To be received and placed on file:

The Committee on Academic Freedom met three times during AY2011-2012 as well as conducting committee activities via e-mail. Several issues that came before the UCR committee were raised at systemwide meetings of the University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAF) on November 18, 2011 and March 15, 2012:

APM-010&015. The wording of the revision, which had been proposed by UCAF in 2010, has been modified by the Office of the President. The wording proposed by UCAF expanded academic freedom as follows by including: “freedom to address any matter of institutional policy or action when acting, whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance” while the wording proposed by the Office of the President reads “freedom to address any matter of institutional policy or action when acting as a member of the faculty whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance.” Discussion focused around whether the addition of the words “when acting as a member of the faculty” alters the meaning and intent of this amendment to the APM, a conversation that has yet to be concluded.

APM-210. The wording of Section (d) of APM-210-1 regarding Criteria for Appointment, Promotion, and Appraisal includes the following:

“Teaching, research, professional and public service contributions that promote diversity and equal opportunity are to be encouraged and given recognition in the evaluation of the candidate’s qualifications. These contributions to diversity and equal opportunity can take a variety of forms including efforts to advance equitable access to education, public service that addresses the needs of California’s diverse population, or research in a scholar’s area of expertise that highlights inequalities.”

Portions of this section were deemed incompatible with academic freedom, especially the last line, which privileges one outcome of a scholarly investigation over another (e.g. if a research program were to explore inequality and found that, contrary to expectation, none exists).

Freedom of assembly and expression. UCR’s Committee on Academic Freedom unanimously put forth a motion to the regular meeting of UCR’s Academic Senate on February 22, 2012:

“The right of assembly and expression of views shall not be suppressed. Such assemblies and expressions, however, shall not interfere with the lawful conduct and public safety of others at the University.”
The Division requests that this resolution be introduced at the next meeting of the University Committee on Academic Freedom.

That motion passed and was brought to UCAF for consideration by other Divisions. Subsequently, at a special meeting of the Academic Senate, a motion was proposed, to be voted on by mail ballot, to amend that statement, so as to read:

“The right of assembly and expression of views shall not be suppressed. The Senate affirms, moreover:
(i) that peaceful protest is not only permissible but protected and valued as a vital form of speech;
(ii) that responses to protest on campus should be led with the presumption that force should not be used against demonstrators.”

The Division requests that this resolution be introduced at the next meeting of the University Committee on Academic Freedom.

As of this writing, the outcome of the mail ballot has not been decided.

M. Roose
P. Ryer
R. Arvidson, GSA Representative
S. Li, GSA Representative
V. Lippit, Ex-Officio
I. Hendrick, Ex-Officio
T. Morton, Chair