



November 8, 2022

Updated membership

Max Auffhammer, Vice Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate (co-chair)

Andrea Lambert-Tan, Assistant Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff to the EVCP (co-chair)

Jennifer Ahern, Professor of Epidemiology and Associate Dean of Research, School of Public Health

Roia Ferrazares, Director of Administration, Department of Physics

Linda Fitzgerald, Manager, Department of English

Ann Kring, Professor of Psychology, Division of Social Sciences, College of Letters & Science

Layla Naranjo, Executive Director of Administration (interim), Student Affairs

Ana Sanchez, Human Resources Manager, Berkeley Regional Services SHARE Region

Mark Stacey, Professor and Chair of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Heidi Wagner, Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration, Division of Biological Sciences, College of Letters & Science

Cynthia Weekley, Executive Director, Berkeley Regional Services ERSO Region, and Assistant Dean of Human Resources, College of Engineering

Kairi Williams, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Administration and Compliance

Re: Reducing Bureaucracy Taskforce

Dear Colleagues,

As we all know, the bureaucratic burden at UC Berkeley can make it difficult to be efficient. Today, I invite you to participate on a task force to advise me on how we can reduce that burden and improve people's ability to navigate that bureaucracy. Making these changes for faculty, staff, and students will boost morale and free up time, allowing people to devote more energy to activities that more directly benefit our educational, research, and public service missions.

All efforts at Berkeley must work within the limitations we face: higher education is one of the most regulated industries in America; we are a state institution; and many of the policies and procedures to which we must adhere are determined at a level beyond the Berkeley campus. Nevertheless, there are numerous ways that we can reduce the bureaucratic burden. Where we cannot, we can help people better navigate the bureaucracy.

Broadly, the goals of this task force include:

1. **Identify process pain points and navigational bottlenecks** – help build a catalog of processes, policies, and operations for which reform is both possible (i.e., within our control) and would meaningfully reduce complexity, workload and/or inefficiencies.

2. **Recommend improvements and pathways for change** – offer suggestions for specific reforms or changes. Suggest ways we can put practices in place that allow us to continually improve our operations so that they place less, not more, of a bureaucratic burden on people and/or are easier to navigate.
3. **Support solutions implementation** – identify and partner with functional leaders and key stakeholders to advance recommended reform and implement solutions.

As these goals suggest, the effort is targeted at addressing long-term and ongoing needs; this task force cannot solve all the issues we confront in the time allotted to it. Consequently, the task force should view its role as principally offering guidance to me and my office. Because this is the first step, not the last, I am eager to have the task force provide me and senior leadership with two types of “solutions” and feedback.

By January 2023, I would like the task force to help us identify two to three wins that can be quickly implemented. These can be communicated in whatever form is most convenient; something like a white paper is not the intention.

Next, I would ask that the task force be prepared to give an oral presentation in February 2023 of its progress to date on longer-term “heavier lift” options, with a final report due at the end of the spring term 2023. The goal is for the final report to be shared with the campus community, understanding that some redactions might be necessary.


Although the task force has considerable latitude on how to proceed, I would ask that you give thought to the following:

1. **Solicit input from the campus community.** For example, have members of your task force attend a Chancellor’s Cabinet meeting, a Council of Deans meeting, an EVCP Divisional Leaders “Mega” meeting, and a meeting of the CAO/DFL group. As we learn of other endeavors in this area, we will bring them to your attention. You should also feel free to engage with any members of our community.
2. **Empower people to be problem solvers.** It is often noted that people see themselves as gatekeepers rather than as problem solvers. This may be because they adopt a gatekeeping mentality because they are risk averse or are concerned about the consequences of making mistakes.
 - To the extent that is an issue, how might we better empower people to be problem solvers and take a proactive approach?
 - How might we reassure people that mistakes will not unreasonably be held against them and that it is understood that some mistakes are inevitable?
3. **Issues analysis.** In thinking about the issues, some points to consider may be:
 - Are there processes and procedures which, while sensible at some level, may be too frequent or ask for more information than truly needed (e.g., reporting requirements)?
 - Do people understand who is in charge? If not, how can that be better conveyed? Do the right people have decision-making authority?
 - How can processes be streamlined? Are there processes with too many handoffs? Too many requests for additional information? Are there processes done in serial fashion that could more efficiently be done in parallel fashion?
 - How could documentation (e.g., instructions for forms) and/or user access and navigation be improved?
 - To what extent are problems issues of governance rather than policy and/or procedure issues per se?

Please reach out to Max, Andrea or me with any questions you might have about this service via email or we can arrange for a call.

I thank you in advance for considering this request. I hope you will be willing to assist me and the campus by serving on this critical task force.

With gratitude for your service,



Benjamin E. Hermalin
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

cc: Erica Wilson, Field Education Program Coordinator, School of Social Welfare (Staff to the Task Force)
Adrienne Griffith, Communications Manager, Office of Communications & Public Affairs
Chancellor's Cabinet
Council of Deans