



CHAIR, ACADEMIC SENATE
RIVERSIDE DIVISION
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BUILDING, RM 225

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Michael T. Brown
Professor of Counseling/Clinical/ School Psychology
Chair, UC Systemwide Academic Senate
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Michael:

RE: CCGA/UCEP/ITTP 'DIALECTIC' PAPER ON REMOTE/ONLINE INSTRUCTION

For the past eight centuries the university has been based on exchanges between a professor and their students in one room, albeit sometimes a very large one. For this reason, it should hardly be hardly surprising that scholars have more a little trouble comprehending the notion of remote/ online instruction; certainly they have in the Riverside Division.

The Dialectic Paper found the most sympathy in the Graduate Council whose members heartily endorsed the general idea, maintaining that "online education will become an inevitable extension to the current on-campus education." They repeatedly cautioned against the dangers of over-regulation at the systemwide level, arguing for the maximum amount of leeway on each campus; and they suggested that the problems of academic dishonesty could be dramatically reduced by including "interactive visual sessions as part of the grading proposals."

Markedly less enthusiastic were the members of the Committee on Academic Computing and Information Technology (ACIT). The former called for a thorough review of the "proposed selection procedure/guideline for both courses and faculty." ACIT was unable to resolve fundamental question about "how could exams be administered with any degree of assurance that we would know who was actually taking the exam?" Its members were equally stumped by the question of "whither UC's traditional residency requirement," and they were apprehensive about the "significant amount of work" involved with developing these online course.

ACIT was a model of enthusiasm compared to the Committee on Educational Policy which noted with considerable dismay that the queries that the Dialectic Paper did not even address, much less answer, the many questions that its members had raised in 2006. Among those, CEP drew attention to the following:

1. How can student access to faculty be enhanced?

2. How can faculty workload for such courses be measured?
3. What kind of guidelines will be in place to ensure faculty presence and how will units of credit be measured?
4. Because it is difficult to imagine courses like Lab courses online, the committee asks what kinds of courses will be unsuitable to online instruction.
5. What security for assessment will be available?
6. How can time requirements be clarified and how can they remain flexible enough to work with student schedules?
7. How can expectations be stated clearly enough so that students understand what constitutes "attendance" in such a course?
8. How can collaborative projects be evaluated?

Anxious about "the prospect of our students not receiving what they ought to expect out of a UC education," the members of CEP emphatically called for a special committee to explore this matter much more thoroughly.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Cogswell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Thomas Cogswell
Professor of History; and
Chair of the Riverside Division