

COMMITTEE FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)**MEETING MINUTES****Monday, November 4, 2024****12:00PM – 1:30PM****ZOOM**

Pursuant to call, the Committee for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion met at 12:00pm on November 4, 2024. Chair Clarissa Nobile presiding.

I. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's Agenda
- B. [October 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)

Action:

- The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

II. Chair's Report – Clarissa Nobile

- A. Updates from [UCAADE](#) Meeting (October 17)

Academic Council Chair Steven Cheung informed UCAADE members that there was support from the administration regarding the incorporation and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the UC system.

President Drake is stepping down at the end of June 2025, so a Presidential search will be initiated soon. There are also several Chancellor searches occurring with the goal to fill the positions prior to President Drake's departure.

There is a consideration to transition campuses that are on a quarter system to a semester format. Divisions will be invited to review this proposal in Spring 2025.

UCAADE members expressed concerns with Chancellors receiving increases in pay amid the state budget cuts. They noted that it created an equity issue with faculty not receiving similar pay raises.

Chair Nobile reported on the topic of hate speech and bias in student evaluations. UCAADE members did not note an uptick of occurrences at their own campuses, however they shared various processes on how hate speech and bias in student evaluations had been addressed. For example, some members noted that their campus removes comments containing hate speech or bias, however the teacher evaluation (TEVAL) score was not removed from their file.

UCAADE members discussed the way each of their campuses were handling the directive from UCOP regarding expressive activities and assembly. Many members expressed concerns about the policies being too restrictive.

One potential priority for UCAADE this year is to look into how to guide faculty in the drafting of their DEI statements which aligns with one of EDI's priorities this year.

- B. Updates from the [Divisional Council](#) Meetings (October 21 and November 4)
UC Merced will begin a budget exercise to strategize and determine where the campus can reduce costs by 5% in anticipation of next year's budget cut.

The construction of the Medical Education building is proceeding. The Chancellor is trying to acquire additional funding to fill in the gap between the amount of funds already received and the costs of the building.

VPAP Hansford informed Divisional Council members that two new laws were implemented, SB 791 and AB 810. The new laws were passed with the goal of preventing institutions of higher education in California from hiring individuals who have misconduct findings in their current or previous institutions. He noted that although this is good for the campus, implementation will be challenging especially when hiring graduate students.

Chair Nobile presented EDI's memo on hate speech and bias in student evaluations to Divisional Council members. She noted that Divisional Council members generally seemed supportive of the proposal but questioned the frequency of the issue occurring. Divisional Council members also seemed to support the idea of flagging the comments containing hate speech and bias and leaving it up to the faculty member to view the comments or not. Some Divisional Council members expressed concerns about unblinding the student evaluations to the administration as they believed the evaluations should remain completely anonymous.

Chair Nobile also presented EDI's memo on the FEA Program and it was endorsed by Divisional Council members. The administration was informed on the Senate's decision in a memo dated October 21, 2024.

EVC/Provost Dumont informed Divisional Council members that there may be a potential three-day strike involving the unions representing custodial and dining services staff.

EVC/Provost Dumont attended a systemwide Congress on the UC commitment to being Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI). She expressed optimism regarding UC Merced becoming an HSRI upon receiving an R1 status.

CAP Chair Barlow led a discussion on the proposed revisions to MAPP sections 2013, 2014, 2053 and 2054. Divisional Council members expressed concerns about having separate MAPP sections for the Research Faculty series and Teaching Professor series and thought it might be best to combine the sections into one

document. Divisional Council members also discussed EDI’s comment about redefining or removing the word “impact”. There was also a discussion about the EDI section of the MAPP, and while the APM does not require EDI contributions as a criterion for advancement and promotion, Divisional Council members discussed the possibility of the MAPP providing more specific EDI guidelines than the APM. Divisional Council members also discussed Career Equity Reviews (CER) and expressed the need for more information in the MAPP pertaining to CERs.

Divisional Council members met with Police Chief Her to discuss campus safety and security with the upcoming elections as well as the university’s purchase of military grade equipment. Chief Her explained that certain items are classified as military grade equipment if they are purchased on university funds. He added that such equipment is not intended for use in protests, but rather responses to individuals who are armed and dangerous.

