

May 7, 2021

Lori Kletzer  
Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor

**Re: Curricular Flexibility in Fall 2021**

Dear CPEVC Kletzer,

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) would like to advocate that you work with the VPAA, VPDUE, and Deans to allow maximum curricular flexibility in the fall. The Senate is aware that there are faculty who are uncertain about the availability of childcare in the fall and that there are impacted departments in which faculty fear they will be required to teach both in-person and remote versions of the same course. There are also faculty who are unclear about how to enforce or deal with classroom challenges regarding mask requirements, social distancing, and other issues.

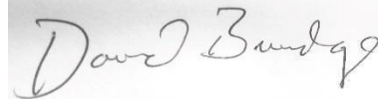
Additionally, many graduate and undergraduate students have left Santa Cruz due to the high cost of living, and there is concern that returning to in-person instruction will not be smooth or even possible given the dramatic shifts in cost and availability of housing due to the pandemic, fires, and other factors. While there are clearly many faculty and instructors on both sides of the in-person or remote issue, it is for these reasons that we advocate for maximum flexibility for programs, Senate faculty and lecturers, and Graduate Student Instructors at this moment in time. Our view coincides with that of UC Academic Senate leaders, who have emphasized that “faculty, instructors, graduate students, TAs, and staff must be an integral part of the conversation” over the details of fall reopening and that “flexibility should encompass the question of whether faculty have a right to refuse to return to campus and be able to continue to teach and meet their service obligations remotely.” (Mary Gauvain, Chair, and Robert Horwitz, Vice Chair, Academic Senate, to Academic Senate Division Chairs, May 3, 2021)

We understand, and appreciate, that the administration has sought to encourage the flexibility of *departments* to mount and fulfill their curricula in a manner suitable to the discipline. We also appreciate that your most recent guidelines (“In-Person or Remote: Principles for Assigning Teaching for Fall Quarter 2021”) state that assignments should not be based on past faculty performance or seniority. However, we would argue that, in a context of uncertainty about schooling and childcare options and with local housing costs steadily rising, flexibility for *individual faculty members, lecturers, and TAs* to teach remotely or in-person should be given equal (rather than secondary) weight to that of pedagogical, curricular, and student needs in assigning teaching.

SEC believes that the administration would receive significant appreciation if you sent a message to the campus that acknowledged the confusion that has surrounded some of the communications

up to this point, registered again that this is an extremely fluid situation, and expressed a commitment to flexibility for all instructors and TAs with regard to fall instruction.

On behalf of the Senate Executive  
Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Brundage", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

David Brundage  
Chair, Academic Senate

cc: Chancellor Larive  
Assistant Chancellor & COS Finn  
Assistant EVC & COS Rhoads