

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE

Minutes of Meeting

April 10, 2020

I. Chair's Announcements

Jean-Daniel Saphores, UCFW Chair

1. Agenda Review

II. Systemwide Review Items

1. Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Protection of Human Subjects in Research
Representatives McGuire, Hollenbach, and Beaster-Jones will serve as lead reviewers.
2. Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Travel Regulations
Representatives Aron and Hsiai will serve as lead reviewers.
3. Proposed Presidential Policy on Gender Recognition and Lived Name
Representatives Chew and Adejunmobi will serve as lead reviewers.

III. Report: Health Care Task Force

Mark Peterson, HCTF Chair

1. HCTF of March 20, 2020
 - HCTF met the new systemwide Vice President for Research, Theresa Maldonado.
 - Mental health access continues to be a focus. A provider survey is being planned with the goal of assessing why the networks are so limited.
 - COVID testing and treatment protocols continue to be developed.
 - Human Resources will cost out a potential new benefit for in vitro fertilization.
 - A new budget contingency planning group has been convened. The interim CFO, Paul Jenny and the Associate Vice President for Budget Analysis and Planning, David Alcocer, are the lead administrators. The Senate is represented by Council Chair Bhavnani, Council Vice Chair Gauvain, UCPB Chair Malloy, TFIR Chair Brownstone, and HCTF Chair Peterson. The first meeting focused on revenue stress at the medical centers.
 - HCTF will meet next week to focus on COVID-19 impacts to physicians and operations, as well as employee coverage and communications.
2. Medical Center Senate Faculty on "Soft Money"

So far, medical center personnel have received no word about layoffs or furloughs. Regular town halls and daily email updates occur. However, labs are closed and elective surgeries have

been canceled. Hiring freezes are also in place. All of which places additional stress on faculty who must secure outside funding.

IV. Report: Task Force on Investment and Retirement

David Brownstone, TFIR Chair

1. TFIR of March 23, 2020

- Chief Investment Officer Bachher has been holding regular calls with prominent University and public officials. Originally, foundations and donors were the target audience, but COVID-19 has reframed the series.
- The budget contingency group described above may be limited in scope due to CFO Jenny still having his campus CFO position, too. Membership questions should be addressed to Council Chair Bhavnani.
- The Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC) reports their new software is functioning better and staffing levels have increased. Positive reports about the income estimator in UCRAYS have been received. Unfortunately, the RASC phone system does not function remotely, so web-based messages are more likely to be received in a timely fashion. Voice messages are only checked once a day, under current lockdown protocols.
- The lump sum cash out amount is up for most employees due to assumption changes adopted by the Regents last summer. There is no concern about a “bank run.”

V. Campus Updates

1. Child Care Next Steps

The UCFW memo sent to UCOP and the Academic Council has been received. Those two groups will work together on action items.

2. Climate Crisis Next Steps

Members propose asking for greater transparency in UC investments from the Regents. Public statements have brought more scrutiny, and many believe that all of UC's holdings, not just the endowment and pension fund, should be divested and publicly reported. The funds that are externally managed may be difficult to bring into compliance, though. The amount of funds managed externally is also unclear at this point.

Chair Saphores will lead a drafting team off-line.

3. Administrative Burden Next Steps

The COVID crisis presents a good opportunity to reassess duties. Members are asked to focus on three areas: 1) unnecessary information requests 2) accessibility of requested information, and 3) compliance requirements and software update impacts.

VI. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership

Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Academic Council Chair

Mary Gauvain, Academic Council Vice Chair

- The Regents have deferred consideration of a cohort tuition item.
- The Regents received a background presentation on the work of the Standardized Testing Task Force, but discussion rapidly focused on test elimination rather than the findings of the report. A full discussion is scheduled for May.
- The Senate has been responsive to calls for flexibility in admissions given the COVID crisis. Temporary guidelines for testing assessment, grade evaluation, and more have been issued.
- The Senate has been responsive to call for flexibility in undergraduate grading practices. Temporary guidelines have been issued.
- The Senate is surveying instructors and students to assess the impacts of remote learning. The UC Undergraduate Experience Survey will also have COVID-related questions added. The focus is on student and faculty coping, not how well remote teaching works.
- The admissions audits proceed. Proposed changes to the Admission by Exception policy will go to the Academic Assembly next week.
- The General Obligation bond failed at the ballot. Salaries will remain flat, except for merit increases. Final budgets are unlikely until late summer.
- The presidential search continues.
- The Merced chancellor search committee has made its recommendation to President Napolitano.
- The graduate student strike at Santa Cruz has seen some solidarity strikes at other campuses. The upset continues, and the UAW is considering whether to authorize an official strike.
- The Vice Chancellors for Research are meeting twice a week now.
- A teaching evaluation task force will note the unique circumstances of COVID.

