On 23 January 2019, the CSUDH Academic Senate held a spring working retreat. The retreat employed a roundtable format similar to that of our fall retreat, in which Senators rotated through six tables, each addressing a distinct topic and facilitated by a team of moderators. Senators and guest participants were encouraged to discuss and share both their own thoughts and those of their colleges, departments, programs, and units on each of the six topics.

The topics, questions, and summaries of the table discussions are provided below.

**Table 1—UCC and Curriculum Review**  
(Moderators: Kim Costino & Sheela Pawar)

The original nine questions posed have surfaced in meetings of the college curriculum chairs as part of efforts since last spring to strengthen the curriculum review process. During the retreat, the moderators pivoted to a new set of questions to better get at the responses they were seeking.

1) What is the purpose of Curriculum Review? What is it supposed to accomplish/ensure?  
2) What do we value about our current process? What do we definitely want to keep?  
3) What problems consistently arise?  
4) What is the role and purpose of each level/step in the process? What is each step responsible for and what information/documents does each step need in order to fulfill these responsibilities?  
5) What does it really mean to “consult” with other departments?  
6) What criteria and process do we use to navigate the territory wars?  
7) What is the relationship between Curriculum Review and Assessment/USLOAC?  
8) What role do budget resources play in curriculum approval? What is the process/mechanism for having budget conversation and who ultimately gets to make what decisions?  
9) How much autonomy and how much consistency can we stand across the Colleges? Once we decide what needs to be consistent, we need to define what those consistencies are.

The initial nine questions listed above, generated a number of comments such as:  
*Senators stated that the purpose of the curriculum process should not be editing syllabi.*  
*Senators observed that the current process is murky and byzantine, and stated that we need a clear process that allows us to track the progress of proposals through the system.*  
*Senators felt the process takes too long.*  
*Senators observed that the committees focus on minor details and minutia, etc.*

The moderators had heard these responses before (because they’re apt), and they were not the type of responses that we were looking for. UCC is in the middle of a process of describing the
role of the curriculum process itself, as well as the roles of the various parts and stakeholders in that process. To that end, they stopped asking the questions posed on the printouts from the Senate Executive Committee and instead posed the following questions:

1) (As a faculty member) if you are creating a new course or program, who do you think has a stake in it, who needs to know, and why?

Senators responded that proposals need to clearly demarcate how their disciplinary lens differs from that of other disciplines. Non-experts need to be able to see clearly the differences that various disciplines bring to the same subjects. In other words, there is a need for a level of committee that does not consist of disciplinary experts.

Senators stated that the dean needs to have some role in the process to ensure appropriate resources exist.

Senators also stated that the campus-wide sharing process needs to be retained and enhanced.

Lastly, Senators offered that curriculum committees should review some or all of the following: SLOs, PLOs, course descriptions (as opposed to syllabi).

**Table 2—General Education**

(Moderators: Pat Kalayjian & Dana Ospina)

Dean Costino is working with GEC Chair Kalayjian and others to hold student focus groups regarding G.E. Senators and guest participants provided their perspectives for six questions.

1) What is General Education?

*Senators were generally in agreement about the definition of General Education, using phrases such as “broad based,” “breadth of knowledge,” and “an integrated course of study” in both liberal arts and scientific disciplines.*

2) Why do students need to take G.E. courses?

*Senators offered that G.E. courses ensure that students have exposure to a wide range of perspectives, cultures, disciplines, and methodologies. Further, this broad exposure is instrumental in helping students to evaluate issues from different perspectives, meet students with a wide array of interests and experiences, and develop multifaceted views of the world.*

*Senators stated that G.E classes also offer an opportunity to explore disciplines and can help undecided students determine their majors. It is through G.E. courses that students develop skills that help them to contextualize their chosen areas of specialization.*

3) What role does G.E. play in a university education?
Senators stated that G.E. courses align with and are critical to our institutional learning outcomes and produce well-rounded students.

Senators observed G.E. courses play an important role in a universal education and serve as a scaffolding/shared platform for the development of similar types of universal skills, such as writing, communication, and critical thinking.
Senators also observed that G.E. courses introduce students to the realities of the world and allow them to see themselves in other members of our community. Also, these courses contribute to the development of good global citizens and educate students in ways that will allow them to make informed and important contributions to society.

4) How do departments decide what G.E. classes to offer?

