**Economic Crisis Response Team Guiding Principles**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the committee is to:

1. Provide a seamless and individualized response to UCLA students in extraordinary financial crisis;
2. Develop proposals for actions to examine (and revise, when appropriate) university policies and office protocols in order to improve students' ability to manage their financial situations and avoid economic crisis.

**Description:**

The *Economic Crisis Response Team* (**ECR TEAM**) is a group that meets bi-weekly to discuss students who have self-identified, or are identified by UCLA faculty or staff, as experiencing a financial crisis that impacts their continued success as students at UCLA. The ECR TEAM’s mission is to provide short-term funding via an *ECRT Grant* to students making satisfactory academic progress who demonstrate financial need.

ECR TEAM funding in the form of an *ECRT* Completion *Grant* is not to exceed $4,000 per individual, as the ECR TEAM funds are not long-term funding solutions. The individual must use the grant delivered by the ECR TEAM for educational expenses. The ECR TEAM aims to serve students by offering potential solutions to and assistance with their short-term and temporary needs that may fall outside of the traditional student track. Representatives on the ECR TEAM can also provide meal vouchers to students who need a short-term solution for food.

In addition, due to the ECR TEAM's unique position to observe issues that affect students' ability to manage their financial situations at UCLA successfully, the ECR TEAM, with the support of and in consultation with the Dean of Students Office and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, makes proposals for actions to examine and revise University policies.

**ECRT Completion Grant Funding:**

Funds for the *ECRT Grant* will be held in an account managed by the Financial Aid and Scholarships (**FA&S**). The funds will be granted following guidelines similar to those used by the FA&S when setting awards (i.e. must be able to assess student’s financial need via FAFSA or SAADAS application). Support can be provided only to students enrolled at least half-time for the term for which support is granted.

**ECRT Completion Grant Criteria:**

A student under consideration for a *ECRT Completion Grant* must:

* be an undergraduate or graduate student at the University of California, Los Angeles;
* demonstrate financial need (via FAFSA or SAADAS or CA Dream Act Application);
* show satisfactory academic progress;
* be an enrolled and registered student; if not currently enrolled and registered, student must have been registered in the prior term;
* be enrolled at least half-time in the term for which support is granted;
* not have been dismissed from the University;
* provide ECR TEAM with a long-term funding plan;
* apply *ECRT Grant* funding to educational expenses;
* As of January 1, 2013, AB540 undocumented students may be considered for the  *ECRT Grant*.

**Economic Crisis Response Short-Term Loan Criteria:**

In addition to awarding grant funds, the **ECR TEAM** facilitates awards from a special short-term loan fund administered by Student Loan Services & Collections (**SLS&C**) specifically for students who come before the Team.

Based on a student’s individual circumstances, the ECR TEAM may decide that it is appropriate to provide the student with an *ECR Short-Term Loan*. In order to determine whether or not a student will be eligible for such a loan, the ECR TEAM will follow the general *SLS&C Short-Term Loan Program Guidelines*. For more detailed information on these guidelines, visit the following pages on the UCLA Student Loan Services & Collections (SLS&C) website:

* http://www.loans.ucla.edu/shorttermloan.html
* http://www.loans.ucla.edu/bruinbasics/shorttermloanprogram.html

The *ECR Short-Term Loan* awarding process differs from that of the general *SLS&C Short-Term Loan Program* in the following ways:

* The ECR TEAM, in consultation with SLS&C and the FAO, makes the final determination of whether or not a student will be offered an *ECR Short-Term Loan.*
* An *ECR Short-Term Loan* may be awarded for amounts generally up to $750. Loans greater than this amount may be considered, pending review by the ECR TEAM.
* If the ECR TEAM decides to offer such a loan, one of the following designated ECR TEAM representatives must prepare the application as an *ECR Short-Term Loan Signatory*:
  + Maria Blandizzi, Dean of Students (Chair of *ECR Team*)
  + Vivian Salazar, Associate Director, AAP Counseling
  + Guerrero, Itzel – ECRT Case Coordinator, Dean of Students Office
  + Jessica Rivera, Case Manager, Bruin Guardian Scholars, Bruin Resource Center
  + McClure, Andrew – Assistant Director, Bruin Resource Center
  + Potter, Sara – Financial Wellness Program Director, Student Loan Services & Collections
  + Pacheco, Denise – Deputy Director to the Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs & Assistant Dean of Students, Dean of Students Office
  + Melissa Faybik – Outreach and Customer Service Manager, Housing & Hospitality Services
  + Zoya Chhabra – Chief of Staff to the Dean of Students
* The ECR TEAM may request that SLS&C extend the due date of a student’s *ECR Short-Term Loan*. Extended ECR Loans are due on the 20th of the next month (following the original due date). Consideration of additional extensions may be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

