

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL
VIDEOCONFERENCE MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2019

Attending: Dan Farber, Chair (UCB), Sharon Block (UCI), Susan Tapert (UCSD), Marilyn Westerkamp (UCSC), Sherryl Vint (UCR), Ignacio Lopez-Calvo (UCM), John Kuriyan (UCB), Jon Snyder (UCSB), Charles Langley (UCD), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate)

I. Consent Calendar

Action: The minutes were approved with a correction.

II. Updates and Announcements

Topics discussed during the most recent Academic Council meeting included negotiations with Elsevier, the proposed 2019-2020 UC budget, and the chancellors' letter opposing academic boycotts of Israeli institutions. Council discussed the recommendation to establish a task force on inappropriate comments in student course evaluations and this proposal will be discussed further today. Council approved UCAP's recommendation about what CAPs should do when a faculty member dies while a promotion is pending.

Discussion: There is pressure to hire more diverse faculty and the legislature is critical about the lack of diversity among UC faculty. The analyst shared the link to the UC Information Center which has data on faculty diversity and also reported that diversity was often mentioned during the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates' Legislative Day on February 20th.

III. Inappropriate Comments on Student Course Evaluations

Chair May would like the task force on student course evaluations to complete its work by July and it will include representatives from the Coordinating Council of Graduate Affairs and the Committee on Educational Policy. The research on student course evaluations is worth reviewing. This task force may re-envision the way student evaluations are used or explore ideas such as increasing the number of evaluations needed at various thresholds.

Discussion: UCM established a task force on course evaluations last year, UCI is currently piloting a redesigned evaluation and UCSC just completed a two year process involving literature reviews on this subject. The task force proposal seems to rely on a handful of studies which may not relate to the issues at UC. One approach may be to consider best practices about the use of student course evaluations and the focus could be on evaluations as a tool for professional development. The best practices for evaluating teaching should be identified and campuses should be engaged in this discussion. UCR's CAP did not agree with the proposal to have someone would remove inappropriate comments before they are seen by CAP. A bigger issue is how CAPs evaluate faculty, including that there may be insufficient peer review at the CAP level.

Campuses have different requirements about what is included in personnel files. One idea is to have a systemwide policy about what departments include the student evaluations in files. Chair Farber hopes the task force can provide information to CAPs regarding the extent to which evaluations are biased. It was noted that CAP members primarily receive on the job training, and CAP members should be encouraged to read the literature about bias and offered other resources. CAPs could have a general ten minute discussion, unrelated to a specific case, about the big picture issues. It might be beneficial for UCAP to discuss what can be done to increase CAPs' awareness of issues like bias. The specific goals of the task force will need to be identified.

IV. Statements on Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Council adopted the Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity's recommendation that candidates include statements on contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the review process. Members are to report on how campuses are implementing this recommendation and UCAP will discuss this matter again in May.

Discussion: The information shared by UCAP members may be shared verbally with their CAPs. Members seem to agree that the contribution to DEI should go beyond activity that meets basic job requirements, especially at a campus where the majority of students are underrepresented minorities (URMs). CAPs are not in favor of making diversity a fourth leg in the assessment of faculty. CAPs have reviewed cases where candidates claim that simply having URM students in a lab or classroom or writing a recommendation letter for a female colleague are contributions to diversity.

To begin addressing concerns about over simplification of activities that expand/enhance diversity, UCAP may wish to propose that the following sentence is revised or removed from APM 210.1.d: "Mentoring and advising of students and faculty members, particularly from underrepresented and underserved populations, should be given due recognition in the teaching or service categories of the academic personnel process."

V. Campus Reports/Member Items

UCI: The campus has adopted a process to have two areas for an acceleration, excellence in research and in a second area, and the member would like to know if other CAPs have standards for accelerations. At UCSD, UCM and UCSB an acceleration requires one area to be exceptional and no deficiencies elsewhere. Certain steps may require excellence in research. At UCSC, the case must show either truly exceptional research or outstanding performance in all three areas. At UCR, excellence is expected in all areas but there cannot be deficiencies in any of them. UCB rarely grants accelerations in time but one dimension should be outstanding and there cannot be deficiencies. Winning UCB's outstanding teaching award would merit an acceleration and the CAP may award two half-steps provided that one them is for research. UCD is actively examining its process but research may be weighted more heavily than teaching and service. Since criteria varies, departments have made specific guidelines to assist CAPs.

UCSC: The EVC established a special academy for faculty who remain at associate for a certain amount of time who are doing extraordinary service. This group is designed to help facilitate production of participants' manuscripts, who are relieved of teaching. While faculty in engineering and sciences complain that the program is unfair, the program's goal is to assist faculty over-burdened with service. Members agreed that the support structure is interesting.

UCD: The CAP is discussing what does and does not work for the careers of faculty in the medical center and the background materials collected will be shared with UCAP. Next year's committee should closely examine this matter next year. As the number of faculty in the teaching hospital grows, the more CAP's workload will focus on their evaluations. CAPs need to learn the nomenclature and about the diverse career trajectories associated with careers in medical schools. UCI's CAP has two medical school representatives, one from basic and one from clinical, but it is difficult to find members. The contribution of medical faculty to faculty overall should be documented.

Videoconference adjourned at: 10:50 AM
Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams
Attest: Dan Farber