

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE & ACADEMIC FREEDOM (FWAF)
ANNUAL REPORT
AY 2016-2017

To the Merced Division of the Academic Senate:

In AY 2016-2017, FWAF held a total of 4 regularly scheduled in-person meetings in order to conduct business with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's Senate Bylaw [II.IV.5](#). Some additional business was completed via electronic mail discussions.

Areas of Focus

Start-Up Funds and Incidental Funds

FWAF devoted a significant amount of attention to this issue, as a number of faculty members across the three schools expressed concern about their start-up funds being sequestered by the Provost/EVC if not spent in a prescribed manner and without permission of extension by their schools' deans. FWAF submitted a memo to Division Council in the last academic year with recommended alternatives for the use of start-up funds. FWAF requested the Council's endorsement and for the recommendations to be forwarded to Vice Provost for the Faculty (VPF) Gregg Camfield and Provost/EVC Tom Peterson.

In September 2016, FWAF reiterated its recommendations in a second memo submitted to the Senate Chair. The recommendations were: 1) All new hires to get access to start-up funds for six years, with an additional year possible by application to the dean in extraordinary circumstance (similar to stop-the-clock provisions). 2) Allow new faculty hires to map out blocks of their start-up funds to be released for particular purposes over the period of 6 years (or up until tenure, should there be extenuating circumstances such as family or sick leave, or accelerated advancement). 3) If faculty are required to relinquish start-up funds because of an expiration date, the funds relinquished, either 100% or some reasonable percentage, will be returned at a later date such as when the faculty advances to tenure in the form of a mid-career award or at promotion to full as an established career award. FWAF also stated that regardless of the which recommendations can be implemented, it advocates for flexibility in how and when faculty can spend out their funds.

Concurrently with the discussion about start-up funds, FWAF also addressed the issue of

faculty incidental funds; at the end of the last academic year, many faculty reported the lack of notification before their incidental funds were to be swept and re-deposited. In September 2016, FWAF submitted a memo to the Senate Chair (with a request that it be forwarded to the administration) that asserted that the faculty would like to maintain an environment of predictability, transparency, and stability in the handling of their incidental accounts irrespective of disciplinary needs. Faculty depend on these funds each year in order to carry out an array of scholarly-related activities, especially given the lack of bridge funding or other sources of funding offered by the campus, with the exception of the Senate faculty grants program. FWAF added that if the administration does not find this suggestion feasible, then the administration should consult with the Senate to find an acceptable alternative.

After discussions on these two separate but related topics at Division Council, FWAF elected to draft “Principles for the Allocation and Management of Faculty Start-Up and Incidental Funds”. In consultation with the Senate Committee on Research, FWAF submitted the following set of principles to the Senate Chair: 1) If UCM is committed to remaining a research university, faculty must have regular and predictable access to the funds necessary to conduct research activities and disseminate their findings as discretionary funds are essential to the scholarly and educational mission of UCM. 2) When determining appropriate policies for faculty discretionary funds, comparisons between institutions must be done with great care. UCM currently differs from its sister campuses in its relative lack of sources for discretionary funding for faculty. Policies concerning the use of start-up funds might best be specified at the School level or lower. 3) In the interests of both staffing efficiency and faculty productivity, access to start-up and incidental funds should be made as predictable and uncomplicated as possible.

In February 2017, the Senate Chair transmitted FWAF’s principles to the Provost/EVC, the VPF, and the Interim Vice Chancellor for Planning and Budget (the Chancellor was also copied on the correspondence).

Child Care Survey

In the last academic year, FWAF recognized the need for after-school programming at the campus Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) and for similar options for the multiple, traditional breaks such as Thanksgiving and Spring Break, as local schools’ schedules do not align with UCM’s academic calendar. In fall 2016, FWAF members began working on a set of survey questions to assess the needs of parents or guardians who require or expect to

require child care for at least one child (age 0 to 13) during the workday or after school.

In spring 2017, FWAF's draft survey questions were submitted to various campus stakeholders for input, including IRDS, the campus survey committee, the director of the ECEC, and members of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women. FWAF slightly revised the questions according to feedback received.

In May 2017, the survey was issued via the campus Communications unit to all faculty (including unit 18 lecturers), staff, and graduate students. The results of the survey were compiled into a report and submitted to FWAF members in June 2017. The analysis of the results, as well as plans for distribution of a summary of the results, will occur in the next academic year.

