



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLOR
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
TEL: (858) 534-3130

9500 GILMAN DRIVE
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92093-0001
URL: WWW.EVC.UCSD.EDU

February 13, 2025

Subject: Response to Senate Feedback – Implementation of Academic Support Model (ASM)

Dear Senate Chair Graeve,

Thank you for your thoughtful and constructive feedback regarding the implementation of the Academic Support Model (ASM). We fully appreciate the concerns expressed by the Academic Senate and are committed to ensuring a smooth and transparent transition. Below, I will address each of the points raised in the Senate's memo.

Rationale for the Development of a New Academic Support Model

The ASM was developed to provide greater flexibility for schools in making financial decisions that best align with their academic priorities. While enrollment plays a key role in determining resources, we recognize that other factors—such as research growth, experiential learning, and new program development—are also critical. The ASM allows for these considerations by giving deans the discretion to balance multiple priorities while maintaining overall institutional financial stability. To address concerns about how these elements are incorporated, we are now engaged in sharing a comprehensive explanation of the rationale and key benefits of the model.

Plans to Enhance Transparency

Transparency is a fundamental aspect of the ASM's success. While deans will have greater discretion, our office will provide guidelines and best practices to ensure a **clear, predictable, and equitable** allocation process within each school. Additionally, we will work with deans to establish a **standardized communication framework** so that departments receive timely and consistent updates on funding decisions. To further support transparency, we are developing a **dashboard** that will provide visibility into allocation metrics and decision-making processes. The deans expressed their desire to implement their own communication plan and timeline to fit their structure and culture.

Based on feedback from the deans and the Senate, we have concluded that it will be wise to roll out the ASM in two phases. This will make the transition more gradual and predictable and will ensure there is within-school consultation and clarity about within-school allocation methodologies.

Phase 1 (FY 2025-26):

- We will implement the new ASM method for allocating funds to the schools. Each school will continue to use the current methodology for allocating funds to the departments and programs within the school.

- This approach will allow ample time for the dean to undertake consultation and engagement with their leadership teams in order to determine the allocation methodology to be used within the school in future years. Academic Affairs – Finance & Administration will collaborate with each school to establish their internal allocation model and ensure it is clear and transparent.
- During this period, we will also focus on developing a transparency dashboard to ensure all necessary data is accessible to departments, as well as schools.
- The responsibility for start-up funding and renovations will remain centralized during Phase 1.

Phase 2 (FY2026-27 and beyond):

- Schools begin to use their internal allocation model for allocating funds to their departments and programs.
- We anticipate it should be possible to reallocate start-up/renovation funds to the schools during this phase, possibly in FY2026-27.

This phased approach ensures that departments experience minimal disruption while schools gradually assume greater fiscal accountability.

Clear Plans to Address Faculty FTE Allocations and Salary Programs

Faculty FTE allocations and salary programs are critical concerns, and we recognize the need for clarity. Funding for new FTEs will still be subject to strategic planning at the university level. Request for faculty lines will follow a clear protocol. We are creating a detailed document outlining these processes and will ensure that leaders and faculty have clear points of contact for related inquiries.

Incentivizing Research

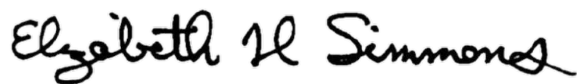
We recognize the importance of maintaining strong institutional support for research, particularly given current national uncertainties related to research support and IDC rates. The ASM does not diminish research funding but allows schools to **align their support structures with their specific research needs**. Considering the growing nature of interdisciplinary partnerships, we will engage in a review of the ICR distribution when the time is right.

Assessment

Continuous evaluation and refinement of the ASM are essential. We fully support the inclusion of Senate representatives. We will consult with the Senate to create an ASM Assessment and Advisory Committee, which will ensure that faculty and chair perspectives inform the ongoing assessment of the model and allow nimble and fast actions as needed. Additionally, we will establish **review metrics** to monitor the ASM's impact, particularly on departments and programs that may not experience growth through enrollment. This will allow us to make recommendations for methodological adjustments to ensure that all academic units are adequately supported.

My team and I deeply appreciate the Academic Senate's partnership in this effort. Your insights and collaboration are invaluable in ensuring that the ASM strengthens our institution while maintaining transparency and equity. We look forward to continued dialogue and will provide regular updates as we implement the ASM.