While adhering to the general *SLS&C Short-Term Loan Program Guidelines* and the additional guidelines listed above, the ECR TEAM will determine whether or not a student will be offered an *ECR Short-Term Loan* following the criteria below:

* A majority of the ECR TEAM members must be reasonably confident that the student will be able to repay the *ECR Short-Term Loan*. In urgent, time-sensitive cases, an email will be sent out to ECR TEAM members. A majority (greater than 50%) of the ECR TEAM members must respond in favor of the loan for the *ECR Short-Term Loan* to be processed.
* To determine whether or not the ECR TEAM can be reasonably confident in the ability of the student to repay his/her loan, the FAO and SLS&C will perform initial assessments of the student and report to the ECR TEAM. SLS&C will determine whether or not the student meets general *SLS&C Short-Term Loan* criteria, as in is the student:
  + enrolled at UCLA Main Campus (*not* Extension)
  + paid in full regarding all fees and tuition
  + free of holds on his/her records
  + free of any outstanding balance on a previously issued short-term loan
  + free of default on any previously issued short-term loans during the past year
* ECR TEAM representatives who have been additional “points of contact” for the student will convey whether or not a student may be able to repay the *ECR Short-Term Loan*, and whether or not such a loan is the best option to alleviate the student’s financial crisis.

If the student does not meet all of the above criteria, reasonable exceptions could be made according to a student’s individual circumstances. The offices involved will be consulted as to whether or not any exceptions are possible and how they would be facilitated.

**Meal Vouchers:**

In partnership with Swipes for Hunger and Basic Needs Committee; the ECR Team manages and facilitates the distribution of meal vouchers, donated from Swipes drives and co-funded by Basic Needs Committee, ECR Team and Dean of Students Office.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

A student requesting a meal voucher must:

* Be registered and/or enrolled; exceptions may be reviewed by ECR TEAM
* indicate the lack of a regular source of sufficient nourishment
* not have an alternative source of meal options (i.e. dining hall meal plan)

Each student can receive an initial 5 vouchers at first visit. If a need exists beyond that, students should return for additional vouchers with meal voucher assessment form completed by Financial Aid.

Students are **limited to 20 meal vouchers per quarter with a maximum of 3 quarters of support**; if exceeded, an assessment of student’s financial situation must be completed.

International, Undocumented/AB540 students are **limited to 30 vouchers per quarter each quarter they are enrolled at UCLA through degree completion. If a student begins a new degree at UCLA, the eligibility will reset.**

**Emergency Housing:**

Undergraduates, graduates, singles, and students with dependents can request emergency housing through the ECR TEAM. If a student is in an economic crisis and/or is in need of housing assistance, s/he can e-mail the committee at [ecr@saonet.ucla.edu](mailto:ecr@saonet.ucla.edu). A response to the student will be provided within 24 hours. Once a student contacts ECR TEAM, their financial needs are assessed, and if housing is needed, the student will be offered a room in University-owned property. In addition, the ECR TEAM will work with the student to ensure that s/he creates a long-term solution to their financial situation, so as to not lead into the issue again.

Process for assessment and approval for emergency housing:

1. Case Manager/ Coordinator assess need
2. Confirm enrollment or plans to enroll
3. Review holds and identify those that may prevent access to emergency housing
4. Review financial aid eligibility
5. Confirm availability of space with housing colleagues: Melissa Faybik or Sarah Dundish
6. Consult with Maria Blandizzi for final approval
7. Refer to housing for move in process and placement

The **daily rate** for housing through ECR Team is **$25**, which either the student or the ECR TEAM will cover the cost. Housing granted to students in crisis will not exceed **14 days**.

**Measures:**

The ECR TEAM will be responsible for:

* Tracking referrals in a web-based data system.
* Regularly reviewing *ECR Short-Term Loan* reports and balances, as prepared by SLS&C.