Diversity in Faculty Hiring

In spring 2017, FWAF members discussed the concern that is sometimes raised by faculty when presented with the importance of diversity in hiring and retention. Specifically, some faculty are under the impression that diversity and excellence (or quality) as potentially opposing goals. FWAF rejected this notion and drafted a statement to Division Council that asserted that excellence in the context of a university setting is the byproduct of capable, motivated scholars who are given the tools, resources, and an environment that allows them to effectively apply their talents. In its statement, FWAF argued that this perspective has a number of important implications for the way we think about our personnel process. First, it means that in evaluating job candidates faculty need to move beyond simply counting the number of publications or grants a scholar has to examining candidates holistically, including the context in which their work to date has been accomplished and their fit at a campus such as UC Merced. Second, once faculty are hired, the campus must work steadfastly to ensure that all faculty members have both the necessary resources and a supportive environment in which to pursue their research and teaching.

FWAF's statement on diversity in faculty hiring was submitted to the Senate Chair in April 2017 and discussed in Divisional Council. A revised version of this statement that takes Division Council's comments into account will be drafted in Fall 2017.

Police Advisory Board

Since the campus incident of November 2015, FWAF has been in discussions with the administration (originally, with the former campus Police Chief) on empaneling a police advisory board. A draft board membership was created by Associate Chancellor Luanna

Putney, and reviewed by FWAF in the last academic year. While the committee generally viewed the draft favorably, it took issue with the role of the Chief of Police; the committee maintained that the Chief should neither serve as the board chair nor have the power to appointment or dismiss members of the board.

In spring 2017, Associate Chancellor Putney issued the draft board membership to a variety of campus stakeholders for review and input including the ASUCM, GSA, and the Chancellor. In April 2017, Putney announced that plans to establish a Police Advisory Board are ready to proceed now that a new Police Chief has been appointed; in addition, the administration is recruiting for a Director of Public Safety who will serve as the Chancellor's designee on the future Board.

Faculty Professional Development Series

FWAF continued its partnership with the Academic Personnel office on sponsoring a year-long series of workshops for the benefit of all faculty. Topics this year included mentoring of graduate students and post docs and an overview of the promotion and advancement process.

Consultation

Consultation with Vice Provost for the Faculty

FWAF benefited during the academic year from consultation with ex-officio, non-voting committee member, VPF Camfield. In addition to VPF Camfield's attendance at meetings, the FWAF chair met with him via regular, standing meetings. VPF Camfield brought the following issues before FWAF:

- Emeriti faculty benefits. Other campuses provide various benefits for their emeriti faculty members and this may be something for UC Merced to consider in the future when our population of emeriti faculty increases.
- The importance of faculty members to understand their rights and responsibilities in this highly-charged political climate.
- The VPF hosted an academic freedom forum on April 10, 2017 attended by the Provost/EVC, faculty, deans, and staff. Forum participants shared with faculty a variety of campus resources and assistance.

- Hiring of two faculty liaisons who are tasked with taking a systematic approach to standardizing policies across campus in support of faculty members. These positions were established as a result of discussions from workforce planning. Both positions are housed with the VPF's office.
- Evaluation of teaching. Relying on student ratings for the evaluation of teaching is not an ideal method due to various reasons including the low response rate. The VPF proposed the formation of a task force and asked for a volunteer from FWAF. This will be a carry-over item to the next academic year.
- The VPF intends to conduct shared governance workshops with next year's department/unit chairs and Senate committee chairs.

Consultation with Administration

FWAF benefited throughout the academic year from consultation with various members of the administration who provided valuable updates and information:

- *AVC and CIO of Information Technology*

AVC/CIO Ann Kovalchick kept FWAF informed on systemwide developments related to cybersecurity, specifically, surveillance methods, cyber risk assessment, and updates from the cyber risk governance committee.

- *Director of Campus Climate*

Director De Acker offered FWAF members various resources available to faculty pertaining to academic freedom, including guidance on how to handle classroom disruption, contact information for campus individuals who can provide guidance on interpersonal conflict, the abusive conduct policy, and threat management.

- *Associate Chancellor*

As recounted above, FWAF enjoyed a positive working relationship with Associate Chancellor Putney, specifically, on matters pertaining to the Police Advisory Board.

