

ACADEMIC COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE. The Academic Council is the administrative arm of the Assembly of the Academic Senate and acts in lieu of the Assembly on non-legislative matters. It advises the President on behalf of the Assembly and has the continuing responsibility via its committee structure to investigate and report to the Assembly on matters of Universitywide concern.

2003-2004 ISSUES:

During the 2003-2004 academic year, the Academic Council took under review and made recommendations on more than seventy initiatives, proposals, reports, variances, and APM policy changes covering a wide range of issues. Some of these issues carried over from last year, such as retirement benefits for health sciences faculty, review of the Reports on Faculty Instructional Activities, and revision of the Senate Bylaws; others included: proposed guidelines for the establishment of a new division; equivalent status for Cooperative Extension Specialists; the University Professor review procedure; Green Building Design and Clean Energy Standards Policy and Procedures; proposed new policy on Conflicts of Interest Created by Consensual Relations, the Senate's request for a broad review of DANR; and a Senate proposal to align the campus calendars. The Academic Council's final recommendations on many of these issues are posted on the Senate's website at: <http://www.Universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/>. Matters that were of particular and/or persistent focus for the year are noted below.

THE STATE BUDGET

The budget and other funding matters were either explicitly or implicitly at the center of many of Council's deliberations for the year. Particular effort was made to develop as far as was possible proactive recommendations and strategies to address potential budget cuts, such as the proposed cut in enrollment funding. In the process of looking at a wide scope of strategies, budgetary principles and priorities were distilled.

Budget strategies and priorities. After broad Senate discussion of the budget and its effect on enrollment, the Academic Council finalized a formal Resolution, "California's Budget Crisis and the University of California," which was adopted by the Assembly at its May 12, 2004 meeting. The Resolution was part of a general university advocacy and education campaign to bring attention to the unique role of UC in the economic and cultural health of the state. Council is continuing its interest in further developing faculty advocacy activities. In light of the "compact" that was made with the Governor, which intends to provide UC with stable funding in coming years as well as possible funding for initiatives, Council made preliminary recommendations for budget priorities in the context of long-range planning. Early in the year Council also endorsed the proposal "Increasing Access and Sustaining Excellence, which had been updated to reflect the current budgetary situation, and delineates funding principles consonant with the fulfillment of the University's mission.

Graduate education. Giving high priority to graduate education, Council endorsed and sent forward to the President: 1) "A Crisis in Graduate Education at UC," a letter highlighting the contributions of graduate education to the state and calling for a commitment to greater fundraising efforts for graduate education; and 2) a "Resolution on Graduate Support," which calls for changes in the return-to-aid formula that will enhance graduate student support.

ADMISSIONS ISSUES

The Academic Council and its committees reviewed BOARS' recommended changes to the eligibility criteria that were developed in response to the findings of the 2004 CPEC Eligibility

Study. In order to adjust UC's eligibility pool to the level set out in the Master Plan, recommendations were made for procedural changes and for raising the GPA required for eligibility. The recommendations were endorsed by the Assembly at its Special Meeting on June 30, and then forwarded to the Regents. Throughout the year, the Academic Council Chair and the Chair of BOARS served as key members on the President's Admissions Study Group, which was empanelled to look at a wide range of admissions issues. Council will continue its close involvement with the study group next year, and BOARS has been charged with carrying out a number of the group's recommendations.

FACULTY WELFARE ISSUES

Significant faculty welfare matters taken under review in 2003-04 included:

Resolution on Including Private Equity Investments in the 403(b) Plan and the Proposed New 457(b) Plan. The Academic Council endorsed this resolution in support of allowing employees and retirees the option of private equity investment.

Academic Council Resolution on Educational Fee Waiver. This long-standing recommendation of the Senate's to institute an educational fee waiver for qualified children, spouses and domestic partners of all faculty and eligible UC employees was again forwarded to administration along with a proposed implementation schedule to minimize initial costs.

Model Plan for Faculty Recalled for Post-retirement Teaching. The result of a two-year consultative process between the Senate and the Council of Vice Chancellors, this model can be used as a normative "floor" for negotiations with faculty for post-retirement teaching. The Council has asked that a follow-up study be conducted of the types of recall agreements reached under the plan.

Proposed Changes to Retirement Benefits for Health Sciences Faculty. In recognition of the opposition among health sciences faculty to the proposed changes, and in light of impending increases for voluntary tax-deferred savings, the Academic Council recommended that the proposed changes not be made and that other options having minimal impact on the UCRS continue to be explored.

TASK FORCES AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

Task Force on Graduate and Professional School Admissions. This group was established last year to review graduate and professional school admissions guidelines and principles, in part in response to a resolution of the State Legislature calling upon the University to implement comprehensive review at the graduate and professional school level. The task force report, which was completed and sent forward in December, found that comprehensive review of applications to UC's graduate academic and professional programs is the standard process implemented for selection of high quality graduate and professional school students. Completion of an addendum to the report relating specifically to diversity in graduate and professional school programs is pending.

Honors/AP. Last year, a task force was empanelled by the Academic Council to formulate a recommendation on the appropriate role of Honors/AP/IB and community college courses in the admissions process and, in the case of AP and IB courses, the credit given by the campuses. Completion of the task force report is expected in the 2004-05 session.

