

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE (FW)
ANNUAL REPORT
AY 2012-2013

To the Merced Division of the Academic Senate:

The Committee on Faculty Welfare held a total of 6 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.III.5.

The Faculty Welfare committee worked on the following issues:

Ombuds

On behalf of the Faculty Welfare committee, Chair Malloy met with the new campus Ombuds – and former Assistant Dean of the School of Natural Sciences – De Acker. In her role as serving faculty, students and staff, she will provide impartial and confidential counseling as a first step in resolving conflicts and grievances.

Report of the Faculty Diversity Working Group

During the last academic year, a report from the Systemwide Faculty Diversity Working Group was circulated through the UC Divisions for review and comment. Professor Cristian Ricci, UCM's UCAAD representative, presented the report at the first Faculty Welfare meeting of fall 2012 and led the discussion on what could be implemented at the campus level to increase and support diversity. The campus-level recommendations from the report were: crediting contributions to diversity, one-time half or whole-step increase for extraordinary contributions to diversity, establishing a central diversity office, and cluster hiring. Additional recommendations discussed among the Faculty Welfare committee were financial rewards for school and unit efforts, more focused recruiting efforts, workshops for chairs, deans, faculty, and staff, surveys to assess progress, and the Presidential Postdoctoral program.

Professor Ricci suggested the Academic Senate create a standing committee for diversity but was informed that the campus at this time does not have the resources to establish and staff an additional committee.

Ultimately, the Faculty Welfare committee decided on the following revisions to the list of campus-level initiatives: 1) note the high success rate of Presidential Post-Doctoral (PPD) fellows in obtaining faculty positions at UC campuses and in achieving tenure; 2) reference the relatively large percentage of Merced faculty who were PPD fellows, and 3) highlight the highly competitive nature of the fellowship.

Campus Faculty Salary Equity Study

In September 2012, UC President Yudof requested the Divisions to address the issue of faculty salary equity. In response, the Faculty Welfare committee selected faculty members Vice Chair Anna Song and Professor Rudy Ortiz to serve on the steering committee to formulate a joint Academic Senate-Administration Plan on a UC Merced faculty salary equity study. UC Merced's plan was completed in December 2012 and transmitted in January 2013 by UC Merced Provost Peterson to systemwide Provost Dorr.

Learning Assessment and Faculty Welfare & Campus Assessment Principles

The intention of institutional assessment was to ensure success with the WASC accreditation, as the agency has a number of standards regarding learning assessments and outcomes. However, learning assessment has steadily increased its presence in faculty workload and as such, the Faculty Welfare committee identified the following concerns: increased, uncompensated workload on faculty; the erosion of faculty's control over and the management of curriculum, and the need for a substantial amount of resources with significant opportunity costs in this limited budget environment.

Campus Visit, Professor Emerita Martha West

In August 2012, Martha West, a professor of law at UC Davis, visited UC Merced. Professor West has served the UC Merced and UC Davis faculty by advising on grievances before they are formally filed with P&T. She will continue to serve as an additional resource for UCM faculty.

UC Online Education

The Faculty Welfare committee sought answers to the following questions: What is the existing copyright language for standard courses taught in a classroom? Should an online degree be a UC degree? How would online courses be factored into faculty personnel reviews?

Systemwide Review Items

- Proposed Revision of APM 430 – Visiting Scholars. The Faculty Welfare committee was concerned with the general lack of prescribed faculty oversight in the process, especially since the minimum criteria for becoming a Visiting Scholar were relatively slim. The committee sought clarification on APM 430-4 language “under supervision of UC faculty” and ensuring a faculty role in vetting visiting scholar appointments. Chair Malloy drafted a memo of the committee’s concerns to the Senate Chair.
- Proposed Revision of APM 700 – Leaves of Absence. The Faculty Welfare committee acknowledged the rationale behind the proposed revisions to APM 700, though the committee felt additional clarification was needed with respect to the definition of “academic duty” and to the process for determining qualifying absences. Chair Malloy sent a memo expressing the committee’s concerns to the Senate Chair.
- APM 668 – Negotiated Salary Program. APM 668 proposed to establish a Negotiated Salary Program (NSP) that would bring a modified version of the Health Sciences Compensation Program (HSCP) to the general campuses. The Faculty Welfare committee drafted a response to the program that included several concerns. First, the NSP represents a further retreat from the salary scales and the principles of peer review and faculty governance. Also, despite the claim in the draft APM that the NSP will “offer consistent benefits and privileges to general campus faculty,” it appears that this program will in fact privilege a particular type of contribution to the university mission. Moreover, there are several unresolved questions with respect to the implementation of the NSP. Finally, the explanatory material suggested the UC’s goal should be to “encourage an entrepreneurial spirit” amongst the faculty; while the UC should certainly not discourage entrepreneurship among the faculty within the existing guidelines for such activities, to promote it as a key university mission raises troubling question with respect to academic freedom.
- Proposed Open Access Policy. The Faculty Welfare committee supported the policy’s objective, as well as its opt-out option. The committee had a few general concerns with the proposal: What is meant by the notion of commercial use and reuse? Could an end user modify published work? In general, what are the terms of the license? The committee further noted that the policy imposes additional

work on participating faculty members. In addition, more clarity is needed on enforcement mechanisms. Chair Malloy sent a memo expressing the committee's concerns to the Senate Chair.

Campus Review Items

- Search Committee for VPF. The Faculty Welfare committee was invited to nominate a committee member to serve on the search committee for the Vice Provost for Faculty which will be a full-time position to replace the current Vice Provost for Academic Personnel.
- MAPP. The Faculty Welfare committee expressed concern regarding language in the revised MAPP pertaining to unit-level voting procedures. Specifically, the implications of the required "physical presence" were unclear.
- Integrating evidence of faculty engagement in assessment process. The Senate Administration Council on Assessment and Planning (SACAP) was concerned that UC Merced's commitment to assessment as a means for improving student learning will not endure if faculty engagement with assessment is not addressed in the faculty personnel process. SACAP therefore identified two possible lines of evidence that could be included in faculty files and (as appropriate) addressed by case writers, the faculty discussion, or the Dean. These are 1) thank you letters issued by the School, and signed by the Dean, indicating the faculty member's contributions to their program's annual assessment activities and 2) teaching statements that address their use of formal or informal assessment practices to refine teaching activities, curriculum design, pedagogy, or other aspects of instruction or the instructional environment.
- Proposal for a B.A. in English. Undergraduate Council asked the Faculty Welfare committee to review and comment on the proposal.
- Proposal for a B.A. in Spanish. Undergraduate Council asked the Faculty Welfare committee to review and comment on the proposal.

Respectfully submitted:

Faculty Welfare members

Sean Malloy, Chair (SSHA) – UCFW Representative

Anna Song, Vice Chair (SSHA)

Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, (SNS)

Lilian Davila, (SoE)

Marcos Garcia-Ojeda, (SNS)

Shawn Newsam, (SoE)

Ex officio, non-voting members:

Peggy O'Day, Senate Chair

Ignacio López-Calvo, Senate Vice Chair

Guest:

Rudy Ortiz, (SNS)

Staff:

Fatima Paul

Mary Ann Coughlin