

August 10, 2018

**ENRIQUE LAVERNIA  
PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLOR**

**RE: SENATE UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS TASK FORCE REPORT**

In Spring 2018, the Senate constituted a Task Force to assess the conditions and resources for undocumented students to pursue and complete their undergraduate and graduate education at UCI.

Attached you will find the Task Force's report which assesses both the undergraduate and graduate student experience from application and enrollment through graduation and the resources and opportunities for UCI's undocumented students. For each of the different stages of a student's career at UCI, the report outlines some of the challenges our students face and recommendations for how these might be mitigated or resolved. In addition, the report highlights the important role of the DREAM Center, both for undocumented students - in the provision of resources - and the campus community as a whole - in the form of education about undocumented student needs and how we, as a campus, can best respond.

Based on their report, the Senate recommends that the Administration continues to support the DREAM Center and its legal representation services in the event the UCOP funding expires in the summer of 2019. We further recommend wide distribution of this report so that the campus community is aware of the unique needs and challenges experienced by our undocumented student population. The Senate, through its new Council on Equity and Inclusion, will seek to review how the campus is serving this population and raise issues as needed with the Office of Inclusive Excellence to ensure that our campus maintains its commitment to equal access for all UCI students.

The Senate looks forward to working with the Administration in support of efforts to best serve our undocumented students.

Sincerely,



Maria Pantelia, Chair  
Academic Senate, Irvine Division



Enclosure: Senate Task Force on Undocumented Students Report and Recommendations

C: Linda Cohen, Chair Elect, Academic Senate  
Jim Steintrager, Incoming Chair Elect, Academic Senate  
Michael Dennin, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning  
Frances Leslie, Vice Provost for Graduate Education  
Doug Haynes, Vice Provost for Academic Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
Jeff Lefkoff, Associate Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor  
Edgar Dormitorio, Interim Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs  
Gary Matkin, Dean, Continuing Education, Vice Provost, Career Pathways  
Louis DeSipio, Chair, Senate Task Force on Undocumented Students  
Christine Aguilar, Senate Analyst, Academic Senate  
Natalie Schonfeld, Executive Director, Academic Senate  
Laura Gnesda, Senate Analyst, Academic Senate

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

By definition, an **undocumented student (immigrant)** is a foreign national who: (1) entered the United States without inspection or with fraudulent documents; or (2) entered legally as a nonimmigrant but then violated the terms of his or her status and remained in the United States without authorization (as defined by the National Immigration Law Center). In contrast, a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) is defined as a person who was granted the right to live permanently in the United States. An LPR is a “green card” holder that is allowed to legally work and live in the United States.

The majority of undocumented students are characterized as youth that were brought to the United States by their parents at an early age and have lived in this country for a significant portion of their lives, learning the language and adapting to the same American customs taught to other students in schools.

The California **DREAM Act** extends eligibility for certain types of UC and California Financial Aid to students, including undocumented students, who qualify for non-resident tuition exemption under AB540.

A student eligible for non-resident tuition exemption under **AB540** must have completed the following requirements:

- Attended a California high school (public or private) for 3 or more years (does not need to be consecutive years)
- Graduated from a California high school or have attained a G.E.D.; or received passing mark on the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) prior to the start of the term
- Registered or be currently enrolled in one of the three state institutions of higher learning

**Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)** is a kind of administrative relief from deportation. The purpose of DACA is to protect eligible immigrant youth who came to the United States when they were children from deportation. DACA gives young undocumented immigrants: 1) protection from deportation, and 2) a work permit. The program expires after two years, subject to renewal.

DACA is facing administrative and legal challenges at this writing and could be eliminated on short notice or, although less likely, be expanded modestly

August 3, 2018

**MARIA PANTELIA, CHAIR  
ACADEMIC SENATE, IRVINE DIVISION**

**RE: Academic Senate Task Force on Undocumented Students - Report**

The Senate Task Force on Undocumented Students at UCI was created by Senate Chair Maria Pantelia, upon the request of Vice Provost Douglas Haynes. The task force was comprised of seven members who were asked to assess the conditions and resources for undocumented students to pursue and complete their undergraduate and graduate education at UCI.

The task force held multiple meetings throughout winter and spring 2018, inviting guests from a variety of campus divisions to discuss the interactions and involvement they each have with undocumented students on campus. Additionally, some members took part in interviews with undocumented students on campus, during which members were able to gain insight on undocumented student experiences and concerns.

On behalf of the task force, please see the attached report and recommendations for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Louis DeSipio, Chair  
Task Force on Undocumented Students

c: Natalie Schonfeld, Executive Director  
Laura Gnesda, Senate Analyst  
Christine Aguilar, Task Force Analyst

Attachment: UCI Academic Senate Task Force on Undocumented Students –  
Report and Recommendations



## **UCI ACADEMIC SENATE TASK FORCE ON UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS – REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Our goal in the report is to ensure that UCI lives up to its commitment – as well as UCOP’s commitment – to ensuring equal access to *all* UCI students. Ensuring that undocumented UCI students (as well as potential undocumented applicants to UCI) are provided with the necessary services and resources to thrive while at UCI is critical to meeting that goal. To quote Pillar II in the UCI Strategic Plan: “Our students are at the very heart of everything we do. As a comprehensive research university, the knowledge we create in all disciplines impacts our students’ scholastic, co-curricular, and career development experiences. ... We will continue to strive to be a sought-after destination for the most talented and ambitious students – reflecting all backgrounds and life experiences – who see that UCI is where they can reach their full potential and do their best work.” Specially, Pillar II commits UCI to: “Provide support for all students regardless of background, including mentoring and networking programs, analytics to help students identify majors and enhance performance, increasing attainment of graduate level grants and fellowships.” It is in the spirit of UCI’s commitment to ensuring student success regardless of background that we undertook this review of the UCI undocumented student experience.

As will be evident in the discussion that follows, we have identified many areas in which UCI is a national leader in ensuring the academic success of undocumented students. We have, however, also identified areas of concern in the delivery of services to UCI’s undocumented students. We make a series of recommendations to identify ways in which UCI can better serve the needs of undocumented students. These recommendations are based on conversations that Task Force conducted with units across campus as well as on focus groups conducted with undergraduate and graduate students.

Before assessing specific dimensions of the undocumented student experience, we begin with several comprehensive recommendations that we believe are necessary for the success of the more specific recommendations discussed in the remainder of the report.

Most importantly, none of the recommendations that follow can be implemented without an immediate campus commitment that the funding for the DREAM Center will continue when its current UCOP funding expires in Spring 2019 (and, quite possibly expand, based on specific recommendations below).

Throughout our information gathering, we were told of how critical the DREAM Center and its staff are to UCI’s



undocumented students. Its staff serve as the point of contact for UCI faculty and staff seeking to develop a better understanding of the needs and challenges of undocumented students. It often serves as a locus for the direct delivery of services by other units to undocumented students. As it was designed to, it serves as a safe space for UCI undocumented students to access campus resources and to thrive at UCI. In other words, it is the nexus for nearly all services to and development of resources for undocumented students. Its continued operation must be guaranteed, and guaranteed now, to ensure that the proposals we make below will be able succeed.

A related concern is that the attorney that is provided to assist with student and family immigration matters is not funded on a permanent basis and, at this writing, is unable to take on new cases due to her existing immigration case workload. The funding for this position needs to be made permanent and the resources for this office need to be expanded to meet current demands as well as expected future demand.

As critical as the DREAM Center and legal representation of student and family-member immigration services are to UCI's undocumented student community, we also want to ensure that all campus units have the skills and commitment to serve the needs of UCI's undocumented students. So, throughout the discussion that follows, we identify specific units that serve undocumented students and ways in which we have found they can improve this service delivery. The DREAM Center and its staff will undoubtedly serve as a resource as these units seek to improve their structures and operations, but all campus units must ensure that they meet the needs of undocumented students.

We also think that it is very important that the Academic Senate continue to monitor the campus resources and opportunities available to undocumented students on campus. With ongoing policy changes in Washington and Sacramento as well as the uncertain path of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in the federal courts, it is quite likely that the status of and resources available for undocumented students will change. These changes will be rapid and, likely, unexpected.

