

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

December 7, 2004 Meeting Minutes

Attending: Alan Barbour, Chair (UCI)

B. Joseph Guglielmo, Vice Chair, (UCSF), Anna Maria Busse Berger (UCD), William Maurer (UCI), Inder Chopra (UCLA), George Andersen (UCR), Harvey Sollberger (UCSD), Roland Winston (UCM), Mary Croughan (UCSF), Cynthia Brown (UCSB), Ellen Switkes (AVP, Academic Advancement), Myron Okada (Director, Academic Personnel Relations), Michael LaBriola (Senate Analyst)

I. Chair's Announcements – Alan Barbour

Academic Council is meeting with the Executive Vice Chancellors in March. UCAP members are welcome to submit topics to Chair Barbour for possible mention at that meeting.

Action: The committee approved the minutes of October 19, 2004.

Action: The committee approved the consent item: Amendment to Senate Bylaw 336.B.4.

II. Report from UCOP Consultants – Myron Okada and Ellen Switkes

Director Okada reported that his office is in the process of populating a longitudinal database with 15 years worth of data about faculty career advancement, and it is expected that by January, the Office of Academic Advancement can begin to supply UCAP with reports from that data. The project was prompted by the Senate's recognition that there was insufficient longitudinal data system-wide on faculty experiences with the step system. The in-depth analysis could help resolve whether some of the Step System Task Force's conclusions with regard to the advancement of women and some minorities in the academic personnel process were justified. The database could also establish whether there are significant differences between campuses in advancement to Step VI and Above Scale. The database will use payroll data to track faculty appointments, years at step and progress through the ranks over the course of a career. UCAP is encouraged to develop data templates for issues they would like to see addressed and questions they want answered.

The committee had two questions about the data collection and entry. The first was whether the data would be about in-line faculty only or whether other series would be included as well. Since only 15% of UCSF faculty have in-line positions, a study of in-line faculty only may not be an ideal way of understanding certain campuses, especially those with medical schools. The second question and concern of members was whether some of the most important demographic information was adequately captured from sources where reporting was optional. Director Okada will share these concerns with staff statisticians.

With regard to the content of the database, members agreed that at minimum the database should include these parameters: gender; date of birth; campus; ethnicity; degree; department; and intra-step actions (deferrals or denied merits). The Committee offered consultation to the statistician in developing and implementing the database. One of UCAP's members, Dr. Mary Croughan, was involved in a similar survey of faculty advancements at the UCSF campus and would bring unique and relevant expertise to the analysis.

AVP Switkes reported that her office is engaged in two major policy proposals. The first relates to a request from UCLA biology faculty for a general campus compensation plan for biology

faculty and other faculty with access to grant income. Biology faculty on the general campus say their work is similar to basic science faculty in the health sciences units of campuses, who are able to supplement their salaries with grant income. In response to this situation and the recognition that faculty salaries in general are falling behind those of comparison institutions, a Senate-Administration work group has formed—which includes UCAP Chair Barbour—to look at the possibility of using non-state grant income funds to pay for some or part of off-scale salaries. A formal proposal from the work group is likely to come before UCAP as soon as February.

The second proposal relates to faculty sick leave policy. It is unclear exactly how much sick leave faculty are entitled to, because sick leave is not officially accrued, yet faculty are entitled to it. Questions have been raised about how generous campuses have been in providing paid leave for long-term illnesses. UCOP is attempting to formulate a fair, formal policy that will provide guidance to faculty and administrators about that, and also about what happens after the maximum of sick leave has been used. The proposal includes a medical separation policy for faculty who are unable to work for medical reasons, because it is also unclear whether faculty can be dismissed on the basis of being unable to work. Finally, AVP Switkes noted that fewer than 70% of faculty take advantage of UC's long term disability benefit. She said the policy would take the opportunity to remind faculty to seriously consider buying into this benefit.

AVP Switkes distributed headcount and percentage data on UC Full Professors by campus and step. For all campuses there is a higher proportion of Professor-level faculty at Step V than at ranks IV and VI. Campuses vary in the magnitude of this build-up. More faculty retire at Step V than at any other step, suggesting that some faculty who don't anticipate successfully crossing the barrier step, retire at that point. A study of publication records found a correlation between a low number of recent publications and likelihood of retirement. At Berkeley, a modest retirement incentive recently caused a small burst in the number of retirements. Members anticipate that in-depth longitudinal database and its analysis will provide further insights into the phenomenon.

Action: The committee will meet by conference call January 11 to touch base about some of these issues.