When it comes to determining which G.E. classes to offer, departments differ in their approaches. Some Senators expressed that a G.E. course can be one of the most important offerings from a department, while others offered that G.E. has the lowest priority in their departments, and that the least qualified faculty in the department are assigned to teach G.E. classes.

Some Senators felt that G.E. is more flexible now than it was in the past, and that there is more departmental freedom to select courses. They believe that this freedom leads to more faculty engagement with G.E., since faculty are able to teach to their interests.

Other Senators felt that G.E. classes were determined by whichever courses would generate the highest FTE and are the cheapest to offer. There was the sense in some departments that practical considerations may override philosophical ones.

5) What are the important connections between G.E. and your major or minor program?

Some Senators in the humanities offered that G.E. is important because it is the way that we ensure that students receive education in the liberal arts and develop cultural understanding as a result. For Senators in the sciences, there was a similar sentiment; G.E. science courses provide an opportunity for non-science students to develop some familiarity with the scientific process and to be able to apply that knowledge to current world events, such as global warming.

6) How is G.E. important to student success on campus? In life after the degree?

Senators appeared to be in universal agreement that G.E. courses contribute to student success on campus and beyond, offering that G.E. courses support the development of the holistic or whole person.

G.E. courses introduce basic, foundational skills that students need throughout their education. This skill development extends to soft skills that are useful to employment in many fields and in areas outside of the major.
G.E. core competencies are very useful for lifelong learning. To that point, one faculty member observed that these courses “contribute to personal growth through incremental challenges, which leads to students becoming more sophisticated learners.”

One topic that came up in discussion but that was not addressed directly in the questioned posed was the difference between faculty and student perceptions of the purpose and value of G.E. courses. Senators and guest participants discussed how to better convey the purpose of G.E. to students. They suggested that perhaps NSO and Advising can help faculty to educate students on why G.E.s exist. It was also suggested that adjusting the catalog and encouraging students to read the course descriptions would be helpful. A number of faculty members also mentioned that reducing the class size would be helpful in improving outcomes.

Table 3—Cultural Pluralism
(Moderators: Kate Esposito & Enrique Ortega)

As a result of requirements in EO 1100R, Cultural Pluralism is now a stand along requirement outside of G.E. We are using the current change to initiate dialog on the topic. Senators and guest participants discussed five questions.

1) What do we mean by the term "cultural pluralism"?

*Senators observed that the term cultural pluralism should go beyond a dictionary definition. They also stated that they would not want the term to become a “catch all” or “loaded” phrase that ends up with a broad meaning like “what has happened to the term diversity (“It has become everything and nothing”).*

*Senators stated that Cultural Pluralism should allow students to study, respect, tolerate, and accept ideas from people with a different background from their own. A number of senators indicated that we had to allow for the fact that cultures are constantly changing and that imposing definitions may sometimes not allow a culture to change or be fluid. The term should also allow for a review or reflection of how cultures emerge, how they are experienced, and how they change.*

*Senators also stated that we must integrate social justice to the working definition of the term.*

2) What do we want students to know and be able to do with respect to the term?

*Students should be encouraged to value and understand their roots. They should also be encouraged to reflect on the fact that cultures evolve.*

*Students should be taught to be aware of the dominant narrative in their field and to recognize that the narratives or stories of some social groups are not represented in the narratives that drive many academic fields.*
Students should be presented with the term culture from local to global meanings of the word and what it means to understand one’s own background in light of one’s local, state, national, continental, and global context.

3) Do we like this term, or do we want to modify it?

We need to define the term.

4) In what ways and to what extent should attention to "cultural pluralism" be included in our G.E. outcomes? In our institutional outcomes?

We need to do a review of which classes are currently integrating cultural pluralism into their curriculum and maybe review which classes are demonstrating culturally responsive pedagogy (including contributions, ideas, stories, narratives from historically underrepresented voices in the field).

5) Could we this outcome by creating "cultural pluralism" designations for other GE, major, and minor courses that meet agreed-upon criteria? We could consider requiring students to take x number of classes (major and/or G.E.) in order to fulfill the requirement.

On this subject Senators raised a series of questions: Who exactly will define cultural pluralism as it pertains to our graduation requirements? How will this be determined? What expertise will the person/body have to be able to define this term?

