



COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE

June 30, 2025

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Salman Asif, Chair
Committee on Faculty Welfare

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Salman", with a date "7/1" written next to it.

Re: [Campus Review] (Consultation): *Revision of Retention Processes at UCR (2025)*

At our meeting on June 4, 2025, the Committee on Faculty Welfare (CFW) reviewed the *Revision of Retention Processes at UCR (2025)*. CFW has the following comments and questions:

Tryout Period

As it may be in the best interest for a faculty member to reserve the right to a “tryout period”—to explore new job opportunities elsewhere with the understanding that there is reasonable cause to believe that they may return to UCR under the same terms they had when they left—some CFW members believe the policy should be maintained as is. This is important to consider in special circumstances related to family or personal constraints.

With respect to the previous comment, conversely some CFW members support the proposed revision and believe tryout periods should be eliminated, due to the adverse impact that tryout periods may have on departmental stability; and in consequence the increased stress that may be placed on faculty members in the Department.

Some CFW members question how severe of an issue “tryout periods” are, considering Provost Watkins and VPAP Jeske’s letter to Senate Chair Barish indicate that “Recent data from CHASS indicates that the large majority of Senate faculty....who have utilized the tryout period since 2017 ultimately do not return.” Is this only a CHASS issue? What does the data from the other Colleges and Schools—besides CHASS—suggest (are tryout periods ineffective in retaining faculty members)? Is there truly a pattern of “abuse” of tryout periods?

In short, some CFW members believe that it can be a win-win for the faculty member and Department/UCR to maintain the tryout period, particularly because it preserves the chance for the faculty member to return to UCR. Other CFW members do not believe the odds of

a faculty member's return during this tryout period outweigh the detriment and operational strain such uncertainty causes for Departments/UCR.

Faculty Awareness

Some CFW members ask: how familiar are UCR faculty with this current policy? Is there a sense that most faculty members on campus know about this policy? Or rather, are only a minority of faculty members aware of it?

CFW recommends broad dissemination of this policy for the benefit of all the faculty and Departments.

Faculty Vote

CFW members strongly agree that the "department voice" in the retention process is very important; and that the vote from the Department's Senate faculty should be taken to formally account for whether these faculty members believe the retention effort in question is warranted—i.e., the departmental vote will provide a glimpse into whether these faculty believe that the retention of the faculty member in question aligns with Department priorities and desires.