




PLANNING & BUDGET

January 19, 2018

To: Dylan Rodriguez, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Christian Shelton, Chair 
Committee on Planning and Budget

RE: Campus Review: [Consultation] Cluster Hiring Initiative: Status and Future Plans

The Senate Committee on Planning and Budget (P&B) reviewed the Provost's memorandum of November 6, 2017, titled "Cluster Hiring Initiative: Status & Future Plans." The committee cannot advocate for any of the three proposed courses of action. However, P&B would welcome further dialog supported by more information on the present situation and the future plans.

The committee found that the analysis presented omitted important aspects of the cluster hiring process:

1. Table 1 suggests that cluster hires were a relatively small portion of the overall hires by listing total cluster hires since 2013 alongside total number of hires since 2013. This masks the effect of the cluster hiring process. Cluster hires were begun in 2015 as a way of increasing the number of faculty. Since 2015, cluster hires have represented 70% of the increase in faculty at UCR (68 out of 97).
2. The announcement to grow the faculty by 300 was made in 2014. However, this document uses a baseline of 2013. "300 net new faculty" is mentioned in "model 3." The campus should not be tied to previous rhetoric when circumstances have changed.
3. No part of this document addresses the faculty concerns over the method of selection of the clusters. Page three lists four "key issues," but selection of clusters is not among them. The haphazard fashion in which cluster solicitations and decisions were made continues to have repercussions. They should not be ignored as they define our current situation.

4. Discussion of the necessary (and to-date often lacking) infrastructure resources to support faculty growth on campus is conspicuously missing from this memorandum. P&B has repeatedly for years called for increased attention in planning and budgeting such resources. It is troubling that infrastructure and institutional support for new faculty is still ignored.
5. This document has no information on the remaining resources to support further growth.
6. The memorandum states that, "[i]n terms of process, cluster hiring is very similar to the department hiring." While many of the steps might be the same, the differences are critical and result in delays, confusion, budgetary posturing, and planning uncertainties. The committee members' experiences suggest these are no better now than during the first year of cluster hiring.
7. The memorandum gives no sense of how individual clusters have proceeded. The only data are drawn from Human Resources Data Warehouse. It is not clear whether there has been any accounting or monitoring on a "per cluster" basis.

Generally, the document is not responsive to the faculty cluster hiring surveys. Model 1 does not really address the concerns. Model 2 turns control to the Deans over the positions and does not necessarily take into account the faculty involved in the clusters; it further decentralizes budgets on this campus. Model 3 encompasses all possible future actions and does not provide a clear alternative proposal for how the funds would be redirected. Without further information about how model 3 might be enacted, P&B cannot render an opinion.

P&B would like to see quantitative data on the resources available centrally to support future hiring, whether via clusters or not. This includes not only salary, benefits, and start-up support, but the necessary increases in staffing (for contracts and grants, for purchasing, etc.) and capital improvement (office and lab space, space for increased graduate students, parking, etc.). Further, the committee would like to see a plan (or set of plans) that acknowledges the current differences among clusters. Finally, any plans on central hiring initiatives should be coupled with a discussion of long-term plans for the campus as a whole.