

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RIVERSIDE DIVISION
December 3, 2019**

To be received and placed on file:

The Committee on Academic Freedom is an important part of faculty governance and collegial responsibility in the University of California system. As a committee of the Riverside Academic Senate, Academic Freedom is appointed by the Senate's Committee on Committees and consists of five members of the Division, including as *Ex-Officio* the Chairs of the Committee on Privilege and Tenure and the Committee on Faculty Welfare. The Committee is responsible for reporting to the Division any conditions within or without the University that in the judgement of the committee may affect the freedom of the academic community at large. It is understood that academic freedom includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the free inquiry and exchange of ideas, the right to present controversial material relevant to a course of instruction, and the freedom to publish or disseminate controversial information and perform research in controversial areas. It is also understood that academic freedom is to be conjoined with academic responsibility; it is to be exercised in accordance with standards appropriate to the relevant scholarly disciplines.

The Committee on Academic Freedom conducted committee activities via email and met one time during the 2018-2019 academic year. In addition to reaffirming its Conflict of Interest Statement, the Committee undertook the following actions:

a. Communication with the Campus at Large

In keeping with its charge to assist in the education of the academic community regarding the rights and responsibilities relating to academic freedom, the Committee conducted a review of its bylaws and communicated a statement of its duties and mission to the general UCR academic community via the Senate email.

**b. Discussions with Campus Leadership and Recommendations to the Administration
*Recommendations to Senate. Proposed amendment to UCR Procedures SAR Application-
approved by Riverside Division 5.29.18***

At the May 23, 2017 Riverside Division meeting a resolution was adopted that requested the Committee on Academic Freedom to recommend procedures to collaborate with Scholars at Risk (SAR) and Scholars Rescue Fund (SRF) and with administrative staff to facilitate and encourage the invitation of refugee scholars to the UCR campus and to share regular and equitable processes by which these ends can be achieved. The Committee was also to recommend a process for UCR faculty, Deans, and Chairs to consult SAR's and SRF's lists to identify and communicate to the Senate committee the names and credentials of scholars they would like to invite as visiting faculty, particularly when regular faculty go on leaves or sabbaticals. These recommendations were followed by the committee and resulted in a Procedures document for Scholars at Risk at UCR.

The Committee on Academic Freedom was informed that the UCR Procedures SAR Application that was approved by the Division on 5.29.18 contained an unintentional error. The composition of the review committee membership contained representation from all schools/colleges except for the School of Business. As a result, the Committee on Academic Freedom put forth a proposal to amend the original procedures. The modification includes a faculty member from the School of Business to serve on the review committee.

Recommendations to Chair Rodriguez. Committee's thoughts on UCR Strategic Plan

The Committee on Academic Freedom discussed the upcoming content and process for UCR's Strategic Plan, within the context of UCR 2020, the most recent university strategic plan. The following comments were presented by committee members.

1. We need to look at where UCR stands in reference to achieving 2020 plan goals. We would like a summary of where UCR stands before offering specific suggestions for the future.
2. We want to ensure this is a Senate based process with faculty and student involvement. As well, the process should be communicated clearly and well in advance of initiation.
3. Plan should match who we are instead of our pretensions.
4. Specific areas and issues:
 - A. Graduate students: Taking more graduate students depends on funding support. International students come with funding, but visa is problematical. Packages offered do not compare to other institutions. Consideration should be given to tuition waivers for international graduate students who cannot obtain funding from research grants. This will increase our graduate student population.
 - B. Fundraising: What are the prospects and actualities of funding from donors; where is the money going; how is it being used?
 - C. Funding in CHASS: With the current structure, there is a need to enroll more students to acquire TAs. Should CHASS reduce number of graduate students and packages in order to ensure that current students finish?
 - D. Financing: Should one part of the institution subsidize another? Students are not taking History as a major; instead, they are taking Business. Are we then offering a consumer model for financing undergraduate education?
 - E. Online programs and courses: These can affect academic freedom. They generate money, but can faculty reject teaching a class if they do not want to teach it? Do faculty have the freedom to teach online courses the way they want? We should encourage caution with proliferation of online courses and programs and ensure they are carried out with academic freedom standards and faculty rights. Should a student attain a degree without ever meeting a professor? This is a concern, although a student taking one or two online courses to finish up a degree may be practical.

Recommendations to Administration. Academic Freedom's Response to UCR Vice Provost for Academic Personnel Aimee Walker's Response of June 28, 2018 to the Senate review of the Campus Implementation Procedures for the Negotiated Salary Trial Program

The Committee on Academic Freedom considered the response to the Senate review of the Campus Implementation Procedures for the Negotiated Salary Trial Program received from the

Vice Provost for Academic Personnel Ameae Walker and noted the following concerns and queries:

- A. When a grant is given from one institution, or business, or industry and the faculty member works for another institution, a conflict of interest comes into play when research is focused on business or industry rather than academia.
- B. The program might give a group of people on campus more power with administration and within departments because of the money. The program may exacerbate salary gap issues which are problematical at UCR.
- C. There is an unknown impact on time spent with students and teaching. Does the extra money come with extra responsibilities? Or are the grants modified so that one receives more money for the same work?
- D. Does the responsibility of the individual remain unchanged and is it the responsibility of the department to ensure workloads are maintained?

In general, the committee viewed the response from Vice Provost Walker as one that did not answer the questions and concerns in a direct fashion. Rather, the response was a rationalization for the program as communicated in policy and procedure documents. Some members of the committee noted that the Senate has no power on this matter of the implementation of a negotiated salary program.

c. Responses to additional issues raised by the Academic Senate

In keeping with its charge to evaluate and propose revision as needed to current institutional policies as they might relate to academic freedom, the Committee considered the following Campus and System-wide issues:

Campus Review

- Endowed Term Chair for Teaching, Research and Service in CNAS

System-wide Review

- Executive Summary (Draft) – Report of Task Force on University Policing
- 2nd Round. Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on Open Access for Theses and Dissertations
- Proposed Revisions to Senate Bylaw 336
- Proposed Revisions to SVSH Academic Frameworks
- APM – 011, Academic Freedom, Protection of Professional Standards, and Responsibilities of Non-Faculty Academic Appointees

The Committee offered no comments on the following system-wide review items:

- Proposed Revised Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Proposed Revisions to Presidential Policy BFB-RMP-7 Protection of Administrative Records Containing Personally Identifiable Information

The Committee's formal response to each issue is located on the Academic Senate website and can be found at: <http://senate.ucr.edu/about/issues/2018-2019/>

d. Representation at Systemwide Senate and the Executive Council

The Committee on Academic Freedom continued its active participation on the systemwide University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAF). The 2018-19 UCAF representative was Professor Devra Weber, who updated committee members of the issues under discussion at the statewide level.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dimitri Maslov
Devra Weber
Michael Adams, *Ex-Officio, CP&T*
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Irma Ortiz – GSA Representative
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