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January 8, 2007

Professor John Oakley
Chair of the Academic Council
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

In Re: Joint University Committee on Educational Policy and Coordinating Council on Graduate Affairs Proposal on the Role of Graduate Students in University Instruction

Dear John:

Thank you for the opportunity to opine upon the Joint University Committee on Educational Policy and Coordinating Council on Graduate Affairs Proposal on the Role of Graduate Students in University Instruction. Upon receipt of the request for review, I invited all standing committees of the Academic Senate to opine. Additionally, I specifically requested that the following Senate Committees opine: Undergraduate Council, Graduate Council, and the Executive Board.

The UCLA Academic Senate is unequivocally opposed to this proposal. Please allow me to explain. Both the Graduate Council and Executive Board were unified in their respective oppositions to the proposal. The Undergraduate Council, while divided, nevertheless opposes the proposed policy changes.

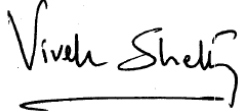
UCLA disagrees with the proposal's assumption that each division does not effectively administer the policies governing the use of graduate student instructors. At UCLA, we have clearly articulated titles and requirements for the Appointment of Apprentice Academic Personnel (see attachment below) *which are strictly adhered to*. The proposal to adopt new titles to ensure that graduate students meet the requirements for teaching would negatively impact the UCLA campus in a number of ways. These include (1) UCLA established titles—developed after careful negotiations with our Graduate Student Union (UAW/SAGE). This carefully negotiated system would be cast aside to remedy a problem that does not exist here. (2) Moreover, as the Graduate Council indicates, "the proposal does not indicate the process and timeline for re-negotiating new titles and requirements for the graduate student instructors with the union."

The Executive Board and Graduate Council do not believe that one of the stated intents of the proposal—to strengthen the restrictions on the use of graduate student instructors—would be achieved by its recommendations. On the contrary, it seems more likely to us that exactly the opposite would be achieved. Namely, that revision of SR750 as proposed would loosen the restrictions on graduate students who would be assigned substantial responsibility for the content and conduct of courses. This proposal is in clear violation of the existing principles governing the policy for the use of graduate students as outlined by the negotiations with UAW/SAGE.

While other divisions may indeed struggle with the problems outlined by the proposal, UCLA does not. If there are other factors compelling the proposed revisions, it would be fair that each individual division address the issues accordingly.

I have attached the various responses from the committees at UCLA. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vivek Shetty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Vivek Shetty
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Cc: Maria Bertero-Barcelo, Executive Director of the Systemwide Senate
Jaime R. Balboa, Chief Administrative Officer of the UCLA Academic Senate