Table 4—PTEs & Best Practices for Assessing Teaching
(Moderators: Reza Boroon & Katy Pinto)

As a result of recent PTE issues and the email discussion that followed, we are taking the opportunity to: 1) consider the current goals of administering PTEs and 2) consider the ideal goals of administering PTEs. Senators and guest participants responded to a series of 6 questions on this topic.

1) What are the current CSUDH goals of student teaching evaluations?

Senators offered that current goals included improving one’s classes and inclusion in RTP evaluations.

Senators felt that variously that PTEs are demoralizing and biased (at both student and RTP levels). They felt that the questions don’t match the goals because they are too subjective. They also saw no distinction being made between summative and formative evaluations.

2) What are the ideal goals of student teaching evaluations?

Senators believed the ideal goals of PTEs are to improve teaching, to provide honest feedback, to improve student learning, and to conform to best practices and inform peer review during the RTP process.
3) How do students benefit by assessing their learning experience and what questions might better facilitate such goals?

Senators responded that PTE questions should focus on actual learning material and that they should be factual in nature.

Senators also offered that questions should address general instructor attributes, such as effectiveness and enthusiasm. PTEs can also solicit student perceptions on specific instructor behaviors, such as providing feedback.

Some example PTE questions provided by Senators were “What is the important thing you learned?” and “Did the professor follow the syllabus?”

Senators suggested that PTEs be administered at two points in time.

4) How do professors benefit and what questions might better facilitate such goals?

Senators offered some of the same suggestions for facilitating more a beneficial experience for faculty that they did for students; namely, that the questions be about actual learning material and that they be factual, and that PTEs be administered twice in the semester.

Additionally, Senators offered new questions such as “What is your anticipated grade?” Senators recommended focusing on trends in PTEs versus focusing on the one-point-in-time PTE format.

5) What are additional ways of assessing teaching effectiveness?

Senators suggested peer assessments, teaching portfolios, narratives, and department syllabi reviews (these reviews should be provided by content area experts in order to keep content relevant—OT reviews their syllabi as a faculty).

Senators also stated that the focus should be on qualitative replies instead of quantitative questions.

6) What should be the next steps to continue this discussion and move into action steps?

Senators recommended the following improvements to the current PTE process:

I. Possible Ways to improve Response Rates
   a. PTE process—PTE access could be made available to faculty, so that faculty could open PTEs in their classrooms, and students could complete in the classroom, but electronically

   b. Student Incentives (administrative level)
      1. Student could access grades only after PTEs were completed
2. Paid Incentives (raffles)

c. Student Participation
   1. Active students only vs. Inactive students

II. Use of PTEs
   a. NTTF do not have a way to really address any negative PTE feedback they have if they
don’t do a yearly review of PTEs
   b. PTEs are largely used for RTP and interpretation and use of them is not standardized

III. Format of PTEs

Table 5—Faculty & Setting the Curve for Student Retention/Graduation
(Moderator: Laura Talamante)

President Parham recently sent a CSUDH team to learn more about the change in practices at
Georgia State University that has significantly moved their needle on student retention and
graduation. What we’ve both noticed is that changes in practices did not largely include faculty,
except in Math. So how can our faculty set the curve in this area?

Senators and guest participants responded to two broad questions which are merged according to
topics in the summary.

1) What are faculty practices that are currently working? What would we need to do to take the
practice to scale?

   o High Impact Practices?
   o First Year Experience?
   o Design Your Life?
   o Writing Across the Curriculum?
   o Service Learning?
   o Undergraduate Research
   o Other BA/MA faculty practices, including librarian faculty practices?

2) What do faculty need to support these practices (e.g. compensation for independent study,
thesis supervision, etc.)?

   **High Impact Practices:** Many Senators stated that faculty find success with HIPs that provide
opportunities beyond class assignments. Senators noted that capstones are magnets for HIPs.

   **HIPS Consolidation:** Faculty questioned how to reach more students w/HIPS and suggested
having them coordinated under 1 umbrella.
Faculty also expressed interest in centralizing how professors/students can access information regarding the HIPS that are already working on our campus. Faculty indicated the need to move away from separate budgets across the campus to support HIPs and have them coordinated in one place to ease faculty’s ability to access resources and receive communication more uniformly.

