

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION (CAPRA)
ANNUAL REPORT
AY 2013-2014

To the Merced Division of the Academic Senate:

The Committee on Academic Planning (CAPRA) held a total of 11 regularly scheduled in-person meetings and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's Senate [Bylaw II.IV.1](#).

2013-2014, as with 2012-2013, was another transition year in terms of a new budget and planning process. As part of the Chancellor's [Project 2020](#), the Provost/EVC introduced the Strategic Academic Focusing (SAF) initiative in fall 2013 led by a working group comprised of faculty and administrators. The goal of SAF was to determine the academic programs and research areas in which additional investment is most likely to establish a position of leadership and a unique identity for UC Merced. Faculty were asked to submit collaborative, interdisciplinary proposals to the working group. Ultimately, these research themes are intended to help shape faculty hiring for the next 6-8 years. While CAPRA conducted normal Senate business, much of the academic year was focused on ascertaining CAPRA's role in the SAF initiative and whether CAPRA should request the traditional academic plans and FTE allocations from the Schools or request FTE proposals in concert with the Provost's SAF process.

FTE Requests Process

At its first meeting of the fall semester, CAPRA met with the Provost/EVC to discuss the AY 2014-2015 FTE process in the context of SAF and CAPRA's role. (Traditionally, the call for FTE proposals is submitted from the Provost/EVC to the Schools. CAPRA, in parallel, submits its criteria for evaluating the requests. In the last academic year, the Provost's call for FTE proposals was embedded in the larger, campus budget call.) As the SAF process was still in a nascent stage, the Provost/EVC requested feedback from CAPRA on the process of submitting the traditional call for FTE proposals to the Schools and recommendations on the criteria needed to evaluate the hiring requests.

CAPRA devoted much of the fall semester to drafting a new process and criteria for evaluating faculty FTE requests for AY 2014-2015. In preparation, CAPRA solicited broad feedback from School Executive Committees and School Deans on the challenges

faced during last year's FTE process and subsequently shared this feedback with the Provost/EVC at a joint meeting of CAPRA and Division Council in the middle of the fall semester.

In addition to addressing the challenges in last year's FTE process, CAPRA sought to ease the workload burden on faculty by drafting the process and criteria in a way that allowed faculty to submit the same or modified proposals to both the Provost/EVC's SAF and to CAPRA for consideration. CAPRA's final proposed process and criteria were submitted to the Provost/EVC in November 2013 and suggested two rounds of submission: 1) requests for new FTEs submitted to the Senate Office by Bylaw 55 units, graduate groups, or recognized campus or multicampus research institutes and 2) revised FTE requests submitted to the Senate Office, lead Dean, and School Executive Committee that include a longer-term strategic plan that describes that group's planned trajectory through 2020. In the final stage, the requested FTE positions would be ranked in priority both by the School Dean and by the faculty of each hiring unit within the School and submitted to the Senate Office. In this proposed process, CAPRA encouraged cluster hires, connections to organized research units, and included language on cross-School and interdisciplinary considerations.

As the SAF working group continued to convene, CAPRA continued to monitor the campus budget developments and the impact on the faculty hiring process. At the beginning of spring semester, CAPRA again met with the Provost/EVC to discuss updates. CAPRA was particularly concerned with the timeline, as an October communication from the SAF working group indicated that the conclusion of the SAF process would be March or April, which would be too late for the FTE process to occur as new faculty lines must be allocated no later than July. Other major issues discussed with the Provost/EVC at this time were the possible sweeping of unexpended funds in faculty startup accounts and other faculty-controlled accounts such as graduate group support funds and the need for CAPRA to receive the final reports from campus committees that convene to discuss academic space and resources. The Provost/EVC related that hiring plans will have to reflect a roadmap that describes a multi-year trajectory for the campus to strengthen the research themes as well as the other areas of research that may not exactly align with the themes. Also, the campus budget was still not ready to be disseminated at this time. While the Provost/EVC had no issues with

CAPRA's proposed FTE process and criteria, he asked CAPRA to consider revising the call to reflect a scaling back on new faculty positions for one year to allow the campus to catch up. With the lack of a roadmap from the SAF, this slowing of faculty growth could allow the campus to better plan for future hires. CAPRA agreed to revise the draft to reflect a call for FTE requests only, decoupled from a larger, strategic plan request.

Towards the end of the spring semester, the Provost/EVC submitted a letter to the campus announcing that no new faculty lines will be allocated for next year. Faculty searches during the upcoming year will be limited to those positions already allocated and not yet filled. Accordingly, there would be no new FTE requests to be evaluated by CAPRA this year.

