



COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

April 9, 2015

To: Jose Wudka
Riverside Division Academic Senate

From: Linda Walling, Chair
Committee on Academic Personnel

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Walling". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "L" and "W".

Re: Senate Task Force on Climate, Equity and Discrimination

CAP received a copy of the Senate Task Force on Climate, Equity and Discrimination on March 13, 2015, along with the request for comments. This memo is a response to that request.

CAP commends the Task Force for a thoughtful document with clear recommendations for assuring that transparent, prompt and fair methods are developed to address faculty complaints and grievances that relate to discrimination, inequity or harassment are developed.

As a Committee that provides an assessment of faculty scholarly, teaching and service accomplishments, CAP obviously does not have direct responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the Senate Task Force. CAP's task is to evaluate the evidence of research, teaching and service in a faculty member's file. Any commentary on issues of poor climate, inequity or discrimination that have influenced a faculty member has always been removed from files prior to the file arriving for CAP's evaluation. CAP believes that this policy should be continued. CAP should remain as a neutral body for a fair and unbiased evaluation of faculty accomplishments and is not in a position to adjudicate properly charges of this nature.

However, CAP acknowledges that discrimination can negatively impact faculty research productivity or creative activities, as well as influencing the quality of teaching and/or service. Public health and social science research has documented that discrimination can negatively impact both the mental and physical health of the party who has experienced discrimination. Therefore, UCR should find a mechanism to address whether these experiences have negatively impacted scholarly productivity, teaching or service in a manner that might jeopardize any promotion to tenure decision. CAP does not think this material should be viewed by CAP members. Instead, CAP would recommend that the administration and the Senate remedy the "chilly climate" created by discrimination immediately. In some cases, finding a safe space for the faculty member will be needed (eg., alternate department). Moreover, after consultation with Deans, the Provost and Chancellor, the Vice-Provost for Academic Personnel might make a recommendation for a stop-the-clock action providing the impacted faculty member the "lost time" to enable a return to previous productivity. Clearly, discrimination could also delay advancements or promotions; how this could be adjudicated is less evident but should be thoroughly discussed.

In response to the Task Force document, CAP provides several additional comments below.

- (1) Overall, CAP is concerned about the lack of detail regarding implementation of the proposed changes. Timelines and reporting structures are not clear at the present time. This probably exceeded the Task Force's charge.
- (2) The addition of a Campus Climate Equity Officer to the campus is a solid idea. However, the reporting structure for the Campus Climate Equity Officer was not clear. In discussing this position, CAP wondered whether this is a position for the faculty (a Senate position) or administration. It is also not clear how a regular performance review by the faculty could be carried out. (page 3, item 1)
- (3) It was not clear who was to be responsible for initiating and maintaining the "One-stop Shop" for climate, equity and discrimination grievances (page 4, item 3).
- (4) CAP agrees that the relevant offices need to report the status of climate, equity and discrimination grievance cases. While the numbers of cases and time to process complaints are reasonable to report, CAP is concerned about reporting the "nature of the outcomes". CAP is concerned that if the disciplinary actions, sanctions and restorative actions are reported, the identities of the parties involved will be inadvertently revealed. CAP supports the concept of transparency in these processes at all levels, but is concerned about individual privacy rights. (page 4, item 4).

Finally, during the discussions of the Task Force Report, CAP digressed and discussed salary inequities. There are known instances of gender inequity in salaries on the UC Riverside campus. These inequities can be due to a number of factors, but CAP hopes that this discrimination can be promptly addressed by our campus. Apart from the self-evident structural discrimination they suggest, such inequities may contribute to a climate in which some colleagues are perceived to be less valued and more therefore vulnerable to discriminatory conduct. CAP recommends that the Equity Office and Vice-Provost for Academic Personnel evaluate hiring practices, appointment off-scale decisions, merit and promotions off-scale decisions, and salary rewards to assure that there are no inequities due to gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability or creed. The Chancellor and Provost should prioritize rectifying these inequities. CAP understands that this issue has been discussed by the upper administration, but it is not aware of strategies that are currently being proposed to resolve this issue.