



A Resolution for the Effective Involvement of Student Feedback in the Hiring of the Associate Center for Accessible Education Director

Whereas, on May 15th, 2022, UCLA has a record of seeking feedback from disabled and allied students during the hiring process for top positions in the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) but then giving little weight to that feedback when deciding who to hire.¹

Whereas, organizations seeking to uphold the rights of people with disabilities must give tremendous weight to the viewpoints of the disabled population they exist to empower. For instance, federal law requires Independent Living Centers (government-funded non-profit organizations which exist to meet the access and advocacy needs of disabled people) to meet the following conditions:²

- The Board of Directors must be 51% [or more] persons with significant disabilities.
- The majority of decision-makers in the organization must be persons with disabilities.
- They must operationalize consumer control philosophy [disabled people's control over the institutions, resources, and services they need] in all facets of the organization and services provided.

Whereas, the CAE does not contain published, transparent guidelines on criteria they examine before granting accommodations to its students. Thus, students rely on CAE directors to create an accommodations framework that operates on

¹ <https://dailybruin.com/2021/01/10/student-leaders-say-their-feedback-was-not-considered-in-hiring-of-new-cae-director>

² <https://cfilc.org/about/our-history.php>



fair/just policies serving student interests. They also require close communication with their CAE specialist to ensure they obtain their accommodations.

Whereas, the CAE mission statement is to “create an accessible, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. Through a collaborative effort with faculty, staff, and students, the CAE facilitates academic accommodations, disability advocacy, and serves as an educational resource for the campus community.”³

Whereas, active undergraduate student members of the UCLA Committee on Disability (UCOD) voiced discomfort with CAE at the September 13th, 2022, UCOD meeting because of their repetitive mismanagement and disrespect against students with disabilities, violating the principles of their mission statement. Specifically, students raised structural issues about CAE's role in UCOD, such that the power dynamic between the CAE and students created challenges for students to participate effectively in UCOD.⁴ A nonresponse to student concerns led those student advocates to not return to the following October 11th, 2022, UCOD meeting, which lends to long-term issues of UCOD meetings failing to meet quorum as a voting committee due to missing appointees.⁵

Whereas, the most recent recruitment cycle for the newly hired CAE director, which suggested a promise of heavily involving student feedback, did not provide a written response to student feedback or transparency regarding the timeline for the hiring decision that would empower students to organize effectively.

³ <https://cae.ucla.edu/>

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<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a9or5cbbebd0eGe5RpJY7VXZIY1toY5A0Z5Chj4QdQE/edit?usp=sharing>

⁵

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jpm_JpOYpc_0JMrYpUwW8kJ86kmEsFmEYJy2XtB66po/edit?usp=sharing



Whereas, there is currently disagreement between many students with disabilities and the Student Development department, who hired the CAE Director, whether the recent recruitment process adequately engaged and addressed student feedback. As described by Student Development department, the official timeline for hiring was as follows:

- August 25th: Email sent to the Disabled Student Union (DSU) email to introduce John Bollard, who chaired the search of the CAE Director, and dates for candidate interviews to occur over Zoom.
- September 1st-7th: Candidates interview via Zoom.
- September 8th: Email sent to the DSU email to solicit feedback from students with an offer to meet in person. Feedback and results of reference checks provided to Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Development, Suzanne Seplow.
- Week of September 12th: Official offer accepted.
 - Note: The tight timeline for hiring was due to the need to hire the CAE Director by the end of Summer 2022 after the previous director left in July.

Whereas, as an organization whose purpose is to uphold disabled people's rights and meet their access needs, the CAE is obliged to give more weight to disabled students' viewpoints than it has in the past.

Whereas, the CAE is currently hiring an Associate CAE Director.

Whereas, the Associate CAE Director directly manages all of the CAE specialists.

Whereas, students with disabilities have also voiced discomfort toward the previous Associate CAE Director.



Whereas, the CAE had significant turnover for CAE specialists over Summer 2022, and many students receiving CAE accommodations noted receiving little communication on the turnover of their CAE specialist.

Whereas, a new Associate CAE Director could respond to the above issues, and Student Development's hiring cycle of the open position for Associate CAE Director could set an example for student involvement for future hiring cycles.

Therefore, let it be resolved, the USAC urges the CAE to hire only people who disabled students trust to treat them justly, both for the Associate CAE Director position, which is currently open, and for all future openings.

Let it further be resolved, the CAE must provide disabled and allied students at least one week after announcing each feedback cycle to provide input unless two weeks advance notice is given for shorter feedback periods of no less than 72 hours.

Let it further be resolved, when requesting student feedback for a hiring decision, the CAE must send a feedback form with instructions to all CAE students via email. In this email, the CAE must also notify students of the dates for when the applications for positions are open, dates for interviewing and methods of student participation in interviews, and the deadline for making a final hiring decision. Students should receive notice, with reasoning, if dates change as soon as officials make changes.

Let it further be resolved, the CAE must provide an anonymous feedback summary, including the number of respondents, the percentage of CAE users that responded, and summary statistics for each question, to all CAE students and the pertinent student/staff hiring committee describing student input on the CAE candidates. They must also have the option for students to attend a follow-up meeting or forum to discuss the feedback summary before making the final



hiring decision on a date no less than one week after the release of the feedback summary.

Let it further be resolved, the CAE works with at least three elected USAC or GSA members and their designated representatives to continue efforts to finalize the details of a shared governance model for hiring CAE employees by undergraduate and graduate students. This work can include identifying engagement methods to increase feedback from CAE users and students with disabilities and co-developing selection criteria by students and administrative staff for candidates.

Let it finally be resolved, Assistant Vice Chancellor Suzanne Seplow, CAE Director Spencer Scruggs, and Executive Director/CAO of Student Development and Health John Bollard must present at a Fall 2022 USAC meeting to respond to this resolution. The presentation will describe the plan to improve future hiring cycles based on their collaborations with the above students.