

May 24, 2024

JODY GREENE, Co-Chair
Associate Campus Provost for Academic Success

MATTHEW MCCARTHY, Co-Chair
Vice Chair of the Academic Senate

RE: Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) Preliminary Report

Dear Jody and Matt,

The Academic Senate has reviewed your request for review of the first year preliminary report from the Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC). The Committees on Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA), Educational Policy (CEP), Faculty Welfare (CFW), Information and Technology (CIT), Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CODEI), Teaching (COT), Planning and Budget (CPB) and Graduate Council (GC) have responded. We would first like to thank CMAC for their work on this committee and the report as this is an issue that has been a critical priority for the Academic Senate over the last several years.

Several committees noted a concern and hesitation with the report's emphasis on online courses as a solution to classroom capacity. Technological support and infrastructure, pedagogical reasoning and justification, graduate student instructors and teaching assistants, and UC quality were cited as issues that should be prioritized as integral aspects to decisions for online course offerings (CAFA, CEP, CIT, CODEI, COT, CPB, GC). Additionally, the committees appreciated the inclusion of the study that was done on our own campus and recommend further research to be included regarding the efficacy of online course offerings (CAFA, CFW). Moreover, online course policies and approvals are clearly situated within the Senate's plenary committees (CEP, GC and CCI). The review and revisions of the current policies have been a priority for these committees, and they will continue to engage with stakeholders in the next academic year.

Multiple committees pointed out the limitations of our current class scheduling offerings and time blocks and supported more analysis regarding the correlation between student progress and success and course times (CEP, CODEI). We note that particular attention should be paid to performance in course sequences tied to major requirements. Furthermore, there was concern that nighttime and weekend offerings could negatively impact our instructors and students that have families and/or have work commitments, and that this shift would cause a new expectation and undue burden (CODEI, CFW). Lastly, some committees wondered if the Course and Modalities committee discussed how the restriction of admissions could alleviate classroom space.

The committee responses include specific purview-related commentary, and they are enclosed in their entirety to help next year's committee to continue to think through these important issues facing our campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Gallagher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patty Gallagher, Chair
Academic Senate

Enc: Senate Committee Responses (Bundled)

cc: Cynthia Larive, Chancellor
Lori Kletzer, Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
Ann Pham, Assistant Executive Vice Chancellor/Chief of Staff
Josh Warburg, Project Manager
Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
David Lee Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Elisabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Andrew Fisher, Chair, Graduate Council
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate

May 22, 2024

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

Re: Classroom Modalities

Dear Patty,

In our May 22, 2024 meeting, the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid discussed the preliminary report of the Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee. We appreciate the committee's efforts as well as their creative and open-minded approach to this challenging issue. We offer the following comments:

Comments on Part I: Classroom Space and Utilization

- In practice, maintenance of classrooms leaves much to be desired. One of us taught for a quarter with the lectern chair broken, in spite of several requests to fix it.
- We should aim for all classrooms to have a modern, up to date, and standard computer setup. Something that allows simultaneous projection of two devices (e.g., computer or laptop), or the fast switching at least. This needs to be standard, so that all rooms are interchangeable.
- We should give priority, for each class, to find physical classrooms for either the main instruction (the common case) or the discussion sections (if the main class is online). Once the main need is accommodated for all classes, if there is still space available, it can be allocated to discussion sections. This would create a more uniform distribution of physical space utilization across classes.