In order to monitor the implementation of the recommendations that we make here and to react to changes in legal status and enforcement regimes, it is important that the Academic Senate maintain oversight of how the campus is serving its undocumented students. We will leave to you the exact form that this oversight should take – maintenance of a Task Force or the formation of a more permanent council, committee, board, or special committee – but we think it critical that the Academic Senate establish an institutional locus to ensure that the changing needs of UCI's undocumented students be monitored and addressed.

## **Organization of the Task Force Report**

We have organized the report to follow the student experiences of UCI undergraduates and graduate students. For reasons that will become evident, we analyze these student experiences separately.

For UCI undergraduates, we first assess the undergraduate application process and follow newly admitted students through their UCI enrollment (pages 4 – 6).

We then assess five dimensions of the undergraduate experience once students have enrolled at UCI:

- Academic (pages 7 – 11);
- Financial (pages 12– 15);
- Physical and Mental Health (pages 16 – 18);
- Basic Needs and Legal Services (pages 19 – 23); and
- Campus Climate (pages 24 – 27); and

We conclude our analysis of the undergraduate student experience with a discussion of Career Preparation and the Post-Graduate Experience (pages 28 – 31).

Our discussion of the Graduate Student Experience is more synthetic, addressing several of these themes with a particular eye to the challenges in funding undocumented graduate student study (pages 32– 37).

We anticipate that our discussions of undergraduate and graduate students may well be reviewed separately by different units on campus, so some of the discussions of these two groups of UCI students duplicate some information.

## **I. Undergraduate Application through Enrollment**

The process of applying to college is a particularly stressful time for undocumented students for a variety of reasons. Some learn about their undocumented status for the first time as they communicate with their parents about their status and their eligibility for financial aid. Others receive unclear or inaccurate information from high school counselors regarding eligibility for financial aid and availability of support for undocumented students at prospective colleges/universities. Undocumented students who were interviewed as part of the Undocumented Task Force focus groups and in past studies report difficulties navigating the application and financial aid system at UCI as well. Some are misidentified as international students, which both prevents the students from learning about available financial aid for undocumented students and results in the students being charged the equivalent of international tuition and fees. They also face additional requirements to “clear” their graduation status as international students.

These challenges are not always easily resolved. The first point of contact in the Financial Aid Office is often with a student staff member, who is not always trained to respond to queries regarding undocumented status. Some undocumented students also indicate that multiple, in-person, trips, which can be burdensome and costly, were required to provide the necessary information in order to access financial aid. Finally, some undocumented students are not eligible for financial aid through the California Dream Act (i.e. not eligible for AB-540) and experience distress and anxiety about their future prospects and therefore have extremely limited options for financing their education beyond the high school level.

### **Area of Concern #1 – Accurate and up-to-date information for prospective undocumented undergraduate students**

Prospective students need accurate information from high school counselors and college admissions advisors regarding the application process for admissions and the availability of financial aid.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The UCI Admissions Office should review current training practices for high school counselors and college admissions advisors as well as the training materials provided to them to ensure that they have up-to-date and accurate information about campus resources for undocumented students to ensure that the ability to advise undocumented students and their families in a sensitive and supportive manner.
- The UCI Admissions Office should organize training sessions for counselors and among feeder school districts.
- The UCI Admissions Office should offer professional development training regarding undocumented issues for UCI staff and faculty engaging in recruitment activities.



## Part I: Undergraduate Application through Enrollment

- The UCI Admissions Office should include statements about undocumented student aid and support in brochures, on the application web site, and during in-person contact with prospective applicants

### **Area of Concern #2 – Misclassification of some admitted undocumented students as “international” students**

Undocumented students are sometimes misclassified as international students through their responses to the application form.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Registrar and the UCI Admissions Office should review the application form to consider whether there could be greater clarity as to how undocumented students might respond to the form to avoid misclassification as international students.
- The Registrar and the UCI Admissions Office should develop a sample response or specific directions for how undocumented students might respond to the application form. They should include “identifying as undocumented” as one of the FAQs on the Financial Aid section of the application web site.
- The Registrar should confirm the residency status of all UCI applicant’s and provide clear instructions as to how a student would correct a miscategorization.

### **Area of Concern #3 – Confusion about financial aid eligibility and unique challenges in verifying eligibility**

Undocumented students are uncertain as to their eligibility for financial aid as well as how to understand financial aid packages. The students also sometimes have to go through unusually burdensome processes to verify their eligibility for aid.

#### **Recommendations:**

- We applaud the Office of Financial Aid for including information about financial aid available to students who might be or are eligible for AB-540. We encourage the Office of Financial Aid to work with the DREAM Center and current undocumented students to develop additional information materials and procedures to help make this information even more visible and to more effectively serve undocumented students. For example, the counselor(s) who specializes in advising California Dreamers could be more prominently identified in information related to undocumented students. We especially encourage the Office of Financial Aid to highlight resources available for non-AB540 eligible students.
- The Office of Financial Aid should provide an annotated version of the financial aid package statement that explains the information in detail for students and their families who may not be familiar with these documents.
- All Office of Financial Aid front-desk staff as well as financial aid advisors should be trained as to how to respond to undocumented student queries. This may entail ensuring that one or more of the advisors/staff members are well versed in these

## Part I: Undergraduate Application through Enrollment

issues and may serve as the primary consultants for students as well as other staff members. According to many current students, the DREAM Center Staff serve as their primary financial advisor. However, the Office of Financial Aid should ensure that its own staff has the knowledge and skills to advise undocumented students on financial aid.

### **Area of Concern #4 – Undocumented undergraduates not eligible for AB-540**

Some prospective undocumented students may not meet the requirements of AB-540 and are not eligible for state-funded financial aid.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Office of Financial Aid should provide information about alternative financial aid (scholarships, emergency funds, etc.) that is available to undocumented students, regardless of whether they qualify for AB-540. The UCI DREAM Center maintains this information, but the Financial Aid Office should update this information on a regular basis and ensure that this information is accessible and visible on their web site.
- The Office of Financial Aid should collaborate with the UCI DREAM Center and the University Office of Advancement to fundraise for scholarships for all undocumented students, including those who do not qualify for AB-540.

### **Area of Concern #5 – Confusion about availability of campus resources for undocumented students**

Prospective students are not always aware of available resources that support undocumented students at UCI.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Both the 2018 Celebrate UCI Latino/a Family Welcome and the Celebrate UCI Asian American and Pacific Islander Breakfast/Reception for Transfer Students included information regarding undocumented students and the UCI DREAM Center. The Admissions Office should arrange for targeted publicity to undocumented first year and transfer students to ensure that they are aware of on-campus resources to support their education at UCI.
- The Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) should review the summer orientation program to determine whether it is effectively informing undocumented students about available campus resources and fostering a sense of community for students who are likely to feel isolated due to their status.
- DUE should also create an optional summer orientation program specifically for undocumented students and their families.

## **Part II. Section 1: The Undergraduate Experience – Academics**

Undocumented students confront multiple challenges on a daily basis, ranging from financial hardship to food insecurity and elevated mental health stresses that can negatively impact their ability to succeed academically. These factors, combined with persistent institutional obstacles to their full integration into the campus community, can also limit undocumented students' ability to take full advantage of all of the academic enrichment programs, activities and research opportunities offered at UCI.

Given these challenges, the academic success and wellbeing of undocumented students depends to a heightened degree on the support and advocacy of informed faculty, academic advisors and staff who work directly with undergraduate students. It is thus encouraging that a growing number of faculty and many of UCI's academic advisors and staff have completed the AB 540 and Undocumented Student Ally Training. However, academic advisors report that their ability to provide effective outreach, support and guidance to undocumented students is limited by the fact that they don't know students' immigration status until and unless they self-identify as undocumented. Moreover, many undocumented students continue to report that faculty, academic advisors and other staff often lack awareness and specific knowledge that would allow them to more effectively serve the needs of undocumented students.