III. APM Language Criteria for Step VI and Above Scale

Last year, a Senate Task Force studying the Professorial Step System noted that APM language describing the criteria for advancement from Step V to Step VI is difficult to distinguish from language criteria for advancement to Above Scale. Academic Council has asked UCAP to undertake a review of the language and if necessary, to recommend changes. Before the meeting, several UCAP members distributed data on recent successful and unsuccessful Step VI cases. Davis noted that after reviewing the failed cases, its CAP reversed its previous support of the Task Force's recommendation to eliminate the barrier step.

Step VI language. In the criteria for advancement to Step VI, APM 220 calls for evidence of “highly distinguished scholarship, highly meritorious service and evidence of excellent University teaching.” In the criteria for Above Scale, it calls for the “highest distinction” of international recognition in scholarship and teaching, and drops any mention of service. It was noted that current CAP practices do not always reflect APM language criteria. For instance, some CAPs have denied advancement to Step VI because the candidate lacked a better than average teaching record, while on other campuses; a superior record of scholarship or

research has sometimes outweighed comparatively weak teaching or service. One member pointed out that the language in APM 220 could be considered both a portrait of the ideal Step VI faculty member, and a set of specific criteria for determining advancement to Step VI. One of the goals of modifying the language would be to bring the APM more closely in line with actual practice, and to ensure CAP decisions are grounded objectively in the APM, while, at the same time, not weakening that ideal.

The general sense of the discussion was that in practice, teaching and service, while certainly valued, are valued less than research and scholarship for advancement to Step VI by most CAPs. Some members thought changing one or more of the *ands* to *or* in the definition would help reflect this reality, while other members felt such a change would essentially deemphasize teaching. Members pointed out some of the redundancies in the text. Removing the phrase “or in teaching” later in the definition could eliminate one of these redundancies. Finally, there was general support for removing “highly” as a modifier for meritorious service, which would also help specify that excellence in that area is not quite as highly regarded as excellent scholarship.

Above Scale language. In general, members agreed that a finer level of distinction could be made between the language describing Step VI and Above Scale in terms of the criteria for excellent scholarship and research. Some members thought this could be accomplished by adding the notion of a “sustained” or cumulative level of research excellence to the Above Scale language. Others suggested that evidence be required of a new “breakthrough” or performance above and beyond whatever brought the individual as far as Step IX. It appears that many if not most CAPs consider it sufficient for advancement to Above Scale if a candidate’s work has a sustained high level of impact. Finally, members agreed to add meritorious service to the Above Scale criteria.

A draft encompassing most of the suggested changes will be circulated after the meeting. Members agreed to take this draft back to their committees to get a sense of what the divisions think philosophically about each of the proposed changes. All APM changes are approved by Office of the President. Members agreed it would be wise to put forward a proposal likely to succeed.

Action: Chair Barbour will circulate a draft that encompasses most of the suggested changes. Members will bring the draft to their divisional CAPs for further input and the committee will discuss again at the January 11 conference call.

IV. Criteria for New Endowed Chairs.

Members briefly discussed how CAPs review endowed chairs, both the proposals for new chairs themselves, and for appointments. Most CAPs approve them pro forma with little discussion or are only involved on the level of approving a promotion or changes to the faculty series. One CAP related a situation in which it felt an outside Chair appointment was not appropriate, but the CAP was not in a position to comment.

AVP Switkes also urged UCAP, as Senate members, to help ensure that Endowed Chairs are not configured too narrowly. It is important to keep the Chair descriptions flexible, because they are forever. CAP members agreed this is occasionally a problem. Recently, there was a proposal to delete the seldom-used, Regent-designated “Professorial Name Chair,” which honors a deceased

faculty member. No money is associated with the Chair and only five or six were ever created, but deletion of this “Chair” designation met resistance at a previous Council meeting.

V. Role of Research Collaborators.

There is general interest on the committee in updating standards for the evaluation of academic personnel process candidates who may have had unique and valuable contributions to research projects as collaborators, but who might not have “independence”, by the criteria of senior authorship or Principle Investigator status within the project. The increasingly collaborative and multi-disciplinary nature of research in the biological and social sciences, as well as the physical sciences and in the arts, makes re-examination of the definition of “independence” and “collaboration” in the system-wide and divisional academic personnel manuals particularly relevant. To that end, UCAP will further study current practices and possible remedies.