Comments on Part II: Teaching Modalities

- We were interested to learn about the study of Balanchandran, McNamara, Lee and Tassio (2023) and encouraged by the use of success in *downstream* courses as a measure of quality. We also appreciate the report's stated commitment to developing rigorous methods for evaluating the relative effectiveness of online vs. in-person instruction. On that note, we would caution against using DFW rates in the online courses themselves as a measure of quality (p.14, p.16), since those rates could be influenced by grading policies, grade inflation, or even a higher incidence of cheating. Further, we worry that explicitly tying reviews to DFW rates gives instructors an incentive to increase pass rates even when not justified by student learning.
- We are encouraged by the report's emphasis on making the course approval process more consistent and predictable. We also agree that the standing policy of considering only "pedagogical" justifications for online course proposals needs to be revisited.
- A concern that deserves greater attention is how to address issues around academic honesty in online testing. The problem might be mitigated by the provision of physical space for in-person exams – which might be facilitated through something like the "shared" slot proposal described on p.8. However, this does raise the question of whether

a new modality category would be required for courses that share physical space and have some instruction online.

Sincerely

/s/

Laura Giuliano, Chair

Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid

cc: Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction (CCI)
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CDEI)
David Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy (CEP)
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare (CFW)
Kent Eaton, Chair, Committee on International Education (CIE)
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology (CIT)
Elisabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching (COT)
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB)

May 10, 2024

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) Year One Report

Dear Patty,

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) appreciates the work of the Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) and its thorough and thoughtful report. We understand that, due to the crisis in classroom space, attention to the possibility of offering courses in different modalities must be part of our discussion. At the same time, we believe that student learning will suffer if instructors are pressed to offer an online or hybrid modality when they have determined that a fully in-person modality is pedagogically preferable. The availability of online instruction as an option should not slip into a requirement for online instruction, even in the face of critical shortages of physical infrastructure.

Additionally, we would suggest pursuing information about the amount of space utilized by different programs (based on both the number/type of courses and units required and the size of the courses.). We also would like to see student success considered in classroom scheduling. For example, qualification courses for students with high DFW rates should not be scheduled at 8AM in suboptimal classrooms (Classroom Unit 2, for example).

Sincerely,



David Lee Cuthbert, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

cc: Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Elisabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Kent Eaton, Chair, Committee on International Education

May 23, 2024

Patty Gallagher, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Divisional Review – Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee Preliminary Report

Dear Patty,

During its meeting of May 16, 2024, the Committee on Faculty Welfare (CFW) reviewed the Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee Preliminary Report¹. Members noted that although many smaller classrooms are underutilized, pressure to teach large courses and a 95-minute class schedule on Tuesdays and Thursdays are two main factors that contribute to campuses' inability to optimize space. In addition, concerns were that the Advisory Committee may have overstepped its purview in creating principles for online-education, that there are currently many roadblocks to creating online courses, and that faculty who do not wish to do so may be forced to teach online courses.

Part I: Classroom Space and Utilization

It is not surprising to hear that we have reached capacity with large classrooms. However, it was interesting and useful to hear that smaller classrooms, particularly those that are non-general assignment (non-GA) rooms are underutilized. Our campus was built during a time when there were small in-person classes, and our infrastructure no longer matches the current modality of teaching. Members were intrigued about the possibility of exchanging space for some of these classrooms that are underutilized so that they may be used more frequently. However, CFW acknowledges that departments are under pressure to have faculty teach 180 students each year and have been routinely creating larger classes as this number is tied to FTE and the number of faculty that they are allowed to hire. This pressure is one of the main reasons why our smaller classrooms are being underutilized. CFW suggests that if faculty had the option to teach smaller-sized classes, they would more fully utilize these classrooms, it would reduce the overall problem. However, in order for this to happen, the campus would need to reduce this pressure and state that faculty can teach smaller classes.

Members additionally noted the effect of the current UCSC course schedule/time blocks on our campus's ability to optimize classroom space. CFW understands there was a proposal to reduce class times to better align with our sister campuses and optimize classroom utilization a few years ago. The result of the review led to the preservation of the 95 minute time blocks, but the shortening periods between classes that now forces many students to have to arrive to class late, and/or leave class early in order to travel across campus between classes. Members suggested that although faculty may not have been in favor of reduced class times in the past, if they were now given the choice between reducing class times by 5-10 minutes (the different time blocks would be shortened accordingly) or teaching online, most would likely opt for a reduced class time.

