



Daniel L. Simmons
Telephone: (510) 987-0711
Fax: (510) 763-0309
Email: Daniel.Simmons@ucop.edu

*Chair of the Assembly and the Academic Council
Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200*

March 8, 2011

**MARK YUDOF, PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

Re: Working Smarter Initiative

Dear Mark:

Prompted by a letter from UCFW, which is attached, the Academic Council discussed the Working Smarter Initiative at its meeting on February 23. Council supports UCOP's effort to identify areas where administrative savings can be achieved with an expectation that the University's resources will be channeled to its core teaching and research missions. In these difficult fiscal times, such savings are especially welcome.

You may recall that Council expressed conditional support for several efficiency proposals to the Commission on the Future, with the caveat that faculty should be consulted on specific plans for implementing systemwide initiatives. We also noted, "Generally, Council opposes large-scale projects and top-down management, preferring that UCOP acts as a facilitator, and that initiatives be sufficiently flexible to accommodate campus needs."

The current Council echoes the call for including faculty in developing and evaluating efficiency projects. The end-users of these projects (faculty and staff) can provide valuable input at the development stage, anticipating obstacles to the use of new processes or systems. We are pleased that EVP Brostrom indicated that he will recommend to you that a Senate representative be named to the Working Smarter steering committee.

Council is concerned that many of the proposed initiatives shift administrative burdens from UCOP to the campuses, imposing unacknowledged costs on academic units and individuals. It would be ironic if the administrative demands on faculty and staff were increased in the name of efficiency. Campuses also are engaged in exercises to create greater administrative efficiencies and one divisional chair asked whether the campus and central efforts are coordinated. However, Senate committees and divisions strongly endorsed the Research Strategies Work Group's proposal to streamline risk management practices to reduce the burden on faculty time.

Finally, Council requests the data to support the claims of costs savings to be realized by each proposed measure, including documented baseline numbers and appropriate metrics for success. For

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instance, the January 2011 report on Working Smarter projects savings from implementation of the Connexus travel program on the basis of anticipated usage rates without documenting reasons why current usage is only 20 percent or what may be necessary to increase usage to 80 percent, the level used to calculate potential savings from Connexus. For example, is the current low usage rate due to incomplete roll-outs, difficulty of use, or an inadequate array of travel services? Projects should be evaluated to ensure that they enhance productivity and save money and that trade-offs between financial savings and quality are identified so that the University can make informed choices. Unsuccessful efforts should be modified or abandoned.

We look forward to collaborating with you on these and future initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel L. Simmons".

Daniel L. Simmons, Chair
Academic Council

Copy: Nathan Brostrom, EVP-Business Operations
Peter Taylor, Chief Financial Officer
Academic Council
Martha Winnacker, Academic Senate Executive Director

Encl. (1)



UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE (UCFW)
Joel Dimsdale, Chair
jdimsdale@ucsd.edu

Assembly of the Academic Senate
1111 Franklin Street, 12th
Oakland, CA 94607-5200
Phone: (510) 987-9466
Fax: (510) 763-0309

February 18, 2011

**DANIEL SIMMONS, CHAIR
ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

RE: “Working Smarter”: Administrative Efficiency at the University of California

Dear Dan,

At its meeting of February 11, 2011, the University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) had extensive discussion regarding the “Working Smarter” initiative. The committee reviewed the progress report document of January 1, 2011, and had the opportunity to discuss the report with Lisa Baird, Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives in the Office of Ethics, Compliance and Audit Services, and Kobie Crowder, Associate Director of Business Operations. The committee has substantial reservations about this report and hope you will communicate to the Office of the President that we believe they are moving in the wrong direction for the following reasons.

1. Shared Governance: The committee notes that there has been no consultation with the Academic Senate in the preparation of this report, nor indeed at the executive level of agenda setting and goal development for the project. In discussion with Ms. Baird and Mr. Crowder, they did not seem to recognize the importance of this consultation. Given the extensive and obvious problems with the document, we urge that the Senate participate in its revision and dissemination. Various members of the UCFW have volunteered to serve.

2. Organization, Presentation, and Tone: The report appears to represent an effort to put UCOP in a good light at the expense of the individual campuses. Moreover, while the report may be an effort to try to win support for the University, it was the sense of many on the committee that the report made the University appear like “where once we were stupid, now we are getting smarter – but only because we have to.”

3. Burden Shifting: Many new initiatives are proposed which appear to save the university money, but in reality all these initiatives do is shift the cost from UCOP downward to either the campuses or faculty members. The Senate will undoubtedly recommend against any such tactics.

4. Goal and Metric Misalignment: The report lauds itself for savings which many on the committee regarded as illusory or deceptive, as no data were provided to back up assertions of cost savings. For example, the committee voiced particular concern for the Connexus travel program, whose success metric is simple usage, not efficiency, ease, or cost savings. In reality, individuals who have used Connexus found it remarkably user-unfriendly, costing considerable

personal and administrative time, in addition to the fee for usage, despite any possible corporate gains. And throughout, the projects and their descriptions seem to be missing a key consideration: the need to test and improve the usability of any of the solutions proposed.

Indeed, we find it emblematic of this report that it asserts that the Office of the President and, by extension, the University, are being harmed by its inefficient and wasteful employees. The following quote is interesting: “Managing rogue spend (sic) and increasing utilization of negotiating contracts is necessary...” (page 50). We question the wisdom and accuracy of characterizing the faculty and staff as “rogue spenders”. Furthermore, rather than label faculty as rogue spenders resistant to change, it would be more effective (smarter?) to meet with faculty to find out *why* they find administration-sponsored solutions to be unworkable options, rather than lament perceived underutilization as mere stubbornness.

In short, while we recognize that practices must change to accommodate external realities, we are not convinced that the Working Smarter initiative, as presently being conducted, will yield positive results, especially in the long term. We hope that you and the Council will be able to impress upon the administration the importance and utility of involving Senate members and deliberations in **all levels** of these efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joel E. Dimsdale". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Joel E. Dimsdale, UCFW Chair

Copy: UCFW

Martha Winnacker, Executive Director, Academic Senate