Vice-Chair Guglielmo searched the APM for references to independence in research and the role of collaborators, and concluded that the traditional requirement for faculty to demonstrate independence for merit and promotion is not well established. There is no reference to “independence” in the Professor, Professor in-Residence, Clinical Professor or Adjunct Professor series, or in the Faculty Handbook. APM 210 places the responsibility on the department chair for establishing the role of collaborators and preparing a separate evaluation of their contributions. The Professional Research series defines what duties do *not* count toward independence—activities defined as technical assistance or those that do not rise above “significant and creative contributions” to a project. Finally, the Project Scientist series explicitly states that independence is not a requirement for promotion.

Campuses are more frequently facing the problem of how to reward collaborators, and disagreements occasionally arise with administrators about a candidate’s independent status. Outside letters sometimes help to clarify the situation, but they are not always available at each decision level.

Multiple authors may be involved in writing a single article, with each one bringing a unique element to the effort. In fact, some projects in the Physical Sciences may involve hundreds of collaborators. Within the Arts and other disciplines, the line between technician and creative collaborator is sometimes difficult to establish, and there are occasionally disputes over what constitutes technical versus creative work. There are also problems with PIs who don’t encourage, and may actually discourage independence. On the other hand, an individual who has had a hand in multiple articles but has never been a primary author may need to take more responsibility in asserting independence.

Members agreed that the APM as it is has shortcomings in defining a reward system for collaborators in the academic personnel process. It was also noted that the traditional focus on independence, and rewards for such in the academic personnel process, could actually impair collaborative research by forcing faculty members to focus narrowly on research areas they can accomplish themselves, without need of collaborators. One possible action, which will be considered, is to add text to the APM that would broaden and elaborate on the definition of independence and the role of collaborators. The following text was suggested as a starting point to define collaborative activities: “A recognized unique intellectual or creative contribution that goes beyond technical expertise and is essential to collaborative atmosphere.”

Action: Members will seek input from their divisions and the committee will discuss again at the January 11 conference call.

VI. Council Resolution on Research Funding Sources.

Last year, the Universitywide Committee on Research Policy (UCORP) produced a report on restrictive clauses and strings in contracts, grants and gifts, along with a Resolution, which stated that no special encumbrances should be placed on the freedom of UC faculty to accept or reject research funding from any source. A number of faculty members at UCSF had asked their Chancellor to enact a policy barring faculty from accepting research funds from tobacco companies, based on their record of corporate behavior and history of distorting scientific research. UCORP found that such policies represent violations of university policy and academic freedom. However, some health sciences faculty continue to push for a position against the Resolution, claiming shared governance allows a unit of faculty to place restrictions on itself.

Members agreed that from a CAP viewpoint, policies that restrict faculty from accepting grants could affect research, and consequently, merits, and promotion. Members agreed that CAPs are not in a position to look beyond the quality of the work into the source of funding, and that the funding source does not and should not have an impact on CAP's assessment of the value and excellence of the research. However, members did express concern over possible bias in science and the influences certain corporations could have on scientific integrity. One member remarked that academic freedom is an absolute, even if it offends. Another member added that is necessary to design contracts that allow faculty to retain control over research findings.

Action: UCAP will send comments to Council.

VII. Strategic Directions for Libraries and Scholarly Information.

In general, the committee liked the report, but decided not to submit an official comment from UCAP. The report suggests that the California Digital Library would have a leadership role in providing publishing opportunities for UC faculty, and members thought there could be peer review issues related to that.

VIII. Individual Campus Reports.

Merced. Merced wants to hire a target of 60 faculty members by opening day. CAP asked UCAP members for input into three issues. First, how to successfully justify off-scale salaries. UCAP members suggested that economics departments have this data. Second, how to establish appropriate ranks when proposing initial appointments, and calibrating those with systemwide norms. A few members shared typical starting ranks. Finally, CAP asked how faculty are prompted for biographical information when they are up for a promotion or advancement review. At most campuses, the department initiates the process and sets a deadline, and at least at one campus, the chair and vice chair of CAP meet with faculty to make them aware of the process.

San Diego. The UCSD CAP has been focusing on retention issues—in particular, the problem of faculty being lured away to other institutions by high salaries that UC cannot match. Members agreed this is a problem. Some CAPs requires evidence of the outside offer in writing before considering counter offers, although some campuses (and CAPs) are using preemptive action to dissuade faculty from leaving. Overtures from institutions asking faculty to apply for positions

without a specific objective offer should not be a reason to merit somebody. With counter offers, rank should remain consistent with achievement as much as possible.

Finally, the committee touched briefly on career equity review; candidates coming up for review who have declined to submit an updated CV; situations in which faculty, even highly regarded faculty, have declined to be reviewed at all; and non-reappointment at the mid career review.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola

Attest: Alan Barbour