



March 5, 2013

TO: Jose Wudka, Chair
Riverside Division Academic Senate

FR: Thomas Morton, Chair
Committee on Academic Freedom

RE: Final revision of APM700

The majority of the faculty and graduate student members of UC Riverside's Committee on Academic Freedom wish to go on record as opposing the proposed modifications of APM 700 as currently worded. The stipulated time for "presumptive resignation" is too short, and the procedure for redress (700-30d) remains too onerous. Although the option of a chancellorial override (700-30e, added since CAF last reviewed the modification in November) does address some of the concerns voiced in CAF's memo of November 16, the question of restoring salary and service credit is left unanswered. Furthermore, at least one member of the committee takes issue with the definition of "absence from academic duty" in 700-30.

As UCR's committee chair pointed out in the spring, 2012, UCAF meeting, the new policy could serve to stifle scholarly efforts in important areas of research. At its meeting on November 14, 2012, UCR's CAF discussed APM 700 and transmitted a response. After reflecting on the revised wording (February, 2013), committee members offer the following critiques:

"I stand by the reservations we had last fall, perhaps writing again stating that we indeed find the limitation to 30 days to be 'draconian,' as we say, and that we urge Provost Carlson to take into consideration the work of faculty committed to field work in the humanities, social sciences and also in the sciences who could potentially be negatively affected by this stipulation. 90 days would give everyone more leeway and would still have the same overall effect on discouraging leaves without proper paperwork."

and

"I especially share the concerns expressed in Bob Powell's letter about how one defines 'absence from duty' and how that will be determined, without instituting an excessively bureaucratic monitoring system at the department level to see that faculty put in sufficient 'face time.' (Will there be time clocks to punch, or sign-in sheets, in the future?)

"Also, placing responsibility on department chairs for determining when someone's absence begins can potentially lead to great variations in interpretation. This, alone, introduces the prospect of differential treatment across faculty members.

"Overall, the entire policy seems to be an unnecessary solution to address some occasional (rare?) abuses, with a burdensome impact on all faculty. The suggested alternative in Bob Powell's letter for amending APM 075 is far more appropriate, in my view."

and

"I agree, noting the difficulties of communication in remote areas of the world... There are still places that are not consistently wired, and plenty of places where politics and language can be a time-consuming hindrance. If a faculty member were having a rough time in such a place, 30 days could pass very quickly. Example areas: Afghanistan, parts of Pakistan, the Yemen, Syria, etc."