

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE

Minutes of Meeting

November 13, 2020

I. Chair's Announcements

Shelley Halpain, UCFW Chair

1. Agenda Overview
2. Approval of October Minutes
Action: The minutes were approved as noticed.
3. Academic Council of October 28, 2020
 - Senate bylaw 336 regarding evidentiary standards for faculty discipline proceedings is out for systemwide review; see also Item III below.
 - A task force is being formed to assess the current state of the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR).
 - Regent Kieffer will visit with Council next month.
 - The Senate response to possible curtailments has been submitted; see also Item II below.
 - Faculty evaluations in the health sciences are being scrutinized for transparency and clarity. UCFW should work with the University Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP) to advance the issue.

II. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership

Robert Horwitz, Academic Council Vice Chair

1. Climate Crisis: The Senate has recently been invited to join the Global Climate Leadership Council, which is operating under the carbon neutrality umbrella. A comprehensive strategy is needed, and the Senate has a role to play. The University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP) has been active in this area, partnering with the Vice Chancellors for Research, the division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), and the national labs. Bottom-up approaches are sought.
2. President Drake: Senate leadership asked the President about his goals regarding campus safety and how the Senate can best help. Campus task forces are working to implement recommendations made last summer, and implementation reports will be submitted next spring. A systemwide safety symposium is also being planned for 2021.

Discussion: Members asked if the President seemed to embrace a reform mindset or an abolition mindset. Vice Chair Horwitz indicated that both he and Regent Chair Perez seem like reformists at first blush. Fewer uniformed officers and weapons on campuses, a renewed emphasis on de-escalation, and sensitivity training were mentioned.

3. Animal Researchers: Animal rights activists are filing Freedom of Information Act and Public Records Act requests. Researchers perceive this as harassment, and hope for systemwide assistance. President Drake is aware of the situation.
4. Curtailment: The Office of the President (UCOP) has received stakeholder feedback. President Drake was complimentary regarding the faculty response. The final plan will allow for campus flexibility in techniques employed to meet savings targets. One priority seems to be to show external audiences that the University is also suffering; it is hoped that doing so will facilitate future budget negotiations with the state. One obstacle to implementing curtailments remains UC Path functionality. A stated priority in implementing curtailments is to protect the most vulnerable workers and prevent layoffs, which are predominantly workers from underrepresented groups.

UC Retirement Plan accruals will be held harmless, though in part this is due to Path limitations. Chief Financial Officer Brostrom has said that no impacts to service credit will occur. UCOP does not support increasing employee contributions, but some Regents may disagree. The Senate will advocate from the perspective of total remuneration.

Campus financial equity concerns have come into sharp relief during the COVID/financial crisis. Rebenching, the formula that allocates state funds to the campuses, might be revisited.

Any salary actions absent the declaration of a financial emergency could set a dangerous precedent, however, merits should be protected, regardless.

III. Systemwide Review Items

➤ *The committee shall determine its position:*

- Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force Report
Nico Orlandi, UCSC Representative, and Jayson Beaster-Jones UCM Representative, Lead Reviewers

The report presents three options, but no clear recommendation. The three options are 1) a mix of online and in-person classes, 2) fully online with the full UC experience, and 3) fully online with an asterisk. The second and third are not good options; they do not include costing data and show no promise of increasing access. No option contains a clear pedagogical justification, either. To provide a UC quality education, research and community would be needed, but would be lacking or cost prohibitive. None of the options solves the access questions absent significant cost. Student success metrics are also implicated, and some think a second, lower tier of student could be created. Students likely

to succeed online already have access to the university through traditional methods.

Members also noted that articulation agreements with the other California higher education segments would be required, and that disciplinary differences could limit the number of majors that could be successfully delivered in a fully online environment. External stakeholders may be well-intentioned, but they also seem woefully misinformed regarding the limitations of online education. Making decisions during the current crisis, whose post facto assessment could meaningfully inform this discussion, seems misguided. Expanding financial aid and student support services are proven ways to increase access to the University.

