

**COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE & ACADEMIC FREEDOM (FWAF)****Friday, February 17, 2023****10:30 am – 12:00 pm****Minutes of Meeting**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom met at 10:30 am on February 17, via Zoom. Chair David Jennings presiding.

- I. UCAF updates – *Justin Yeakel*
  - A. UCAF meeting December 20  
Highlights of the meeting were:
    - Strike resolution difficulties.
    - 2-year appointment requirement for postdocs is problematic for some faculty. VPAP Hansford interjected to point out that there is a work-around to the 2-year requirement but he strongly encourages faculty to be clear and transparent with postdocs about this when they are initially appointed.
    - Questions about what information faculty are meant to provide on the attestation forms if they joined the strike with graduate students.
    - Discussion about how each UC campus Academic Freedom committee bylaws are different and whether they should be as uniform as possible.
    - Some campus Chancellors have issued civility statements. This led to a discussion among UCAF members about academic freedom and the need for each campus Academic Freedom committee to have a definition/statement of academic freedom is on their webpages.
    - Proposed P&T bylaw changes regarding faculty with ongoing investigations who are also undergoing academic personnel review. actions going through.
- II. Consultation with VPAP Tom Hansford
  - A. Campus draft climate survey to faculty (drafted by IRDS)  
This draft survey was previously shared with Divisional Council and FWAF members.  
  
VPAP Hansford explained that the plan is to issue this survey every three years. Co-sponsors of the survey are members of campus leadership, including himself. CDO Delia Saenz and VP Christiane Spitzmueller are submitting an NSF ADVANCE grant on behalf of UC Merced and the aim is to use this survey to inform their draft proposal. That is why IRDS staff asked the Senate Chair for feedback by March 3.  
  
**Action:** The FWAF chair will assign parts of the survey to each FWAF member for review. FWAF's final comments need to be sent to Senate Chair LiWang and Senate Executive Director Paul.
- III. Consent Calendar
  - A. Today's agenda
  - B. Draft December 1 meeting minutes

**Action:** The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Family-Friendly Policies Update – *Vice Chair Lempiälä*

**Action:** due to a FWAF members' absences, this item will be postponed to the next FWAF meeting.

V. Senate Spending Plan for MacKenzie Scott Gift – *Chair Jennings*

Linked on today's agenda were the following: spending plan as approved by Divisional Council in spring 2022, the CoR chair's proposal for Senate committees' allocation of the funds, and the draft FWAF call for proposals for faculty and staff professional development.

FWAF members discussed the draft call for proposals for faculty and staff professional development. Members agreed that the call should be modified as follows:

- revise the language to state that FWAF anticipates awarding grants between \$1,000 - \$5,000
- specify that the funds can be used for "mentoring-focused events and programming, including facilitating peer mentoring and supportive networking for faculty from underrepresented backgrounds".
- revise the language about start-up funds.

FWAF members also discussed the financial language in the draft call. The committee analyst will contact the EVC/Provost's office for clarification.

**Action:** FWAF Chair Jennings will revise the call for proposals and re-send to FWAF members for review and approval. The committee analyst will contact the EVC/Provost's office for clarification on the call's financial language. The final call for proposals will be submitted to Divisional Council for review before FWAF issues it to the Senate faculty.

VI. COVID Mitigation Funds – *Chair Jennings*

EVC/Provost Camfield and Vice Provost for Academic Personnel (VPAP) Hansford invited a proposal from the Senate Committee on Research (CoR) on the allocation of potential COVID mitigation funds that would be awarded to the Senate. CoR submitted its proposal to the VPAP which was ultimately reviewed favorably by the EVC/Provost. The EVC/Provost informed CoR that he will award the Senate \$50,000 to allocate to the faculty to mitigate COVID impacts.

Linked on today's agenda were the following: CoR's proposal, VPAP Hansford's input on CoR's proposal, and FWAF's draft call for proposals for COVID Mitigation.

A FWAF member speculated that the campus's implementation of Oracle probably had a more negative impact on faculty research than the COVID pandemic. FWAF Chair Jennings responded that that point is well taken, but the EVC/Provost did earmark these funds for COVID mitigation.

Another FWAF member pointed out that teaching relief may be a better mitigation effort than allocating these funds. FWAF members then discussed whether they should award fewer grants at larger amounts in order to make a more significant impact on faculty who receive these funds. Members also wondered about the cost to buyout a course.

**Action:** FWAF will determine how much it costs to buy out a course. The committee will postpone its work on the call for proposals until they receive that information.

VII. Systemwide Review Item

A. Proposed Presidential Policy – Anti-Discrimination

The proposed Policy is responsive to a request from President Drake for a systemwide analysis of the University’s policies and procedures for responding to complaints of all forms of discrimination and harassment based on protected categories.

The proposed policy and the explanatory cover letter were linked on today’s agenda.

FWAF identified two lead reviewers.

**Action:** The lead reviewers will submit their comments to the committee analyst who will then distribute them to FWAF members for review. FWAF’s comments are due to the Senate Chair by Friday, March 3.

VIII. Executive Session

No minutes were recorded.

**Action:** FWAF Chair Jennings will contact CoR Chair Sexton to suggest a collaboration on mitigating difficulties caused by campus financial systems. The FWAF analyst will distribute CoR/GC/FWAF’s joint 2021 memo on research obstacles (addressed to the administration) to FWAF members in addition to the administration’s response and CoR’s 2022 follow up memo to the administration.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Attest: David Jennings, FWAF Chair