¹ Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee Preliminary Report (CMAC), April 23, 2024

Members additionally raised concerns about the suggestion of utilizing more 8 am and night time class blocks. CFW recognizes that the less than desirable time blocks are often pushed onto junior faculty members, many of whom have young families and are already struggling with several burdens such as high cost of living and a lack of affordable and accessible childcare. As such, CFW does not support the notion that faculty should work from 8am until 8pm solely to address space issues. Doing so would raise many labor and work life/balance issues.

Part II: Teaching Modalities

Members found this section to be concerning for several reasons:

First, it is our committee's understanding that the charge of the Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) was to find out how online courses could influence space. However, this section of the report is focused on defining principles for online courses, which seems not in the committee's purview. Discussion of how online offerings might affect space, which is directly in the committee's purview, is missing from the report. CFW contends that principles for an online modality rests in the charge of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and Graduate Council (GC), and not this advisory committee.

Second, the report tries to make a point that online education can be beneficial and references only one study, which members found to be 'cherry picking.' The overall efficiency of online education and its impact on different student demographics is a topic of ongoing research and debate, and the answer is far from certain. CFW believes that CMAC should refrain from commenting on the topic.

Third, approval for online courses has proved extremely difficult in recent years. Members note that departments frequently receive reminders of APM 700 about the faculty requirement to be on campus at all times. Even if there are some courses that would be appropriate for online modality, it is worth mentioning that there are currently many roadblocks to converting them. Whether or not a course should be offered online should be up to the instructor and the pedagogy of the course. In other words, switching to online courses should not be dictated by space constraints. The decision should be made based on benefits to student learning, and in agreement with the course instructor(s), who are the experts in delivering instructions to our students. Even so, it is not easy to create online courses and if faculty are expected to conduct online courses from campus offices due to APM 700, there will be added tension.

In summary, CFW acknowledges that the infrastructure of our campus was built in a different time, and intended to support a different kind of pedagogy. Since then, UCSC has reconfigured as a much larger research based university and has had to accommodate an increasing number of students. Still, CFW disagrees with many of the recommendations in the CMAC report. Faculty should not have to teach a new modality to address structural problems. If our campus wants larger classes, then it will need to build larger classrooms and/or adjust the current class block schedules, not force faculty to teach online.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine.

Sincerely,



Alexander Sher, Chair
Committee on Faculty Welfare

cc: Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
David Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Raphe Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Elizabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Andy Fisher, Chair, Graduate Council
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Kent Eaton, Chair, Committee on International Education

May 23, 2024

Patty Gallagher, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Divisional Review – Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee Preliminary Report

Dear Patty,

During its meeting of May 1, 2024, the Committee on Information Technology (CIT) reviewed the preliminary report of the Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC)¹. CIT members raised concerns about several sensitive issues around instructional modalities and the recommendation to shift towards more online courses to address space issues.

Members noted that during the pandemic, “space issues” or faculty/student “convenience” were not acceptable reasons for online course approvals. Pedagogically speaking, members questioned whether space issues alone justify the need for more online courses, and whether the campus and Senate will relax approval justifications for on-line courses to include non-pedagogical reasons?

Although a shift to more online courses may seem reasonable on paper, members noted that such a shift requires not only IT resources, but the time to make the transition, and do it well. Several members noted that with teaching, research, service, and graduate student advising responsibilities, there is little to no time to redesign courses for an online platform, especially if the online courses are going to be of comparable or higher quality to existing in-person courses. Without some sort of incentive (such as course release, etc.), members are concerned that there will be no desire and/or bandwidth for faculty to shift their courses to online. Several CIT members currently use lecture capture, either when requested by students, or when specifically requested as a DRC accommodation, but indicated that they would not want to shift their courses to fully online. If the campus was to move in this direction, resources, accommodations, and support will need to be considered well in advance. Further, CIT recommends that there be flexibility for faculty. If faculty want to teach fully online courses, this could be incentivized, but the committee contends that no faculty member should be forced to transition their courses to an online format. CIT members commented that it will be important to have resources for course redesign regardless of modality, and expressed concern that the current trend might be to support development/redesign of online courses at the expense of other modalities. Members also expressed concern that certain courses of study will be more challenging to adapt to online modalities, and this risks creating a tired educational experience where some majors may find a relatively higher proportion of their classes taught online just because it is technically easier to achieve.