CAPRA turned its attention late in the spring semester to devising a mechanism for tracking the FTE allocations that are borrowed or accelerated from future years to fill targets of opportunity hires or spousal hires this year. (Part of the Provost/EVC's rationale for holding off on allocating new faculty lines for the coming academic year was that the number of faculty lines actually approved for search during this current year exceeded the target originally discussed by last year's CAPRA, in part owing to additional allocations made for spousal hires and other special circumstances.) CAPRA believed that faculty would find this information useful as it will improve strategic planning and ensure trust in shared governance. CAPRA also intends to use this information to assist the Provost in making the most efficient use of limited resources to meet ever increasing demands. At the end of the spring semester, CAPRA requested from the Provost/EVC and Academic Personnel office a list of all new faculty lines originally allocated for search at the start of the current academic year and a corresponding list of all other new faculty lines that were approved through special mechanisms after the original allocation was made. In each case, CAPRA requested the title and identifying number of the position, rank(s) of the search, and unit(s) to which the allocation was made and to receive a list of all currently allocated faculty lines by their identifying number, whether they are currently vacant or filled, and if filled, the rank and unit to which the line is assigned. CAPRA believed such historical information data are vital to establishing a baseline for future reference and made this request to improve how it can assist the Provost/EVC and the campus community in

decision making. It was CAPRA's assertion that since faculty hiring is a complicated process, the fulfillment of this request will provide a necessary baseline as strategic plans move forward and hiring commences once again. CAPRA looks forward to receiving this information in the next academic year.

In June, the Chancellor announced the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UCOP which contained significant implications for CAPRA with regards to undergraduate enrollment growth, the ratio of students to faculty, and the growth of interdisciplinary programs. CAPRA met with the Provost/EVC in July 2014 to discuss the MOU's implications as well as future consultation between the Provost/EVC and CAPRA on academic planning, space issues, and strategic focusing. At this meeting, the Provost/EVC made it clear that the targets for student growth and faculty hiring contained in the MOU are entirely contingent upon the success of Project 2020 in obtaining the required research, instructional, and office space. Members of CAPRA voiced their concern that student growth not be allowed to outpace faculty growth, which is limited by research space and startup funds. The Provost/EVC also stated that CAPRA would be asked to comment on the recommendations of the Strategic Academic Focusing committee this fall and gave a definite deadline of the end of calendar year 2014 for completion of the SAF process, which should provide adequate time for a new faculty FTE process to be carried out during AY 14-15.

CAPRA also opined on the following issues:

Composite Benefit Rates and UC PATH

UC PATH is a systemwide initiative that strives to centralize each UC campus's payroll functions for staff, students, and faculty. As part of its implementation, the UC system is changing to a system of pooled benefit rates, meaning that each category of employee will be assessed a fixed percentage of salary for benefits. Under the current situation, the funding source is assessed the actual benefit rate for that individual employee rather than an average. Two aspects of this change are significant issues for faculty: whether faculty summer salaries (usually paid through faculty research grants) are charged benefits at the same rate as academic year salaries, and the establishment of a predictable benefit rate for postdocs. CAPRA invited Vice Chancellor for Planning & Budget Dan Feitelberg to a meeting in fall semester. VC Feitelberg related that the composite benefit rates issue is linked to UC PATH and the latter is undergoing further

review prior to implementation. However, he was unable to provide any information about the campus-level modeling of the effects of various benefit rate scenarios that had been discussed extensively at the systemwide level (UCPB). Upon requesting input from CAPRA, committee members advised VC Feitelberg that faculty members require stability in the rate modeling.

Visit of UC President Janet Napolitano

In fall 2013, President Napolitano visited UCM and met with various constituencies including faculty members. Prior to the meeting, CAPRA members felt that the various issues should be imparted to President Napolitano: lack of funding in light of the divestiture of state funds, possible sources of non-state funding, the implications of budget cuts for a growing campus, and the uniqueness of this campus and the many space challenges the campus has as we move towards becoming a full-fledged UC campus. It is difficult to recruit high-quality faculty and graduate students due to our lack of space and resources and UC Merced needs continued support from UCOP.

Faculty Start up Funds

The issue of unspent start up funds was discussed throughout the academic year as these outstanding commitments may make it more difficult to request additional funding from UCOP. The Provost/EVC emphasized that he remains committed to viable, competitive start up packages for new faculty hires, but that he must take a more quantitative approach. He intends to focus on what faculty members specifically need and when they should spend the funds, however, he will also explore ways to provide faculty with bridge funding and funding for international travel. He emphasized that no start up funds will be seized or swept.

Systemwide Review Items

- APM revisions. CAPRA opined on several proposed revisions to various sections of the APM as requested by systemwide and Division Council.
- Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition Policy. CAPRA discussed the new and more detailed guidelines and judged that the proposed changes do not hold significant implications for the campus.
- Composite Benefit Rates. CAPRA was concerned with post doc rates and the systemwide proposal of imposing the same benefit rate for summer

and academic year salary. Faculty believe this practice is essentially a tax on their grants. UCOP has proposed different rate proposals and all have been rejected by the campuses.

- Compendium revisions. CAPRA opined on the proposed revisions to the Compendium and judged that they do not have significant implications on academic planning and space at this time.
- University Committee on Planning and Budget (UCPB) updates. UCPB discussed the following issues this academic year: capital outlay issues, enrollment management, funding streams, composite benefit rates, rebenching, the UC Retirement Program, and the state budget.

