

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, April 7, 2022

Attendees: Chair LeRoy Westerling, Vice Chair Patti LiWang, Christopher Viney, Ramesh Balasubramaniam, Kevin Mitchell, Erin Hestir, Holley Moyes, Jason Sexton, Jesus Sandoval-Hernandez, David Jennings, Martin Hagger, Min Hwan Lee, Justin Yeakel, Jeff Butler

I. Chair's Report – LeRoy Westerling

A. Meeting with Chancellor Muñoz and EVC/Provost Camfield (March 21)

- The Chancellor plans to create an opportunity hire for a senior faculty member with a background in education who will be tasked with spearheading a certificate program or graduate program in education at UC Merced. The motivation for this hire is to deepen the relationship with high schools and community colleges that serve as pipelines for students to attend UC Merced. The campus also wants to provide better training to counselors and instructors at high schools and community colleges.
- The Chancellor urges the campus to make more rapid progress in diversifying the faculty. Chair Westerling told the Chancellor that he would draft a proposal for a process to increase faculty diversity. Divisional Council members pointed out that UC Merced has hired very few new faculty members the past two academic years due to budget issues.

A Divisional Council member raised the issue of the large number of failed faculty searches and added that faculty should ask the administration for its support for better, faster, and more collaborative APO processes so that faculty hiring can be done in a more timely manner. The member also stated that a report is forthcoming from systemwide on mitigating COVID-19 impacts and evaluating faculty using achievement relative to opportunity (ARO) principles. It is important to evaluate new faculty hires who were post docs or PhD students during the pandemic using the ARO principles rather than the traditional criteria; otherwise, this talented cohort of scholars will not be able to gain positions in the professoriate.

A Divisional Council member pointed out that Associate VPF Valdez has been working on ARO issues and would be a good contact person for Divisional Council. CAP Chair Balasubramaniam stated that the campus Faculty Equity Advisors (FEAs) program has done a lot of good work on best practices for faculty hiring. UC Davis and UC Irvine have significant training programs for faculty members who serve on review committees which UC Merced FEAs have participated in. Since UC Merced instituted the FEA program, the campus has seen a 30% increase in the hiring of faculty from underrepresented groups (data available from the Center of Institutional Effectiveness). AVPF Valdez and other campus units already have data on what methods have worked in terms of increasing diversity in the faculty and what methods have not been successful. CAP Chair Balasubramaniam suggested that the campus use the data and feedback it already has.

Action: CAP Chair Balasubramaniam will draft bullet points on the campus’s existing processes and data on diversity in faculty hiring and will send to Senate Chair Westerling and Director Paul. Chair Westerling will draft a report based on these points and send to the Chancellor.

- The Chancellor is continuing his efforts to obtain more funding for UC Merced. Chair Westerling reminded Divisional Council members of previous discussions about Assembly Bill 2046 entitled “University of California: Inland Rising Fund” that proposes the allocation of about \$1.5 billion to be divided between UC Merced and UC Riverside for a variety of initiatives. Senate Chair Westerling suggested that Divisional Council invite the Chancellor to a future meeting so he can update Council on his efforts to acquire additional external funding for the campus. Senate Chair Westerling also wants to consult with the Chancellor on the medical education program.

B. Meeting with EVC/Provost Camfield (April 4)

Due to time constraints, Senate Chair Westerling did not share updates.

C. Academic Council (March 30)

Due to time constraints, Senate Chair Westerling did not share updates.

II. Consent Calendar

A. The Agenda

B. March 10 Meeting Minutes

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

III. CoR Update – *CoR Chair Sexton*

A. CoR’s revised memo to the Chancellor and EVC/Provost on research infrastructure

Background:

- CoR/FWAF/GC’s memo on research obstacles (Oct. 6, 2021)
- Chancellor and EVC Provost’s response (Nov. 1, 2021)
Faculty toolkit referenced in the Chancellor and EVC/Provost’s response:
<https://research.ucmerced.edu/faculty-toolkit>
- CoR’s draft response memo to Chancellor and EVC/Provost’s Nov. 1, 2021 memo
- On February 24, 2022, Divisional Council reviewed CoR’s draft response memo and offered suggestions for revisions. CoR revised its memo and the memo was hyperlinked on today’s agenda.

Chair Westerling stated that CoR’s memo should emphasize the lack of Senate faculty input on the campus’s implementation of the Oracle service model. He suggested placing this language under the memo’s recommendations 3 and 4.

A Divisional Council member pointed out that the main problem is that the service model itself is flawed but the campus keeps spending money (e.g. additional staff hires) to fix a problem that is not improving.

Another Divisional Council member requested that CoR revise its memo to indicate more empathy for research administrators and procurement staff who find it stressful to work within a system that is broken. The pay for these positions is low and the turnover rate is high. CoR Chair Sexton pointed out that this point was made in CoR/FWAF/GC's original memo.

Action: Divisional Council members will continue reviewing CoR's memo and send additional edits to the Senate Executive Director and Senate Chair by 5:00 pm on Thursday, April 14.