Further, the report preamble references the Compact. As we know, the Compact has no money attached to it, but is frequently used as justification for proposed changes. The Compact was based

¹ Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee Preliminary Report (CMAC), April 23, 2024

on the expectation of 5 years of increases.² There is no current increase, and the promise of a 10% increase next year is unlikely to manifest. As such, CIT finds it disingenuous to use the Compact as a reason to shift towards more fully online teaching.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine.

Sincerely,



Zac Zimmer, Chair

Committee on Information Technology

cc: Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
David Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Raphe Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Elizabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Andy Fisher, Chair, Graduate Council
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Kent Eaton, Chair, Committee on International Education

² Multi-Year Compact Between the Newsom Administration and the University of California, May 2022, page 7:
“The Administration’s Proposed Investment in UC: The Administration will propose annual, year-over-year ongoing General Fund base increases of five percent for the term of the compact. In 2022-23, the five percent base increase totals \$200,542,000 ongoing General Fund.”

May 22, 2024

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) Year One Report

Dear Patty,

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CODEI) has reviewed the Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee Preliminary Report. Our committee discussed a number of concerns and issues raised in the report.

The shortage of classroom space is a serious problem for our campus and for the effectiveness of teaching and learning at this institution. Members of CODEI are concerned that there are currently more students enrolled than our campus can physically and intellectually accommodate, particularly for our in-person courses. We are troubled that the negative effects of the problem of over-enrollment for the available spaces could impact vulnerable students more significantly, including those who are under-represented and may lack a breadth of resources. Has CMAC discussed the option of reducing admissions as part of an approach to addressing space issues?

In addition, our committee is concerned that increasing online course offerings is being used to attempt to remedy this problem. The committee feels strongly that the introduction of more online courses should not be driven by problems with infrastructure but rather by the pedagogical and intellectual logics of instructors. CODEI discussed ways in which online course offerings could be deleterious for historically marginalized and under-represented students. Students who participate in online instruction instead of participating in person miss out on critical opportunities to learn and to form community. Students who are under-represented in STEM fields, for example, could lose opportunities to “see” themselves as part of that community by missing out on in-person activities and learning in labs or workshops. We hope that the impact of online courses for URM and first generation students will be further explored by the committee next year.

In addition to the above, we see other areas for future inquiry, concurring with the report to consider more intentional enforcement of the 60/40 rule (divisions must enforce no more than 60% of sections during prime-time hours). CODEI wonders what the impact of enforcing out of prime-time scheduling is on students, especially those from under-represented groups who may have work or family commitments that make attending out of prime-time sections difficult. The committee notes this is an issue that should be examined more closely next year.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine on this very important issue at UC Santa Cruz.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabriela Arredondo', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Gabriela Arredondo, Chair
Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

cc: Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
David Lee Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Elisabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Andrew Fisher, Chair, Graduate Council
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Kent Eaton, Chair, Committee on International Education

May 22, 2024

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) Year One Report

Dear Patty,

The Committee on Teaching (COT) has reviewed the Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) Year One Report. Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on it. We were impressed by the thoroughness of the research into both the classroom spaces and its current utilization and the data around the effectiveness of the current online classes. We do understand that this is the preliminary report and look forward to participating in the final report at the end of academic year 2024-2025. As we believe the final report will deal significantly with modalities and the teaching involved, we encourage you to include COT in those deliberations as much as possible.

