

Committee on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom (FWDAF)
Minutes of Meeting
May 6, 2014

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom met at 3:00 pm on May 6, 2014 in Room 324 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Rudy Ortiz presiding.

I. Tom Peterson, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

Chair Ortiz summarized FWDAF's main issues over this academic year: faculty retention and diversity in faculty searches. FWDAF submitted a suggestion to Division Council that the Provost allocate the few new FTE lines next year based on diversity considerations. A FWDAF member pointed out that diversity must be a faculty issue rather than an administrative one and that increased diversity must be based on an incentive system, not a punishment system. Opportunity or thematic hires could be viable options to achieve this end.

Chair Ortiz reiterated to the Provost the importance of being proactive in ways to keep faculty members. Junior faculty are harmed when senior colleagues leave campus. Chair Ortiz also mentioned he had previously met with SNS Dean Meza on this issues (the dean had been tasked by the Chancellor to lead a discussion on faculty retention for the Chancellor's retreat).

Provost Peterson emphasized the need for trust between faculty and administration. While he agrees that methods to increase diversity must be spearheaded by faculty, there needs to be consistency. Also, diversity and quality are not orthogonal. We need to make every effort to bring diverse candidates to campus. With regards to retention, the Provost pointed out that Merced is at a critical juncture with founding faculty now tenured and visible to other campuses; they are burnt out and may be tempted to apply for positions elsewhere. It is important to be proactive and reward these faculty who have done stellar work. Thus far, we have rewarded faculty on a case by

case basis when a retention issue arose but we must do that consistently and before it becomes a retention issue.

Chair Ortiz mentioned the faculty survey that FWDAF conducted last semester on issues of diversity and the survey results indicated a miscommunication about diversity and excellence.

Chair Ortiz mentioned FWDAF's response to the proposed MAPP revisions that were recently submitted to the campus for review. In particular, FWDAF took issue with Section 2012 E pertaining to recruitment: while FWDAF supports diversity, the narrative conveyed a punishment-based system to ensure diversity in a search instead of an incentive-based system. Provost Peterson responded by pointing out the issues surrounding incentives; for spousal hires or targets of opportunity hires, the Provost had to decide whether to let the School deans allocate the positions for their purpose or allocate to the Schools. The Provost stated that he had many conversations with the deans this year and they decided it was best to allocate the positions directly to the Schools. However, the Provost informed the deans that he will be examining the positions that move between Schools, i.e. if too many spousal positions are going to one School, the process must be reevaluated. The Provost reiterated that allocating lines directly to the Schools was the deans' idea and that it makes faculty take ownership of the diversity issue.

Chair Ortiz debriefed Provost Peterson on the joint FWDAF/APO untenured faculty workshop series. Next year's series will include a new topic on how to hire the best faculty candidate. Too often, search committees are asked to focus on a candidate's publication record and the quality of publication venues and not enough importance is placed on the candidate's ability to be a good colleague, mentor, or campus citizen. Chair Ortiz invited Provost Peterson to participate in this workshop and the Provost agreed.

Before the Provost departed the meeting, he asked faculty to provide him input on anything further he should be doing to help increase faculty diversity.

II. AY 14-15 FWDAF Committee Composition

In response to an inquiry from the FWDAF liaison on the Committee on Committees (CoC), FWDAF members held a brief discussion on which members plan to return for committee service next year. Several issues were taken into account including the need to have three members available to attend the three corresponding systemwide committee meetings (UCFW, UCAF, and UCAAD) and three backups for these members.

ACTION: Chair Ortiz will contact the FWDAF liaison on CoC to further discuss FWDAF's composition.

III. De Acker, Ombuds

Ombuds Acker provided a summary of faculty-related topics she experienced this academic year: candidates for the position of Vice Provost for Faculty, the need for consistency on policies for family leave and active service/modified duty (APO is working with the Schools to develop consistent information), the campus climate survey results (there were several responses from faculty indicating they felt intimidated or bullied), and the need for a faculty mentoring program. Regarding the mentoring program, Chair Ortiz stated that he will likely attend the October mentoring conference at the University of New Mexico and bring his findings back to FWDAF and the administration.

IV. Chair's Report

Chair Ortiz updated the FWDAF members on the following:

--May 1 Meeting of the Division. The Provost sent an email to all faculty before the meeting that announced a faculty hiring hiatus next year as the campus concentrates on strategic focusing this year.

--Vice Provost for Faculty candidate interviews.

--Faculty mentoring conference at the University of New Mexico. Chair Ortiz will likely attend. The goal in the future is to send two faculty members and submit an abstract in advance.

V. Consent Calendar

Today's agenda and the March 31 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

VI. Systemwide Updates

--UCAAD. Chair Ortiz, the FWDAF committee representative to UCAAD, announced the main topics at UCAAD recently were the Moreno Report, graduate student funding, the need for more multi-year guaranteed GSR appointments, summer bridge funding for graduate students, and the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. Chair Ortiz suggested inviting program director Sheila O'Rourke to Merced in spring 2015.

--UCFW. FWDAF member Cameron, the representative to UCFW, announced that the main topic at UCFW is the new UC health plans. UCFW has asked each campus to provide feedback on the UC Care plan.

ACTION: Committee analyst will contact the appropriate campus HR representative to provide campus survey results on the UC Care health plan.

--UCAF. The committee's last meeting was in March and will reconvene in fall 2014.

VII. AY 14-15 FWDAF Planning

FWDAF will propose to the Provost that additional funds be provided to the Senate for a new Senate award for excellence faculty mentoring.

ACTION: FWDAF will submit a proposal memo to Provost Peterson.

VIII. Campus Review Items

--Community Research and Service minor in SSHA.

ACTION: FWDAF endorsed the minor and a memo from the committee will be submitted to the Senate Chair.

IX. Systemwide Review Item

--Proposed revisions to APM 190 pertaining to the Whistleblower Complaint Policy.

ACTION: FWDAF endorsed the proposed revisions and a memo from the committee will be submitted to the Senate Chair.

--Proposed extension to UC policy on supplement to military pay.

ACTION: FWDAF endorsed the proposed revisions and a memo from the committee will be submitted to the Senate Chair.

X. Faculty Salary Equity Report

The faculty salary equity progress report from each campus is due in January 2015. Chair Ortiz reported that he and FWDAF member Newsam have completed their work on the report from IPA and the report will be submitted to UCOP soon.

ACTION: Committee analyst will request a copy of the progress report from IPA for FWDAF's committee records.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm

Attest: Rudy Ortiz, Chair

Minutes prepared by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Senior Analyst