survey, for example. As the Faculty Welfare Committee pointed out, “pursuing the issue of climate should not eclipse the necessity for the collection of continuing numerical data on diversity.”

For these reasons, UCLA cannot support the Faculty Diversity Report and the Campus Climate Report and their recommendations as written.

I am attaching the various responses to the reports from the committees for your information. Each contains a greater elaboration of the concerns and insights of UCLA, and each has the endorsement of the Executive Board.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions,

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ligon Bjork
UCLA Academic Senate Chair

Cc: Maria Bertero-Barcelo, Executive Director and Chief of Staff, Academic Council
    Jaime R. Balboa, Ph.D., Chief Administrative Officer, UCLA Academic Senate
March 10, 2008

Elizabeth Bjork
Academic Senate Chair

In Re: Undergraduate Council Response to the UC Undergraduate Work Team of the Study Group on University Diversity Report

Dear Elizabeth,

Thank you for the opportunity to opine upon UC Undergraduate Work Team of the Study Group on University Diversity Report, dated September 2007. The Undergraduate Work Team of the Regents’ Study Group on University Diversity was charged by the Regents to review and report on recent trends in freshman and transfer admissions and to identify best practices in academic preparation programs, admissions practices, and recruitment and “yield” programs.

The Undergraduate Council (UGC) discussed the Report at its regular meetings on February 22, and March 7, 2008. The Council faculty and student members voted to endorse the Report. The vote was twelve members in favor of endorsement, zero opposed, and zero in abstention. The student vote was four in favor of endorsement, zero opposed, and zero abstaining.

We invited Professor Jeannie Oakes, CUARS and BOARS member, to brief the UGC on the Report at our meeting on February 22nd. Professor Oakes reported that some of these recommendations, (5, 6, and 7, in particular) have already made their way onto the agendas of BOARS and CUARS and UCLA, and careful work toward adopting and implementing them is underway. UCLA has moved to a system of “holistic review” for the 2007 admissions cycle. With recommendation 5 in particular, UCLA Academic Senate Committees, including Undergraduate Council, previously voted to support the BOARS proposal for rethinking how UC eligibility is determined.

The report presents recommendations for the University of California in addressing diversity as an institutional goal post Proposition 209. These recommendations discuss steps, in general terms that UC should take in addressing uneven educational opportunities in K-12, in admissions policies and recruitment, and in undergraduate programs. The UGC paid particular attention to Recommendation #12: “Greater Diversity at UC Will Require Institutionalizing a Supportive Climate, With Accountability.” It recognizes that disparities in persistence rates continue between students of different populations, and urges the creation and maintenance of local programs providing academic and social support for underrepresented minorities. Additionally, academic units are encouraged to develop early contact between faculty members and students to ensure success, identification of at risk students, and assistance with securing needed support. UGC noted the example of the excellent work of the Academic Advancement Program in institutionalizing such a climate and providing accountability with demonstrable success. UCLA is the only institution in the UC system that has such a program, and it might serve as a model for other campuses. A broader discussion at UCLA should include representatives from the residence halls, who are in contact with students in all academic areas. UGC also discussed the importance of learning from other universities how these same issues are being addressed.
Faculty plays a fundamental role in supporting the recommendations of the UC Undergraduate Work Team of the Study Group on the University Diversity Report. Thank you again for the opportunity to opine. Please contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Stuart Brown
Undergraduate Council Chair

Cc: Jaime Balboa, CAO Academic Senate
    Dayna Baker, Senior Policy Analyst
    Linda Mohr, Assistant CAO Academic Senate
March 14, 2008

Elizabeth Bjork
Academic Senate Chair

In Re: CUARS Response to the UC Undergraduate Work Team of the Study Group on University Diversity Report

Dear Elizabeth,

Thank you for the opportunity to opine upon UC Undergraduate Work Team of the Study Group on University Diversity Report, dated September 2007. The Undergraduate Work Team of the Regents’ Study Group on University Diversity was charged by the Regents to review and report on recent trends in freshman and transfer admissions and to identify best practices in academic preparation programs, admissions practices, and recruitment and “yield” programs.

The Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools (CUARS) discussed the Report at its regular meetings on January 18 and February 15, 2008. The Committee faculty and student members voted to endorse the Report along with the following comments. The vote was 4 members in favor of endorsement, 2 opposed, and 0 in abstention. The student vote was 2 for endorsement, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining.

The Undergraduate Work Team of the Study Group on University Diversity is to be commended for the comprehensiveness and thoughtfulness of their report. It provides a broad and important set of recommendations and ample evidence to support their adoption. Overall, this is an important time for campuses to discuss institutionalizing its vision for diversity and its value in the education of students at the University of California.

With regard to specific recommendations, there are several that the committee wanted to offer additional comments on. First, some of these recommendations, (5, 6, and 7, in particular) have already made their way onto the agendas of BOARS and CUARS at UCLA, and careful work toward adopting and implementing them is underway. With recommendation 5 in particular, UCLA Academic Senate Committees including the Undergraduate Council and the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools, strongly supported the notion of rethinking how UC eligibility is determined and voted support for the BOARS proposal in the first round of reviews.

