

June 8, 2022

ALEXANDER WOLF  
Dean, Baskin School of Engineering

**RE: Baskin School of Engineering; Direct Admission and Diploma Proposal**

Dear Alex,

The Academic Senate has reviewed your request for review of the revision to the Direct Admission and Diploma Proposal, initially entitled: “Baskin School of Engineering Regularization: A Proposal to Complete the Establishment of a Professional School of Engineering at UC Santa Cruz.” The Committees on Affirmative Action and Diversity (CAAD), Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA), Educational Policy (CEP), Planning and Budget (CPB), Graduate Council (GC), and Rules, Jurisdiction and Elections (RJ&E) have responded. The committees were largely appreciative of the additional clarification that this revised proposal included. Our below response highlights the broader issues. Similar to the last Academic Senate review, we would like again to draw your attention to the specific of each committee’s individual responses (appended).

**Diversity and Admissions Process**

CAAD appreciated the inclusion of the section, “Implications of direct admissions for diversity” in this proposal and supports the “urgent development of initiatives that address BSOE climate issues head-on and that improve the culture of teaching and learning as a necessary first step to address equity gaps in retention and student success in BSOE.” CAAD found the referenced UC Santa Barbara model to be a valuable model for direct admissions, but noticed the lack of data provided regarding “how direct admissions reshaped their demographics of retention and student success.” This information would have assisted in helping to contextualize the effects of adopting such practices, and as a result, there lacked evidence in how direct admissions would directly alleviate the issues of currently impacted programs. Similarly, CEP remarked, “[T]he proposal acknowledges the possible impact of direct admissions on the UC Santa Cruz college system but provides no thoughtful reflection or specific plan.”

CAFA offered general support for working in collaboration with BSOE in implementing a parallel set of criteria. They note, “CAFA welcomes the intent of BSOE to study nationally successful methods of increasing diversity and equity in the admission of underserved groups in Engineering, including members of minoritized groups and women (gender parity not normally being a concern in the overall admissions process).” They further insist that they will still retain authority in ensuring that the desired outcomes do not default to the general default selection criterion. Should BSOE move forward with direct admissions, CAFA requests that resources be made available by the division to the Data Subcommittee, which currently includes CAFA members, Enrollment Management, and IRAPS, and the stipulated BSOE faculty representative. Furthermore, the committee “encourages BSOE to coordinate closely with Admissions and Enrollment Management on all such efforts.” While CPB is in favor of direct admission goals outlined by the proposal, they commented, “the proposal did include, more detail on the admissions *practices*, but not the admission *metrics* themselves.” They additionally caution, “We remain concerned that there may be broader consequences of direct admissions on the broader campus enrollment ecosystem that

may be hard to predict. Given this concern, and the fact that the metrics that will determine admissions to BSOE have yet to be worked out, we recommend that the outcomes of this new admissions process be thoroughly reviewed in the near future by the campus (the Senate and Administration).” CPB also encourages BSOE to include more substantial information regarding the overall current enrollment management plan and its impacts on admissions prior to, or during this review, once initiated.

The Senate remains cautiously concerned with the specific implementation of not only ensuring greater equity in the direct admissions process, but additionally how BSOE will collaborate in obtaining the overall goals of DEI and student success on our campus. Furthermore, our committees (CAAD, CAFA and CEP) underscore the importance of BSOE developing stronger priorities addressing issues of climate, outreach focused on K-12 and retention, and are deeply interested in collaboratively identifying the strategies and programs that will be developed to ensure this.

### **Curricular Impacts for Undergraduate and Graduate**

Committees further raised questions and considerations for students once admitted in regard to major qualification and declaration processes. CPB wondered how, “direct admissions might have an impact on access to engineering degrees for students who were initially admitted to the campus, but later desire to declare a major in BSOE. Similarly, members remained concerned about access to BSOE courses for students enrolled in majors outside the school.” CAFA also remarked on the implications for students once admitted, “Since we understand students will still have to clear significant hurdles in terms of major preparation in order to declare their major of choice -- and indeed may not be guaranteed to be able to declare any major in BSOE at all, even if they were admitted directly to the school.” CEP further emphasized the complexity of direct admissions when they stated, “If students are directly admitted to the school but still have to achieve and retain proposed major status before ultimately qualifying to declare their majors, what is the purpose of being directly admitted? It neither removes barriers to entry nor increases self-belonging: It becomes another level of stress and bureaucracy for students.” Committees remain concerned about students’ sense of belonging, not only for those admitted into BSOE, but those from the rest of campus as well.

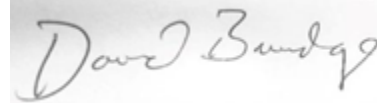
Lastly, while the revised proposal included information regarding BSOE graduate programs, GC maintains that if future changes are to be made within the purview of Graduate Council, they will require appropriate review. Additionally, they caution that potential changes to undergraduate curriculum could have downstream implications for graduate support allocations (Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Student Internships), and they trust the BSOE departments to track these variances

### **Diploma**

Regarding the request for the Dean to sign and confer diplomas for BSOE, RJ&E, “does not see that Regents Standing Order 1103.b necessitates adding the BSOE Dean signature to diplomas, as long as BSOE does not have the authority to recommend students for degrees. If the BSOE Dean signature were added, the Senate may need to consider whether signatures should be added for other deans, too, or whether circumstances warrant a different treatment of BSOE majors. They further ask, “[W]ould diplomas also have to include the signature of the dean for other major-overseeing departments (e.g., the Social Sciences Dean for students majoring in Anthropology)? And, for double-majors, would the signatures of both deans be added if the majors belonged to different divisions?”

The Academic Senate appreciates the consultative process that BSOE has been engaged with on these important topics. While we recognize the School's desire to move forward with these changes, and do not want campus issues to prevent their doing so, the Senate is committed to ensuring that the secondary and tertiary impacts of these changes on students and programs (both in- and outside of BSOE) are mitigated to the extent possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Brundage". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

David Brundage, Chair  
Academic Senate

Encl: Senate Committee Responses (Bundled)

CC: Lori Kletzer, Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor  
Ann Pham, Assistant Executive Vice Chancellor/Chief of Staff  
Abigail Kaun, Executive Advisor to the Dean, BSOE  
Anne Criss, Assistant Dean and Chief of Staff, BSOE  
Patty Gallagher, incoming Chair, Academic Senate  
Melissa Caldwell, incoming Vice Chair, Academic Senate  
Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Chair, Committee on Affirmative Action and Diversity  
David Smith, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid  
Tracy Larrabee, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy  
Andy Fisher Chair, Graduate Council  
Dard Neuman, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget  
Audun Dahl, Chair *pro tem*, Rules, Jurisdiction and Elections  
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate