



**FALL MEETING OF THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2022
2:00 – 3:30 PM
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING ROOM 306**

I. Chair's Report and Announcements – *Division Chair Patti LiWang*

Division Chair LiWang made the following announcements:

- She encouraged faculty to review the recent campus communication on pass/no pass grading options.
- Senate committees are discussing how to allocate the funds provided to the Senate from the MacKenzie Scott campus gift. (The Senate was given \$1 million from the \$20 million campus donation.)
- UC Merced recently became one of the newest campuses in the UC system to be named an Agricultural Experiment Station (AES).
- The pre-proposal for the establishment of the Gallo School is still being considered by CCGA. CCGA's feedback should be submitted to UC Merced in January. In the interim period, discussions are being held with the Senate and administration about the future of SSHA. Senate and administrative leadership have held two meetings on this topic on November 18 and December 12. Leadership is concurrently discussing revisions to the campus policy on the establishment of new schools.
- UC Merced has received funding for climate research which will be discussed later in today's meeting.

II. Consent Calendar ¹

- A. Approval of the Agenda
- B. Approval of the May 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes

¹ Agenda items deemed non-controversial by the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Division, in consultation with the Divisional Council, may be placed on a Consent Calendar under Special Orders. Should the meeting not attain a quorum, the Consent Calendar would be taken as approved. (Quorum = Fifty (50) voting members of the Division are required for a quorum). At the request of any Divisional member, any Consent Calendar item is extracted for consideration under "New Business" later in the agenda. Christopher Viney, Secretary/Parliamentarian.

C. Annual Committee Reports AY 21-22

The reports were linked on today's agenda.

- Divisional Council
- Admissions and Financial Aid Committee
- Committee on Academic Personnel
- Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel
- Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation
- Committee on Research
- Committee on Rules and Elections
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom
- Library and Scholarly Communications
- Graduate Council
- Undergraduate Council

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

III. Campus Updates – *EVC/Provost Gregg Camfield*

EVC/Provost Camfield gave the following updates:

- He provided CoR with funding to allocate to faculty to help mitigate COVID impacts.
- He is working on tools designed to help faculty address various interruptions to their work and campus operations in addition to a pandemic (e.g. wildfires) in a way that is not rigid or detrimental to faculty that are disproportionately impacted.
- With regard to the ongoing strike, EVC/Provost Camfield stated that he legally cannot share certain information given the confidentiality of the negotiations. The parties have moved to mediation and those conversations are private. However, he did share that the post docs have ratified a contract. EVC/Provost Camfield estimated that Temporary Academic Staffing (TAS) budget may increase by 10%. The TAS budget is dependent on enrollment. UC Merced's applicant pool is up 20% from last year. However, the yield is unknown at this point. EVC/Provost Camfield stated that he will share that information with faculty as soon as it is refined. VPDGE Hratchian is working with graduate groups to determine the number of new graduate students that can be admitted. EVC/Provost Camfield stated that if negotiations go to an impasse, there are formal regulations that dictate going to the California Public Employment Relations Board who will assign another mediator and to through the state sanction process. If there is still an impasse, we can impose a contract. That could take months and we do not want that to happen. The UC hopes that private mediation will work. EVC/Provost Camfield acknowledged that there will be substantial budgetary impacts on faculty grants. The post doc contract will also pose monetary challenges. The minimum pay is above the NIH maximum; however, the campus does not want the faculty to stop applying for NIH grants. EVC/Provost Camfield is seeking advice from other campuses on how they plan to handle these impacts. Those UC campuses

that have medical centers are in a better position, as those medical centers subsidize their campus research. The UC campuses that do not have medical centers – including UC Merced – do not yet know where the money will come from. He wants VCR Wilson to work with the Senate to find creative solutions. He added that the good news is that the UC’s recruitment package for graduate students will be very competitive when compared nationally. UC Merced may be an attractive option for potential graduate students.

- With the new Agricultural Experiment Station designation, UC Merced will receive a small amount of funding initially, but our share will grow. In addition, UC Merced will have access to new grant opportunities.

