


UCRIVERSIDE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA | **Academic Senate**
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

November 21, 2017

To: Dylan Rodriguez, Chair
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

From: John S. Levin, Chair 
Committee on Academic Freedom (CAF)

Re: Negotiated Salary Trial Program (NSTP)

The Committee on Academic Freedom considered the Negotiated Salary Trial Program Report (“Report from the Fourth Year Negotiated Salary Trial Program Taskforce,” June 22, 2017). There were concerns about the report and the NSTP from members of UCR’s CAF; however, given the short notice for review not all committee members opined.

First and foremost, concerns were raised that pertained to academic freedom. One concern addressed, if not a conflict of interest then, a split loyalty between a private sector business/industry and one’s university (or indeed the public) with salaries derived from private sources. Another concern was over the potential for either censorship or self-censorship in public disclosure (through media, public presentations, teaching) of findings from research based upon either pressure from a private employer-funder or self-constraint and fear of reprisals. (“For example, one can easily foresee cases of self-censorship, if not anything else, arising from a conflict of interest and a split loyalty [to the private sector on one hand and to the public on the other]. So, I agree that there is a potential impact on academic freedom if this program continues to expand and caution needs to be exercised.”

Second, there was concern expressed not focused necessarily on academic freedom but on salary inequities and resultant (or exacerbated) stratification among faculty. “I’m concerned the program exacerbates salary inequities on the campus. First, by advantaging faculty that work in areas where grant money is more widely available, and second by advantaging faculty who write large grants and are more likely to have the agencies accept the relatively small increment in salary request.” This concern could be attached to academic freedom to the extent that those with higher status have more capital and thus have more influence on university decisions, whereas those with lesser status have limits on their ability to speak out and give voice to their values. Thus, a university

may be run by an elite group of faculty, based upon their status which is largely the result of compliance with economic interests of the university.

There was no consensus on whether or not the program should be extended or even expanded. One member's view supported the extension of the current NSTP trial program and expansion to other campuses. Such extension and expansion will help in the assessment of the effects of NSTP. Another's view suggested the expansion of the trial even without more analysis but opined that more analysis of the effects could occur with expanded trial results.