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*Chair of the Assembly and the Academic Council
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June 16, 2008

MARK YUDOF, PRESIDENT

WYATT R. HUME, PROVOST & EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AFFAIR

Re: 'Non-Progressing' UC Faculty Members

Dear Mark and Rory:

During a discussion at the September 2007 meeting of The Regents, a few members of The Regents raised a concern that the administration's plan to bring UC faculty salary scales to market might unfairly benefit what was feared to be a large number of 'non-progressing' faculty members. As a result of that Regents discussion, the administration and the Academic Senate were requested by The Regents to study the issue and make recommendations. As part of the Senate's response, the University Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP) was tasked to investigate the frequency of non-progressing faculty and evaluate its severity. At the May 2008 Academic Council meeting, UCAP presented its report, which Council accepted. I am transmitting this report to you with the respectful request that it be conveyed to The Regents and the Chancellors, as they may be interested in this issue.

UCAP found that, overall, the number of non-progressing or 'disengaged' faculty, as UCAP terms this category of faculty, is exceedingly small--at or less than 1% of 4,300 faculty across the entire University system who were facing review during the period under study. What is more, UCAP's investigation showed that the academic personnel systems at the individual campuses are working very effectively. There is evidence that performing faculty are being rewarded, and faculty whose research and teaching do not yet rise to the level required for promotion were being delayed in their advancement. In addition, campuses are appropriately implementing policies and procedures for assisting those few faculty members significantly disengaged from their careers. UCAP also found that the dismissal procedures within the Academic Personnel Manual, once triggered, were sufficient to encourage faculty to either re-engage in the academic enterprise or to leave the University of California.

UCAP noted that the most commonly cited grounds for a non-advancement decision were a serious deficiency in research, teaching, or service, with insufficient or modest research productivity being the most common justification. A second, much smaller cohort of faculty showed evidence of lack of professional activities. On the other hand, UCAP found that most faculty showing insufficient engagement in research or slower than average progress in their scholarship were, nevertheless, very engaged in teaching and otherwise productive.

On the whole, UCAP found that the overwhelming majority of faculty were engaged robustly in high quality research, teaching, and service; most faculty identified as non-progressing were deficient in only one area, and were likely to be more heavily engaged in teaching or service duties. I wish to emphasize a particular recommendation: **UCAP urges against micro-managing the salary scale adjustments in any way that would impede bringing the scales to market, that could impair the role of the salary scale/merit review system in performance management, progress, or that could take away from CAP's ability to perform its duties.**

For your convenience and reference, I have enclosed UCAP's report on 'Non-Progressing and "Disengaged" Faculty,' which includes more information on the methodology used in their investigation of this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael', written in a cursive style.

Michael T. Brown, Chair
Academic Council

Copy: Academic Council
María Bertero-Barceló, Executive Director

Encl. 1



UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL (UCAP)

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June 6, 2008

MICHAEL BROWN, CHAIR
ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Re: Non-Progressing and “Disengaged” Faculty

Dear Michael:

Earlier this year, you and Vice Chair Croughan came to UCAP to discuss a concern, expressed by others, that the recent adjustments to the UC salary scales may reward some faculty who are not actively engaged in their research or teaching duties. You asked UCAP to collect and analyze data that would accurately estimate the scale of the concern and to report our findings back to you. I would now like to share the results of that effort with you.

In short, the number of faculty across the UC system who UCAP would term “disengaged” is very small – 1% or less of 4300 faculty systemwide - and the academic personnel systems at the individual campuses are working very effectively. We found evidence that engaged faculty are being rewarded, that faculty whose research and teaching do not yet rise to the next level were delayed in their advancement, and that campuses are implementing policies and procedures for assisting those few faculty significantly disengaged from their careers. The dismissal procedures within Academic Personnel Manual, once triggered, are sufficient to encourage faculty to either re-engage in the academic enterprise or leave the University of California.

To estimate the number of potentially “disengaged” faculty, UCAP requested and received from UCOP a list of associate and full professors who have remained at the same rank and step for at least the past six years, which would normally represent two consecutive “no action” decisions in a personnel review. We asked UCOP to exclude assistant professors, faculty at the Associate Professor Step V, Professor Step V or Professor Step IX barriers, and those who held administrative positions at any point during the six-year period. We excluded faculty at the barrier steps for the Associate and Professor levels because these barrier steps were designed to be part of our post-tenure review process that imposes increased expectations in research, teaching, and service as faculty advance within the system. Faculty members at these barrier steps performed adequately to reach that level of the professorate, but have not yet demonstrated the achievements required for the next level. We do not view them as disengaged for this analysis. Each UCAP representative reviewed the individual files of the faculty from his or her campus identified by this definition as “non-progressing” to discover the individual circumstances in each case causing the lack of advancement.

UCAP took great care to ensure confidentiality. The data were forwarded to individual UCAP members over a secure email server, and information about the individual files were, in turn, conveyed back to the larger committee without identifying specific faculty names.

Initially, UCOP's report identified 166 faculty (81 full professors and 86 associate professors) out of 4,346 total systemwide faculty as fitting the above-mentioned data parameters set by UCAP. We determined that of those 166, 118 did not advance over the last six years as a result of academic deficiencies. This number differs from the original total because in the process of analyzing each case, we were able to remove those who advanced, retired or separated from the University, as well as those who are deceased or on medical leave.

It is difficult to fit a diverse set of case circumstances from nine campuses into a few rigid categories, but we identified two broad categories of non-advancement causes within that list of 118. By far, the most commonly cited grounds for a non-advancement decision was an individual having a modest or serious deficiency in one of the three areas typically considered for advancement – research, teaching, or service. In this category, insufficient or modest research productivity was the most common justification for the no-action decision, although several cases cited insufficient teaching alone as causing the no-action.

A second, much smaller cohort of faculty showed evidence of more significantly stalled professional activities. Some CAPs defined such disengagement in the context of a lack of research productivity only, while others defined it as demonstrating serious deficiencies in all three areas. Most campuses reported five or fewer total cases in which insufficient creative activity, teaching, and service, were all checked as factors in the non-advancement decision.

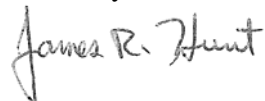
The current merit review systems and the Academic Personnel Manual give campus CAPs and administrations the tools they need to address insufficiently engaged faculty. We found that most faculty showing insufficient engagement in research or slower than average progress in their scholarship are nevertheless very engaged in teaching, which follows appropriately with APM policy that such individuals accept a heavier than normal teaching load.

We believe the small number of underperforming faculty is evidence that the academic personnel systems at the individual campus are working. The overwhelming majority of faculty are engaged robustly in high quality research, teaching, and service. Most faculty identified as non-progressing were demonstrating weakness in only one area and are likely to be more heavily engaged in teaching or service duties.

UC's unique salary scale and comprehensive post-tenure merit review systems have been essential both in building a world class faculty and in limiting the number of underperforming faculty. Strengthening the relevance and integrity of these systems will help ensure that faculty compensation continues to be based on rank, step, and merit. We urge against micro-managing the salary scale adjustments in any way that would impair the progress we are making or take away from CAP's ability to perform its duties. Finally, we encourage all campuses to review current programs and policies intended to help faculty meet their full potential and to address problems through positive actions such as improved mentoring at the associate professor level. Campus CAPs can better participate in this effort by not delegating normal or accelerated merit reviews to the administration, but I realize this will require additional resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this review.

Sincerely



James Hunt
UCAP Chair

cc: UCAP
Senate Executive Director Bertero-Barcelo