Graduate level HIPs: Senators discussed the value of graduate level high impact practices, including the practice of scaffolding research process across five semesters, which was very successful. Senators mentioned reading, qualitative/quantitative methodology, technical writing, citations, how to construct narratives using evidence, data collection, and presenting at Student Research Day. It was suggested that these practices could be layered into the undergraduate experience, which some professors indicated they are already doing, including theories/methods classes where students use theories/methods in learning and writing.

Senators observed that graduate programs need more TAs.

First Year Seminar: A survey of students in class revealed a positive experience, especially summer bridge, peer mentors, and workshops on school/personal life. Faculty questioned how better to share back w/others the success of First Year Seminar and ways to move the program out of its silo.

Faculty also expressed the need to increase TT faculty in FYS so that more programs can participate.

Design Your Life: Senators discussed successful practices by professors using design principles in assignments in courses already in the curriculum. A student survey indicates students appreciated the following practices, which made them think about their college experiences and future life: Students discovered more options for future than they thought. Students also benefited from prototyping – talking to people in professions of interest – and internships, as well as from creating career/life plans and connecting to educational goals/experiences inside/outside class.

Writing Across the Curriculum: Faculty believed in the importance of writing development across the undergraduate experience. Best practices that work in larger classes (50-60 students): Senators mentioned that faculty currently are experimenting with short writing assignments (500 words) that students revise & resubmit.

Senators recommend expanding the WAC training. Students also need training in writing beyond the classroom, such as when they submit petitions without taking care to use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Senators voiced the need for support for issues of reading comprehension, which is connected to writing success. Strong writing programs need support for reading comprehension. Support for reading comprehension also aids in the development of critical thinking skills.
Senators also want to see an increase in student support services. For example, more writing support is needed. There is a strong desire for faculty-based tutoring possibly through the creation of a distinct writing center:

**Community Service Learning.** Senators offered the example of students working on political campaigns leading to acceptance in graduate programs, prof/paid internships, and jobs. Others tied research projects to Community Service Learning (e.g., interviews w/professionals tied to researching a problem in the community). Internships/service learning is required in some programs.

Senators would like to see more internships and community service learning opportunities. There is a need for support for more connections in the community, for cultivating relationships so that community members initiate contact.

Senators recommend increasing the number of college–level internship coordinators.

**Undergraduate research** Senators stated that undergraduate research increases the number of students going to grad school – 90% in one program. Librarians can help w/undergrad research. For example, librarians can create online interactive tutorials for evidence based practices. Senators discussed hands-on experience as part of course work. Senators highlighted Community Service Learning and field practice w/professors as other forms of effective undergraduate research.

Senators wondered how the Office of Undergraduate Research can reach more students and faculty. They also expressed the need for more support for field practice with professors.

Faculty Librarians indicated interest in finding more ways to support student success through simplifying guides and tutorials (face-to-face/online) for research, including how to read disciplinary journals. Faculty librarians recommended that classroom faculty work with faculty librarians and include library tutorials in syllabus grading to increase student use of such resources.

**Student Academic Journals:** Senators mentioned increasing the number of student journals on campus. Student publishing strengthens writing and editing skills, and prepares students to deliver presentations.

The University Library has a Digital Initiatives Librarian (Dana Ospina) who is interested in supporting undergraduate publishing.

Senators observed that an increase in library staff support would allow Ospina to work with more programs.

**Participation Professional Societies/Conferences:** Senators mentioned taking students to professional conferences, having them submit proposals to present, and creating bootcamps to prepare them for conference presentations.
Senators noted that it would be helpful both to increase travel funds for field trips and to make clear how to apply for them. There is a strong need for funding for chartered busses, which increase the quality of student experiences and increase student attendance.

**Reading comprehension:** Senators indicated success with reading/study groups, which are assigned and graded, to hold students accountable for reading and discussion. Other faculty focus on techniques for teaching reading for the discipline and scaffolding exercises. Textbook companies offer online resources that support student comprehension in reading via quiz/feedback.

**Invasive Advising:** Senators mentioned that this practice keeps students on track for graduation (writing classes, too many/few classes), increases majors, increases retention.

**Classroom practices:** Senators stated that clickers engage students and keep them accountable, especially in large classes. Flipped classrooms increase student success for some faculty but not others. (See meta-analysis by Chickering & Bamson for 7 best practices)

Senators wanted more professional development/technical training on the topic of clicker pedagogy.

**Supporting student success:** Senators discussed engaging students in learning and growth beyond focusing on graduating students in 4-6 years. Senators would like to see more recognition that one size does not fit all for student success and to make that message clearer in advising throughout the campus.