Formal adoption of the report will assist in further guiding our work. CUARS has moved to a system of “holistic review” for the 2007 admissions cycle and this recommendation is on our agenda as we continue to evaluate our practices. The move to holistic review was decided after an alert to a continuing decline in underrepresented students, an examination of overlap pool decisions compared with Berkeley, and an evaluation of our current practices. One major change was that our rating system did not consider enough of the high school context in evaluating student performance. Although we had the indicators, their separate evaluation was potentially part of the problem. The use of extensive information on high school context in the evaluation of each student’s file is beginning to be viewed as a “best practice” nationally, as we compare ourselves with other selective institutions across the country. CUARS may use recommendation #6, as a call to continue seeking stronger ways to account for differences in students' K-12 opportunities during the application review process. Other recommendations
reaffirm the intentions of UC to engage with K-12 students and schools in ways that would help compensate for the significant inequalities and inadequacies in access to higher education in California's K-12 system. As the report suggests, UC's rhetorical commitment to such engagement should be matched by a commitment of stable resources to support this work. We will need continued to support to implement this form of comprehensive review.

In terms of recommendation 7, UCLA is open to achieving greater efficiency at the same time that we maintain our progress toward identifying and admitting student talent across broad sectors of the state. Some elements of our review process may be automated at a system-wide level and used on other campuses.

One of the “best practices” for recommendation 9, can use UCLA as an example offered by the student members of our committee. In January of 2007, Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with School at UC Los Angeles announced the establishment of an innovative program called Bruin Ambassadors. Supervised by an admissions counselor, 18 student ambassadors and their student coordinator meet regularly with students attending secondary schools underrepresented on campus. According to the program's director, Bruin Ambassadors provide "accessibility to UCLA within the community." Ambassadors are each assigned six schools with which to establish a working relationship. They visit each of these schools twice per quarter making presentations and meeting with students individually—providing valuable information as well as personal insight. Having received extensive training by UARS, they are well-versed on admissions policy. By reaching out to students in downtown Los Angeles, Pomona, Walnut, Long Beach and other areas of LA County, Bruin Ambassadors are building relationships that embody UCLA's commitment to achieving diversity reflective of its position as a community-based institution. Interest in the program has compelled UARS to hire as many as 50 ambassadors to be led by three student coordinators in the coming year. The program exemplifies recruitment efforts and retention efforts for diverse student communities.

The final recommendations ask UC to act more aggressively than is currently the case to remove resource barriers to diversity (recommendation #11), and to create programs and policies that promote diversity (recommendations #12 and 13). The committee felt that curricular and extracurricular programs should emphasize an environment of respect and tolerance for diverse opinions, at the same time that it works to dispel myths about the specific groups and social issues. Such environments were identified in particular cluster courses and the Academic Advancement Program during the committee discussion. Together recommendations 13 and 14 encourage bold and much needed action, specifically, a clearer direction on actions to take is needed centrally to help eliminate disparate impact effects on campuses.

Thank you again for the opportunity to opine. Please contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Hurtado
CUARS Chair

Cc:  Jaime Balboa, CAO Academic Senate
      Dayna Baker, Senior Policy Analyst
      Linda Mohr, Assistant CAO Academic Senate
March 17, 2008

To: Elizabeth Bjork
Academic Senate, Chair

From: Ines Boechat
Committee on Diversity & Equal Opportunity, Chair

Re: Senate Item for Review: Regents Study Group on Diversity Report and Recommendations-
Campus Climate Report and Faculty Diversity Report

The Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity reviewed the Campus Climate Report and the Faculty Work Team Report of the Regents’ Study Group on University Diversity at their meeting on March 12, 2008. CODEO applauds the efforts and goals reflected in both of these documents but feels that 1) more consistency is needed in complying with the definition of what diversity entails; and 2) specific plans are needed, particularly with regard to implementation of changes and accountability for results.

First, on the question of definition, the University’s “Diversity Statement” includes a long list of social groups comprising a diverse environment (“race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic states, and geographic region, and more”). The Regents’ Study Group’s Faculty Work Team Report includes race and gender in most of its recommendations, but the Campus Climate Report appears exclusively focused on race (women, for example, are mentioned only once). Since the proposal of this report is to launch a series of climate studies, it would be desirable to define diversity more in line with the Diversity Statement so as to avoid the prospect of numerous other studies added later on. Another concern is that both reports seem focused primarily on increasing “representation” in the sense of numbers within the campus population. For faculty, at least, equity in advancement (in terms of salary and rank) needs to be more prominently highlighted. The only time that either report raises the question of faculty advancement is in Appendix D of the report by the Regent’s Study Group.