C. Confirm Alternate for April 10 [UCAADE](#) Meeting

Actions:

- Member Lee will rearrange his schedule so that he is available to attend.
- The EDI Analyst notified Fatima that Member Lee is able to serve as an alternate for the April 10 UCAADE Meeting.
- Fatima notified UCOP that Member Lee will serve as an alternate for the April 10 UCAADE meeting.

III. EDI Representatives/Liaisons

A. [Periodic Review Oversight Committee \(PROC\)](#) – Marcus Lee

- Update on October 21 Meeting

It has been especially difficult to obtain more diversity on review panels. PROC is looking to determine if the lack of diversity is acceptable or if they should reach out to more individuals in an effort to increase panel diversity. Most PROC members agreed that there should be an effort to increase the panel diversity, and some even supported the idea of compensating individuals to make it more appealing.

PROC members discussed the workload and structure of program reviews within departments. Specifically, the self-study often becomes concentrated in the hands of just a few individuals within the department, rather than being a collaborative effort shared more evenly.

PROC is continuing to look at using data to streamline EDI guidance for program’s self-studies.

B. [Chancellor's Council on Climate, Culture, Antiracism and Equity \(CCCAE\)](#) – Dalia Magaña

- Update on October 23 Meeting

Member Magaña informed EDI members that the CCCAE meeting was devoted to the Black Lives Initiatives. CCCAE members clarified that the funding for the Black Lives Initiatives runs through 2026, not 2025 as stated in the previous meeting.

CCCAE members signed up for various recommendations to take the lead on. Member Magaña signed up to take the lead on recommendation #7, Create and Fund the Black Graduate Student Fellows.

Action:

- Member Magaña requested that members share any information they have pertaining to Black Graduate Student Fellows so that she can report it back to CCCAE.

IV. Consultation with AVPAP Song

A. [EDI's Position Regarding Student Evaluations](#)

AVPAP Song sought to confirm EDI's position on adding a preamble in the beginning of the evaluation and an open-ended section at the end of the evaluation. She added that as EDI's recommendation makes its way through the Senate, she would like to begin to try addressing some of the concerns for the next round of student evaluations upon EDI's approval.

Action:

- EDI endorsed implementing the preamble in the beginning of the evaluation and an open-ended section at the end of the evaluation in order to begin to address the concern of hate speech and bias in student evaluations.

Chair Nobile requested that data also be collected in the next round of student evaluations. AVPAP Song replied that this would take coordination with Student Affairs and the Division of Undergraduate Education as they administer and receive the student evaluations.

Actions:

- AVPAP Song will coordinate a meeting with Student Affairs and the Division of Undergraduate Education regarding data collection on hate speech and bias in student evaluations.
- AVPAP Song will update AVC Valdez, VC/CDO Saenz, and the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) on the next steps.

V. Consultation with AVC Valdez

A. UC Academic Congress on Hispanic-Serving Research Institutions (HSRI)

AVC Valdez attended the UC Academic Congress on HSIs where there was a noted push to make all UCs HSIs. She noted that there was also an emphasis on the research aspect of HSIs and what it means for a UC to be an HSRI. AVC Valdez clarified that

universities are not given money once they become an HSI, but rather can apply for specific funds that are coming from the government and other sources that are benefiting in HSI. Also, research HSIs are more likely to obtain those types of grant funds. AVC Valdez added that UC Merced is not an HSRI as it does not have R1 status. Once UC Merced reaches R1 status, it will emerge as an HSRI.

Attendees of the UC Academic Congress discussed the types of research that they would want to cultivate if going to an HSI or HSRI as well as how to account for community engaged research.

AVC Valdez noted that UC Merced does not have a comprehensive approach to HSI. For example, there is not a specific task force dedicated to HSI efforts, only some individuals completing HSI-related work. Attendees from UC Merced agreed that formalizing a task force or something similar would be a step in the right direction. Senate Executive Director Paul recommended reaching out to GC and UGC to discuss this initiative.

Actions:

- Fatima reached out to GC and UGC to request that AVC Valdez provide an HSRI update at a future committee meeting.
- AVC Valdez is confirmed to attend the November 22 UGC meeting and the November 26 GC meeting.

VI. [Step Plus Advancement System](#)

A summary of other UC campus' advancement systems can be found [here](#).

Chair Nobile stated her preference for a model similar to UC Davis's Step Plus System but opened it up to members to provide different opinions. Chair Nobile then reviewed the format of the UC Davis Step Plus System with members but noted it would be important for members to review all of the finer details of the Step Plus System to determine if it would be a suitable option for UC Merced. AVC Valdez then recommended consulting with VPAP Hansford as the Academic Personnel Office (APO) would need to be on board before moving forward.

