

Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA)
Minutes of Meeting
February 13, 2014

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation met at 3:30 pm on February 13, 2014 in Room 362 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Anne Kelley presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Kelley updated members on the following topics from the January 7 and February 4 UCORP meetings:

--Composite benefit rates. The controversy lies in the fact that UCOP considered a model where faculty summer salaries are charged the same benefits rate as their academic year salaries. The difficulties surrounding the establishment of UC Path have compounded the issue. UCOP and faculty are currently at an impasse.

--Capital projects. A letter from UCOP related to capital outlay projects was circulated to CAPRA members prior to this meeting. Capital projects were previously funded by state bonds. Now, UC is being asked to pay for capital projects from its operating budget. The issue is whether the decision to fund capital projects in this manner should be made at the campus level or by UCOP. UCPB recommended it be handled centrally by UCOP, but also emphasized that this must be considered a stopgap measure only until the state returns to funding capital projects in the usual way.

--Tuition policy. The Governor is in favor of freezing tuition. One alternative, which has been discussed for several years, is to establish cohort tuition but UCPB does not advocate this.

--Self-supporting graduate degree programs and professional degree supplemental tuition policy. CAPRA has already opined.

--Campus budget committee. Professor Kelley, as CAPRA chair, is a member of this committee. The first meeting was held today and the next will be held in March.

II. Consent Calendar

ACTION: Today's agenda and the minutes from the December 10, 2013 meeting were approved as presented.

III. FTE Process

In preparation for Provost Peterson's impending arrival, CAPRA members discussed the status of the FTE call. (CAPRA drafted a call in fall semester and submitted it to the Provost on November 26 for his review).

Traditionally, CAPRA's call for FTE requests was submitted in early December, but as this is a transitional year, the call still has not been sent to the campus. CAPRA members reviewed the call and discussed the need for revisions. It is important that the call be sent in a timely manner so that FTE lines can be released by the Provost in July for faculty recruitment in August. CAPRA members suggested decoupling the strategic focusing initiative process from CAPRA's FTE call and just proceeding with the regular call independent of strategic focusing's timeline. CAPRA members also discussed how to revise the strategic planning component of the call, as faculty will find it challenging to provide their space needs when that information is still largely unknown.

CAPRA members also discussed Provost Peterson's statement at the fall semester Meeting of the Division in which he announced his intention to eventually tighten the parameters of faculty start up funds. He mentioned in that meeting that unspent start up funds present a somewhat misleading picture to UCOP and so these unused funds must be addressed before Merced can request additional funding from UCOP. CAPRA members discussed the need for bridge funding or other sources of funding if faculty will no longer be allowed to receive multi-year extensions to their start up packages.

IV. Guest – Provost/EVC Peterson

Provost Peterson joined the meeting to speak to CAPRA members about the FTE process and the campus budget situation. When told that faculty are

concerned over the delay in sending the call for FTE request, the Provost explained that there are three factors to understand: 1) in terms of faculty recruitment, there are approximately 34 searches occurring at the moment. Half are new positions and the rest are either carry over lines from unsuccessful searches from last year or replacement positions. 2) the campus is in the middle of the strategic focusing initiative. The first phase went well. But in the second phase, the strategic focusing committee is debating whether to include every faculty member's research under the umbrella of the campus's research mission, or, whether we should aim for establishing general pillars of research. Faculty hiring plans will have to reflect a roadmap that describes a multi-year trajectory for the campus to strengthen the pillars as well as the other areas of research that may not exactly align. 3) the campus budget is still not ready to be distributed. The campus is not decreasing the number of students, but we are slowing the growth for one or two years. For at least the next three years, after SE 2 comes online and COB 2 is built, we will have no new space. To meet the goals of Project 2020, we will need to have between 300-400 faculty members by 2020. A straight-line growth trajectory toward this goal is not realistic given our space challenge.

Provost Peterson then presented CAPRA members the idea of scaling back on new faculty positions for one year to allow the campus to pause and catch up. The Provost suggested 12 positions for next year. Since we don't yet have a roadmap from the strategic focusing initiative, this slowing of faculty growth could allow us to better plan for future hires. The Provost urged CAPRA members and all faculty members to provide him feedback on this idea and what its ramifications would be for our academic programs.

A brief question and answer period followed. A CAPRA member inquired if this pause in faculty hiring means that the faculty currently on campus, in particular those untenured, would be better taken care of. The Provost assured the CAPRA members that his intention is to build infrastructure to support our current faculty that includes research support as well as administrative support. However, space is a problem. In response to a question about faculty hires being tied to undergraduate enrollment, Provost

Peterson reiterated that undergraduate enrollment provides much of the campus funding, however, he agrees that more ladder-rank faculty need to be hired. Since the campus's inception, it has invested in non-ladder rank faculty (LSOEs and unit 18 lecturers) but looking ahead, Merced needs to be more in line with other campuses and increased ladder-rank faculty. A CAPRA member pointed out that many programs do not have the critical mass to maintain solid graduate programs, so slowing faculty growth may exacerbate the problem. Another CAPRA member mentioned that faculty in high-enrolled disciplines would be concerned with getting fewer faculty FTEs. Provost Peterson emphasized that the rate of faculty growth will slow, but will not stop; moreover, as mentioned, student enrollment will also stop increasing.

When told that faculty members are still unsure about new space on campus, what is available in SE 1 and SE 2, and the difficulties in strategic planning, the Provost replied that he does not want to balkanize SoE and SNS and he recognizes that in previous years, this may have been the case as SE 2 was being conceived. The Provost said he is trying to move as many faculty as possible from Castle to campus, however, there is a financial inefficiency inherent in this process because new faculty hires will have to be placed at Castle.

CAPRA members then asked the Provost about the future of unspent start up funds. The Provost replied that he remains committed to viable, competitive start up packages for new faculty hires, which means he must take a more quantitative approach to them and to start up funds held by existing faculty members. The Provost will focus on what faculty members specifically need and when they should spend the funds, however, he will also explore ways to provide faculty with bridge funding and funding for international travel. The Provost wants to be more organized and regimented about start up funds, however, he emphasized that nobody's start up funds will be seized or swept. He encouraged faculty to come speak to him if they remain concerned.

The Provost stated that he is not altering the hiring plans for this year and they will proceed as planned.

The Provost said he reviewed the draft call for FTE requests that CAPRA submitted to him in fall semester and he has no issue with it. However, in light of his suggestion of scaling back faculty hires, he asked CAPRA to consider revising the call. CAPRA members responded that they will revise the draft to reflect a call for FTE requests only, decoupled from a larger, strategic plan request.

ACTION: The draft call for FTE requests will be revised based on today's discussion with the Provost. The revised draft will be circulated among CAPRA members for review and will then be submitted to Provost Peterson.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Attest:

Anne Kelley, Chair

Minutes prepared by:

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