

Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, October 18, 2022

Attendees: Chair Patti LiWang, Vice Chair Catherine Keske, Christopher Viney, Peggy O’Day, Charlie Eaton, Kevin Mitchell, Michael Scheibner, Holley Moyes, Jason Sexton, Carrie Menke, David Jennings, Jessica Trounstone, and Shilpa Khatri.

I. Consultation with EVC/Provost

EVC/Provost Camfield suggested that Senate Chair LiWang and Senate Executive Director Paul attend meetings of the campus Leadership Council to discuss shared governance. He also spoke with Vice Provost Spitzmueller about the need for the continuous improvement of staff with a focus on collectively accomplishing the campus’s goals rather than making unilateral changes.

EVC/Provost Camfield stated that the campus has long struggled with ways it can handle complaints about harassment and discrimination. About six years ago, the UC revised its policy on Title IX complaints to set timelines on investigation and response and communication with complainants. UCOP has recently issued a new policy.

UCOP and UC Legal want to ensure that faculty understand the union contracts, so they know how to engage with students who are also employees. UCOP is developing guidance which they will distribute to campuses. EVC/Provost Camfield will share this information with faculty as soon as it is transmitted from UCOP.

Just before the pandemic, the administration sent a proposed, revised campus mission statement to the Senate for review. Since that time, the campus has adopted a strategic plan, so the administration will make additional edits to the revised mission statement and send it out for a campus review by faculty, staff, and students.

A Divisional Council member raised an issue that was partially discussed at a previous Council meeting. At the annual Senate-Administration shared governance retreat in August, participants discussed the problematic response times to review items and the fact that the administration sometimes needed to act prior to acquiring faculty input. The Divisional Council member also asked again for a timeline for what the administration considers feasible for Senate responses on review items, and, a list of major review items in the pipeline so that the Senate does not have to operate in reactive mode. EVC/Provost Camfield responded that the administration has silos and layers so sometimes it is a challenge to coordinate these reviews. He added that this issue was raised in the recent Cabinet meeting. He suggested that the administration could send items to the Senate for review and the Senate Chair and Senate Executive Director would act as gatekeepers. Senate Chair LiWang replied that she would need to speak with Divisional Council.

Senate Chair LiWang asked EVC/Provost Camfield for an update on the administration’s request for revisions to the campus policy on the establishment of new schools and colleges. EVC/Provost Camfield replied that he is sending a memo to the Senate shortly with a formal request.

Senate Chair LiWang mentioned that she informed Cabinet members that faculty were not consulted

prior to the administration's decision to hold a separate commencement for graduate students. EVC/Provost Camfield suggested that Divisional Council express their concerns in a memo and send to the administration.

A Divisional Council member pointed out that in a previous Council meeting, members advocated for more faculty participation in the development of the annual shared governance retreat agendas, and that those agendas should be drafted at the end of each academic year before faculty leave for the summer. (Currently, those agendas are drafted in May when most faculty are unavailable.) EVC/Provost Camfield agreed with both points and asked Divisional Council to send him a memo with these two requests.

II. Chair's Report – Patti LiWang

Chair LiWang announced that the fall Meeting of the Division will be held on Tuesday, December 13 from 2:00 – 3:30 pm.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's agenda
- B. October 4, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. CAPRA Updates – Kevin Mitchell

CAPRA Chair Mitchell informed Divisional Council that CAPRA is trying to schedule a date to consult with the Strategic Planning teams. CAPRA previously informed the EVC/Provost, VP AA&S Spitzmueller, and Assistant EVC/Provost Martin that the committee elects not to place CAPRA representatives on the Strategic Planning teams due to CAPRA's workload. Instead, CAPRA suggested that the committee hold a consultation with the representatives of the various Strategic Planning teams. Chair Mitchell will keep Divisional Council informed.

CAPRA Chair Mitchell is trying to get clarity from EVC/Provost Camfield on faculty FTE lines. It appears that some departments are hiring; these could be failed searches from the past, replacement lines, or opportunity hires, but CAPRA was not informed.

Action: Due to time constraints, CAPRA Chair Mitchell will provide additional updates at the next Divisional Council meeting.

V. Oracle Updates – Interim VC/CFO Schnier and Associate VC and Controller Preston-Nelson

Interim VC/CFO Schnier introduced new Campus Controller Amanda Nelson.

Interim VC/CFO Schnier informed Divisional Council that he and Controller Nelson are spending a significant amount of time this week having a conference about Oracle, learning about the experiences of other institutions, discussing problems, and considering how to improve. Last week, Schnier and Nelson hosted a campus town hall and provided an overview of work that has been done with regard to Oracle. There has been some improvement to procurement from last year. CBS2 seems to work well now, and faculty do not have to utilize Service Now. The bad data the campus was experiencing last

year came from various sources and integration pieces had to be cleaned up. Schnier worked closely with IT on many of those fixes.