Campus Review Items

- Course Buyout Policy. The Provost/EVC and School Deans submitted two proposals to the Academic Senate. CAPRA was not unanimous in its judgment of the first iteration which stipulated that cost to buy out a course is 1/6 of 9-month salary plus benefits and that faculty must teach an undergraduate course that contributes significantly to the major. The majority of CAPRA believed that the cost of buying out a course should be a fixed dollar amount that accounts for the cost of hiring a lecturer for one course. In the second iteration from the Provost/EVC which contained the same main tenets as the original version, some CAPRA members again judged that course buyout should not be pegged to faculty members' salaries and that the cost of buying out a course should be a fixed dollar amount that accounts for the cost of hiring a lecturer for one course. While a few CAPRA members felt the cost was reasonable, other committee members argued that the high cost discourages faculty from buying out courses and taxes faculty grants. CAPRA requested that Division Council conduct research to discover how other UC campuses determine the cost of buying out courses.
- PhD Program Proposals. CAPRA opined on the following proposals, found that they were sound in the areas of academic planning, budget, and resource allocations, and recommended approval: Physics, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, Sociology, and Molecular Cell Biology.

- Mechanical Engineering PhD program proposal. CAPRA recommended the proposal be revised so that the proposed growth trajectory of the program considers the resource limitations on the campus. Later in the semester CAPRA revised the revised proposal and while the committee still had reservations about the program's ambitious growth profile and the space, staff, and graduate student support the group requests, it recommended approval of the revised proposal.
- Public Health major. CAPRA opined on this proposed major in SSHA and found that it was sound in the area of resource allocations and recommended its approval.
- English minor. CAPRA opined on this proposed minor in SSHA and found that it was sound in the area of resource allocations and recommended approval.
- Community Research and Service minor. CAPRA opined on this proposed minor in SSHA, which required the completion of one course, and was generally supportive of its approval. However, CAPRA requested clarification of the number of faculty who will be participating in the course, the number of students each of these faculty will be expected to supervise, and whether this supervision will be in addition to or in place of the faculty members' other teaching assignments.
- Diversity hires. The Committee on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom suggested late in the spring semester that in light of the announcement of the severely limited numbers of new faculty FTEs next year, the Provost/EVC should consider allocating the few positions based on diversity considerations. CAPRA stated that any allocation model would not be feasible at this late point in time: the MAPP requires that all faculty positions be nationally advertised and some disciplines begin recruiting in July and August.
- Medical Education Task Force. A task force was previously formed on campus to plan the future trajectory of the medical education initiative. Professor Paul Brown from SSHA debriefed Division Council on the task force's findings and Division Council subsequently drafted a charge for a future medical education task force. CAPRA voiced its support for the formation of a task force and expressed its desire to see how medical

education would enhance UC Merced's stature as a comprehensive research university with broad strengths in research and teaching across a range of traditional academic disciplines.

- MAPP revisions. As per procedures, in the spring semester, the Academic Personnel office, in conjunction with the Provost/EVC, submitted a set of proposed revisions to the MAPP. CAPRA had comments on two particular revisions: 1) Section 1005 pertaining to voting procedures and physical presence. CAPRA requested clarification that faculty may be allowed to discuss a personnel case by phone or email but also cautioned against confidentiality breaches. 2) Section 2012 E pertaining to recruitment. The proposed revisions gave the deans the authority to cancel a faculty search if he or she does not approve of the interview list due to inadequate diversity. Deans are required to give a written explanation of a decision to close the search but CAPRA requested clarification on to whom this letter is submitted. The Academic Personnel office will take all campus comments under consideration and will circulate a revised draft.
- Committee on Research's (COR) proposed research unit policies. COR drafted a comprehensive set of policies on the establishment and review of research unit policies. CAPRA's main comments were that the proposed review cycles for research units are too burdensome on faculty who concurrently undergo reviews for other units to which they belong, the policies grant too much authority to the Vice Chancellor for Research, and the policies mention no specific role of the faculty in the allocation of funding and space to research units. CAPRA recommended the policies be revised to resemble those that govern graduate groups.
- Library Space 2020 plan. As part of Project 2020, the Library submitted to the administration its plans for future space. CAPRA's main comment was that the plan should specify which unit, if not the Library, should be in charge of study halls.
- Senate-Administration Library Working Group. The final report from this working group, which was submitted to the Senate Chair and Provost/EVC, suggested that the library's budget grow commensurate with student and faculty growth and that the Merced division should

create a standing committee on library and scholarly communication issues, similar to other UC campuses. CAPRA supported both of these main recommendations and pointed out the need for additional space as the campus continues to grow.

Respectfully submitted:

CAPRA members:

Anne Kelley, Chair (SNS) – UCPB representative

Mukesh Singhal, Vice Chair (SOE)

Jan Wallander, (SSHA)

Jian-Qiao Sun, Senate Vice Chair (SOE)

Marilyn Fogel, (SNS)

Joshua Viers, (SOE) – spring term

Ex officio, non-voting members:

Ignacio López-Calvo, Senate Chair (SSHA)

Student Representatives:

Edwin Gibb, Graduate Student Representative, GSA – fall term

Brandon Stark, Graduate Student Representative, GSA – spring term

Sagir Kadiwala, Undergraduate Student Representative, ASUCM

Staff:

Simrin Takhar