

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Attendees: Chair Tom Hansford, Vice Chair Robin DeLugan, Christopher Viney, Nella Van Dyke, Patti LiWang, Jay Sharping, Michael Scheibner, Erin Hestir, Michael Dawson, Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, Carolin Frank, Linda Hirst, and Josué Medellín-Azuara.

I. Consultation with EVC/Provost

EVC/Provost Camfield updated Division Council members on the following:

- He has spoken with Chancellor-Designate Muñoz on a few occasions. The Chancellor-Designate is already well versed in the issues that are important to UC Merced as well as the challenges.
- The American Federation of Teachers, the union that represents the Unit 18 lecturers, is showing a willingness to work with the UC system towards an extension of the expired contract with some minor modifications. The negotiations are related to job security for non-Senate lecturers rather than requests for a role in shared governance which were previously proposed.
- Fall 2020 planning is proceeding apace but there are still many unknowns. A physical return to campus will require COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, and appropriate rules for physical distancing. The campus has an interim policy on non-pharmaceutical intervention in the spread of the coronavirus. The policy includes rules about face coverings and other requirements. Buildings and lab-specific safety requirements are allowed to be stricter than the interim policy; if this is the case, then the building and lab-specific requirements supersede the interim policy.
- The campus must convince the county public health department that we are doing all we can to prevent an outbreak that would potentially overwhelm local health care facilities. UC Merced is in discussions with UCSF-Fresno and UC Davis about potentially utilizing their hospital space should the Merced campus experience an outbreak of the coronavirus. UC Merced is working with Merced County to develop contact tracing (which graduate students will work on). There are many logistical issues on campus that have to be worked out before the campus could reopen later this year.
- VCORED Traina and VPDGE (and incoming, interim VCORED) Zatz will be holding a faculty webinar later this week on the efforts to ramp up campus research activities.

II. Consultation with VPDGE and Incoming Interim VCORED Zatz

VPDGE Zatz presented a set of slides to update Divisional Council members on the reorganization of the Sponsored Projects Office and the future of the pre-award process.

VPDGE Zatz suggested several goals:

- Create a structure that facilitates three times the research expenditures in 10-15 years.

- Make it easier for faculty to submit, receive, and manage extramural funding of their research
- Connect faculty to enable them to pursue new projects, including larger grants
- Position UC Merced to receive large center grants from major funders, such as NSF Engineering and Science & Tech Research Centers

VPDGE Zatz stated that she has been holding discussions with faculty in all three Schools on how to execute the above goals. Some suggested steps are: holding individualized searches for grant opportunities, establishing a tracking system from pre-proposal through post-award issues, centralizing the pre-award process across the Schools, and more faculty workshops.

VPDGE Zatz acknowledged that it is quite ambitious to implement this plan in approximately 10 years. A Divisional Council member asked if VPDGE Zatz is taking into consideration research employees who are on soft money, since they need to be equally supported with faculty and the campus should not construct barriers for them. The member also asked how Research Development Services (RDS) can better support faculty as faculty seek large, multi-institution grants. VPDGE Zatz replied that the RDS unit will report to her.

VPDGE Zatz ended her consultation by encouraging Divisional Council members to send her their additional input on her proposed goals for a modified pre-award process and increased support for faculty to pursue large grant opportunities.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. The Agenda
- B. May 13 Meeting Minutes

Action: The consent calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Chair's Announcements – Tom Hansford

A. Academic Council Meeting – May 27, 2020

- UC President Napolitano stated that the name of the new UC President will be announced at the July Regents meeting or possibly sooner.
- While the revised budget will not be known until July or August, the UC will not receive the 5% increase it was hoping for. Rather, the current proposal is for the UC budget to be cut 10%..
- President Napolitano announced that a systemwide furlough is an option the UC is considering. She is considering empaneling a task force to begin preparing for potential furloughs.
- President Napolitano rejected the recommendations of the Standardized Task Force with regard to the SAT/ACT for UC admissions. The Regents accepted President Napolitano's recommendations, and the SAT and ACT are effectively eliminated for UC admission. The UC is exploring the use of a UC-specific test or Smarter Balanced testing. Smarter Balanced testing was already rejected by the Standardized Testing Task force.
- With regard to the UC policy that students can only be employed as TAs for 12 semesters will be modified in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. CCGA has

proposed that spring 2020, fall 2020, and the spring 2021 terms do not count towards the 12-semester maximum. The proposal has not been approved yet.

