

11/21/2025

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
and Cherysa Cortez, Executive Director of the UCR Academic Senate

From: Kinnari Atit, Ph.D., Faculty Chair of the School of Education Executive Committee

Subject: School of Education's Feedback on Proposed Revisions to APM - 036, General University Policy Regarding Academic Appointees/Employment

The SOE Executive Committee reviewed the "Proposed Revisions to APM - 036, General University Policy Regarding Academic Appointees/Employment". Comments/feedback were solicited at our executive committee meeting and via email.

The document states: "This law mandates that University supervisors and administrators take certain steps to ensure the requesting employee is not a respondent in a sexual harassment complaint before providing an official letter of recommendation." Faculty expressed concern that the proposed policy places the responsibility on individual letter-writers to initiate verification before issuing an official letter of recommendation. Writing letters is already a substantial service obligation, particularly for faculty who mentor many students, trainees, and staff. Adding an extra administrative step, one that must be independently initiated each time, creates additional workload and may unintentionally discourage faculty from writing letters or cause delays for employees who need timely recommendations. Faculty urge the University to consider alternative mechanisms that fulfill the legal requirement while reducing the burden on individual faculty members.

Additionally, the Faculty also sought clarity regarding which letters are subject to the verification requirement. According to pages 3–4 of the draft policy, the following are *not* classified as "Official Letters of Recommendation" and therefore do **not** require prior verification:

- Letters written for academic review files
- Letters for current or former students regarding academic performance
- Letters for graduate school applications
- Letters written for grants, fellowships, awards, and similar purposes

By contrast, letters written for employment purposes—such as K–12 teaching positions, faculty appointments, or other job applications—are considered "Official Letters of Recommendation" subject to the verification process.

Faculty emphasized that this distinction is not intuitive and may lead to confusion or inconsistent implementation. Clearer guidance from the University is needed to ensure compliance and prevent unnecessary workload for faculty who write both academic and employment-related letters.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kinnari Atit", followed by a stylized flourish or checkmark.

Kinnari Atit
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee
School of Education
University of California, Riverside
Email: kinnari.atit@ucr.edu