Second, on implementation and accountability, CODEO wishes to stress that merely saying that the University should improve the diversity of its faculty and graduate students has a history of failure. What these two documents advocate most strongly is the collection of evidence (the Campus Climate Report calls for regular assessments of climate; the Study Group on University Diversity calls for annual reports and itemizes types of data in its Appendices). CODEO agrees that it is important to have data, but we also strongly believe that efforts to increase diversity and equity will succeed only if metrics for success are specified, and if different rates of success produce different consequences for units. Currently, units are not required to succeed or to inform members of the unit about the effectiveness of efforts being made. CODEO feels that it is unreasonable and inefficient to expect faculty or staff to work towards a goal without giving them feedback and providing effective enforcement support. Such an approach impedes the ability of
the conscientious faculty and staff to revise the processes as needed. It also hides ineffective processes behind their mere existence.

In these two reports, mentoring and leadership are the only methods that receive repeated emphasis. Specific actions likely to produce tangible results include the allocation of concrete resources in proportion to measurable successes at meeting goals -- resources such as salaries (to administrators), FTE (to deans and departments), space, and staff support. Since we already know that serious problems exist, we need not wait for the results of numerous studies to consider setting concrete goals, rewarding those departments or units that meet the goals, and administering serious sanctions to departments or units that fail to make significant progress towards the goals.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue, and look forward to continued cooperation.

Cc: Jaime Balboa, Chief Administrative Officer, Academic Senate
    Brandie Henderson, Policy Analyst, Academic Senate
March 17, 2008

Elizabeth Ligon Bjork
Academic Senate Chair

Re: Graduate Council’s Response on the Graduate and Professional Student Diversity Report

Dear Elizabeth,

The Graduate Council used your request to review the Report of the Workteam on Graduate and Professional Student Diversity as an opportunity to discuss the critical issue of campus diversity extensively at both its February 29 and March 14, 2008 meetings. That document, along with reports from Vice Chancellor Claudia Mitchell-Kerman and Associate Dean Carlos Grijalva, provided the Council with valuable updates on the huge challenge of ensuring diversity and the ongoing efforts at UCLA to encourage it. The Council wants to commend the efforts of the work team in creating a document that so clearly lays out the challenge facing the University of California in the area of Graduate and Professional Student Diversity.

The Council finds the report’s recommendations to be helpful, insightful, and limited. The Council feels that, in focusing on the whole of the University of California, the report overlooks not only the leadership role that the Graduate Divisions on every campus have assumed in addressing diversity issues within the University of California’s graduate and professional student communities but also the wide range of efforts already underway elsewhere on individual campuses. One notable instance in the report’s detailed examination of professional students on the campuses is its apparent exclusion of some of the more diverse student bodies on our campuses, including Nursing, Education, Public Health and Public Affairs.

That oversight helps contribute to the Council’s sense that this report neither sufficiently addresses the future of existing or possible diversity initiatives nor provides a suitable foundation from which to build a solid implementation strategy. It seems to overlook any consideration of resources required to plan, implement and execute such a far-reaching and worthy initiative. Moreover, it does not use the successes and failures of individual departments and campuses to begin to formulate effective strategies that might meet the challenges confronting particular segments of the University of California. Therefore, we recommend a more serious analysis with effective and constructive recommendations that will assist us in executing the most ideal of outcomes. As one of the Senate committees most closely involved with reviews of departments and IDPs, we regularly grapple with these issues and would welcome such analysis.

We applaud this effort as a significant step toward making the students and faculty of the University of California as diverse as the state’s population and appreciate the report’s careful attention to the diverse and talented pool of students who live here. We hope that, having done this work, UCOP will select benchmarks for the sectors covered and produce an annual update to this report. The Graduate Council is strongly committed to encouraging diversity of all kinds at UCLA and the University of California, believing that, without diversity, neither can be a world-class university.

We appreciate the opportunity to opine on this matter and look forward to ongoing efforts to improve diversity in all of our graduate and professional programs.
Sincerely,

Jan Reiff
Graduate Council Chair

Cc: Jaime Balboa, Academic Senate CAO
    Kyle Cunningham, Sr. Policy Analyst, Graduate Council
March 17, 2008

To: Elizabeth Bjork  
Academic Senate, Chair

From: Shane White  
Faculty Welfare Committee, Chair

Re: Senate Item for Review: Regents Study Group on Diversity Report and Recommendations- Campus Climate Report

Dear Professor Bjork,

The Faculty Welfare Committee reviewed the Campus Climate Report at their meeting on March 11, 2008. The committee found the report to be well written, but believe that additional data and specific plans would strengthen the approach.

In addition to the assessment tools in Recommendation 1 of the Campus Climate Report, additional data will be available via the results of the 2008 Academic Senate’s Faculty Welfare Survey and the Higher Education Research Institute Survey.

The committee strongly believes that pursuing the issue of climate should not eclipse the necessity for continuing numerical data on diversity.

Sincerely,

Shane White  
Faculty Welfare, Chair  
2007-2008

Cc: Jaime Balboa, Chief Administrative Officer, Academic Senate  
Brandie Henderson, Policy Analyst, Academic Senate