With best regards,



Elizabeth H. Simmons
Executive Vice Chancellor

c: Chancellor Khosla

Marie Carter Dubois, Associate Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration

Robert Continetti, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor

Judy Kim, Interim Dean, Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs

John Moore, Dean, Undergraduate Education

Carlos Jensen, Associate Vice Chancellor, Educational Innovation

Attachment: [December 18, 2024] Senate memo re Implementation of Academic Support Model (ASM)

December 18, 2024

ELIZABETH H. SIMMONS
Executive Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Implementation of Academic Support Model (ASM)

Dear Elizabeth:

In recent weeks, Senate leadership has heard significant concerns from faculty expressing uncertainty, anxiety, and confusion regarding our new Academic Support Model (ASM). To gain a better sense of the concerns, we consulted with the Senate members of the Fall 2024 Implementation Advisory Committee. Our takeaway is that the transition to the ASM gives individual schools on general campus more autonomy to make decisions about funding priorities and allocations. This move allows school deans greater flexibility to determine how limited resources are distributed to address school needs. While this proposed model is a reasonable path forward in principle, the details matter significantly, and it seems that there are some remaining issues and questions that still need to be finalized.

Effectively responding to these remaining issues, defining a clear and transparent communication protocol that is smoothly implemented (as we have previously discussed), and responding to faculty questions (perhaps in the form of a Q&A document that can be shared with faculty), would go a long way in facilitating a smooth rollout to the campus community and assuage the many concerns we have heard. Given the current budget climate, there is already significant anxiety across campus. Rolling out the ASM while some questions remain unresolved is likely to contribute to this sentiment and cause unnecessary confusion, anger, and misinformation among the faculty. There is an aggressive timeline for the rollout, with implementation beginning in January 2025 in preparation for a July 1, 2025, effective date. Based on what we have heard from our constituents, it would be unwise to announce in January that we are now under the new model, without first making sure that concerns are addressed.

Below we outline some of the main concerns and questions:

1. **Rationale for the Development of a New Academic Support Model.** Faculty have limited context from which to determine whether the new ASM is an improvement over our current model. A clear rationale is required to explain why an updated ASM is needed and how the new ASM addresses existing problems and strengthens our academic and research objectives. Under the new ASM, it is our understanding that growth for units is primarily driven by class size and enrollment. It is unclear how other priorities, such as the growth of our research enterprise, maintenance of quality undergraduate experiences through experiential learning and small class sizes, and new program development efforts, are factored into the decision-making process. This should be explained.
2. **Plans to Enhance Transparency.** Since school deans will have more discretion over budget decisions, concerns have been raised that this will lead to less transparency for departments. At present, departments understand the current centralized model well enough to reasonably predict their funding allocation. For the ASM to be successful, deans will need to articulate a clear and predictable allocation process and communication plan for sharing decisions with departments.
3. **Phased Approach to Implementation.** Advisory committee members explained that while the new ASM will be implemented for July 1, 2025, this does not mean that there are immediate and drastic changes to school or department allocations this year, although deans will have greater fiscal accountability. It would be helpful to clarify with departments and programs what to expect for the upcoming fiscal year. Communication plans need to clearly convey the timeline for which

elements of the new ASM are being implemented and when, specifying what changes departments can expect in the short term and plans for the long term.

4. **Clear Plans to Address Faculty FTE Allocations and Salary Programs.** Uncertainty remains about how FTEs will be allocated under the new ASM and where funding comes from for various types of salary increases (cost of living adjustments, merits and promotions, including accelerations, and retentions). Faculty will inevitably ask questions about funding for new FTEs and what happens to existing FTEs in the event of retirement, separation, or cases when faculty at the Assistant-rank are not promoted.
5. **Incentivizing Research.** Support for research is already strained based on current IDC rates. If more responsibility for supporting research is shifted to the schools, it would be beneficial to communicate impacts of the ASM to research support and growth.
6. **Assessment.** Defining plans and a timeline for evaluating the new ASM from the onset is critical to assure faculty that the model can be further refined and adjusted over time and there is accountability and transparency for school decisions. When Senate Council reviewed the Spring 2024 Task Force report, it was noted that smaller departments and programs that cannot grow may be negatively impacted by the new ASM's emphasis on enrollment growth, yet these departments and programs are still critical to the university's academic mission. This is an issue that faculty will pay attention to in the coming years, and I strongly recommend that Senate representatives be part of the oversight structure.

Thank you for taking these suggestions into consideration. The Academic Senate would very much like to collaborate with you and your team to successfully implement the new ASM. Adoption of the ASM on a timeline that factors in Senate consultation and time for Academic Affairs to ensure potential issues and common questions have been addressed in a well-reasoned manner will benefit the campus.

Sincerely,



Olivia A. Graeve
Chair
San Diego Divisional Academic Senate

cc: Pradeep K. Khosla, Chancellor
Rebecca Jo Plant, Senate Vice Chair