A faculty member asked whether the campus will issue guidance for faculty on how to deal with the extra costs to their grants and what they are expected to do with their GSRs in the spring. EVC/Provost Camfield replied that the strike has to be settled before he can provide concrete information. Another faculty member pointed out the difficulty of making offers to graduate students in January based on enrollment numbers the campus does not yet have. EVC/Provost Camfield responded that campus funds will have to be reallocated and he is working with CAPRA on parameters. He pointed out that other measures can be taken by the Schools, for example, there is flexibility in the TAS budget and school deans should negotiate with each other. But if resource reallocation affects more than one unit, then it needs CAPRA input because CAPRA takes an institutional perspective.

A faculty member asked about plans for lobbying efforts at the federal level with regard to federal funding agencies. EVC/Provost Camfield replied that the systemwide chair of governmental relations is working on that.

A faculty member asked about an admissions cap for graduate students. EVC/Provost Camfield replied that any capping decisions will be made in consultation with the Graduate Division and the Senate.

IV. Discussion: FWAF/EDI – *FWAF Chair David Jennings and EDI Chair Carrie Menke*

- A. Impediments to faculty success, with implications for personnel evaluations
- B. Faculty morale
- C. Challenges and opportunities from a Senate perspective on Strategic Plan Goal 3: Cultivate a Culture of Dignity & Respect for All

EDI Chair Menke and FWAF Chair Jennings presented a series of slides with the following information:

Impediments to Faculty Success include:

- Shortage of staff support exacerbates problems with:
 - Using financial system
 - Orders submitted in timely manner
 - Submitting & spending grants
- Pandemic
 - Shifting to & working remotely

- Ripple effects shifting back
 - Students that lost ≥ 2 years of in-person instruction
 - Absences due to illness

EDI and FWAF are hearing increasing reports of:

- Changing or inconsistent standards
- Vague guidance on *achievement relative to opportunity*
- Denial of accelerations
- High service loads under-rewarded
- Contributions to diversity not valued

Faculty Morale:

- Widespread mistrust
- Burnout
- Administration perceived as hindrance rather than helpful
 - Opaque processes
 - Lack of timely information
 - Missed opportunities for collaboration & shared governance
- Decreased staff support
- DivCo not viewed as a resource

Strategic Plan Goal 3: Cultivate a Culture of Dignity and Respect for All:

- Senate and Administration should proactively engage each other to synergize on the Equity, Justice, Inclusive Excellence (EJIE) initiative.
- Integrate Goal 3 into implementation of Goals 1 & 2 of Strategic Plan
 - Opportunity almost missed
- EDI was not involved in the search committee for Associate Deans of EJIE
 - Opportunity missed

Actions being taken by EDI and FWAF:

- EDI: Data RE: accelerations (requested S22)
- EDI: Reviewing process for Assoc. Deans of EJIE
- FWAF: Advocating for blanket grading deadline extension for courses with TAs
- Trying to forge better connection with faculty & administration at multiple levels
 - School Executive committees
 - VC/CDO Delia Saenz
 - AVPF Anna Song
 - (VP Academic Affairs and Strategy Spitzmueller)

Suggestions:

- Faculty hiring: Make reviewing research & diversity statements first a standard practice in applicant reviews
- Context/instructions for letter writers
- Rubrics for case analysis committees
- Codify lines of communications
 - Between faculty groups
 - Between faculty & administration

- Devote a faculty meeting to discuss local context for ARO
- Rubrics for case analyses

EDI Chair Menke then asked EVC/Provost Camfield for the best way to communicate with him to ensure that the administration is responsive and accountable to faculty requests. She gave examples of memos that EDI submitted to the EVC/Provost to which the committee did not receive a response. EVC/Provost Camfield responded that he was unaware that he was unresponsive and does not recall the memos EDI Chair Menke referred to. He asked EDI Chair Menke to contact him and his Chief of Staff to follow up.

CAP Chair O'Day agreed that systemwide guidance on Achievements Relative to Opportunity is vague and local guidance is needed. However, case files are developed by the departments and departments need to ensure they justify the requested action. CAP, the VPAP, and the EVC/Provost are only allowed to review what is contained in the case files and cannot conduct outside research on faculty under review. She added that VPAP Hansford has been attending department meetings across campus. CAP Chair O'Day also pointed out that the criteria for accelerations is uneven and she has spoken with VPAP Hansford about revising this section of the MAPP to make it clearer.

CoC Chair Hagger concurred with the points on compensation/course release for Senate service, and also expressed concern that Senate service is not viewed by faculty as “worth it” for merit advances, acceleration, and promotion. This may be due to a perception that it is not something that is considered in sufficiently high regard when advancement cases are evaluated.