Professorial Step System. This task force was formed last year in response to concerns raised about the rationale behind the professorial step system, and to consider whether a step with uniquely high standards - a so-called barrier step - should be maintained, and, if so, whether Step VI is the right point for a review of that nature. The final report of the task force raised questions as to possible inequities in the academic promotion of women and underrepresented minorities. Council responded to the report by: 1) establishing a subgroup to identify the type of data needed

to carry out a study of the effect of Step VI on the advancement of women and minority groups through the professorial ranks; and 2) asking UCAP to review and recommend more appropriate language for the Step VI criteria. Next year's Council will address the outcome of both of these efforts.

Academic Council's Special Committee on the National Labs (ACSCONL). This special committee was given the charge to: 1) consult with the Administration regarding the management of the DOE Labs, the decision about whether to compete to continue managing the laboratories, and the circumstances surrounding any possible bid; 2) report to the Academic Council on the relationship between the DOE Labs and UC; 3) advise the Academic Council about the best timing and form of Senate input, both at a systemwide and campus level, regarding the advisability of UC competing to retain management of the Labs. The group met monthly throughout the year. A central effort of the group was the development and administration of a systemwide survey of all Senate faculty on questions relating to UC's competing to continue to manage LANL and LLNL. The survey had a response rate of 26%. Of those faculty members who completed the survey, a more than 3-1 majority was in favor of competing for both labs. The full results were reported to the Board of Regents, which took them under consideration. The final report on the survey was completed in July and made public on the Senate website. ACSCONL will continue its work in 2004-05.

Special Committee on Scholarly Communication. This committee was conceived to investigate a wide range of scholarly publication issues including: cost-effective production and optimal dissemination of scholarly works; dissemination methods and use for peer review and academic advancement; assessing faculty interest in and legal issues related to new methods of publication. The committee will begin activities in 2004-05.

OLIVER JOHNSON AWARD

The Oliver Johnson Award for Distinguished Leadership in the Academic Senate is given every other year. Professor Aimee Dorr and Professor Calvin Moore were selected by the Academic Council and approved by the Assembly as the 2004 co-recipients of the award, which was presented at the annual Chair's Dinner in July.

RESEARCH ISSUES

Restrictions on Research Awards. In 2003-04 the Academic Council gave UCORP the charge to investigate university policy concerning "strings" attached to research contracts, grants and gifts, and the nature of these restrictions. Coming out of that investigation were three documents, which were reviewed and adopted as Council positions. The first, the Academic Council Resolution on SUTI (Sensitive but Unclassified Technical Information), formalized the Senate's opposition to the implementation of this new federal research category, which is inimical to fundamental research. The second and third documents were the final committee report on the types of restrictions, "Problematic Restrictive Clauses in Contracts, Grants and Gifts for Research," and its accompanying "Resolution on Restrictions on Funding Sources," which supports the right of individual researchers to accept funding from any source that is legitimate under university policy.

Senate Review of Systemwide Research Units. Council reiterated its request (originally formulated last year) for a formal response from administration to the Senate's recommendation for a joint Senate/administrative work group that could develop a review structure for the California Institutes for Science and Innovation, taking as a point of departure previously submitted Senate reports. It is anticipated that progress on this matter will be realized in the coming year. Council also forwarded a report recommending a revamping of the MRU review

process that would re-categorize units according to their primary function and restructure the review cycles and criteria in a way that would free up funding for new initiatives.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNING BODIES

Joint Administrative/Senate Retreat: The Academic Council has recently established the practice of meeting in alternate years with the chancellors and with the executive vice chancellors to discuss matters of joint concern. This year, Council members met with the chancellors to discuss: 1) shared governance practices in regard to budgetary decisions; 2) improving efficiency in the academic personnel process; and 3) support for campus Senate offices. Following up on topic #1, divisional chairs subsequently reported general satisfaction with the process of campus budgetary decision-making. As an outcome of topic #2, a joint administrative-senate workgroup on improving efficiency in the academic personnel process was formed, the activities of which will continue to be monitored by next year's Council.

The Regents. Last year, the Academic Council recommended that the non-voting status of the Faculty Representatives to the Regents be maintained for another year, during which time the Senate Chair and Vice Chair would work toward achieving greater integration into the Regents' deliberations process. At the July, 2004 Council meeting, Chair Pitts reported that, as non-voting Faculty Representatives, both he and the Council Vice Chair have enjoyed a significant degree of access to regental meetings and deliberations, noting that this access (and other advantages of having a non-voting status) might diminish if the faculty representative were a Regent. It was argued on the other hand that a Faculty Regent with voting rights would have a given and unvarying authority and that such status would have significant symbolic meaning. In a close vote, the Academic Council opposed a change in the current status of the Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents. This outcome will be conveyed to the 2004-05 Academic Council members, who will revisit the question of the status of Faculty representation on the Board of Regents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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Respectfully submitted:

Lawrence Pitts, Chair
George Blumenthal, Vice Chair

Divisional Chairs:

Ronald Gronsky, Berkeley
Bruce Madewell, Davis
Abel Klein, Irvine
Clifford Brunk, Los Angeles
Irwin Sherman, Riverside
Jan Talbot, San Diego
Leonard Zegans, San Francisco
Walter Yuen, Santa Barbara
Allison Galloway, Santa Cruz
Guests:
Peter Berck, UCM Task Force
Sam Traina, UCM Task Force (June, July)

Senate Committee Chairs:

Barbara Sawrey, BOARS
Kent Erickson, CCGA
Ramon Gutierrez, UCAP
Lisa Alvarez-Cohen, UCEP
Ross Starr, UCFW
Janis Ingham, UCORP
Richard Goodman, UCPB Sept.-Dec.
Michael Parrish, UCPB Jan.-Aug.

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