

October 10, 2017

IAVPAA Martin Berger
Chancellor's Office

VCBAS Sarah Latham
Business & Administrative Services

Re: Proposed Classroom Space in Kresge Project

Dear Martin and Sarah,

I am writing to you about the Kresge Project, notably the alterations proposed to classroom space in Kresge College as part of the project. Under standard campus procedure, capital plans and projects are proposed on behalf of the academic divisions by deans, and the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) provides advice to the administration on behalf of the Academic Senate. However, we believe that the consultation should be broader for classroom space. As they are central to the delivery of instruction, often constraining what is feasible, Senate consultation regarding classroom space should include the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), the Graduate Council (GC) and the Committee on Teaching (COT). At the divisional level, the departments have the greatest expertise in pedagogy in their disciplines, and their opinions should be sought.

Our understanding is that Kresge College has classrooms with 21, 29, 30, 37 and 142 seats (one of each size), and a computer lab with 17 seats. The initial plan was to replace these with two 35 seat classrooms, two 50 seat classrooms, one 150 seat classroom and one 48 seat classroom to achieve approximately the same total capacity, with an additional 600 seat classroom. However, we gather that there is a proposal to eliminate one 35-seat and one 50-seat classroom from this configuration. Below, we enumerate our concerns about the current plan:

- The shortage of large classrooms on campus is acute. Appended to this letter, we show the number of unused time slots in each term in 2016-17 in the thirteen largest classrooms on campus. The situation is worst in the fall, when the campus is at the edge of what is possible. However, it is easy to see from the table that the crisis in classroom availability in the fall extends *all the way down* to rooms with approximately 200 seats. Indeed, as seen from the list below the table, several classes held in Classroom Unit 2 (with 472 seats) in Fall 2016 had approximately 200 students enrolled. Thus it is reasonable to infer that we are actually operating *beyond* the edge for classrooms with approximately 200 seats, and the spillover effects are impacting availability of still larger rooms. By contrast, there is some availability of rooms with approximately 170 seats.

Our conclusion is that it is extremely important to ensure that the second-largest classroom in the Kresge Project should have approximately 200 seats instead of 150.

- At the other end, we would like to emphasize the importance of small rooms with 25-50 seats for certain courses, especially College Core and Writing courses. In addition, such rooms are essential for discussion sections; with the proliferation of large classes, the recent reduction in lecture time by 5-10 minutes per class, the role of discussion sections in instruction has increased, and this trend is likely to continue.

We have not analyzed the availability of these rooms in the same way as we have for the largest classrooms, partly because there are so many of these rooms and partly because, for courses offered by the college, courses cannot be freely moved from the college to another location. However, we urge that a proper analysis be conducted to ascertain that the 35 and 50 seat classrooms can be eliminated without causing significant problems. Slight adjustments in room size — with more modest cost savings — should be considered if elimination is problematic.

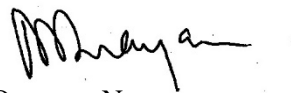
- After taking care of these priorities, the campus should consider the maximum number of seats it can afford for the largest classroom. However, if this is significantly greater than the capacity of Classroom Unit 2, a room of this capacity should only be approved after *departments* have been asked if they would be interested in teaching in such a large room, or if this would hurt teaching effectiveness. The answer to this will vary by discipline. For example, the courses at UC Santa Barbara in Fall, Winter and Spring 2016-17 with significantly more than 500 students enrolled were in some obvious ‘candidate’ departments but not others. Another point to remember is that only *three* UC campuses have their largest classroom with significantly more than 500 seats: UC Santa Barbara, Berkeley and Riverside.

We should make it clear that we are not taking the position that the largest classroom should *not* have 600 seats. We support the idea that the campus should build the largest room it can afford, for which there are enough interested departments; such opportunities are very rare. However, if departmental interest is not ascertained before a 600 seat classroom is built, departments are liable to be pressured to teach classes in it.

- On a slightly different note, it is important that the large classroom — and, for that matter, the other classrooms — be designed properly. Instructors’ complaints about some of the largest classrooms on campus, most notably Classroom Unit 2, should be well known to you; if not, it will be easy to collect them. Lighting, ventilation, the space between and quality of the seats, the visibility of the instructor to all students and the ability of students to effectively communicate with the instructor are all basic aspects of classroom design that seem to have been forgotten. We are told by some colleagues that Campbell Hall at UC Santa Barbara is a good example of a well-designed classroom that UCSC could emulate.

It is possible that there is a proper analysis behind the classroom configuration that is being considered and that we would support the plan if we were made aware of this analysis. But in the absence of such information, we must express our grave misgivings. With classroom space nearly saturated at UCSC, and a new Long Range Development Plan underway, input from all stakeholders must be obtained before a decision is made about what is in the best interests of the campus.

Sincerely,



Onuttom Narayan

cc: Senate Chair Einarsdóttir
CPB Chair Walsh
COT Chair McCarthy
GC Chair Dent
CP/EVC Tromp

Utilization of Large Classrooms in 2016-17

Room	Seats	Unused time slots (Fall)	Unused time slots (Winter)	Unused time slots (Spring)
Classroom Unit 2	472	0	2	3
Media Theater	382	0	1	2
Humanities 206	301	1	2	3
EMS B206	268	1	3	2
Thimann 3	224	1	2	1
J Baskin Aud 101	207	0	5	0
Oakes 105	175	3	5	2
Classroom Unit 1	172	4	1	2
J Baskin 152	144	1	3	2
Kresge 321	142	1	4	2
Stevenson 150	133	0	2	1
Merrill 102	114	6	9	6
Thimann 1	103	3	3	3

Enrollment in classes held in Classroom Unit 2 in Fall 2016

BIOL 20A	484
CHEM 1A	473
CMPS 5J	469
CHEM 8A	462
CRSN 81A	447
BIOL 105	415
CMPE 12	396
MATH 11A	348
CMPE 3	319
MATH 23A	299
MATH 3	295
CHEM 1B	278
BIOE 20C	234
MATH 19B	222
MATH 3	208
MATH 11B	206