Action: Analyst Feer will draft a memo for consideration.

- Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 544 (Cross-Campus Enrollment)

Action: The committee elected not to opine on this item.

- Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 630 (Senior Residency Requirement)

Action: The committee elected not to opine on this item.

➤ *The committee shall assign lead reviewers:*

- Proposed Revisions to Leave-Related Policies of the 700 Series of the Academic Personnel Manual

Action: UCI Representative Dalton and UCLA Representative Li will serve as lead reviewers.

- Proposed Revisions to Senate Bylaw 336.F.8 (Evidentiary Standard)

Action: Vice Chair Hollenbach and UCR Representative Morton will serve as lead reviewers.

- Proposed Revisions to President Policy, Business and Finance Bulletin, IS-12: IT Recovery

Action: UCD Representative Filkov and UCSF Representative Hampson will serve as lead reviewers.

- Innovative Learning Technology Initiative Review with Update

Action: UCB Representative Odean and UCSD Representative Sinha will serve as lead reviewers.

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

Susan Carlson, Vice Provost

1. Faculty Salaries: Vice Provost Carlson provided a brief overview of the Comparison 8 and how UC salaries have compared recently. A “gap report” is forthcoming, as is a

report by the Academic Planning Council which will be circulated for systemwide comment. Absent significant new funds, the status is unlikely to change.

2. COVID Impacts on Academic Advancement: At present, campus activities have not been collated for centralized assessment. No central data tracking yet exists to track advancement, however, UC Path may be a useful tool here. The long-term impacts of COVID are still unknown, and so framing them productively and accurately is speculative. Other Senate committees are also discussing this topic.
3. COVID Active Duty/Modified Service (ADMS) Implementation Update: Since the Provost notified campuses that they could develop and submit adjusted ADMS plans, four campus proposals have been approved, and at least one more is being prepared for review. Differences in the plans seems to revolve around flexibility or cash off-sets, and most are focused on dependent care duties. Approval processes and available resources also vary by campus, and central reporting and tracking would be useful.

V. Report: Health Care Task Force (HCTF)

Lisa Ikemoto, HCTF Chair

1. HCTF Meeting of October 6, 2020

- The task force continues to work with UCOP to improve employee benefits surveys.
- The new Medicare Advantage PPO plan has received positive reports so far.
- The task force will focus on behavioral health access this year.
- The Health Benefits Advisory Committee (HBAC) is expected to sunset this fall. The task force has sent feedback on their preliminary report and is concerned about several implications of the report. Many feel that employees need to have “skin in the game” and so must contribute a minimum percentage toward premiums. The risk adjustment practice and the resulting transfer of funds between plans did not receive unanimous support on HBAC, and HCTF feels that the employee experience should be determinative. Competition between plans also did not receive unanimous HBAC support as some feel that UC providers and plans should be favored. HCTF notes that non-UC plans, such as Kaiser, remain popular for many reasons, not just cost.
- Comprehensive Access and Non-discrimination in health care remain discussion topics.
- In-person retirement transition counseling services should be enhanced. Webinars are insufficient.

VI. Report: Task Force on Investment and Retirement (TFIR)

David Brownstone, TFIR Chair

1. 2016 UCRP Tier “Second Choice”

The 2016 Tier of the UC Retirement Plan (UCRP) includes a provision that allows faculty hires who chose the Savings Choice (defined contribution model) to switch their election, one-time, irrevocably to the Pension Choice (defined benefit model) up to 5 years after hire. The IRS recently issued its ruling approving the provision, and UC Legal is parsing the interpretation. Human Resources sent to TFIR a “Second Choice” proposal to implement the option. TFIR supports the proposal, excepting the requirement for second 5-year vesting period post switch. IRS did not allow service buy-backs.

Action: UCFW supports the TFIR position unanimously. Analyst Feer will draft a transmittal to the Academic Council.

2. Fossil Fuel Disclosures

Note: Item deferred.

