

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE & ACADEMIC FREEDOM (FWAF)**Minutes of Meeting****Tuesday, February 11, 2020**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom met at 1:50pm in Social Science and Management Building, Room 117, Chair Carolin Frank presiding.

- I. Chair's Report – **Carolin Frank**
 - A. Division Council updates: In 2018 the Chancellor formed a task force in response to incidents of students' aggressive behavior towards faculty members, with the goal for faculty to develop new tools. The task force identified a number of issues that are covered in faculty code of conduct but not widely known. It offers 5 solutions: 1. ensure faculty understand APM 15 (Faculty Code of Conduct) and 011 (Academic Freedom). 2. Healthy community in departments and support structure for faculty. 3. Peer mentoring program. 4. New faculty onboarding, 5. Addressing inequity of service responsibilities especially for women of color.
 - B. UCAF updates. UCAF discussed the Working Group Report on Comprehensive Access (see item 9), which is especially relevant at UC Merced given the region's health care facility options.

- II. Vice Chair's Report – **David Jennings**
 - A. Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC) updates: PROC is considering whether or not closely aligned (undergraduate and graduate) programs within a department may be reviewed simultaneously. The concern is that one or the other will be overlooked if combined, but if done at once there is a kind of efficiency, and also offer a holistic view. PROC members pointed out that while many programs do not align vertically, those that do (such as in engineering) might prefer simultaneous review.

- III. University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) updates – **Jayson Beaster-Jones**
 - A. December and January UCFW meetings: FWAF member Tea Lempiala (absent) attended the December meeting, where childcare was discussed. She will provide information at the next meeting. In January, UCFW discussed climate change, and family leave policies for employees in clinical sciences. It was also pointed out that FWAFs at other campuses have retirees on the committee. Since many UCFW issues are retiree issues, it is suggested that UCM considers this addition.

ACTION: FWAF to draft revised bylaw language to add a retiree to the committee's membership.

- IV. Consent Calendar
 - A. Today's agenda
 - B. Draft November 20, 2019 meeting minutes

ACTION: Hearing no objection, the consent calendar was approved as presented.

V. Senate Award for Faculty Mentorship

FWAF is responsible for the review of nominations and selection of awardees for the Senate Award for Excellence in Faculty Mentorship. FWAF must select the awardee by Friday, April 3. Members discussed how best to ensure that nominations come from a variety of departments and groups, including the consideration to make it mandatory that each department nominate one person per award.

ACTION: Carolin Frank (SNS), David Jennings (SSHA), and Mehmet Baykara (SOE) will serve on the Awards Committee. FWAF analysts to ask VPF's office to remind department chairs at their monthly meetings and encourage them to nominate their colleagues for these awards.

VI. Statement on Academic Freedom – *Carolin Frank*

Chair Frank explained to the committee that in fall 2019, UCAF worked on a renewed Statement on Defense of Academic Freedom that, ultimately, the Council rejected. UCAF is considering placing the statement on its website, while each campus would work on their own statement, tailored to their campus and as bounded by the 1940 AAUP statement that is considered "constitution of Academic Freedom." The statement is also for staff and students.

FWAF Chair Frank stated that she would like to see a clear distinction between academic freedom and free speech. She has looked at other universities' statements, and there are wide variations. Academic freedom is based on truth and facts, not opinion, while free speech is about opinions as an individual. Academic freedom is limited by The Faculty Code of Conduct, and also ties into the discussion of partnership with religious hospitals (item 9). Academic Freedom is connected to the pursuit of knowledge, i.e. who pursues what under what qualifications, what methodology/tools they use, and what are the legitimate modes to pursue the knowledge?

Given the significant presence of undocumented students at UCM, the campus needs to be cognizant of expressions against these students that are presented as free speech, or academic freedom. It was pointed out that there is a message from the Chancellor last year about free speech and civility in discourse that can be used by FWAF as a reference.

Chair Frank asked FWAF members to further study the history of academic freedom using the documents she will compile for the committee. These documents include information provided in the Academic Council Chair's letter that is linked to today's agenda, and links to documents in an email from the UCAF chair which Chair Frank will share with FWAF. FWAF members suggested that graduate students be involved in this research. It was also recommended that the campus Legal Counsel be invited to a future FWAF meeting.

ACTION: Invite the Campus Counsel to attend the next FWAF meeting. Chair Frank to share the documents shared by UCAF chair, and lead the drafting of the statement.

VII. Proposal to Add a Teaching Professor to CAP's Membership – *David Jennings*

The revisions to the APM concerning the Teaching Professor series prompted discussion on FWAF about adding a Teaching Professor to the CAP membership on an ad hoc basis to aid in the review of these personnel cases. Member Jennings has drafted a proposal in consultation with other Teaching Professors, and presented it to FWAF's consideration.

The idea of adding a Teaching Professor to CAP's membership was originally raised in last year's annual meeting of UCM faculty (including CAP members), deans, EVC/Provost, and VPF. A FWAF member mentioned that UC Irvine has a full Teaching Professor as a member of CAP. Others pointed out that the Committee on Committees makes appointments to Senate committees so consultation with the Committee on Committees will be required. Concerns were raised that the proposal may not be well received, in which case, it may be better to propose the participation of a full Teaching Professor as a non-voting member.

ACTION: FWAF members endorsed the proposal. Committee analyst will transmit FWAF's endorsement to Divisional Council with a request for Council's review.

VIII. Consultation with Associate Vice Provost for the Faculty – *Zulema Valdez*

AVPF Valdez updated FWAF on the Faculty Peer Mediation Program, which takes place February 17-21 with 10 participants. Participation rate is highest from SSHA, followed by SNS, then SOE. If successful, the program may be repeated, in a 3-year cycle.

AVPF Valdez then reported that there has been a sharp rise in complaints about disruptive/volatile students at UCM as well as in the wider academic world, and explained the VPF office's efforts to support faculty to develop skills to engage well with these students and their claims of free speech. These efforts include half-day workshops, which have been well attended by staff, but not faculty. Faculty participation would benefit both the non-faculty participants and organizers, as well as faculty, especially when the training is interactive, with the presence of the Student Response Team.

A discussion followed as to the reasons for the low participation rate of the faculty, and how to improve the participation rate. Suggestions included offering campus-wide workshops, making participation obligatory, and combining the workshops with departmental meetings. A FWAF member inquired about model language on student civility. AVPF Valdez responded that the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) is drafting it at the VPF's request. The language will include a student-faculty agreement and expected behavior. The CETL Interim Co-director is deeply engaged in this effort.

IX. Systemwide Review: Report of the Working Group on Comprehensive Access

The Working Group on Comprehensive Access has issued its report on UC affiliations with non-UC entities that prohibit certain services for Women and LGBTQ+ people. There was no conclusion as to whether such affiliations should continue to be pursued (option 1), or should be terminated

(option 2). FWAF members discussed the pros and cons of such affiliations, especially given the lack of access to quality healthcare in rural communities. Terminating these affiliations can potentially harm patients, and the partnerships have been beneficial in terms of faculty welfare. However, some of the affiliated non-UC organizations are not open to any negotiation, which makes the partnerships inconsistent with the core values of the University, and creates questions about academic freedom of the UC employees working in/with these organizations.

ACTION: Chair Frank will draft FWAF's response as the lead reviewer, illuminating both sides of the issue, without advocating for a particular position. The draft will be circulated among FWAF members by email, then submitted to DivCo by February 14, 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:47 pm.