### **Area of Concern #1 – Challenges faced by School-level academic advisors**

While many academic advisors are willing to make justifiable accommodations that will support undocumented students' academic success and wellbeing, students may not always feel comfortable disclosing their status or asking for accommodations. Moreover, advisors have varying levels of understanding of the circumstances that might negatively impact undocumented students' academic success and wellbeing. Lacking up to date information on law and university policies governing undocumented students' status and their ability to access specific campus resources, may limit advisors' ability to provide guidance, support, or accommodations when warranted.

### **Recommendations:**

- Schools should explore strategies to develop undocumented students' trust and comfort with academic advisors. These might include outreach activities, the designation of a specific undocumented student advisor in each school, conducting workshops on specific issues of concern for undocumented students and/or the placement of academic advisors "in residence" at the DREAM Center.
- Academic advisors should be provided with regular training and updates on changes in law and university policy that affect students' status and access to resources.

- Continued funding should be provided for the UCI DREAM Scholars program, which provides academic support, guidance and resources targeted to the needs of undocumented students.
- Schools should find ways of developing closer collaborations between School Academic Advisors and the UCI DREAM Scholars Program.
- Schools should develop brochures or information sheets to address challenges likely to be faced by undocumented students. This information should include both information relevant to all UCI undergraduates and supplemental information specific to the School or majors in the School.
- Schools could find ways to share information about resources for undocumented students across schools, for example using a Google doc for all counselors.

**Area of Concern #2 – Ensuring that course and major requirements as well as fieldwork and internship requirements are accessible to all UCI students**

Special attention needs to be paid to ensuring that course activities, fieldwork/internships requirements, and professional development opportunities are inclusive of undocumented students and equally promote their academic success. These requirements may be difficult for some undocumented students to complete, particularly those without DACA who do not possess the work authorization. It is also difficult or stressful for undocumented students to complete LiveScan background checks that may be required to work in certain environments such as schools, hospitals, or secure facilities. Undocumented students, particularly those without DACA, often assume that they cannot complete these background checks; however, it is possible to complete a background check without DACA.

**Recommendations:**

- Courses with community-based partnerships or classroom sites should be sensitive to selecting sites that are accessible and welcoming of undocumented students.
- Schools that encourage or require fieldwork and/or internships should identify and establish placements that accept students who lack work authorization or who will allow them to participate for course credit rather than payment. These placements/internships should be publicized as available to undocumented students.
- Campus counsel, the UCI law school, and/or the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center should prepare an information sheet about the LiveScan background check process, whether undocumented students can do one (and where they can safely complete a LiveScan background check), and what the risks of completing one are. This should clearly explain whether DACA status presents problems or not. These sheets should be widely distributed so that students can make informed decisions. UCI Police Department should establish a process to ensure

that undocumented students are able to conduct background checks through their office and feel safe doing so. They could then be listed on the information sheet as a suggested place to complete the background check.

- Placements should be identified for students who feel unable to complete the background check; placements should be identified that would allow students to use alternative methods of identity verification and/or criminal history (background checks that rely on other things than social security numbers, e.g. biometrics).
- Schools/Departments should set aside funds to assist students in paying for background checks and/or biometrics

### **Area of Concern #3 – Ensuring equal access to all UCI students to academic enrichment and professional development activities**

Financial and social/psychological barriers may prevent undocumented students from participating in academic enrichment and professional development activities such as Study Abroad, UCDC and the Capitol Fellows Program.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Additional funding should be set aside to assist undocumented students in meeting the costs associated with academic enrichment and professional development related travel.
- Academic Advisors and other academic enrichment program officers should receive regular training on the laws and administrative policies impacting undocumented students' ability to travel and/or participate in these activities. One future issue includes the implementation of the REAL ID Act which would make it difficult for undocumented students to fly.
- Targeted outreach to undocumented students should communicate that academic advisors and program officers are aware of their fears, are committed to their safety, and are up to date on information that will allow them to effectively advise students of the risks and benefits of participating in academic enrichment programs.

### **Area of Concern #4 – Resources for academic success**

Information about support services could be made more widely available to ease students' financial and legal barriers to academic success while they are here. Some students have difficulty affording the books and course materials fundamental to their educations (see Financial Aid). Some struggle academically, especially in their first quarter. Some students report being advised to take summer classes, sometimes in order to graduate sooner, or to take pressure off the intense schedule during the year; however, there is a 15-quarter maximum for financial aid. For undocumented students, taking summer courses can diminish the overall amount of time they can remain in school.

**Recommendations:**

- Make widely available and easily accessible emergency and other sorts of funding possibilities for books and course materials—perhaps as part of the DREAM Center website.
- As part of ongoing training for staff and for faculty on issues related to undocumented students, the pros and cons of summer coursework should be made clear.
- Undergraduate Student Services (in DUE) currently dedicates to undocumented students 50% of a staff appointment formerly dedicated to transfer students. A fully funded 100% appointment dedicated to undocumented students (and not one that takes away from transfer students in general) should be appointed. This staff person can help with the transition to UCI, disseminate information, and provide general academic and bureaucratic support for students.

**Area of Concern #5 – Faculty awareness of challenges faced by undocumented students and campus resources to serve undocumented students**

Faculty often lack awareness and specific knowledge that can limit their ability to effectively meet the needs of undocumented students, and/or create an unwelcoming and/or inequitable classroom environment.

**Recommendations:**

In order to ensure an equitable learning environment for undocumented students, faculty should be encouraged to do the following:

- Complete ally training and display their “ally” sticker in a prominent location in their office.
- Use appropriate terminology when discussing immigration issues. Be aware that many people find the terms “illegal immigration” and “illegal immigrant” offensive; they often prefer “undocumented” and “unauthorized.” Some students may also use the term “DREAMer,” originally a reference to the proposed federal DREAM Act which would have provided undocumented students with a path to legalization and now an allusion to various state laws that provide educational access. But other students may reject that nomenclature because it suggests that undocumented students are more deserving of support than other undocumented people.
- Exercise special sensitivity when initiating/facilitating discussions of immigration-related issues and the current political climate in the classroom. Advise students in advance before initiating classroom discussions of immigration issues, especially if that is not on the agenda in the syllabus. Remind students that this topic personally impacts many people living in the United States and ask students to frame their participation in ways that are respectful of different experiences and opinions.

Part II: The Undergraduate Experience  
Section 1: Academics

- Avoid “spotlighting” individual students by revealing their citizenship status or immigrant background during class discussions.
- Add a statement to course syllabi explicitly articulating that immigration-related emergencies may qualify for academic accommodations (alongside medical and other justified emergencies). Making it explicit sends a powerful signal of both symbolic and concrete support for students confronting immigration crises. Should students approach you to discuss the impact of immigration related crises on their performance in your class, make them aware that you are willing to consider providing accommodations—but allow students to determine for themselves whether this is an option they wish to pursue.
- Maintain student confidentiality and privacy. Do not refer to students’ citizenship or immigration status in public conversations or written communication. Only do so when necessary and with the students’ permission, such as when helping them identify resources or explaining their personal background in letters of recommendation.

## **Part II. Section 2: Addressing the Financial Needs of Undocumented UCI Students**

A recurring theme throughout Task Force discussions was the financial challenges that UCI undocumented students face. In this section, we focus on enrolled undergraduate UCI students, particularly their ability to access financial aid resources. Some of this discussion necessarily duplicates the discussion of challenges newly admitted students encounter in getting accurate and up-to-date information on UCI financial aid resources and in establishing their eligibility to receive UCI financial aid, but the specific difficulties they encounter and the administrative and procedural changes necessary to ameliorate these problems sometime differ.

Undocumented students do not have access to *federal* financial aid, but most receive comparable financial aid to citizen students. This is because most are eligible for certification as California residents under the provisions of AB 540, which provides certain undocumented students with access to in-state tuition. The California DREAM Act provides access to state and institutional financial aid for students who are certified as AB 540 eligible. However, UCI undergraduates face challenges in demonstrating their eligibility for and accessing state and campus financial resources.

