

Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)
Minutes of Meeting
November 18, 2024

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation met at 1:30 pm on November 18, 2024, via Zoom. Chair Kara McCloskey presiding.

- I. Consultation with EVC/Provost
 - A. Faculty hiring planning

Recognizing that Schools have varied needs, EVC/Provost Dumont plans to ask School Deans to work with the Executive Committees and Departments to draft principles on faculty hiring. A group (membership TBD but will be selected by EVC/Provost Dumont with input from CAPRA) will then review the Schools' principles and make recommendations on how EVC/Provost Dumont should provide faculty FTE lines to the Schools in a way that is consistent with the Schools' principles. EVC/Provost Dumont emphasized that her intention is to provide the Schools with faculty FTE lines but the Schools will have the authority to decide how to allocate those lines according to their needs.

A CAPRA member asked if teaching plans can be used as a factor in allocating faculty FTE lines to ensure that the curriculum can be delivered. EVC/Provost Dumont reiterated that the Schools would have the local authority to distribute their faculty FTE lines and the Deans need to consult with their faculty on items such as teaching plans, etc.

A CAPRA member cautioned against a "competition model" of faculty FTE allocation especially in the context of student credit hours. Such a model leads to resources disputes amongst departments as well as damaged morale. A CAPRA member suggested incentivizing collaborations across departments and EVC/Provost Dumont agreed.

A CAPRA member spoke in support of drafting principles and conveyed that in her School in the past, there was no institutionalization of principles that drove discussions about faculty FTE lines and this caused the disputes amongst departments. It would benefit the faculty if they were told of the metrics by which FTE line allocation decisions are made.

EVC/Provost Dumont informed CAPRA that after this meeting, she will hold a discussion with the School Deans and ask them to draft principles for faculty hiring.

- II. Chair's Report – *Chair Kara McCloskey*

- A. October 30 Shared Governance Retreat

The notes were shared with CAPRA via email last week. The retreat included discussions with Senate committee chairs and administration partners on: financial management and reporting, graduate education, enrollment, and research.

- B. November 4 and 18 Divisional Council meetings

- EVC/Provost Dumont informed Divisional Council about a potential strike from the unions representing some custodian and dining staff. (VC/CFO Schnier confirmed to CAPRA members in today’s meeting that the strike is occurring this week, and the campus has contracted additional staff to ensure the continuation of services.)
- Consultation with campus Police Chief Chou Her about his department’s protocols. Divisional Council asked Chief Her about the UCOP-approved purchases of military grade equipment.
- Divisional Council voted to endorse the proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (Cal-GETC) and the proposed, new Senate Regulation 627 (Posthumous Awarding of Degrees).
- Campuses are conducting budget reduction exercises in anticipation of next year’s state budget cuts.
- Divisional Council discussed APO’s proposed revisions to MAPP 2013, 2014, 2053, and 2054 and the comments received from Senate committees, School Executive Committees, and individual faculty members. Council’s memo to APO will be transmitted soon.
- Divisional Council supported the proposal from FWF to split into two committees, the Committee on Faculty Welfare and the Committee on Academic Freedom. The next step is for Divisional Council to review revised bylaws.

C. November 5 University Committee on Planning & Budget (UCPB) meeting

- California voters approved Proposition 2 provides up to \$10 billion in bonds to fund repairs and renovations at K-12 schools and community colleges. This funding is not applied to the UCs or CSUs.
- The MOP loan program will be given a cash infusion this academic year but the details will vary across the campuses. Campuses are experiencing difficulty with supporting the program. Due to higher interest rates, the usage of these loans have increased.
- Discussion about next year’s state budget cuts and campus preparations.
- Discussion about revenue generating Master’s programs.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. Today’s agenda
- B. Draft October 28 meeting minutes

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. TAS Allocation Formula – *Vice Chair Beman*

Vice Chair Beman reported that the TAS workgroup will meet tomorrow, and their goal is to finish a draft TAS allocation formula in the next couple of weeks. CAPRA will be invited to review the draft formula.

V. Consultation with VCR Wilson

Guests: CoR Chair Tao Ye and Vice Chair Ramendra Saha

A. Pre-award spending policy at UC Merced

Prior to this meeting, CAPRA Chair McCloskey shared the pre-award spending policies from various UC campuses.

VCR Wilson shared the link to UC Merced's pre-award spending policy with CAPRA. She explained that some funding agencies (e.g. state agencies) do not allow pre-award spending. The current campus policy states that a COA must be provided in case the funding does not materialize. Unfortunately, this situation has occurred in the past. If pre-award spending is allowed, it is capped at 25% of the total award amount. The request must go up the chain of command: first the PI must try to provide the funding and if they cannot, then they ask their departments, and then their School Deans or ORU director. It is also important to remember that whomever provides the funding source for pre-award spending is agreeing to take on the risk. Each sponsored project has different risks. The university (i.e. SPO) has to assess the risks and decide if the university can take them on.

A CAPRA member asked if the campus could establish a pot of money just for pre-award spending. VC/CFO Schnier suggested that it is important to keep in mind campus budget sources. He explained that the primary revenue source at the departmental level is indirect cost returns. Budgets are highly centralized at UC Merced. He also reiterated VCR Wilson's statement that whoever provides pre-award spending is essentially serving as an insurer who takes on the risk if the grants funds do not materialize. If the EVC/Provost agrees to provide pre-award spending but the faculty member does not end up receiving the grant funds, then the EVC/Provost has lost that money and cannot fund other areas on campus. This could also mean fewer staff and faculty hires.

VCR Wilson pointed out the difference between a notice of intent to fund and a notice of funding. Intent notices can be pulled. The risks of moving forward with the research without the notification of funding are very high.

CAPRA Chair McCloskey stated that the UC Merced pre-award spending webpage does not specify the chain of command, nor does it define high risk and low risk. VCR Wilson acknowledged this and stated that she will look into it.

CoR Chair Ye pointed out that in his experience, establishing a COA takes a significant amount of time. For a standard three-year NSF grant, faculty have to prepare renewal proposals after two years. This is why it is problematic when faculty lose time at the beginning of the process. The research on the project is time sensitive, especially when faculty want to hire students. Also, some funding agencies will pull award funding if faculty have not submitted progress reports.

VI. Executive Session – *Voting Members Only*

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Attest: Kara McCloskey, CAPRA chair