

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521-0132

April 6, 2016

TO: José Wudka, Chair
Academic Senate

FROM: Jason Weems, Chair
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: Response to the VPAP Memo CAP—Length of Statements/Responses

The CHASS Executive Committee discussed the CAP inquiry into the appropriate length of various letters pertaining to merit files. Briefly, the committee believes that a 2 page limitation on self-statements and departmental letters is appropriate for all merit files, including Professor Step VI and above. Our reasoning is twofold. First, we feel for the purposes of a merit review—which is not a career or cumulative review, and is also accompanied by e-file and other supporting materials—two pages offers sufficient space to address achievements that occur during the review period. Second, we worry that expanding the page allowance will risk the addition of increased expectations for a successful merit application. It is important to guard against letting merit reviews gain too much weight in the review process, or become subject to escalating standards of expectation. Adding a page to the letters, even in limited instances, might very well have this effect.

With regard to limitations on faculty responses to department letters, we do not agree that such action is appropriate. Faculty should retain the right to respond in the manner they feel appropriate in accordance with their concerns. While faculty might be unofficially counseled that overlong responses can be detrimental and onerous for reviewers, we feel no limitations should be applied by regulation.

Jason Weems, Chair

UCR CHASS Executive Committee