

SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Special Senate Advisory Committee on Affordable Housing was convened in Spring 2001 in response to a widespread sense among the faculty that the housing situation in the Santa Cruz area has created a crisis which is not adequately addressed by the University's current long-range planning.

Our primary goal is to develop a range of options for meeting the needs of faculty for affordable housing in and around the Santa Cruz campus. With this emphasis on affordability, our aim is to develop short-term and interim solutions that can be implemented in ways that contribute to long-term planning while at the same time alleviating some of the pressures faced by faculty before these long-term solutions can be made operative.

Our primary constituency consists of faculty who do not own a home in the Santa Cruz area, either on- or off-campus. We are secondarily concerned with faculty who own homes they have outgrown. In addition, we include in our constituency faculty who have already attempted to find alternative ways of dealing with the housing crisis in Santa Cruz -- these include faculty renters and commuters. We will be investigating ways of assisting faculty who wish to continue renting homes, as well as faculty who are forced to commute long distances due to the constraints of high real estate purchase and rental prices and low availability of affordable homes in Santa Cruz. Although on-campus faculty housing is one of our concerns, we wish to broaden the available options for faculty housing in every way possible and in this way, hopefully enable faculty to maximize existing housing opportunities with the support of the campus and its administration.

Toward this end, we envision our task as follows:

1. Gather information about the magnitude of the housing crisis. Clearer documentation is needed on the current situation of faculty with regard to the relationship between their housing needs and the availability, lack availability and affordability of housing options. Such documentation is crucial to any planning effort and at same time will offer us powerful evidence on the long-term consequences the housing crisis will have for the University. Indeed, it is our conviction (one shared by many faculty and administrators) that the campus will face grave faculty recruitment and retention problems if the current situation is not ameliorated.
2. Investigate and present clear information to the faculty at large about policies governing the allocation and turnover of rental and purchase units in current on-campus faculty housing, as well as to advocate in the planning of new on-campus units being built.

3. Gather information about strategies employed by other universities located in areas with similarly high housing costs and other alternative strategies and report on the viability of implementing some of these strategies (e.g. shared equity, low-cost mortgage loans, down payment and rental assistance) at UCSC.

Our timetable involves information-gathering over the summer of 2001 with ongoing reports to both CFW and CLUBD as well as regular reports to the Senate as a whole. The work is to continue as long as deemed necessary by COC.

Respectfully Submitted:

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October 18, 2001