

**COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE & ACADEMIC FREEDOM (FWAF)****Wednesday, March 30, 2022****10:00 – 11:30 am****Minutes of Meeting**

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom met at 10:00 am on March 30, 2022, via Zoom. Chair David Jennings presiding.

I. Chair's Report – *David Jennings*

A. Divisional Council meetings January 27 and February 10

- Divisional Council endorsed the Community and Labor Center ORU proposal.
- CoR is drafting a memo in response to the Chancellor and EVC/Provost's comments on CoR/FWAF/GC's fall 2021 memo on research infrastructure challenges. FWAF Chair Jennings suggested to FWAF members that FWAF collaborate with CoR on addressing the negative impact of the campus procurement problems on faculty advancement.
- The Library continues to be understaffed and underfunded, but EVC/Provost Camfield informed Divisional Council that he is providing additional resources.
- GC and UGC chairs discussed accommodations for remote instruction beyond spring 2022, specifically, the role of the Senate and the role of the departments in granting accommodation requests. FWAF Vice Chair Lempiälä suggested that FWAF advocate for clear communication to the faculty and an articulation of all options for faculty.

B. UCAF meeting March 18

Chair Jennings reported that the meeting was postponed. UCAF continues to discuss the recommendations for department political statements (recently underwent Senate review) and the debate about mandatory classroom recordings.

II. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's agenda
- B. Draft February 23 meeting minutes

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

III. PROC updates – *Tea Lempiälä*

Vice Chair Lempiälä reported that the review of the Merritt Writing Program is progressing.

IV. UCFW Updates – *Jayson Beaster-Jones and Tea Lempiälä*

## A. Updates from March 11 UCFW meeting

- Standing consultation with systemwide Senate leadership. Demasking policies are not uniform across the 10 campuses.
- The state budget has a large surplus and the UC is making significant budget requests.
- Discussion of fully online undergraduate degrees. FWAF member Beaster-Jones informed UCFW members that such programs at other UCs would severely hinder UC Merced's enrollment. There are also concerns about the quality of online degrees.
- UC Riverside began a discussion about implementing half-step increases for faculty members under achievement relative to opportunity (ARO). However, the issue was contentious and complicated, and will not be implemented at this time. There was also debate about advancement review criteria and the definition of ARO. This discussion will continue.
- Problems caused by the new administrator of pharmacy benefits for UC employee and Medicare PPO plans.
- Discussion on the retirement plan.

V. Additional Messaging on Impacts of Pandemic – *David Jennings*

At the February 23 meeting, FWAF members discussed Chair Jennings' talking points on one of the main concerns conveyed to him and other FWAF members in their office hours with faculty members and visits to department meetings. FWAF members also reviewed the FAQ document drafted by CAP in conjunction with the VPAP and APO. At that meeting, FWAF members agreed that 1) systemwide information and guidance on the impacts of the pandemic on faculty advancement and promotion should be more widely shared; 2) faculty need guidance on how to articulate their personal challenges in their self-statements and if they choose not to include such information, then review committees and department chairs should be made aware of the challenges through a different mechanism; and 3) the FWAF chair should elicit input from department chairs on what information they need to better advise review committees and faculty under review.

Chair Jennings stated that he has heard from some faculty members that despite the guidance provided on campus websites, additional guidance is needed about articulating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on faculty careers. Chair Jennings added that the Senate Chair has suggested the implementation of a COVID challenge statement (separate from the self-statement) that could be included in faculty case files for advancement and promotion. Chair Jennings directed FWAF to his aforementioned talking points, specifically, the document

entitled “Recommendations from Senate/Admin Task Force 2021 Spring” which offers valuable advice for faculty case materials.

FWAF members then held a discussion about whether faculty should include personal information in their statements. Some members pointed out that it will be difficult to claim they were negatively impacted by the pandemic unless they provide examples. If some faculty decide not to include specific and personal examples, will their case be disadvantaged in relation to faculty who did provide examples?

FWAF agreed that the task force recommendation “consider providing a brief statement to higher levels of review on how the pandemic may be affecting the disciplines in your department” would be valuable but would be extremely time consuming to produce.

Chair Jennings then directed members’ attention to the document entitled “Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group Preliminary Report” hyperlinked on his aforementioned talking points, specifically the section on COVID Impact Statements.

Chair Jennings wondered whether CAP is applying the various guidance related to faculty personnel review during the pandemic and whether departments are distributing the guidance to review committees and faculty. He acknowledged that CAP review is one step in the process so it would be important for department level review to also be consistent. FWAF members discussed various options, such as collaborating with CAP, EDI, APO, the VPAP, and the EVC/Provost.

**Action:** at the next meeting, FWAF will consult with AVPF Valdez on communication strategies and Chair Jennings will continue the discussion of his talking points in anticipation of additional guidance from systemwide.

VI. FWAF Subcommittee on Family-Friendly Policies – *Tea Lempiälä*

The subcommittee’s draft action plan was hyperlinked on today’s agenda. One pending question is the possible formation of a campus committee on family friendly matters. AVPF Valdez was unable to attend today’s FWAF meeting but informed FWAF via email that she asked the EVC/Provost and VPAP separately about FWAF’s interest in forming this committee. Her email stated that the EVC/Provost and VPAP suggested that FWAF could contact interested campus stakeholders to collectively ask for a new committee. Once that is accomplished, the request should be directed to Associate Chancellor/Chief of Staff to the Chancellor, Luanna Putney.

FWAF Vice Chair Tea Lempiälä suggested that the FWAF family friendly policies subcommittee hold another meeting to discuss the EVC/Provost and VPAP’s suggestion.

**Action:** the FWAF subcommittee on family friendly policies will meet to discuss next steps.

## VII. Consultation with Associate VPF – Zulema Valdez

As stated above, AVPF Valdez was unable to participate in today's meeting.

VIII. Systemwide Review Item – *David Jennings*

## A. Presidential Policy on University of California Research Data

This is the second systemwide review for this policy. Today's agenda included the revised policy, an FAQ, FWAF's comments from AY 20-21, all previous comments on the first version of the policy, and Chair Jennings' preliminary comments on the proposed revisions to the policy.

FWAF members agreed with Chair Jennings' preliminary comments which suggested that FWAF support the proposed revisions in general but expressed concern about the lack of faculty oversight in the VCR's decisions.

**Action:** the committee analyst will distribute a draft memo for the committee's review and approval. FWAF's memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, April 1.

IX. Campus Review Item – *David Jennings*

## A. New MAPP section 283

The new MAPP section serves to implement the university policy on Lecturers and Senior Lecturers (APM 283) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Non-Senate Faculty Instructional Unit (Unit 18).

The background documents were hyperlinked on today's agenda.

**Action:** Chair Jennings will distribute his preliminary comments to FWAF by Monday, April 4. FWAF's memo is due to the Senate Chair by Friday, April 8.

## X. Other Business

## A. Senate awards

The Senate extended the award nomination deadline to March 31. FWAF will form an awards subcommittee and review the nominations for the award for Excellence in Faculty Mentorship. The awards subcommittee will select a winner by mid-April. The names of all Senate award winners will be announced at the May 12 Meeting of the Division.

**Action:** three FWAF members volunteered to serve on the awards subcommittee. The committee analyst will provide the subcommittee with the nomination packages after the nomination deadline.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Attest: David Jennings, FWAF Chair