### **Area of Concern #1 – Standards of AB 540 Eligibility**

The standards for certification as AB 540 eligibility vary between the California Community College system, the California State University system, and the University of California system. Further, it was reported that the University of California is more stringent in its standards than are the other two college systems.

#### **Recommendation:**

- UCI should advocate with UCOP to ensure that access to AB540 certification is as expansive as the law allows. To the degree possible, the three college systems should develop a single certification that could be applied at any public institution of higher learning throughout the state so that students do not have to be recertified with each new institution attended.

### **Area of Concern #2 – UCI Certification of AB 540 Eligibility**

Application forms include technical language that can make it hard for undocumented students to correctly identify their immigration status and establish AB 540 eligibility. Some undocumented students are initially incorrectly identified as “international students.” Others struggle to correctly fill out the AB-540 eligibility form after admission. This results in students being incorrectly charged non-resident tuition rates until they rectify the situation. The process is reported to be confusing to some, causes stress for many students, and makes them feel unwelcome.



**Recommendations:**

- The Registrar's office should develop a process for pre-certification of AB 540 eligibility that can be completed as part of the application process or during the period between admission and the deadline for accepting UCI's offer of admission. Recognition of AB 540 status awarded by another public institution of higher learning throughout the state (see Area of Concern #1) would partially remedy this problem.
- The Registrar's Office and Office of Admissions should develop a step-by-step guide on how to fill out residency questions on the application to prevent the problem of being identified as an international student.
- The Registrar's Office should publicize information on how to fix clerical errors both remotely and through office visits. This should guide should also be posted to the Admissions Office, Financial Aid, and UCI DREAM Center websites.

**Area of Concern #3 - California DREAM Act Audits**

Students, particularly those transferring from community college, report difficulties with California DREAM Act audits to confirm their financial aid eligibility. They were often given unclear or incomplete information about what documentation paperwork to provide. They were not able to get consistent information when being handed off to different staff members. Often this required students to make multiple visits to campus to provide requested documentation.

**Recommendation:**

- Develop a guide that explains what the audit is, lists all specific documentation, and identifies a contact person who is responsible for answering questions about necessary documentation.

**Area of Concern #4 – Funding for non-AB 540 / non-DACA UCI students (here, particularly UCI undergraduates)**

Almost all UCI undergraduates are eligible for residency certification under the provisions of AB 540. Many have received employment authorization through the federal DACA program. However, there are still a handful who do not have AB-540 and a substantial number, possibly close to 10-15%, who do not have DACA. The unique financial needs of these two subpopulations (which do not necessarily overlap) need to be recognized and remedied.

**Recommendations:**

- The Financial Aid office should identify sources of philanthropic funding for undocumented undergraduates who are not eligible for AB 540 or who do not have employment authorization. Information about these potential funding sources should be provided to prospective and admitted students.

- As a longer term strategy, University Advancement should raise scholarship resources for first-generation UCI undergraduates to increase the scholarship resources that exist for students who cannot rely on traditional financial aid programs.

#### **Area of Concern #5 – Delivery of Financial Aid Services**

We were pleased to hear that professional staff in the Office of Financial Aid have completed Ally Training. We have, however, heard student concerns that the intake/front office staff who are often part-time student workers are less aware of the unique challenges that undocumented students face. Consequently, they are less effective in ensuring that undocumented UCI students get correct information and proper referrals.

#### **Recommendation:**

- The Office of Financial Aid should ensure that all staff receive appropriately-targeted training necessary to serve all students. This professional-development training should address the specific processes and documentation requirements for AB-540, non-AB-540, DACA, and non-DACA students.

#### **Area of Concern #6 – Emergency Financial Needs**

All students potentially face emergency financial needs; the likelihood of these unexpected emergency needs are likely even higher for UCI's undocumented students. Some resources to address these emergency needs are in place. In the past emergency grants have been made available to undocumented students, but these have been funded by the Office of the President and are not guaranteed for the future. Further, the funding process for these emergency grants are ill-designed to meet the needs of undocumented students, specifically requirements that loans be taken out prior to being eligible for emergency grants. Because of their precarious position in U.S. society, many undocumented students are hesitant to take out loans.

#### **Recommendation:**

- A pool of funding be identified to meet unexpected emergency financial needs for UCI undocumented students. Policies should be changed to not require students to take out loans in order to be eligible. The process needs to ensure a quick application review and disbursement of the funds if approved.

#### **Area of Concern #7 – Looking to the Future (1): Changing Rules of Uses of Stipends as a Substitute for Salary Payments to UCI Students**

In an effort to provide support for undocumented students comparable to that available to documented/citizen students, some campus units have disbursed stipends and/or scholarships rather than salaries for some activities. This process is being reviewed on a campus-wide basis and is likely to be reduced in the future.

**Recommendation:**

- A development officer should be appointed to identify a pool of funds without restrictions on their use to ensure that undocumented students are eligible for awards, internship, and campus leadership opportunities comparable to other students on campus.

**Area of Concern #8 – Looking to the Future (2): Funding for Student DACA Renewals**

As long as the program remains in place, DACA recipients are required to renew their status every two years. The cost of this renewal is \$495. Many students face great difficulty in paying for this renewal. Previously, philanthropic funding has been distributed through the UC DREAM Center to students who file their renewal applications with the help for the UC Immigration Legal Services Center.

**Recommendation:**

- A development officer should be appointed to identify funding sources to provide grants to cover immigration application fees, including DACA renewals or other immigration relief applications.

**Area of Concern #9 – Looking to the Future (3): Planning for the end of DACA**

The future of DACA is unclear and tied up in conflicting executive orders and federal court cases. Depending on the outcome of these court cases, DACA could end very rapidly (several states have sued to end the program), be wound down within two years (if the courts allow the implementation of President Trump's executive order ending renewals of status), or expand (if the district court ruling allowing new applications to go forward goes into effect). Clearly, the future of the program is muddled at best, confusing to its beneficiaries, and a challenge for institutions such as UCI that serve a large number of DACA recipients.

**Recommendation:**

- The University (and UCOP) need a clear statement of the commitments that it is making to its current DACA eligible students should the program end. A plan needs to be in place to ensure that resources will be available for enrolled students to complete their degrees if their DACA status ends. Clearly, this will require considerable organizational and financial commitments which are challenging in such a fluid environment. Without a clear commitment from UCI and the UC system, however, today's DACA-protected students will have an even bigger cloud hanging over their futures.

## **Part II. Section 3: Physical and Mental Health**

Both undergraduate and graduate students who are undocumented face unique and heightened strain on their physical and mental health. These range from food insecurity and stress about legal issues to serious physical health problems. While the Counseling Center has made some effort to make psychological services available to undocumented students, the long wait list necessitates referrals off campus, posing new problems for undocumented students. The Campus Social Workers are more available, but severely understaffed. Although there is a designated case manager for graduate students, there is no social worker on campus designated specifically for undocumented students. Nor is there any support staff dedicated to helping undocumented students access health care, especially optometry and dentistry, and navigate the insurance bureaucracy that they encounter.

### **Area of Concern #1 – Counseling Center resources for UCI undocumented students**

There are two staff psychologists at the Counseling Center who are especially aware of undocumented student issues, though students do not necessarily know this. Initial (non-emergency) mental health assessment can take a long time. There is a wait list at the Counseling Center of up to 80 students at any given time, especially late in each quarter. Typically, students may then be referred off campus, but for undocumented students this can pose extra problems like accessing transportation and affording copayments, as well as finding a provider with expertise in immigration-related issues.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Counseling Center should advertise on web site and resource list its own expertise in serving undocumented students.
- The Counseling Center should identify undocumented-friendly providers who they can refer students to for off-campus services. This should be advertised on their website.
- The Counseling Center should fast-track students with high financial insecurity to in-house counseling, or refer students to the Campus Social Workers instead of to off-campus providers.
- Additional drop-in services, especially after high-visibility policy changes for undocumented students, should be offered. Campus psychologists should hold more hours at the DREAM center, using multiple venues to publicize such hours.
- A pool of resources should be set up with the Campus Social Worker to help defray costs of transportation and co-payments

### **Area of Concern #2 – Campus Social Worker services for undocumented students**

The three Campus Social Workers have worked hard to make their presence known specifically to undocumented students, for instance by holding events at the Fresh Hub. Their work includes mental health support, communication with various agencies, support for students who have dropped out and want to come back, and help with physical health issues, disabilities, and more. They are in a position to offer a more rapid response than campus mental health counselors. They are, however, limited by a staff shortage.