- Academic Council proposed a systemwide moment of silence tomorrow at 11:00 am, at the beginning of George Floyd's funeral. An announcement with an accompanying statement will be issued shortly.

B. Chair and Vice Chair Meeting with EVC/Provost Camfield – June 1, 2020

The state proposed budget includes a proposed reduction of funding for UC Merced's medical education initiative with UCSF. EVC/Provost Camfield stated that the initiative needs to be paused in the absence of funding from the state.

C. Senior Leadership Team Meetings

- Interim Chancellor Brostrom announced that there will be a six-month hiring freeze and exceptions will be quite difficult to achieve. As of July 1, all staff stipends will be frozen, and current staff vacancies will not be filled. Current faculty searches will be allowed to proceed, but it is unclear what will happen if those searches fail.
- Plans for reopening the ECEC are being developed. There is a new certification requirement related to COVID-19 related, so the precise steps the campus has to take to reopen the ECEC are not yet known. We do know that the ECEC will not function in the manner it did prior to the pandemic. There will be no infant room and therefore no infant care. The capacity of the ECEC will be reduced and it is unknown how the few slots will be allocated. The campus will have to hire more teachers and staff to care for fewer children and this presents a significant cost to the campus.
- President Napolitano has already stated that borrowing is not a good solution. Given UC Merced's level of debt, it is not likely that borrowing is feasible for our campus. coming up with ways to borrow to avoid furloughs. The UC Chancellors have varying opinions on whether the solution to the deficit problems should be at the campus or systemwide level.

Chair Hansford announced that current systemwide Senate Vice Chair Mary Gauvin has announced her retirement. It is unknown who the next systemwide Senate Chair will be. Current Chair Bhavnani has stated she is willing stay in her role if necessary.

V. Consultation with Incoming UCM Chancellor Muñoz

After Division Council members introduced themselves, Chancellor-Designate Muñoz summarized his priorities for UC Merced, namely reaching R1 status. He also expressed his hope that the faculty and the administration will work together to achieve the campus's goals and to enable the success of the campus academic enterprise.

Chancellor-Designate Muñoz then asked Division Council members about their priorities for UC Merced and why they chose this campus for their academic careers. Division Council members replied with a variety of topics including sustainability and diversity.

VI. Academic Council's Request for Information on the Use of Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion Statements – D&E Chair Berhe

Background:

Last academic year, Academic Council [endorsed](#) six best practice recommendations for the use of statements on contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for UC academic positions. The recommendations aim to promote clarity and consistency in the use of DEI statements across campuses, and to raise awareness of and regularize the implementation of existing APM language statements in faculty hiring and merit review processes that would be consistent with [APM 210-1-d](#).

Academic Council would like to hear from individual campuses on how and whether these recommendations have been implemented.

D&E agreed to lead the review of this item and surveyed the Department Chairs, the Faculty Equity Advisors, and the School Deans on the use of DEI statements.

D&E Chair Berhe briefly summarized the survey results. The results revealed that faculty DEI statements at UC Merced are being considered as part of the overall faculty appointment file. D&E recommends that a uniform campus process be established for the use of the DEI statements. Division Council members had no objections.

Action: D&E's comments, together with a cover memo from Division Council, will be transmitted to systemwide Senate Chair Bhavnani.

VII. Systemwide Review Items

A. Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation (review # 3) – D&E Chair Berhe

The policy pertains to the treatment and repatriation of Native American and Native Hawaiian human remains and cultural items under the University's stewardship and the University's compliance with the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), its accompanying regulations, and the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA).

Division Council had no objections to D&E's comments.

Action: D&E's comments, together with a cover memo from Division Council, will be transmitted to systemwide Senate Chair Bhavnani.

B. Proposed Presidential Policy, UC Seismic Safety Policy, UC-CR-170324 – Vice Chair DeLugan

The Seismic Policy has been revised per the guidance of the UC Seismic Advisory Board (SAB). The SAB is a council of structural and geotechnical engineers with seismic expertise appointment by the Office of the President to advise the University.

Senate Vice Chair DeLugan summarized the revised policy and CAPRA's comments. A Division Council member asked for a definition of an acceptable level of earthquake safety. The policy does not describe to whom the level is acceptable.

Action: CAPRA's comments, together with a cover memo from Division Council that contains a question about the acceptable level of earthquake safety, will be transmitted to systemwide Senate Chair Bhavnani.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Attest: Tom Hansford, Senate Chair