

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RIVERSIDE DIVISION
December 1, 2020**

To be received and placed on file:

The Committee on Academic Freedom is an important part of faculty governance and collegial responsibility in the University of California system. As a committee of the Riverside Academic Senate, Academic Freedom is appointed by the Senate's Committee on Committees and consists of five members of the Division, including as *Ex-Officio* the Chairs of the Committee on Privilege and Tenure and the Committee on Faculty Welfare. The Committee is responsible for reporting to the Division any conditions within or without the University that in the judgement of the committee may affect the freedom of the academic community at large. It is understood that academic freedom includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the free inquiry and exchange of ideas, the right to present controversial material relevant to a course of instruction, and the freedom to publish or disseminate controversial information and perform research in controversial areas. It is also understood that academic freedom is to be conjoined with academic responsibility; it is to be exercised in accordance with standards appropriate to the relevant scholarly disciplines.

The Committee on Academic Freedom conducted committee activities via email and met one time in person during the 2019-2020 academic year prior to campus switching to the remote mode due to COVID pandemics. In addition to reaffirming its Conflict of Interest Statement, the Committee undertook the following actions:

a. Communication with the Campus at Large

In keeping with its charge to assist in the education of the academic community regarding the rights and responsibilities relating to academic freedom, the Committee conducted a review of its bylaws and communicated a statement of its duties and mission to the general UCR academic community via the Senate email.

b. Discussions with Campus Leadership and Recommendations to the Administration to Senate. Potential Threat to Academic Freedom on UCR Campus

Recently the Committee on Academic Freedom has been made aware of the potential threat to academic freedom on UCR campus. A faculty member expressed concern about some Chinese students not being able or willing to freely express themselves on the issues related to the current Chinese government and its policies during the classroom discussions. The faculty member was further concerned that this reluctance might be caused by some form of interference from Chinese government with the UCR students, especially in connection to the similar cases occurring on university campuses elsewhere.

The CAF brought this matter to the Senate's attention. The CAF was not aware of any additional evidence to support the concerns. If confirmed, the interference of a foreign government in the pedagogical process on the UCR campus would represent a violation of academic freedom.

c. Responses to additional issues raised by the Academic Senate

In keeping with its charge to evaluate and propose revision as needed to current institutional policies as they might relate to academic freedom, the Committee considered the following Campus and System-wide issues:

Campus Review

- Campus Five Year Planning Perspectives (2020-2025)
- COVID-19 Temporary Modification or Suspension. Senate Regulations and or Policies
- Proposed COVID-19 Response Temporary Suspension and Replacement of UCR Regulations (R1.1.4-5 and R1.2.2) for Spring 2020
- Proposed Regulation Change. COVID-19 Response Temporary Modification to UCR Graduate Regulation (GR) 1.5.7 (Graduate course withdrawals offered Spring 2020)
- Proposal to Extend COVID-19 Remote Instruction at UCR
- Proposed Regulation Change. Senate Regulation R1.8.1-Final Exam Duration
- Endowed Chair Proposal. Endowed Term Chair for Inclusive Excellence in CNAS
- Proposed Agreement. UCR Online Course Agreement (ILTI Agreement)
- Proposed Agreement. Resubmission-UCR Online Course Agreement (ILTI Agreement)

System-wide Review

- Proposed Policy. Presidential Policy on Protection of Human Subjects in Research
- Proposed Policy. Proposed New Presidential Policy on Gender Recognition and Lived Name
- Proposed Revised Policy. Presidential Policy on Copyright Ownership
- Proposed Policy. Presidential Policy on Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation
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- Proposed Revisions to Academic Personnel Manual Sections 240 and 246
- Report Review. Report of the Working Group on Comprehensive Access

The Committee's formal response to each issue is located on the Academic Senate website and can be found at: <http://senate.ucr.edu/about/issues/2019-2020/>

d. Representation at Systemwide Senate

The Committee on Academic Freedom continued its active participation on the systemwide University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAF). The 2019-20 UCAF representative was Professor Devra Weber, who updated committee members of the issues under discussion at the statewide level.

Respectfully submitted,

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