#### **Recommendations:**

- UCI needs to hire more social workers. The flexibility of such staff and their ability to communicate with faculty and other agencies, providing a network of support for individual students, is unmatched by anything else on campus except, perhaps, the DREAM Center itself. The University should consider hiring a case manager specifically dedicated to undocumented students, who would perhaps be housed at the Dream Center.
- Campus Social Workers should continue to have lunch and provide programming at the Dream Center, the Fresh Hub, and other venues where they can make themselves known as friendly to undocumented students.
- Academic advisors, faculty, departments, and deans should be made aware of the Campus Social Workers so that they might refer students to them.

### **Area of Concern #3 – Student Health Center Services for undocumented students**

The physical health of undocumented students (self-reported) is worse than that of other students. According to a 2016 survey of 525 UC undocumented students, 33% of undergraduate undocumented students report fair to poor health, a rate normally on a par with the elderly. Students run into trouble negotiating health insurance (especially for off-campus services like dentistry and optometry, and other specialists), accessing transportation, and affording co-payments. Many undocumented students are only able to access health care benefits for the first time during their time at UCI. So, it is both an opportunity to seek necessary health care, but also can prove to be a challenge to navigate for first-time users.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Hire a designated staff person (like the one for faculty) to help undergraduate and graduate students navigate the health care system.
- Provide a pool of funds to the Campus Social Workers to help defray the costs of transportation and co-payments for students with mental and physical health needs.

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Section 3: Physical and Mental Health

- Make sure that available health services/benefits available to students are understood. Work with the UCI DREAM Center to develop brochures/videos and other resources about health care services.

## **Part II. Section 4: Basic Needs and Legal Services**

UCI's undocumented students are often the first in their families to attend colleges and universities and face significant financial barriers in attending UCI. They face barriers greater than those for other undergraduate students in using campus housing resources. Modest changes to the administration of the campus housing rules and procedures would ensure that they are better able to use this resource. They are also more likely than other UCI students to face food insecurity on a regular basis and to need to avail themselves of legal assistance available to UCI students. The design of these programs to address basic needs must better account for the specific needs of UCI undocumented students.

### **Area of Concern #1 – On-campus housing affordability and availability**

UCI housing is expensive. UCI residence hall housing requires a 12-month contract and the purchase of a meal plan; potential annual costs range from \$12,746 - \$14,801. Students find Arroyo Vista (AV) and Campus Village (CV) more affordable because they offer 9 month contracts and do not require a meal plan; potential annual cost is \$6,731. If AV and CV residents budget \$300-500 a month for food costs; their food and housing costs are approximately \$3,000 less than if they lived in a residence hall.

The lower costs of AV and CV housing increases student demand for these options, leaving them impacted and hard to access. Students must have applied for guaranteed housing by the priority deadline and only receive a limited number of years of guaranteed housing. Incoming first-years must apply by May 1 and receive two years. Incoming transfer students must apply by June 1 and receive one year. Those with guaranteed housing must fill out their housing preference application quickly; this year AV housing spots for guaranteed students filled up in less than 20 minutes of the application opening.

### **Recommendations:**

- Increase student awareness of application deadlines to facilitate their access to guaranteed housing and CV/AV housing.
- Set aside a number of rooms in AV and CV for undocumented students who do not have guaranteed housing.
- Establish a mechanism to petition for additional years of guaranteed housing based on extreme financial need.

### **Area of Concern #2 – Applying for on-campus housing**

The housing reservation system requires students to come up with \$350 deposits to reserve their space. These deposits must be made almost immediately, within 10 days, and with little advance notice.

**Recommendations:**

- Make students aware of when deposits might be due in the event they receive housing so that they can save up funds.
- Create a payment plan or other mechanism that will allow students to pay the fee over a longer period of time.
- Provide fee remissions that release extremely low-income students from this reservation fee.

**Area of Concern #3 – On-campus housing comfort and safety**

Students are often randomly/haphazardly placed in on-campus housing situations. In our current political climate, this creates issues for undocumented students who may be placed with students who are or appear to be xenophobic and anti-immigrant. This creates stressful living situations which can hamper academic performance. Further, it is difficult to switch roommates as this process is all student initiated, and they must find someone to switch with and get all invited parties to agree.

Students report not sharing their immigration status with their roommates in order to avoid conversations and preserve a sense of safety. However, not revealing one's immigration status can present a safety issue if immigration enforcement officers attempt to enter the premises. Specifically, unaware or ill-informed roommates may potentially grant officer's access, thus endangering the undocumented student roommate.

The Marco A. Firebaugh House – a theme in Arroyo Vista dedicated to building a community of undocumented students, students from mixed-status families, and allies – offers a critical opportunity to combat some of these issues. During the 2017-2018 academic year, the house hosted 24 undocumented students and will expand for the 2018-2019 academic year to include a second 16-person house dedicated to first year undocumented students. Undocumented students living in the house spoke about feeling an invaluable sense of community. It was an important space to build networks, find out about resources, and develop a strong sense of belonging and feelings of safety. In the student focus groups, we spoke explicitly about whether living in a house dedicated to undocumented students is a liability, and they were emphatic that the benefits vastly outweighed any potential risk of attracting the attention of anti-immigrant groups or immigration enforcement. To minimize risk, the houses are primarily advertised through the DREAM Center; student interest has been huge with over 50 students applying for 22 spots for the 2018-2019 academic year.

**Recommendations:**

- Expand the housing options that center around inclusive immigration issues to ensure that they are living around and near other undocumented students, students from mixed-status families, and allies. This should be in Arroyo Vista,



Campus Village, and the Residence Halls to ensure that students are able to select their preferred living situation but still access safe housing options.

- The Housing Office should create alternative and confidential procedures to switch roommates that does not put the burden on the student.
- Increase general student awareness about their rights in allowing law and immigration enforcement officers to enter dorm rooms. This could be through wide-spread distribution of know-your-rights cards or posting the information near fire safety information.

#### **Area of Concern #4 – Off-campus housing difficulties**

Given the high cost of on-campus housing, many students resort to living in off-campus housing. Securing such housing presents a problem for students who need a social security number and need to show a steady income (financial aid disbursements do not count). Most students manage this issue by having a parent co-sign; however, undocumented students and citizen students with undocumented parents have a hard time finding an eligible co-signer.

#### **Recommendation:**

- Explore alternative agreements with Irvine Company and other local landlords that serve UCI students. One possibility would be for UCI to serve as guarantor, with the understanding that if the student becomes delinquent on payment – just like tuition – they won't be able to enroll in the next semester's classes until they've resolved the issue.

#### **Area of Concern #5 – Food insecurity**

A 2016 survey found that 74% of UC undocumented students experience food insecurity, compared to 42% of the general UC student population. This appears to be particularly an issue for students in the residence halls who buy the least expensive meal plan that provides 100 meals a quarter (approx. 9 meals a week). Students fill this gap using the Fresh Hub food pantry, which is funded by UCOP through academic year 2018/2019. One particularly innovative effort is the Fresh Hub's Emergency Meal Swipe Program that provides food-insecure students with meal swipes that were either donated by other students or purchased as a block by the Fresh Hub.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Incorporate funding for the Fresh Hub within UCI's permanent budget to complement additional grant funds that the Hub may secure--and to ensure that, in the absence of external funding, the Hub continues to operate.
- Increase funding from the annual budget to the Fresh Hub to allow an expansion of services, including the maintenance of the Emergency Meal Swipe Program.

- Ensure that there are no unintended barriers or phrasing that leads undocumented students to self-select out of using food security resources. Encourage undocumented students to use existing resources.