Interim VC/CFO Schnier stated that he and Controller Nelson are now working with RA on generating monthly grant reports which contain faculty's balances among other information. Faculty will begin to receive these reports in July. Controller Nelson added that she is working with RAs to ensure that the information faculty are sending through CBS2 or via direct invoicing with vendors is actually hitting those monthly grant reports.

A Divisional Council member asked about UC Path data which was previously problematic. Controller Nelson replied that the campus has fixed all the subsidiary feeds.

Interim VC/CFO Schnier emphasized that faculty PIs and their RAs need to communicate with each other on the monthly grant reports. Now that the Oracle system is implemented, the focus is on system improvements. The process includes many components outside of Oracle, not just Oracle alone.

A Divisional Council member asked about an estimated timeline for system improvements. Controller Nelson replied that solidifying the integrations can take two years. Subsequent to that, the focus needs to shift to the change management aspect, i.e. users. Several trainings have been offered to Oracle users. It is critical to get accurate data points entered. In general, at some institutions, the timeline has been 3-5 years. However, it will be a shorter timeline at UC Merced, because the focus now is on refining the process and educating campus users on getting the right data entered into the system. The trainings and Oracle "reboot camps" for RAs, CAOs, and financial analysts are not well attended. One problem is that these trainings and "reboot camps" have to be held in person, and some staff are remote and therefore cannot attend.

A Divisional Council member asked, from a user's perspective, how can one tell if things are improving with Oracle? Has the administration conducted surveys? Interim VC/CFO Schnier answered that the focus is on working with high-level and high-volume users, i.e. staff who work for faculty. He is using the "reboot camps" as a barometer for improvements. Faculty use CBS2 a lot. The campus needs to determine who will be the main users of Oracle. A Divisional Council member requested that Interim VC/CFO Schnier share quantifiable metrics with the campus to demonstrate improvements and added that Oracle needs an interface that is easier to use. Interim VC/CFO Schnier replied that the user interface is controlled by Oracle. The campus has to submit requested improvements to Oracle which Oracle terms "ideas". UC Merced is trying to get traction with other campuses to suggest improvements to Oracle.

A Divisional Council member stated that faculty have lost a lot of research time from being "guinea pigs" for Oracle. Interim VC/CFO Schnier answered that UCOP did not require UC Merced to adopt Oracle; the campus made its own decision. Merced therefore cannot request money from UCOP to assist in rectifying the problems.

VI. Students' Institutional Debt – AFAC Chair Eaton and Interim VC/CFO Schnier

AFAC Chair Eaton continued his discussion from the last Divisional Council meeting about institutional debt. He presented a series of slides on this topic. 20 HBCUs and 7 CSUs have used COVID 19 Higher Education Emergency Relief Act Funds to cancel these debts. Institutional debts at least doubled in 3 years to impact 5% of UC Merced undergraduate students. As AFAC Chair Eaton mentioned in a previous meeting, these debts are harmful to students because they cannot reenroll if unable to pay debt,

their debt was placed in collections with a for-profit debt collector until a pause after spring 2021, and some UC's (not UC Merced) place debts in "Interagency Intercept Collections" to seize tax refunds including anti-poverty EITC and child tax credits. In Fall 2021, at least 22 of 34 students who incurred large institutional debts under the DFNP policy change appeared to not have enough financial aid to cover all charges from UC Merced. Further research is needed to assess potential role of DFNP changes in smaller debts and all debts in Spring 2021 and Spring 2022 terms. The negative fiscal impacts on UC Merced are significant.

AFAC Chair Eaton then presented AFAC's recommendations which were transmitted by AFAC to former Senate Chair Westerling in a memo dated April 15, 2022.

Interim VC/CFO Schnier thanked AFAC for its work.

AFAC Chair Eaton requested that Divisional Council endorse AFAC's recommendations. Subsequent to that endorsement, AFAC Chair Eaton hopes Divisional Council will engage the Chancellor on policy resolutions. Interim VC/CFO Schnier offered to attend any meetings on this topic and recommended that Interim Controller and Director of Student Business Services Chris Robinson also be invited.

VII. Campus Review Item – CoR Chair Sexton

A. Interim Procedure on Assurance of Laboratory Safety Compliance

The interim procedure was distributed to Senate and School Executive Committee on August 26. It applies to all Principal Investigators and anyone working in a UC Merced laboratory. The purpose of this procedure is to assure a healthy and safe working environment in UC Merced laboratories for all members of the campus community by outlining minimum safety procedural requirements. This procedure also establishes procedural requirements for preventing and correcting deficiencies including issues of non-compliance.

CoR was the lead reviewer. Comments were received from CoR, CRE, FWAF, the SNS EC, and an SNS EC member.

Action: Due to time constraints, Divisional Council will discuss this item at the next meeting. Divisional Council's comments will be transmitted to the Office of Environmental Health & Safety and the Office of Research & Economic Development.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Attest: Patti LiWang, Senate Chair