VII. Previous Crises' Lessons Learned

Dan Hare, Past UCFW and Academic Council Chair

Jim Chalfant, Past UCFW and Academic Council Chair

Members discussed the process by which furloughs were implemented in the past, and the work flow impacts that had. A strategic process must be followed to avoid unintended consequences, but that also requires local planning. Securing Senate involvement in the early stages of systemwide and local planning efforts remains a struggle. Shared Governance is widely seen as waning on many fronts. The Senate must be proactive. Chair Saphores will reach out to past and present UCFW members after the meeting to get organized and make recommendations to Council about how best to navigate the current crisis.

VIII. Consultation with the Office of the President – Academic Personnel and Programs

Susan Carlson Vice Provost

Pamela Peterson, Executive Director

Gregory Sykes, Academic Policy and Compensation Data Analyst

1. Management Consultation: Gender Neutral Pronouns

California law and UC policy require conforming and technical amendments to remove gendered pronouns from regulations and the APM and the like. At present, there is no singular “they.” Comments are welcome until the end of the month.

2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Statements Next Steps

UCFW requested a new systemwide review of this policy, and the Academic Council will consider the request at their next meeting.

A resolution on the Davis campus calling for a reconsideration of the policy did not pass, but the vote was close (426 to 441). Davis will consider a second resolution. Many respondents indicated confusion, not just convictions, about the matter.

Training for a recruitment pilot will soon occur on the Berkeley campus, and Council Chair Bhavnani and Vice Chair Gauvain will both participate.

Alternative means of increasing faculty diversity should be used in conjunction with current efforts.

IX. COVID-19 Impacts

1. Potential Furloughs, Benefits Changes, and UCRP Considerations

With Gary Schlimgen, Executive Director, Retirement Programs and Services

With Susan Pon-Gee, Senior Director, Health and Welfare Benefits

UC will keep employees “whole” through June 30. Possible hiring freezes vary by location. Long-term alternatives are being considered, but another VERIP is not because it is cost prohibitive. Members suggest a progressive scale for any pay cuts, and a careful consideration of precedents. How much harm each individual or group must show is a point of debate. Furloughs are not considered a break in service for UCRS calculations, but service credit does not accrue. Some members speculate that some faculty will consider retiring earlier than planned due to the crisis.

Members are concerned that retiree health will be targeted for cuts during this time of crisis. Contingency planning continues, and no decisions have been made yet regarding benefits funding. Most insurers are expected to keep rates largely the same; how to evaluate member behavior during the crisis is still to be determined. Medicare sets rates at the federal level.

Should employees be separated, benefits coverage will continue for 3 months, after which the individual will be responsible for the entire premium contribution. Dependent care options are also curtailed. After 4 months, individuals should use COBRA.

UCFW will advocate for 1) the continued funding of merits, 2) the development of principles to guide possible reductions in pay or hours, 3) clear definitions of terms, and 4) additional protections for faculty on “soft money.”

2. Remote Instruction Impacts

The lack of pedagogy is a concern to many. Reports suggest student dissatisfaction is high. The digital divide is exacerbating class differences, as are differential family duties. A full assessment of the infrastructure cost and course conversion costs is needed. "Access" may need to be reconsidered.

Adjournment 3:06 pm.

Minutes prepared by Kenneth Feer, Principal Analyst

Attest: Jean-Daniel Saphores, UCFW Chair

Attendance:

Jean-Daniel Saphores, UCFW Chair

Shelley Halpain, UCFW Vice Chair

David Steigmann, UCB

Moradewun Adejunmobi, UCD

Ken Chew, UCI

Tzung Hsiai, UCLA

Jayson Beaster-Jones, UCM

Abhi Ghosh, UCR

Adam Aron, UCSD

Jill Hollenbach, UCSF

Cynthia Skenazi, UCSB

Grant McGuire, UCSC

Caroline Kane, CUCEA Chair

David Brownstone, TFIR Chair

Mark Peterson, HCTF Chair