**Area of Concern #6 – Access to campus legal services**

Legal services are a basic need for undocumented students who need to renew DACA and/or apply for other forms of immigration relief. The UC Immigrant Legal Services Center provides UC-wide legal services for this purpose. Currently, UCI has a resident immigration attorney who is funded 50% by the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center and 50% by the campus; UC Immigrant Legal Services is pushing for her costs to be absorbed by the campus if she is to continue solely serving UCI. Student demand for legal services is so high that she is no longer taking on new clients.

While UCI provides for free legal services, students are responsible for paying all fees associated with applications. The fee for DACA renewals is \$495, which is the most commonly filed application. Previously, students were able to receive grants from non-profit organizations or UCI emergency funds to pay for their renewal fees; these funds have run out and there is a sub-set of student DACA renewal applications that are prepared but have not been submitted due to lack of funds. This delay can endanger their ability to maintain DACA status given the small timeframe to renew.

**Recommendations:**

- As we note above, the position for the lawyer who current provides immigration related legal services to UCI students and their families needs to be funded fully from the permanent budget.
- Hire an additional lawyer or lawyers to meet student demand.
- Provide emergency funding for DACA renewal fees and other immigration fees.

**Area of Concern #7 – Increase access to clinical social workers.**

The campus social workers “provide private support for individual students during a medical, physical, familial, and/or emotional crisis.” They provide case management by developing comprehensive plans to support exceptionally at-risk students’ access to support services. Undocumented students are overrepresented in their cases.

UCI has 2.5 social workers to serve the entire campus population. This is a ratio of 1/15,000; most campuses have a ratio of 1/6,000. As a point of comparison, UCLA has 10 social workers. UCI’s office is understaffed which prevents them from directly advertising their services to students. In the case of undocumented students, they are unable to dedicate substantial time to being present in the DREAM Center and building relationships with students.

**Recommendation:**

- Hire a clinical social worker who is tasked with serving undocumented students for 50% of their workload. They would be located in the DREAM Center for 50% of their time. Their workload could include case management as well as taking on programming responsibilities, including facilitating support groups and providing low-stakes mental health counseling.

## **Part II. Section 5: Campus Climate**

Undocumented students do not report a markedly hostile campus climate. Instead, the main area of concern with campus climate stems from the prevalence of microaggressions, which occur when staff members are unable to answer questions or are not knowledgeable about undocumented students. A 2016 survey of UC undocumented students revealed that 56% had been given inaccurate or incorrect information about how to complete a university procedure as an undocumented student.

### **Area of Concern # 1 – Need for up-to-date information on campus policies and resources for undocumented students**

One of the ways that offices have been trained to deal with undocumented students is through ally training. Currently, the DREAM Center offers a 4.5 hour ally training that consists of:

- Legal and historical context of undocumented students in higher education (e.g. AB-540; DACA);
- Demographics of undocumented UCI students;
- Specific skills needed to support undocumented students (e.g. let them reveal their status on their own; don't ask personal questions; don't "out" someone; don't pity them); and
- Student panel talking about their lived experiences as undocumented students on campus.

The training is usually offered twice a year but there has been an increased interest. The Spring 2018 training had 250+ RSVPs and 5 separate sessions had to be offered.

This training provides a broad overview of undocumented student issues but does not always provide staff members with the up to date information and tools they need to advise on issues specific to their office. Further, front-line staff, such as student workers, are often not trained. Although they may not require the full training session for their jobs, they do need information appropriate to perform their job responsibilities.

Students end up accessing information via the DREAM Center. This puts a burden on the DREAM Center as they are not trained to deal with issues relevant to all the offices. It may also leave a group of students without access to information, because they do not know about the DREAM Center, or they do not feel comfortable going there.

**Recommendations:**

- The Office of Inclusive Excellence (OIE) should collaborate with all campus units that serve undocumented students to provide up-to-date professional development training so that they can provide students with accurate information. This will decrease some of the burden on undocumented student services. This is different than ally training and should be targeted information to assist staff in successfully serving students in their area of expertise. This would require annual training of all front-line staff who directly interact with students. Offices to target include: financial aid, registrar, admissions, career center, academic counseling, counseling center, housing, student health services, and undergraduate and graduate advisors.
- In collaboration with the DREAM Center, OIE should develop a plan and commit resources for expanding the delivery of the ally training to campus units and faculty. The demand for (and need for) this training is beyond the capacity of the DREAM Center. A model could be the current on-ground Title IX training. Our goal here is to ensure that the DREAM Center is not solely responsible for delivering this training, though it could and should provide guidance and curriculum to train trainers.
- OIE should distribute information about the campus' resources and best practices to staff, faculty, and teaching assistants, so they are prepared to deal with undocumented students' questions.
- All campus units serving undocumented students should increase access to information online by providing undocumented student specific information on all relevant offices' websites. This should not just be a link to the DREAM Center site but should replicate information in both places.
- The Division of Undergraduate Education should increase students' early awareness of the DREAM Center through the distribution of a packet of resource and information guides to admitted students who filed the California DREAM Act application. This packet could include a "resource map" for undocumented students so they know what resources and services are available and who they should talk to get current and up-to date answers about campus resources for undocumented students.

**Area of Concern #2 – Increase students' ability to access DREAM Center information and services**

Undocumented students report important benefits of being involved in the DREAM Center. However, it can sometimes be difficult to relay information about services and events to students. Currently, the only way the DREAM Center can disseminate information to the campus' undocumented students is through a weekly email sent out by the registrar. Often these emails are missed by students. Further, its format can make it difficult to effectively transmit information. The DREAM Center website

is, at best, rudimentary; the DREAM Center staff do not have the time or the resources to update and maintain the web site.

**Recommendations:**

- OIE and the central campus administration should provide the DREAM Center with the resources to develop and continually update a website for that includes basic information about their resources, services, and staff. It should also include duplicate information from the various campus' offices sites as well as the contact information for designated and trained staff members in relevant offices.
- The Office of Information Technology needs to increase accessibility of undocumented student list-serve and/or allow the DREAM Center to start their own voluntary list-serve that they control.

**Area of Concern #3 – Improve mutual awareness and understanding between students and campus police of current policy**

UCI Police Department has a strict policy to not ask about or investigate immigration-status related issues. This is further reinforced with the passage of Senate Bill 54, which legalizes and standardizes statewide non-cooperation policies between California law enforcement agencies and federal immigration authorities. It explicitly extends this to campus police. However, local and county level governments have announced legal challenges to this policy and new ways of facilitating access to undocumented immigrants who have been arrested.

**Recommendations:**

- Provide an official notification to students of campus police policies once they have been updated to ensure compliance with SB 54.
- Ensure that the campus police receive proper training so that their daily practice complies with new/changing policies.

**Area of Concern #4 – Adapting to changing state and federal immigration enforcement policies**

Students in the Task Force focus groups did not mention concerns about campus police. Students were, however, largely unaware of how campus police interacted with other police forces. They also expressed concerns about how changes in state or national immigration enforcement policies might affect their status on campus or their risks if stopped by the police. These policies are currently in flux as Attorney General Becerra develops guidelines for the implementation of SB-54 (the state sanctuary bill).

**Recommendation:**

- The DREAM Center in collaboration with Campus Counsel and the Campus police need to update Know Your Rights training for undocumented students and

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students from mixed-status families. Once updated, they need to publicize this information in the form of a widely distributed pamphlet for student use.

### **3. Career Preparation and the Post Graduate Experience of UCI Undocumented Undergraduate Students**

Undocumented students, both those with DACA status and especially those without, face unique challenges in preparing, applying for and financing graduate school, as well as in preparing for a transition to the workforce and securing professional employment in their desired fields. In general, UCI undocumented students have expressed concerns that the Division of Career Pathways has not always been equipped to provide them with resources, information or advice tailored to their specific needs. To some degree, these concerns have been confirmed by the Division of Career Pathways staff that the Task Force spoke with.

#### **Area of Concern #1 – Graduate school preparation**

Undocumented students do not perceive the Division of Career Pathways as being committed to and equipped to serve the specific needs of undocumented students. The Division of Career Pathways' general graduate preparation programs do not include information/resources/advice that is specific to the needs of undocumented students applying to graduate school.

