



January 6, 2015

To: Jose Wudka, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Michael Allen, Chair
Committee on Research

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael F. Allen".

Re: **CNAS Teaching Load Policy**

The Committee on Research discussed the proposed CNAS teaching load policy and felt that the policy formulation process should have included a lot more faculty input right from the start, instead of developing a draft policy statement and then asking for feedback. Thus, the committee suggests that the administration communicate their goals to the various departments in the college, then form an interdepartmental committee to draft a policy that meets those goals while also being as beneficial as possible for the faculty, students, and the college. It does not appear that this proposal was vetted by the college departments or the CNAS Executive Committee. The Committee noted many concerns, but focused on those that largely affect research productivity and graduate education. Some of those items were:

The current balance sheet approach failed to account for sabbatical or other leaves. Furthermore, the Committee noted errors in the data of the proposal. Sabbatical and other medical leaves are not counted correctly and course buy-outs are being counted negatively.

The Committee on Research was extremely concerned by what is being proposed for IR/OR splits – is this even legal given that OR funds are intended for supporting the experiment station mission rather than the IR mission? Has University Counsel been consulted?

The Committee was troubled by the fact that the proposal devalues teaching courses with less than 100 students. Teaching these smaller courses still takes a substantial amount of the instructors' time, and these courses are crucial for the upper divisional mission and the training of graduate students. In fact, it is possible and even likely that it takes more faculty time and effort to teach a graduate course because it has to be current, i.e., it has to be extensively updated each time it is taught, and there is usually no TA support. Contrast this with a large and routine lower division course, which most instructors will

have taught numerous times before, which usually requires much less updating, and for which there is extensive TA support.

The Committee felt that the proposal did not give enough credit to graduate student mentoring or the teaching of 290 courses. Instead, the committee suggests that the number of graduate students each faculty member has should be counted. Mentoring graduate students effectively is often far more time consuming than teaching an undergraduate course, particularly for new graduate students. A good argument can also be made for giving credit for mentoring postdocs.

Teaching Assistants are offered for the large undergraduate courses to help lighten the load of the instructor. But it is extremely problematic that a faculty member is given more credit for supervising TA's than for training and supervising the people in their own lab.

The Committee would like to point out the chronic problem that UCR has had with obtaining fewer graduate students than considered optimal by UCOP, measured as a proportion of total students on campus. This proposal actively contradicts that goal of increasing UCR's percentage of graduate students by incentivizing the teaching of large, undergraduate courses, and disincentivizing the teaching of smaller but critical graduate-level courses and mentoring of graduate students.