LASC Chair DePrano stated that the campus's lack of prioritization of investing in the library also functions as a barrier to faculty and student research. This does not just affect the humanities; it affects all disciplines and schools. She encouraged the administration to prioritize the library.

A faculty member pointed out the lack of access to mental health care for faculty and students.

EVC/Provost Camfield stated that the evaluation of service begins at the department level. If review committees in the department denigrate service, then higher levels of review will likely concur. With regard to EDI Chair Menke's point about using rubrics, EVC/Provost Camfield emphasized that those rubrics need to be developed by the departments as they are in the best position to articulate the expectations for their faculty's advancement and promotion. Those rubrics cannot be provided by the administration. He also pointed out that the Faculty Equity Advisors advise on faculty searches, and they utilize rubrics.

CAP Chair O'Day stated that CAP reviews all elements of the case files – self-statements, case analyses, deans' letters, etc. – but sometimes the case analyses do not contextualize faculty's contributions to research, teaching, service, or EDI. It is important for the case analyses to articulate the impact of faculty's achievements rather than simply providing a list of work they have done.

A faculty member pointed out that even within departments, there is sometimes disagreement over the criteria for advancement and promotion. She suggested that EDI and FWAF could serve as mediators for departments who are experiencing this difficulty. EVC/Provost Camfield stated

that he would be willing to provide funds to support this effort, but EDI and FWAF must take the lead, not the administration.

V. Discussion: CoR/CAPRA – CoR Chair Jay Sexton and CAPRA Chair Kevin Mitchell

A. Proposed Institute for Climate Resilience and Equity

CAPRA Chair Mitchell reminded faculty that UC Merced has received \$18 million in funding for climate resilience research and VCR Wilson has been working to allocate these funds. Her draft proposal is linked on today’s agenda. VCR Wilson has held campus townhalls to ensure that faculty are kept informed about climate funding opportunities. VCR Wilson stated that she will release the funding in three tranches spaced apart by approximately six months. She appreciated the Senate’s offer to form a working group to assist her in allocating these funds. She will send the draft request for proposals to the working group when the document is ready. VCR Wilson also stated that per a recent campus announcement, the Packard Foundation has gifted the campus \$1 million which the Chancellor matched with \$1 million, bringing the total to \$20 million for climate funding research.

VI. Discussion: GC Chair Michael Scheibner

A. Challenges for graduate students

GC Chair Scheibner informed faculty that GC is aiming to capture and assess:

- Pandemic-related impacts
- Building Closures
- Transition to the new Oracle financial system
- Others (strike, etc.)

GC is in the process of gathering information from graduate students on how these challenges have impacted their progress to degree, and their future plans.

Questions that GC has for faculty:

- Are your graduate students experiencing delays in their progress to degree or other impacts due to these challenges?
- Do you anticipate that these challenges will impact the recruitment of new graduate students:
 - On the individual research group level
 - On the graduate group level
- Should the graduate students’ progress to degree be evaluated based on the principle of “achievement relative to opportunity” as was suggested for faculty? If so,

- What would it mean in terms of a UC-quality graduate education?
- What else would be needed to remediate the impacts, not to just shift them to the individual faculty and their research groups?
- What solutions have you come up with?

VII. Question and Answer with Senate Leadership

No questions were raised.

VIII. Standing Committee Chair Reports

A summary of Senate Committees' Fall 2022 business was linked on today's agenda.

AY 22-23 Senate Leadership:

- Admissions and Financial Aid Committee, Chair Charlie Eaton
- Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation, Chair Kevin Mitchell
- Committee on Academic Personnel, Chair Peggy O'Day
- Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel, Chair Anne Kelley
- Committee on Committees, Chair Martin Hagger
- Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Chair Carrie Menke
- Committee on Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom, Chair David Jennings
- Committee on Research, Chair Jason Sexton
- Committee on Rules and Elections, Chair Christopher Viney
- Graduate Council, Chair Michael Scheibner
- Library and Scholarly Communication Committee, Chair Maria DePrano
- Privilege and Tenure, Chair Susan Amussen
- Undergraduate Council, Chair Holley Moyes

IX. Petition of Students

No petitions were presented.

X. New Business

No new business was raised.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Attest: Patti LiWang, Division Chair