This oversight can send the message that undocumented students are not seen as welcome or an important part of the UCI community, and inadvertently contributes to marginalizing their experiences and isolating them from the general student population.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Division of Career Pathways should collaborate with the DREAM Center – which currently offers programming on career preparation, graduate school preparation, and entrepreneurial opportunities for undocumented students – to host workshops and events jointly. These should be held both in the DREAM Center and in the Division of Career Pathways. Hosting joint events may serve as a means of enhancing the Division of Career Pathways' outreach to undocumented students at the same time as it facilitates information sharing and capacity building between DREAM Center and Division of Career Pathways' staff.
- In order to allow undocumented students to participate in the Division of Career Pathways' general graduate school preparation events, the Division of Career Pathways should collaborate with the DREAM Center to ensure that all graduate preparation workshops, events and materials incorporate current accurate information on requirements that are specific to undocumented graduate school applicants, and/or referrals to contacts/resources that can provide more detailed information. They should ensure that all workshop facilitators/activity leaders make clear that, while the needs of aspiring graduate students vary depending on their citizenship and immigration status, every effort will be made to provide information and support that is targeted to students unique needs.



### Part III: Career Preparation and the Post Graduate Experience of UCI Undocumented Undergraduate Students

- As appropriate, the Division of Career Pathways (as well as any other campus units with responsibilities for graduate school preparation for UCI undergraduates) should prepare undocumented-specific programming to address the needs of undocumented students considering graduate education.

#### **Area of Concern #2 – Graduate school preparation in STEM fields**

Undocumented students face particular difficulties in preparing for graduate school in STEM fields or medical school, when many of the research, internship, volunteer or other professional development opportunities that will help them to become a competitive applicant require DACA, and/or a social security number in order to be hired or to complete required background checks. These difficulties are compounded by some undocumented students' inability to travel safely, or fear of traveling, in order to access opportunities outside of the local area.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Schools should create additional “service learning” courses through which students can complete and receive credit for unpaid internships in or near campus.
- The campus should establish scholarships for unpaid internships in career-relevant fields for students who cannot work in their field of study.
- Schools and the Division of Career Pathways should establish relationships with clinics, labs and other work centers that are willing to adopt procedures for background checks that are accessible to students without DACA and/or social security numbers.
- Schools and the Division of Career Pathways should work with the UCI Hospital to establish internships for DACA and non-DACA undocumented students aspiring to healthcare careers.
- Schools and the Division of Career Pathways should provide funding to assist with transportation arrangements for students who secure internships or other professional development opportunities off campus.

#### **Area of Concern #3 – Test preparation for undocumented students pursuing admission to graduate and professional programs**

Although fee waivers for graduate school applications exist, low income undocumented students often struggle to pay for required tests, such as the GRE or the LSAT, and/or test preparation courses and materials; inability to pay these fees may determine which or how many graduate programs they apply for, compelling them to select schools to apply to for admission based on whether they require GRE or other test scores as part of the application process.

## Part III: Career Preparation and the Post Graduate Experience of UCI Undocumented Undergraduate Students

### **Recommendation:**

- The Division of Career Pathways should dedicate funds to provide stipends to cover the cost of test and test preparation materials

### **Area of Concern #4 -- Career Preparation/Life Skills**

Although the Division of Career Pathways seeks to educate prospective employers, many of those who recruit workers through the Career Center lack detailed knowledge about undocumented students' eligibility for paid employment. Their advertisements for workers are often worded in ways that (inadvertently or otherwise) discourage undocumented students from applying for positions.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Division of Career Pathways should expand upon its efforts to educate prospective employers by continuing to provide them with information about DACA, as well as by partnering with the DREAM Center to provide guidance to employers on how to word job advertisements/calls for applications in more inclusive ways.
- The Division of Career Pathways should actively compile internships opportunities with known employers who are willing to offer unpaid internships for undocumented students who are ineligible to work in the United States. This should then be made available to undocumented students who present themselves in the center.

### **Area of Concern #5 – Alternatives to formal salaried employment for undocumented UCI graduates**

Undocumented students, and the Division of Career Pathways' staff, are not always fully aware of the different legal options that undocumented students have for working in the United States without DACA status.

### **Recommendation:**

- Division of Career Pathways staff should undergo training to familiarize themselves with the legal process/requirements for working in the United States as an independent contractor; handouts/cards summarizing the various ways that students can meet the legal requirements for working in the United States, including independent contractor status, should be displayed in the Division of Career Pathways and made available to all students requesting consultations at the Division of Career Pathways, without regard for students' citizenship or immigration status. This information should also be made available on the Division of Career Pathways' website.

### **Area of Concern #6 – Financial literacy**

The Division of Career Pathways' financial literacy programming does not include information/resources/advice that is specific to the needs of undocumented students.

### Part III: Career Preparation and the Post Graduate Experience of UCI Undocumented Undergraduate Students

This can send the message that undocumented students are not seen as welcome or an important part of the UCI community, and inadvertently contributes to marginalizing their experiences and isolating them from the general student population.

Moreover, undocumented students, especially those from low income backgrounds, have a heightened need for financial education, since many are unsure about how their undocumented status impacts their ability to establish credit, to file taxes, purchase a car, navigate the health care system, or make other important financial decisions.

#### **Recommendations:**

- In order to allow undocumented students to participate in the Division of Career Pathways' financial education activities, the Division of Career Pathways should collaborate with the DREAM Center to ensure that all Division of Career Pathways financial literacy workshops, events, and materials incorporate current accurate information that is specific to undocumented students' financial circumstances, and/or referrals to contacts/resources that can provide more detailed information.
- The Division of Career Pathways should ensure that all workshop facilitators/activity leaders make clear that, while the financial circumstances of all students vary depending on their citizenship and immigration status, every effort will be made to provide information and support that is targeted to students' unique needs.
- In consultation with the DREAM Center, the Division of Career Pathways' staff should undergo training to familiarize themselves with the ways in which DACA and non-DACA undocumented students' legal status impacts their financial decision making options, so that this information can be made available as appropriate to students requesting consultations at the Division of Career Pathways.

#### **4. UCI Undocumented Graduate and Professional Students**

In this section, we focus on the unique challenges of undocumented graduate and professional school students. Because there are a relatively low number on campus, these students often feel particularly isolated and unsupported. These feelings of isolation are compounded by the insensitivity of (often well-meaning) faculty members regarding their status, the lack of programs that provide them with adequate administrative information, limited professional development opportunities, and post-graduate concerns. Financial concerns are also important issues for UCI's undocumented graduate students. These concerns include the limited research funding available (particularly if they are out-of-state students), the tax burden of non-resident tuition waivers, and heightened anxiety about the future funding landscape.

##### **Area of Concern # 1 – Small numbers of undocumented graduate students and consequent feelings of isolation**

Undocumented graduate and professional school students are underrepresented and often feel isolated. There is a need to increase recruitment and retention of undocumented graduate and professional school students.

##### **Recommendations:**

- UCI should affirmatively recruit graduate and professional school students from a diverse range of communities, regardless of their immigration status, with an eye towards creating a larger undocumented graduate community.
- These recruitment and enrollment efforts should include the provision of clear information on how immigration status will impact their financial assistance and/or opportunities to pursue research.

##### **Area of Concern # 2 – Community among undocumented graduate students**

The DREAM Center has been instrumental in serving undocumented undergraduate students by providing necessary information, practical assistance, and a sense of community. Given that there are only approximately 25 undocumented graduate and professional school students on campus, the majority of campus programs have focused mainly on undergraduates needs. Consequently graduate and professional school students do not feel that resources at the DREAM Center are as relevant or available to them. They also do not feel a sense of community, as they may not know others in the same situation, and often experience feelings of isolation and being unsupported by the university.

##### **Recommendation:**

- There should be a focused effort by Graduate Division, with consultation by the DREAM Center, to reach out to undocumented graduate and professional school students by developing programs and services that specifically address their needs. Possibilities for this programming include informational sessions about professional opportunities, coffee with the Dean of Graduate Studies once a quarter, the development of a virtual space to enable communication with other

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students, and regularly-scheduled social events to meet other undocumented graduate and professional school students.