Chair Nobile presented a slide set to EDI members that contained useful information pertaining to UC Davis's Step Plus System. Members discussed the positive points from the presentation. One was that implementing such a system could decrease the number of actions reviewed each academic year. They agreed that this may be a good selling point to the campus. A Step Plus System could also provide a greater likelihood of uniformly equitable decisions. Since women and other underrepresented minorities do not accelerate or ask for accelerations as often, the goal would be for such a system to reduce these inequities.

It was noted that it might be a good idea to include salary as part of the promotion system. The reason being that it would be valuable to clarify if salaries are standard or

negotiated with each review. It would also ensure transparency on negotiating off-scales, criteria that would allow for an increase, etc.

Actions:

- Chair Nobile circulated a [Step Plus System PowerPoint](#) slide set to members.
- Members are to review the [Step Plus System PowerPoint](#) slide set and the [UC Davis Step Plus System webpage](#) and record any questions or comments to discuss at the December 9 EDI meeting.
- The EDI Analyst will invite VPAP Hansford to discuss this topic at the December 9 EDI meeting. Fatima will discuss the topic prior to EDI's December 9 meeting.

VII. [Guidelines for DEI Statements in Promotion & Tenure Cases](#)

In AY 23-24, EDI began creating a set of guidelines for faculty to reference while drafting their DEI statements for promotion and tenure cases. A draft of EDI's work on this can be found [here](#).

The APM and MAPP sections related to the review of DEI statements in Promotion and Tenure cases can be found [here](#).

Chair Nobile wanted to ensure that all members' comments were included in the current draft guidelines before considering it complete.

Action:

- The EDI Analyst will circulate the draft [Guidelines for DEI Statements in Promotion & Tenure Cases](#) to members for their review and comments.

VIII. Campus Wide Review Item

A. [UC Merced Interim Policy on Expressive Activities and Assembly: Protests, Demonstrations, Non-University Speakers and Signage on Campus and in University Facilities](#)

Updates align with mandatory directives issued by the UC Office of the President and include:

- Mandatory revisions required by [California State Senate Bill 108, SEC. 219, 34](#) implemented under [UC Merced's Campus Climate Initiative](#).
- Technical updates to owner, contact information, and resources.
- Clarifications around disruptions of a university activity, proximity of activities, signage, unauthorized structures, and consequences.
- Moved Protest Oversight Group (POG) membership/roles & responsibilities to Appendix.

At the October 14, 2024 EDI meeting, Vice Chair Pirtle and Member García-Ojeda agreed to serve as lead reviewers.

Vice Chair Pirtle shared her draft comments with members. She noted that the policy is quite restrictive, especially when dealing with controversial issues that can welcome various perspectives. In her draft comments, she noted concerns with some of the current

language, the arbitrary section on signage regulations, time and location restrictions for protests, restrictions on masks, and use of police. Vice Chair Pirtle added that from an EDI perspective, it is important to recognize that UC Merced has a diverse student and faculty population, and these types of policies can restrict our ability to have an inclusive campus. Members agreed with Vice Pirtle's comments and discussed other concerns that could be incorporated into the draft, such as the use of military grade equipment.

Members reviewed [UCLA's resolution condemning the interim time, place and manner policies](#) and noted that some of the items within the document could be incorporated into EDI's response.

Actions:

- Vice Chair Pirtle and Member García-Ojeda will revise the draft memo based on the committee's comments and send an updated draft to Petra, Fatima and Chair Nobile by **Monday, November 11**.
- Comments will be circulated to members via email in order to be finalized and sent to the Senate Chair by **Monday, November 18**.

IX. Other Business

A. [SSHA Reorganization Proposal](#)

Members discussed EDI's comments on the SSHA Reorganization Proposal. Members expressed concerns with the proposal regarding inequities and lack of diversity within some of SSHA's departments. Members wondered whether there was a way to express this concern more strongly in the memo or alternatively, to push for accountability in terms of ensuring diversity within the departments once the school is divided.

Action:

- Fatima will follow up with the Senate Chair regarding EDI's response memo to push for accountability and express EDI's strong concern about the Economics Department's lack of diversity and poor retention of female and underrepresented faculty.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.

Attest: Clarissa Nobile, EDI Chair