IV. Update on Climate Crisis Working Group – *Member Justin Yeakel*

A proposed memorial to the Regents will be voted on at Academic Council on April 13. Assuming the vote is favorable, a ballot will be initiated. Chair Westerling stated that a set of arguments in favor of, and opposed to, the memorial was presented to Academic Council previously. He shared them with Professors Justin Yeakel and Michael Dawson and will also send to Divisional Council members. Chair Westerling suggested that given the large state budget surplus, the UC should leverage this moment and get some one-time funding that will not take away from other UC budget priorities. In response to a Divisional Council member's request for clarification on the memorial, Chair Westerling explained that generators and power plants on some UC campus are quite old and campuses have been re-investing in them to extend their lives. At some point, these investments must be abandoned in favor of energy efficiency in order for the UC to fulfill its public mission for the state of California.

V. Campus Review Item

- A. Proposal for an Undergraduate Degree Program Leading to a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Degree in Electrical Engineering (effective Fall 2023)

Hyperlinked on today's agenda were the following: the proposal, UGC's endorsement and recommendations, and comments from Senate committees and the EVC/Provost and VPDUE.

UGC Chair Moyes briefly summarized the proposal and the Senate committee comments. Divisional Council members supported the proposal. A motion was made to endorse UGC's approval of the proposal. The motion was seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

Action: Divisional Council unanimously endorsed UGC's approval of the proposed B.S. Degree in Electrical Engineering and will transmit the proposal to the administration for its consideration.

VI. Systemwide Review Items

- A. Second Systemwide Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on University of California Research Data

Hyperlinked on today's agenda were the following: proposed Presidential Policy and the comments from Senate committees.

CoR Chair Sexton summarized the revised policy and the Senate committee comments. Chair Westerling stated that two problems with the original policy was its lack of consideration for team science across multiple institutions and costs.

FWAF Chair Jennings added that FWAF was concerned with the revised policy investing a lot of authority in campus VCRs. FWAF suggested more faculty oversight.

Action: CoR Chair Sexton will work on drafting Divisional Council’s cover memo to transmit to Systemwide Chair Horwitz together with the Senate committee comments on the revised policy.

B. Proposed Revisions to the Presidential Policy on Supplement to Military Pay

All Senate and School Executive Committees were invited to comment. No comments were provided.

Action: Members will be invited to share comments via email. If there are no comments from the membership, Academic Council will be notified that DivCo has no comments.

Deadline: April 19, 2022

VII. Other Business

- Senate Vice Chair LiWang informed Divisional Council members that one school requested an extension to the April 27 deadline for comments on the Gallo School pre-proposal. Divisional Council members discussed the possibility of extending the deadline to May 2 or May 12. Council members agreed to extend the deadline to May 2, as this would give Council the opportunity to discuss the Senate committees’ and School Executive Committees’ comments at the May 5 Council meeting, vote at the May 19 Council meeting, and generate a memo to the administration. The new May 2 deadline applies to all Senate committees and School Executive Committees.

Action: Senate committees and School Executive Committees will be informed that the new deadline for comments on the Gallo School pre-proposal is Monday, May 2.

- A Divisional Council member related that he has heard complaints from some faculty members that their comments on the Gallo School pre-proposal must be transmitted to their School Executive Committee rather than transmitted directly to the Senate as individual faculty members.

Action: Divisional Council will discuss this issue over email.

- There is a new campus policy about ending waste bin collection from individual offices. Some faculty are concerned about hygienic issues caused by the lack of collection and have reported insects and rodents in some buildings. In addition, it appears that the policy is being applied inconsistently across campus.
- GC Chair Hestir asked for an update on a previous Divisional Council discussion on starting Senate committee appointments on July 1 or September 1 instead of the current practice of late August. Senate Chair Westerling replied that he spoke with the EVC/Provost to get his input but has not yet received it. Senate Chair Westerling added that he will be available this summer if the next Senate Chair needs his assistance.

Action: The Senate Executive Director and CRE Chair will raise the issue of Senate appointment start dates at the next CRE meeting.

VIII. Consultation with LASC Chair

LASC Chair DePrano then presented slides to update Divisional Council on the following:

- UC’s Collections Budget Coalition
- UCOLASC’s memo to Academic Council in support of the reinstatement of the California Digital Library’s collections budget and Academic Council’s endorsement.

Action: The Senate Executive Director will share both documents with Divisional Council and LASC.

- The Office of Scholarly Communications is creating a DEI in Scholarly Publishing webpage.
- LASC’s activities since Chair DePrano’s last update to DivCo (November 18, 2021)
 - Consulted with the EVC/Provost, UGC, and GC on the Saturday closure of the Library.
 - Submitted memos to Divisional Council on campus and systemwide items.
 - Submitted a memo to the Senate to bring to CCGA’s attention that their idea of how libraries should support research, teaching, and learning, is out of date. Chair DePrano suggested that Divisional Council may have misunderstood the memo. She received permission from Senate Chair Westerling to speak to UCOLASC.
 - Continued discussion of the Library being underfunded and understaffed.

Action: Chair DePrano will share her slides with Divisional Council.

IX. Executive Session – voting members only

No minutes were recorded.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Attest: LeRoy Westerling, Senate Chair