3. Survey Next Steps

The upcoming benefits survey will include Senate-recommended questions on mental health access and retirement readiness. Financial status questions were removed under the auspices that they are too sensitive for the current survey. The Senate has the option to survey only Senate faculty for a greater picture of unmet needs, beyond health benefits, such as student loan debt and housing insecurity vis-à-vis retirement savings/planning.

Members had several questions about survey implementation logistics, security concerns, and response rate expectations.

Action: TFIR will continue to investigate survey options and report back at a future meeting.

VII. COVID Impacts

Liz Morris, Deputy Director, Center for Work-Life Law, UC Hastings

Among the most acute impacts of the COVID crisis on faculty is extremely limited child care options. For many, it is often an either/or scenario: dependent care or work. Overwork contributes to health problems, and women who leave the work force are often unable to return. Layoffs disproportionately impact women and those from underrepresented groups.

Exacerbating these trends are gaps in the laws involving 1) leave, 2) accommodation, and 3) anti-discrimination. Current leave laws, the first in US history, only cover 12 weeks and are scheduled to expire at the end of the year, along with other supplemental policies.

Accommodation laws include disability, which includes pregnancy, childbirth, and childrearing. Also under the accommodation umbrella are outside income policies and flexible scheduling policies. Anti-discrimination laws focusing on sex and gender provide inconsistent protections.

Possible improvements should include, as a first step, recognizing that individuals should not be left alone to find solutions and work-arounds. Creativity in policies governing telework and flex schedules is necessary. Many workers report spending *more* time on-the-clock while at home, not less. The current environment is one of crisis work, not mindful telework. Telework, though, is not a panacea as it involves well-known class privileges. Other possible improvements include greater financial resources for child care, new approaches to classroom delivery, new approaches to academic review and advancement, and greater job protection provisions. UC does not participate in the state disability program, which has curious impacts on faculty who do not accrue traditional sick leave. Bifurcating pregnancy from disability is another option. Many of these same problems face student caretakers, who have even fewer resources, both financial and legal.

Members noted that lenience in the interpretation of teaching evaluations might also be encouraged.

VIII. Executive Session

Note: During executive session, other than action items, no notes are taken.

Action: Chair Halpain will draft a memo to Council outlining remediation steps for consideration on a wide-spread basis. UCFW sister committees will be invited to co-sign the memo.

IX. Campus Updates

1. ASMD Implementation Feedback

Campuses with current programs should conduct equity analyses, not just for individuals but for departments.

2. General Updates

- Irvine: Local ASMD implementation has been limited to assistant professors for now.
- Merced: Child care is dominating more conversations. The faculty do not support privatizing the local facility, but the administration does. The faculty need assistance lobbying local officials, and a dedicated COVID impact task force could help.
- Riverside: 1) Curtailment implementation decisions will inform future discussions. 2) Taking action on the recent faculty campus climate survey seems more urgent than ever. 3) More support for mentoring is being sought.
- San Francisco: 1) Implementation of curtailment decisions is being closely monitored. 2) A task force report focusing on safety and policing is forthcoming.

X. New Business

1. Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC) Issues

Technology, staffing, and leadership at RASC have been the focus of concern for years now, and the COVID crisis has exacerbated each of them. Campuses are preparing memos of protest, especially regarding the handling of survivor benefits. The status quo must be addressed from top to bottom, not on the margins.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Minutes prepared by Kenneth Feer, Principal Analyst

Attest: Shelley Halpain, UCFW Chair

Attendance:

Shelley Halpain, Chair

Jill Hollenbach, Vice Chair

Terrance Odean, UCB

Vladimir Filkov, UCD

Terry Dalton, UCI

Huiying Li, UCLA

Jayson Beaster-Jones, UCM

Patricia Morton, UCR

Shantanu Sinha, UCSD

Lindsay Hampson, UCSF

Denise Segura, UCSB

Nico Orlandi, UCSC

David Brownstone, TFIR Chair

Lisa Ikemoto, HCTF Chair

Harry Powell, CUCEA Chair

Terry Hendershott, UCRS Advisory Board Representative