

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

March 30, 2017

To: Dylan Rodriguez, Chair  
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

From: Emma Aronson, Chair   
Committee on Academic Freedom

**Re:** Shrimad Rajchandra Endowed Chair Proposal in Jain Studies

The Committee on Academic Freedom (CAF) reviewed the documents supporting the proposed establishment of the Shrimad Rajchandra Endowed Chair in Jain Studies. As presented, CAF is unable to endorse the proposal and respectfully requests the following concerns be addressed:

The wording in the proposal does not guarantee academic freedom and appears to support proselytizing rather than academics. The proposal does not contain any academic or critical components. As a result, CAF suggests that more academic language be added to the second paragraph of section II. A. before “its fundamental principles”. For example, this language may include offering courses on critical inquiry, critical understanding, comparisons to the study of other religions, etc. In addition, CAF recommends removing the word “promote” and replacing it with “provide opportunities for”.

II. Purpose and Use of Endowment

A. Second paragraph

“The endowed chair will promote the study of Jain Religion to students at all levels at UCR, offering courses on its fundamental principles, such as Ahimsa (non-violence), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), and Anekantvad (pluralistic perspective) while examining their relevance and implication for the modern society. An important responsibility of the Chair holder will include engaging students in exploring the practical significance of such principles for enduring peace, social harmony and ecological sustainability.”

Members further expressed serious concerns over the language found in Exhibit A Stewardship Agreement that suggests the donors have a strong involvement in the Chair recruitment process. CAF requests Peter Hayashida’s office provide copies of the previous draft proposals to the committee in order to evaluate how the current language was derived.

It is CAF’s understanding that UCI recently established an Endowed Chair in Jain Studies. To provide more substantial recommendations, CAF respectfully requests a copy of UCI’s approved agreement for the comparison of the requirements presented in the UCR proposal.

The Committee is also interested in learning if Jainism is being promoted at other UC’s apart from UCR and UCI.