Concerning Classroom Space and Utilization, we noted the difference between General Assignment Classrooms and non-General Assignment Classrooms and were grateful that CMAC plans to proceed cautiously with plans for scheduling classes in non-GA classrooms. It is important that divisions and departments not perceive requests to share space with the Office of the Registrar as a “land grab.” Our major concern was with the resources needed to maintain non-GA classrooms. We understand that the division or department to whom non-GA classrooms are assigned are currently responsible for maintaining them. If the Registrar is able to utilize non-GA classrooms, there will be increased wear and tear and possibly damage to specialized equipment in the rooms. Who would be responsible for cleaning and repair of these rooms as wear and tear increases with increased use? We also encourage you to include the Institutional and Media Services in the discussion about the usability of specific classrooms.

With Teaching Modalities, COT acknowledges that an increase in online classes, whether they be asynchronous online, synchronous online, or hybrid classes, is inevitable due to the limitations in classroom space. We believe that all in person and online classes should be of the same “UC Quality.” We are perplexed, however, at the contradictions inherent in the necessary increase of online classes due to space constraints and the requirements for approval of an online class be based only on pedagogical rationales. We encourage further discussions with the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and Graduate Council (GC) about the principles surrounding online classes and with CCI about the implementation of those principles. If a class is being moved online because there are simply no classroom spaces available to accommodate that class, that should be an important factor in the approval process. It would also be useful to learn if partial changes to modalities, such as moving a lecture or Discussion Section remote or asynchronous, would require approval by CEP.

We are not serving our students well with the approach of taking over non-Register space and going online as a solution while enrollment increases each year. If CEP has restricted approval of new programs if they need additional classroom space, why is campus enrollment increasing

when we do not have adequate classroom space for the students we have? Enrollment needs to be capped until these issues are resolved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "El Cameron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Elisabeth Cameron, Chair
Committee on Teaching

cc: Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
David Lee Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Andrew Fisher, Chair, Graduate Council
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Kent Eaton, Chair, Committee on International Education

May 17, 2024

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Divisional Review of Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee Year One Report

Dear Patty,

At its meeting of May 2, 2024, the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) discussed the preliminary report of the Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC) with Professor McCarthy excused. In particular, the Senate was asked to weigh in on what the report deems “areas of further inquiry,” including any areas CMAC may have missed in their research or topics CMAC should direct particular attention to in the coming year.

CMAC divided their report into two sections; CPB commends CMAC for the very thorough analysis of classroom space and scheduling, but notes that less time appears to have been devoted to course modalities. Regarding space, a key proposal is to regularize non-general assignment (non-GA) space, since it accounts for “about double” the number of GA rooms. CPB questions how this could be incentivized. For example, will central funds for upgrade be available for non-GA rooms, and will maintenance costs be proportionally assigned to central? How do we make non-GA spaces available without overburdening departmental staff?

A second proposal is to greatly increase summer session enrollment, as well as CMAC considering weekend and nighttime use of GA rooms. While both are reasonable, CPB questions how popular weekend classes would be, particularly for instructors and TAs, while evening classes and labs may be more easily initiated. For summer session, questions were raised about how to incentivize ladder-rank faculty to teach in the summer. While some faculty readily participate in summer session, for others, there is not much benefit to teaching in summer session if summer salary is available from other sources or if summer is devoted to scholarly activity. Some possibilities would be to consider regularization of summer session (i.e. allowing summer session to count toward teaching requirements) or, as an alternative, providing full or partial sabbatical credit for summer. CPB also notes that for some departments there are already difficulties ensuring faculty can teach across the curriculum; moving large lower-division UG classes to summer, while relieving the space issues, may exacerbate this problem if such courses are taught by GSIs.

CPB noted, as a general comment, that online courses will likely look very different in the next 5-10 years with the integration of AI, immersive reality, and other technologies, and CMAC should take a forward-looking approach rather than providing recommendations based on what has been standard practice for the last few years. CPB also noted that there are other benefits of remote learning that should be factored in, such as reduced environmental impact and better equity outcomes from (e.g.) flexible scheduling for working students.