Goals for AY 17-18

Looking ahead to the next academic year, FWAF intends to continue advocating for quality mental health care for faculty and will voice its support for Counseling & Psychological Services to receive additional resources.

FWAF will also continue to engage stakeholders in issues related to campus safety and the need for a cohesive emergency response plan. FWAF also believes that current campus buildings need to be upgraded to include adequate safety features; new buildings under the 2020 Project should be outfitted with safety features; the campus should install a PA system for announcement and instructions in emergencies; safety procedure workshops should be offered for instructors and staff so they can help students during emergencies and lock downs, and finally, unit 18 lecturers and graduate student instructors should have a private space to consult with students who are in distress.

FWAF looks forward to continue working with Associate Chancellor Putney and the future Director of Public Safety to implement the Police Advisory Board.

Finally, FWAF hopes to continue working on an issue it raised at the end of this academic year in consultation with the chairs of D&E and UGC, regarding Senate and non-Senate lecturer lines within the context of future campus academic planning.

Systemwide Committee Updates

- University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) updates. FWAF member Sean Malloy continued in his role as the UCM representative to the UCFW, and kept FWAF members informed of the major items of discussion this academic year:
 - Updates on UC health plans
 - The systemwide Senate's efforts to bring into balance the policies on same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partnerships and marriages.
 - UCFW's response to the President's travel ban was endorsed by Academic Council. The response did not confine itself to the impact of the ban on faculty, students, and staff, rather, it

- highlighted the general xenophobia that motivated the implementation of the ban.
- UCFW proposed a systemwide police advisory board in addition to each campus version of the same.
 - 3% raise of faculty salaries. As with the previous raise, discussions at systemwide include dividing the extra money into two pools: 1.5% raise across the board and 1.5% to be used at the discretion of each Chancellor to address salary inequities and compression. UCFW members advocated for across the board raises and establishing separate funds for inequity and compression.
 - Discussion around the protection of faculty given the current political climate.
 - UCFW was concerned over the proposed revisions to APM 285, 210, 133, and 740 that would re-designate the L(P)SOE series to “Teaching Professor”, as some on the committee believed it implies that ladder-rank faculty do not serve the UC teaching mission.
- University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAF) updates. FWAF Chair Jayson Beaster-Jones represented FWAF on UCAF and updated FWAF members on the following major topics of discussion:
 - Cybersecurity updates, specifically, the implementation of FireEye. UCAF advised members to remain cognizant of human subject data and the importance of maintaining a robust cybersecurity regimen for faculty who conduct research using human subjects.
 - Free speech issues following the 2016 presidential election. UCAF members discussed cadres of aggrieved students and their interactions with faculty members.
 - UCAF circulated a draft memo to its members in response to the systemwide statement condemning anti-Semitism.
 - UCAF drafted guidelines on academic freedom given the current political climate.

Systemwide Review Items

- FWAF reviewed and endorsed the revisions to the G-28 travel policy as the modifications made the policy more family-friendly, and, endorsed the revisions to Senate Bylaw 182 which clarified the scope of the University Committee on International Education.

Campus Review Items

- FWAF reviewed and endorsed the newly-drafted guide to Senate committee membership and the purpose and practice of executive session; declined to endorse the Committee on Rules and Elections' (CRE) Recommended Voting Guidelines in Academic Personnel Cases, as FWAF took issue with CRE's recommendation that faculty members can only vote on cases at their rank or below, as it implies that faculty below the rank of Full Professor are somehow intellectually incapable of judging the academic work of those at higher levels and that faculty at lower ranks are unable to be objective while evaluating their colleagues' work; and endorsed the Committee for Diversity and Equity's proposed guidelines for the appointment and reappointment of endowed chairs to be incorporated in the MAPP.

Respectfully submitted:

FWAF members:

Jayson Beaster-Jones (SSHA), Chair, UCAF representative

Virginia Adán-Lifante (SSHA), Vice Chair

Laura Hamilton (SSHA)

Carolin Frank (SNS)

Changqing Li (SOE)

UCFW representative:

Sean Malloy (SSHA)

Ex officio, non-voting member:

Gregg Camfield, Vice Provost for the Faculty

Staff:

Simrin Takhar