**ECR TEAM Ground Rules and Responsibilities**

**Members of the ECR Team**

* Maria Blandizzi – Dean of Students, ECR Team Chair, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
* Šerifa Dela Cruz – Economic Crisis Case Manager, Office of the Dean of Students / Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
* Itzel Guerrero – ECRT Case Coordinator, Dean of Students Office
* Jessica Rivera - Case Manager, Bruin Guardian Scholars, Bruin Resource Center
* Melissa Faybik – Outreach and Customer Service Manager, Housing & Hospitality Services
* Morgan Quijano - Supervisor, Counseling Unit, Financial Aid Office
* George Ridjaneck - Assistant Director, Student Loan Services & Collections
* Karen Demarr – Loan Services Counselor, Student Loan Services & Collections
* Vivian Salazar - Associate Director, Academic Advancement Program
* Ina Sotomayor - Sr. Associate Director, Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
* Sherman Chew- Manager, Financial Services, Graduate Division
* Harris, Emily - Case Manager, Dean of Students Office, Office for Students With Disabilities
* Flores, Armando – Case Manager, Dean of Students Office/Graduate Division
* Garcia, Jose – Operations Coordinator, LGBT Resource Center
* Torres, Andrew – Manager, Student Accounts & Bruin Card Center
* Tina Nguyen – International Student Advisement Coordinator, Dashew Center for International Students & Scholars
* McClure, Andrew – Associate Director, Bruin Resource Center
* Potter, Sara - Financial Wellness Program Director, Student Loan Service & Collections
* Njike, Idriss – Assistant Director of Academics, UCLA Residential Life
* Santiago, Dennis, Social Work Assistant, Community Programs Office
* Tantiwuttipong, Pimlada, SEA CLEAR Project Coordinator, Community Programs Office
* Hernandez, Henry – Administrative Analyst, Graduate Division – Fellowships & Financial Services
* Sarah Valdovinos – Assistant Director, Graduate Student Resource Center
* Pooya Khodadadi – Senior Debt Management Counselor, Student Loan Services & Collections
* Kaitlyn Loughran – Case Manager, Graduate Division
* Kattya Hidalgo - Student Accounts Supervisor

**Questions to address before making an ECR TEAM referral:**

* What is the crisis?  When did the crisis occur? Specific needs? (i.e. rent, food)
* What resources has the student already used?
* Has the student met with his/her financial aid counselor? What was the outcome?
* If undergraduate, has the student met with academic advising? What was the outcome?
* If graduate, has the student met with his/her department? Have they met with appropriate points of contact in Graduate Division, if applicable? What was the outcome?
* Recommendations?

**How we approach work:**

* Efficiently
* Compassionately
* Discreetly

**How we treat one another:**

* Respect one another and always offer help
* Deal with people directly and resolve conflicts
* Ask for and accept feedback from others
* Listen to others’ opinions

**How we make decisions:**

* Listen to all opinions
* Keep student-centered focus
* Solicit input from all team members
* ECR TEAM Chair makes final decisions

**How we handle meetings:**

* Attend all meetings whenever possible
* Participate actively
* Use agenda and action-oriented principles

**Meeting Dates and Locations:**

* Every other Thursday from 10:30am to 12pm in the Financial Aid Conference Room

**Operating Procedure:**

* Receive student inquiry
* Email ECR TEAM to see if others have received the same request and to gather pertinent information
* The ECR Team Case Manager and Case Coordinator serve as points of contact for all student inquiries to the ECR Team
* The ECR Team Case Manager or Case Coordinator respond to the student based on input from the ECR TEAM
* Document the intervention in the online ECRT Database

**ECR TEAM Group Responsibilities:**

* Direct students in extraordinary financial crisis to on-campus and off-campus resources
* Assess the student’s short-term and long-term options realistically
* Offer a variety of options
* Gather resources**;** respond to students, staff and faculty quickly
* Measure and assess work

**ECR TEAM Individual Responsibilities:**

* Everyone:
  + Attend bi-weekly meetings
    - If absent or tardy, email ECRT Case Manger, Case Coordinator and ECR TEAM Chair prior to the start of the meeting
  + Actively participate in meeting and provide knowledge in area of expertise
  + Email ECR TEAM Case Manager with agenda items/cases
  + Serve as on-campus contact point for students
* ECR TEAM Chair:
  + Facilitate discussions during meetings
  + Provide final decision regarding the distribution of an *ECRT* *Grant*
* ECR TEAM Case Manager and Case Coordinator:
  + Facilitate discussions during meetings
  + Compose meeting agenda and email it to ECR TEAM members before meeting
  + Take notes during meetings; provide summary of cases