With regards to modality, CPB notes that student experience is not uniform, and some students benefit from in-person sections while others prefer online. CPB suggests some combination of online and in-person (i.e. hybrid sections or multiple sections with different modalities) to make

better use of classroom space while also meeting the needs of our students.

CPB would also like CMAC to address the ongoing costs (technological, as well as staff support) required to maintain high-quality online courses. Many of these courses have been developed through grant support or through professional engagement with TLC. Questions arose about the “refresh rate” for these classes, and whether individual instructors would have access to the resources and facilities necessary for updating content at some regular interval while maintaining the quality of the material. This will likely become standard practice as more online classes become available, and an analysis of the expected costs would be useful. CPB also wonders how this will be assessed, noting that, anecdotally, online classes that have existed for several years are sometimes not updated (i.e. recorded lectures are several years old, hyperlinks are broken, etc.). For example, this could be included as part of personnel review if student evaluations are updated to include questions about the content of classes. CPB acknowledges that this is not unique to online modalities and there is no requirement for in-person classes to be updated regularly either, but suggests that a proactive approach to avoiding outdated course content may be more useful than assuming all classes will remain up to date. Again, CPB has particular concern for asynchronous online classes as they require access to more technical and support staff to ensure the content is of consistent quality and updated as needed.

CPB appreciates the opportunity to review this interim report and looks forward to reviewing the recommendations put forward by CMAC in the second year.

Sincerely,



Raphael Kudela, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget

cc: Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Elisabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
David Lee Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Andrew Fisher, Chair, Graduate Council
Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate

May 21, 2024

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Divisional Review of Classroom and Modalities Advisory Committee Year One Report

Dear Patty,

At its meeting on May 2, 2024, Graduate Council (GC) discussed the preliminary report of the Classrooms and Modalities Advisory Committee (CMAC). In particular, the Senate was asked to weigh in on what the report deems “areas of further inquiry,” including any areas CMAC may have missed in their research or topics CMAC should direct particular attention to in the coming year. GC members thought broadly about the report but focused mainly on graduate students, graduate programs, and graduate advising. GC believes that all areas for future inquiry identified seem reasonable. While most seem to be important mainly for undergraduate teaching, some issues raised, such as keeping better track of non-GA classroom usage, could also be important for graduate classes and related activities, especially if the Divisions/Departments lose autonomy over these rooms.

GC offers three additional observations:

- (1) Online classes may offer excellent opportunities for GSIs during the summer, particularly because a significant number of in-person summer classes tend to be canceled due to insufficient enrollment, leaving GSIs without vital summer support. Furthermore, online classes can be helpful for individuals who require remote accommodations due personal circumstances (e.g. lack of affordable housing, care-giving responsibilities, immunocompromised domestic partners and children, etc.)
- (2) Consideration should be given to setting necessary levels of TA support when developing online classes. Shifting courses to an online modality does not automatically result in lower need for TA support, and could result in a need for more TA support. Especially for large, introductory, and major-gateway classes, having sufficient TA support is critical.
- (3) While GC agrees that gathering data on non-GA classroom usage and raising divisional awareness of non-GA classroom utilization may be helpful, non-GA classrooms sometimes serve as useful spaces for graduate students to meet, collaborate, and complete other important academic activities. Therefore, care should be exercised in any future plans to regulate the usage of non-GA classrooms so as to account for graduate student needs and not degrade access for important activities that support graduate education.

Sincerely,



Andrew T. Fisher, Chair
Graduate Council

cc: Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Elisabeth Cameron, Chair, Committee on Teaching
David Lee Cuthbert, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Laura Giuliano, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Raphe Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Amanda Rysling, Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction
Alexander Sher, Chair, Committee on Faculty Welfare
Zac Zimmer, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate