

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE
MINUTES
March 16, 2021

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:00 a.m.

Present:	Patricia Morton, Chair	Absent:
	Begona Echeverria	Jacob Greenstein
	Brian Federici	Sika Zheng
	John Heraty	Rajiv Gupta
	Manuela Martins-Green	GSA Rep, Cody Simons
	Megan Robbins	ASUCR Rep, Salvador Jr. Olguin
	Bradley Hyman	
	Urmee Khan	
	Venugopala Reddy Gonehal	

Chair Announcements

Chair Morton informed the committee that the Senate would be holding a townhall for faculty on COVID impacts, tentatively scheduled for April 8. All junior faculty will be invited and provided the opportunity to indicate what issues are most important to them. Participants will include major administrative heads on campus and relevant Senate chairs. The format will include breakout rooms to discuss issues and potential solutions with final suggestions provided to Administration.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the meeting on February 16, 2021 and were approved by a vote of +9-0-0.

Campus Climate Survey Senate/Department Responses

The Committee reviewed the Senate and Department responses to the Campus Climate Survey. Members discussed the suggestion of conducting a similar survey more frequently (every 5 years) to allow for better understanding of the current climate, identify what issues are occurring and if things have changed. The Committee agreed to create a sub-committee to draft a report that compiles and summarizes the Senate Committee responses and suggestions succinctly. CFW will provide a combined response to the Senate and Administration with its recommendations.

[Campus Review] Evaluation of Teaching Ad Hoc Final Report

The Committee reviewed the Final Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation of Teaching. Members noted that the report was a good evaluation of the diversity of opinions on the value and use of teaching evaluations, both for improving teaching and for evaluating teaching in the merit and promotion review process. The Committee was strongly in favor of all approaches suggested by the Ad Hoc Committee, including the inclusion of an iEval preamble and the replacement of question 5 with a question on the recognition of bias, stopping of comparative departmental and campus metrics, communication at all levels of the importance of recognizing bias, and also modifying efile to allow for a diversity of teaching evaluation assessments to be added and utilized. The Committee was strongly in favor of all of these approaches.

The Committee was also in support of a redesign of the current student evaluations, with a greater focus on questions that greater address learning outcomes and try to avoid bias, and to develop a "Student Evaluation of Learning". However, members commented that the same difficulties may be faced with faculty accepting those recommendations and making sure that questions are appropriate to all fields of study across the campus. CFW noted that any recommendations that are made will proceed through the Senate review process.

The Committee recognized that increased student participation is necessary but difficult. Early grade release is seen across many different universities as a means of increasing participation, but members commented that without the option in UCR's Banner system, participation will likely remain low. Several CFW members felt that incentives to foster greater participation such as early grade release, have led in the past to evaluations that were done simply for grade access and were not necessarily meaningful evaluations.

The Committee noted that in teaching evaluations, (1) there should be greater recognition by departments of the ability to provide anonymous student letters to address teaching at any level of assessment, and (2) that there was not enough focus in the report on the need for greater guidance on evaluation by the Academic Personnel Office.

Overall, CFW felt the recommendations were a good first step to revising the evaluation of learning on campus.

[Campus Review] Dean's Final Merit Delegation Proposal

The Committee considered the VPAP's proposed Dean's Final Merit Delegation Initiative. Members were in strong support of the proposed change because all other UC campuses have a version of the Dean's Final. Additionally, the committee discussed a response provided by the Senate Committee on Academic Personnel which described concerns with the proposal. CAP noted its concern that the different Colleges interpret The CALL differently and that the advantage of having all files go through them is that CAP applies the same interpretation and standards to all files which makes the process fair. CAP was also concerned that sometimes the departments and the Dean do not appreciate that some files should be considered for higher levels. FWC did not disagree with this view but was not concerned because only a few specific merits would qualify for Dean's final. In addition, the Committee noticed that CAP seemed to like the UCI process where there is a Dean's Final Merit Delegation for all regular merit advancements, except that CAP reviews every other merit at Associate Professor rank and above. Taking this consideration from CAP, FWC proposed the following changes be considered for the proposal. The Dean will have the final decision on one-step, within rank, when there is no change in O/S merits and when both the department and the Dean give positive evaluation except for:

1. Advancements from Assistant IV-V or Associate IV-V. This would allow CAP to comment on appropriate progress to promotion to tenure or to promotion to professor.
2. Advancement on merit from Professor IV to V. This would allow CAP to comment on the potential trajectory to advancement to Professor VI.
3. Advancement on merit from Professor VIII to IX. This would allow CAP to comment on the potential trajectory to advancement to Above Scale.
4. Audited by CAP of the Dean's final delegation files in the following year and the feedback being used to help maintain consistency.

The Committee emphasized that any faculty member has the right to request a review through the normal process that includes CAP at any time for any merit.

[Campus Review] Professor of Practice Title Proposal

The Committee reviewed the proposed request for use of the Professor of Practice title on campus and was in support of the proposal.

[Systemwide Review] Proposed Revisions to the Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures

The Committee considered the Proposed Revisions to the Universitywide Police Policies and Administrative Procedures. The committee felt the item was largely outside its expertise to comment on the specific guidelines in certain aspects. However, members questioned the timing of promulgating a systemwide response team (SRT) while UCOP and UC campuses are revisiting policies on campus safety. It was unclear when the SRT would be called upon. Members noted the policy needs to specify actual circumstances when the SRT would be invoked since it sounds like a SWAT team. CFW suggested that the revised policies be folded into reviews of campus safety already ongoing. Members commented that on-campus expertise in policing and the use of force should also become part of the review process. CFW suggested that anyone employed with the University should be able to intervene if the situation on the use of force demands. The committee noted it would like to know whether these documents would be routed to relevant student/faculty of color organizations.

[Campus Review] Proposal: 3rd Round-Transition of Vice Provost for Administrative Resolution (VPAR) Role at UCR

The Committee considered the Proposal for the Transition of Vice Provost for Administrative Resolution (VPAR) Role at UCR (3rd round review). The Committee found that consultation on the proposal had been effective and details provided in the revised proposal addressed the committee's concerns about the firewall. CFW was in overall support of the proposal.

UCFW and Executive Council update

The Chair provided the following updates from the Executive Council meeting: Provost Smith and Associate Provost Baerenklau presented the Strategic Plan and noted that due to a lack of funding in central Administration under the new budget model, Colleges will be asked to come up with their own strategic plans; questions and concerns regarding campus reopening in fall (also discussed at UCFW).

The Chair provided the following updates from the systemwide UCFW: discussion of impacts of COVID on faculty with UCAP developing guidelines on how to use COVID statements and general principles on how to deal with COVID impact; reopening of campuses in Fall with noted concerns, lack of details and a lack of clear guidance to chairs on how to prioritize classes (smaller v. larger classes; class size vs pedagogical needs), concerns about safety (what has Physical Plant done to mitigate safety concerns, i.e. ventilation). Additionally, it was noted that large remote classes are difficult for students with some students no longer attending class and what exceptions will be made for faculty who cannot or won't teach in-person.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes approved on: April 20, 2021