Senators believe we need to address students’ basic needs and increase the amount of campus resources so that students are able to be classroom ready.

Senators believe we need more psychological counselors to address student mental health needs in order for them to be successful in their studies.

Senators would like more career center counselors to support DYL practices in the classroom.

**Short-term study abroad:** Senators observed that short-term study abroad provides valuable exposure to different cultures.

Senators would like to see more student/faculty financial support for Study Abroad. They recommend offering more short-term opportunities to increase the number of students who can participate. They recommend exploring funding opportunities through IRA funds to increase student opportunities for Study Abroad experiences.

**Additional recommendations made by Senators:**

**Faculty concerns:** Senators mentioned the need to scale-up tenure-track faculty to alleviate the burden currently experienced and to consider reassigned time for faculty advising Independent Study.
Senators argued that a lower TTF teaching load allows for more faculty to implement HIPS, including training, designing, and implementing. High touch practices take time for high excellence.

Senators also would like to see an increase in skills training opportunities for all faculty.

Senators also mentioned the ratio of advisors to students in some programs needs addressed. They also recommended students might benefit from centralizing the advising space rather than having advisors spread throughout campus.

Writing mathematical proofs – communicating to students – still looking for best practices to increase student success. Senators indicated needing small class sizes for courses emphasizing writing proofs. Math lab needs support for professors to tutor not just students tutoring students.

Senators indicated that more Supplemental Instructions Leaders (SILs) are needed for more disciplines and more faculty tutors are needed for more disciplines.

Senators observed the benefits for student learning when professors co-teach and are allowed to cross-list these courses. They recommended lessoning the FTE focus to allow more cross-listing and co-teaching of courses.

Senators mentioned programs are experimenting with cohorting students across courses and have received positive feedback from students. Other faculty are forming class research/writing groups to cohort students, and students reporting positive experiences from the practice.

Senators requested support for developmental learning across the curriculum.

**Table 6—PM 2018-01 Revision (Administrative Review Process for Administrator III and IV Positions)**
(Moderators: Ivonne Heinze-Balcazar, Thomas Norman & Deborah Roberson-Simms)

Table Six provided an opportunity for Senators and guest participants to discuss President Parham’s revision to former President Hagan’s MPP review memorandum. Participants reviewed the draft revised policy, the feedback/survey instrument, and the process for review.

1) Policy

*Senators wanted an expanded definition of confidentiality as stated in the existing PM; there is an understanding of the need to balance the perspective of the person given feedback with anonymity.*

*Senators believe that the survey should be open for at least two weeks, and four weeks might be better.*
Senators stated that the policy should clearly articulate that all staff and faculty will be permitted to provide feedback.

Senators would like to mandate feedback on an annual basis; for instance, why not solicit search committee feedback in the first year, or at least earlier than after 3 years.

2) Feedback Instrument

Senators would like to see additional categories added (i.e., faculty in the college, faculty outside the college, staff, students, faculty rank, major, student year, etc., and check all that apply). Senators recommended adding reviewer identifiers such as the number of years the reviewer has been on campus; the frequency of interactions, or examples of interactions with the MPP under review; and to consider adding demographic data, such as gender identification.

Senators offered suggestions for additional questions such as “does the MPP under review practice shared governance?” and “Is the MPP under review accessible on campus/physically on campus?” and “Does the MPP under review adhere to policies and procedures?”

Senators also provided an addition to the section on professional development to inquire about whether or not the MPP under review promotes the growth of subordinates.

Senators recommended making the form different for Academic vs. Staff MPPs. They suggested providing space at the end to allow for additional feedback.

Senators recommended looking at the form used to evaluate staff to get ideas.

3) Process

The process should commence feedback solicitation in February and allow reviewers 2-4 weeks to respond. Senators suggested tracking submissions by email to validate them.

Senators stated that anonymity will ensure confidentiality; without anonymity participation may be significantly limited, especially as it related to non-tenured faculty. Specifically, make name identification optional.

Senators voiced concerns regarding retaliation, even though only the President, Vice President, and AVP, HR would have access to feedback forms.

Senators stated, with regard to whether the review would take the form of an online survey or a PDF, that having the ability to save their work and return to complete the review in multiple sittings is important.

Senators wanted the process to allow verbal feedback

Senators stated the importance of overall transparency.