- Graduate and professional school students should be included in the DREAM Center's distribution of information.

### **Area of Concern # 3 – Information on services to and resources for undocumented graduate students at the Departmental level**

Departments and university administration are perceived as misinformed, dismissive, and/or not understanding the problems that undocumented graduate and professional school students face. Often, undocumented graduate students rely on the other students for accurate information. This creates anxiety and distracts students from their academic pursuits.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Graduate Division should dedicate at least one staff member to issues affecting undocumented graduate and professional school students and to whom students can specifically ask questions. The continuity of a staff member in this position will ensure trust and a depth of knowledge of administrative concerns.
- Graduate division should ensure the professional development training of graduate directors and school and departmental administrative staff that support graduate studies on issues affected undocumented graduate students.
- Graduate Division and graduate directors should communicate more clearly to undocumented graduate and professional students to minimize anxiety and academic distractions.

### **Area of Concern # 4 – Funding for out-of-state undocumented graduate students**

One of the challenges facing graduate and professional school programs is recruiting and retaining out-of-state undocumented students. Without AB540 protections, out-of-state graduate and professional school students are ineligible for many sources of financial assistance. Although an out-of-state DACA student is eligible for employment as a teaching assistant or a graduate student research assistantship, they are ineligible for UC and state-funded grants and fellowships. This is a major obstacle to pursuing a graduate and professional school degree at UC Irvine for out-of-state undocumented students.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Whenever it is legally possible, grants and fellowships should remove the AB540 and DACA-status requirement.
- There should be an effort to develop independent sources of funding for undocumented graduate and professional school students, particularly those who

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are AB540-ineligible. This could overlap with the fundraising for private undergraduate education funds.

- The university should be clear on what types of financial aid will be available, if any, to undocumented, DACA, and AB540 students when they are applying and during recruitment. The university should also clearly communicate this information to departments and schools

### **Area of Concern # 5 – Planning to ensure continued funding and financial assistance for undocumented graduate students should national or state policies change**

DACA and AB540 students currently have the ability to work as teaching assistants and research assistants. However, there is no back-up plan, if the political landscape changes. Furthermore, undocumented students without one of these statuses cannot work legally, severely limiting UCI's ability to recruit these students.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Assign a development officer to search for and build donor connections to enable alternative funding and training sources.
- Increase funding to UC Presidential Fellowships and other fellowships for which undocumented graduate and professional school students are eligible.
- Continue and expand the UC Presidential Fellowships for Undocumented Graduate Students. The current budget of \$20,000 per year allocated as four \$5,000 fellowships based on financial need must increase as the number of undocumented graduate students increases.

### **Area of Concern #6 – Research funding and fellowship/awards**

Graduate and professional school students need an updated list of extramural sources of support for their research. Obtaining outside grants is not only often essential for research, but fellowships are considered as awards on which to build future competitiveness for the academic job market. For example, the NSF Graduate Fellowship is not accessible to undocumented students (even those with DACA status). Ford Foundation Fellowships are available to DACA recipients and the eligibility for the Soros Fellowship for New Americans was recently altered to include DACA recipients who have lost this protection due to delayed renewals or program rescission.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Graduate Division should collaborate with campus development and faculty to develop independent sources of funding, fellowships, and professional development opportunities for undocumented graduate and professional school students. This could overlap with the fundraising for private undergraduate education funds.

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- Graduate Division should provide up-to-date information on different funding opportunities available to undocumented students within broad disciplines, and available to departments. This could be an online "resources" page.
- Graduate Division and the Professional Schools should develop workshops that focus on specific strategies for confronting the academic and non-academic labor markets for undocumented graduate and professional school students.

### **Area of Concern #7 – UC MEXUS/CONACYT**

UC MEXUS co-administers the UC MEXUS-CONACYT Doctoral Fellowships for Mexican Students. UC MEXUS-CONACYT doctoral fellows receive non-resident tuition and fees, a stipend, and support towards health insurance provided by CONACYT and/or UC MEXUS for up to five years.

Until this year, Mexican-origin DACA recipients were eligible and could send a legal representative to CONACYT in Mexico City to accept the award. This allowed undocumented awardees with DACA to participate in the fellowship program. Now CONACYT is requiring that award recipients present themselves in person in Mexico City to accept the award. This effectively closes the door to fellowship awards for undocumented students.

### **Recommendation:**

- The UCI Academic Senate in collaboration with the system-wide Academic Senate should work the Office of the President to ensure that UC MEXUS-CONACYT returns to the previous policy allowing awardees' legal representatives to accept the awards in Mexico City.

### **Area of Concern #8 – Taxation of AB 540 waivers**

The university currently waives the non-resident student tuition (NRST) for AB540 students. However, the waived portion is subject to federal and state income taxes, which can become a financial hardship for graduate and professional school students.

### **Recommendations:**

- Graduate Division together with the Financial Aid office should provide financial counseling to graduate and professional school students about AB540 waivers and their taxes.
- Graduate Division should confirm whether the NRST can be considered non-taxable and communicate the information to the students.

### **Area of Concern #9 – Classroom climate and advising**

Students have reported being repeatedly "outed" in class by faculty members. While instructors may be well-meaning, this leads to stress, isolation, and feelings of harassment. If students bring up their status, that is their prerogative. But an instructor should not initiate revealing a student's status for the purpose of class

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discussion nor spotlight students who may have previously revealed their status in or outside the class context.

Students have also reported that faculty are sometimes aggressively recommending that students take accommodations for their status. Again, while the faculty may be expressing concern, the recommendations make the students feel as if they are presumed unable to perform academically.

Students who report uncomfortable relationships with advisors and/or faculty do not know where to turn for advice.

### **Recommendations:**

- Faculty and TAs should receive clear instructions and sensitivity training that explicitly describes the negative implications of using specific students as examples of immigration issues.
- Although the role of faculty and graduate advisors is to help inform students of options for accommodation, the final decision rests with the students. Faculty and graduate advisors should allow students to make the decision without pressure.
- OIE should coordinate with Graduate Division and Professional Schools to distribute a faculty/staff "Best Practices" document regarding undocumented graduate students.
- Graduate Division and department graduate directors should make information available to students about campus and departmental resources to seek guidance when facing problems ranging from mentoring, advisement to hostile learning environments. The curation of this information should be coordinate by the newly appointed staff person in Graduate Division responsible for supporting undocumented graduate students (see Area of Concern #3 above).

### **Area of Concern #10 – DECADE advising**

DECADE mentors are not given protocols for addressing issues facing undocumented graduate and professional school students. Undocumented graduate and professional school students observed that departments had sometimes presented themselves during recruitment as friendlier to undocumented students than they had turned out to be. Issues identified by undocumented graduate and professional school students included funding difficulties, having to explain their situations to staff and faculty who did not know much about immigration status issues or who dismissed the difficulties faced by undocumented graduate students, or being called out in class as undocumented. The information that DECADE mentors are given in training does not include best practices for mentoring undocumented students, though as of this Spring quarter, they are required to attend an ally training.



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### **Recommendations:**

- The DECADE program should provide guidance on best practices for DECADE mentors to convey to their departments. The program should make clear where to find undocumented student information through Graduate Division or other offices on campus.
- The DECADE program should also inform mentors about undocumented student applications, admission, and funding in the presentations that DECADE mentors are required to give to admissions committees each year.
- DECADE mentors should address undocumented student issues within departments and schools and make themselves available for information and consultation. DECADE should support these efforts and offer time and space for interaction among mentors about their activities.

### **Task Force Membership:**

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Elizabeth Allen, English  
Anita Casavantes Bradford, Chicano/Latino Studies & History  
Leo Chavez, Anthropology  
Laura Enriquez, Chicano/Latino Studies  
Szu-Wen Wang, Chemical Engineering & Materials Science  
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Christine Aguilar, Senate Analyst

### **Guests:**

Cesar Barrios, Academic Advisor, School of Engineering  
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Deisy Escobedo, Academic Advisor, School of Social Ecology  
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