

Committee on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom (FWDAF)
Minutes of Meeting
March 31, 2014

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom met at 3:00 pm on March 31, 2014 in Room 397 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Rudy Ortiz presiding.

- I. Sam Traina, Vice Chancellor for Research & Economic Development
VCR Traina updated the FWDAF committee members on indirect cost return (ICR). Provost Peterson has expressed an interest in working with VCR Traina to establish guiding principles. VCR Traina provided a brief background on ICR at UC Merced. Merced's assigned rate is 55%. One third used to be allocated to the general fund, one third was earmarked to pay for contracts and grants accounting salaries, and one third was allocated to opportunity funds (discretionary). Merced's effective ICR rate (the total amount we collect) is 20% which is on par with other UC campuses.

The VCR and Provost are considering a revised version of the old allocation model which allowed for one third of discretionary funds. Those funds must be distributed between the various constituencies of the Deans, ORU Directors, research staff, and the PIs.

Chair Ortiz pointed out that any allocation formula will have an impact on faculty retention and asked what FWDAF can do to assist the VCR and Provost. VCR Traina answered that the committee should consider some basic principles around allocation, either directly to PIs or through the Deans. The future allocation structure should benefit both groups.

ACTION: Chair Ortiz will draft a memo on FWDAF's suggestions on ICR guiding principles and will circulate among the committee for review. A final memo will be transmitted to VCR Traina and Provost Peterson.

II. Chancellor Leland and Division Council members

Chancellor Leland and Division Council members joined the meeting to discuss the results from the campus climate survey. Chancellor Leland requested that a member of FWDAF serve on her campus climate and diversity working group to review the data and help identify three or four key areas on which to create an action plan. In addition, the working group will be asked to provide recommendations on whether additional queries are needed to understand the data. She pointed out that, according to the results, UC Merced is not worse than other campuses, however, due to our small size, our problems are magnified. In that sense, some of the data from faculty and staff about work place challenges are a cause for concern.

Chair Ortiz inquired whether the Chancellor has analyzed the prior ADVANCE survey results. The Chancellor responded that while she has seen that survey and corresponding results, it is different from this current survey. The Chancellor also acknowledged that OP is hiring a staff member to analyze the anecdotal data that resulted from the current survey, as it is not yet in a form that can be properly used. Chair Ortiz recommended to the Chancellor that, in addition to a FWDAF representative on the Chancellor's campus climate and diversity working group, a member from the former ADVANCE committee be asked to serve.

Chancellor Leland announced that the position of Associate Chancellor will be filled in the near future in addition to a new position for Intake Coordinator. The Associate Chancellor will be the point of contact for faculty, staff, and student complaints. In the interim, the point of contact is Wendy Smith in Human Resources. In addition, the campus community is encouraged to speak to the Ombuds. As mentioned in the Moreno report, a complaint system will not be utilized if it lacks credibility. In addition, under the current system, a complainant is not told whether his/her complaint was addressed due to confidentiality stipulations.

In response to an inquiry about retaliation against complainants, Chancellor Leland reiterated that if the complainant is a member of a protected group,

he/she is legally protected from retaliation; in addition, the person against whom the complaint is filed is warned about engaging in retaliation during the investigation process. If the complainant is not a member of a protected group, he/she is encouraged to speak to his/her Dean and the Provost.

A FWDAF member inquired of the Chancellor about the hiring of a full time Diversity Officer. Chancellor Leland responded that that may be a recommendation that results from the campus climate and diversity working group. The future Associate Chancellor will be tasked with diversity issues and after that, we can determine whether a full time, dedicated Diversity Officer should be hired and if we have the resources to do so.

Chancellor Leland concluded by pointing out that UC Merced's students reported the highest satisfaction in classroom environment. This result was published in the Los Angeles Times.

III. Chair's Report

FWDAF resumed its regular business after the departure of Chancellor Leland and Division Council members. Chair Ortiz updated the FWDAF members on his meeting with the Provost and School Deans on diversity in faculty searches. The Deans are wary of being heavy-handed during the search process, but also want to retain their authority to encourage diversity in faculty hiring via the MAPP. Chair Ortiz encouraged the Provost to initiate a process now so that we can establish best practices in faculty hiring in the future.

FWDAF members discussed the Provost's proposed MAPP revisions. Regarding Section 2012 E (selection process) the committee agreed that the Deans should retain authority over the short list, but took issue with the language that the Deans can postpone, extend, or cancel a search based on inadequate diversity. FWDAF members believed that this is a punishment-based system; instead, we should encourage an incentive-based system, the specifics of which will be up to the Deans.

ACTION: Committee analyst will circulate a draft memo to committee members containing comments on the MAPP revisions. A final memo will be transmitted to the Senate Chair by the deadline of Wednesday, April 2.

ACTION: A FWDAF member volunteered to serve on the Chancellor's campus climate and diversity working group. Committee analyst will communicate with the Chancellor's Chief of Staff.

Chair Ortiz stated that the Provost understands the need to change the campus culture with faculty hiring and taking into consideration how a candidate would best fit into the campus structure rather than solely examining statistical merit (e.x., number of publications). The Provost voiced his support for opportunity hires. FWDAF members discussed ways to educate colleagues, especially junior faculty, on how to hire a successful candidate. While the number of publications is important, this should not be the sole factor in assessing a job candidate. Some suggestions on how to educate colleagues on faculty hiring included: a workshop seminar with AP and FWDAF dedicated to faculty hiring (as part of the current AP/FWDAF joint faculty workshop series), unit-level retreats that help faculty think strategically about their units, and social events where faculty can engage with their colleagues in an informal manner.

Brief updates were provided on FWDAF's corresponding systemwide committees of UCAF (submitted in writing prior to this meeting), UCFW, and UCAAD.

IV. Campus Review Items

FWDAF members had no comments on the Molecular Cell Biology (MCB) CCGA proposal or the proposal to establish a major in Public Health. Prior to this meeting, a draft memo was sent to committee members on the Committee on Research's draft policies for the establishment and review of research units.

ACTION: Committee analyst will transmit memos to the Senate Chair regarding the MCB and Public Health review items and will re-circulate the draft memo on research units.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm

Attest: Rudy Ortiz, Chair

Minutes prepared by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Senior Analyst