



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLOR  
ONE SHIELDS AVENUE  
DAVIS, CA 95616  
TEL: (530) 752-4964  
FAX: (530) 752-2400  
INTERNET: <http://provost.ucdavis.edu>

March 12, 2014

**Lori Lubin (Co-Chair;** Professor of Physics; Faculty Welfare, Academic Senate representative)  
**Peter Wainwright (Co-Chair;** Executive Associate Dean, College of Biological Sciences)  
**Kelly Anders** (Director of Academic Personnel and Systems, Academic Affairs)  
**Trish Berger** (Chair of CAP, *ex officio*)  
**Carolyn de la Peña** (Interim VP-Undergraduate Education)  
**Floyd Feeny** (Professor of Law; Privilege and Tenure, Academic Senate representative)  
**Bruce Hartsough** (Associate Dean, College of Engineering)  
**Bruno Nachtergaele** (Professor of Mathematics; Davis Division Academic Senate Chair)  
**Kimberly Pulliam** (Resource Analyst, Academic Senate office)  
**Julia Simon** (Professor of French and Italian; Academic Senate representative)  
**Maureen Stanton** (VP-Academic Affairs, *ex officio*)

RE: Charge to the Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on Step Plus Policies and Procedures  
(SAWSPPP)

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to express my sincere thanks for your willingness to serve on a workgroup that will make final recommendations for implementation of the proposed Step Plus merit and promotion system. Pending Senate support, it is my hope that the Step Plus system can be in place for the 2014-15 merit cycle. To meet that timeframe, our workgroup will need to work diligently, creatively and efficiently over the next several months.

I concur with the many members of the Senate who have reviewed and drafted interim proposals and recommendations that the proposed Step Plus system offers significant advantages over our current merit/promotion system, including reduced workload (by eliminating most accelerations in time), increased fairness (by reducing the impact of variation among faculty members and units in the appetite for seeking acceleration), and increased consistency (so that evaluation of faculty members at similar rank and step will be based on their performance over consistent time intervals). Although the core elements of the proposed Step Plus system appear to have broad support from both the Senate and the administration, there are many very important aspects of implementation and process for which no clear consensus has emerged, and on which further Senate input is essential. The primary function of SAWSPPP is to finalize recommendations on processes, practices and standards for Senate review and administrative implementation of the proposed Step Plus merit and promotion system.

**Background:** On June 3, 2011, the UC Davis Representative Assembly passed a resolution to explore “potential simplifications of the academic personnel process.” The result of this resolution was formation of the Academic Senate Task Force on Simplifying the Academic Personnel Process (STAPP). The STAPP report was discussed and accepted by the Representative Assembly in June 2012. Senate feedback on the report provided in January 2013 indicated very strong support for the broad outlines of the Step Plus system (recommended as “Plan 1”), but much less consensus on the additional streamlining recommendations included as “Plan 2”.

To make progress during Summer 2013 on the detailed planning required for implementation of Step Plus, I convened an Academic Personnel Streamlining Implementation Workgroup (APSIW), which presented its preliminary report and recommendations to the Executive Council in December 2013. In response to feedback from the Council, the report recommendations were revised and submitted to the Senate for formal review in January 2014. Senate feedback was received in February, and so the stage is now set for a joint effort by the Senate and the Administration to finalize the details for implementation of Step Plus, ideally for the 2014-15 merit cycle.

***Plans for moving forward (based on recommendations of STAPP, APSIW and Senate reviewers)--***

SAWSPPP is the first of three related groups to be formed, and will begin its work as soon as possible. A second joint Senate-Administration workgroup will be formed in April, and will be tasked with designing outreach materials and programs that will help calibrate our campus to the partial step advancements allowed under the Step Plus advancement system. Finally, the Senate proposes to appoint a special advisory committee on Step Plus that will help us all to navigate the unfamiliar waters of Step Plus. This committee may also choose to engage the campus in further analysis and dialogue regarding elements of STAPP’s “Plan 2” (and related recommendations from APSIW) for additional streamlining.

**Charge to SAWSPPP—** Given the great complexity of our merit and promotion process, there are a number of very important recommendations that need to be resolved by SAWSPPP for near-term Senate and administrative review of the proposed Step Plus system. As a first step, I ask that all members of the workgroup review the April 2012 STAPP report, the January 2014 APSIW report and the Senate responses to those reports as a foundation for our decisions and recommendations regarding Step Plus. (These reports and responses are attached to this charge letter.) Based on Senate discussions to date, I recommend that SAWSPPP focus on Step Plus itself, rather than on the other streamlining measures discussed by STAPP and APSIW.

The tasks for the workgroup include the following.

- **Evaluate each of the existing Step Plus implementation recommendations from APSIW, and decide whether to accept, reject or modify each of them in turn.** The broad strokes of Step Plus, as envisioned by both STAPP and APSIW, appear to have strong support across the campus. It is my hope that SAWSPPP will be able to move quickly to identify the seemingly noncontroversial elements, such as the elimination of accelerations-in-time for regular merit advancements, creation (and calculation) of half-step salary increments, consideration of every package for incremental step advancement and acceleration, the use of temporary off-scale to award accelerations in performance, and the ability to submit a new dossier as soon as one year after deferral or denial. Other recommendations from APSIW, such as the inclusion of a half-step advancement option, are likely to require more consultation and deliberation.
- **Draft written guidelines for regular, accelerated and (if relevant) 0.5-step merit advancements under Step Plus.** To assist our campus community with planning for the 2014-15 merit cycle, I ask that guidelines for the Professor and in-Residence Professor series be drafted by late April 2014.

As a starting point, I recommend that SAWSPPP refer to the UC Berkeley Half-Step guidelines document included as Appendix II in the attached January 2014 revised APSIW report.

- **Formulate recommendations on processes and policies for which explicit recommendations were not made by either STAPP or APSIW.** Minimally, these include the extension of incremental steps to the Above Scale rank, the management of incremental salary and step advancements at promotion, practices for accelerations of greater than one step, and policies for appeals. Undoubtedly, SAWSPPP will identify additional issues and make recommendations on them, as well.
- **Make recommendations on the timeframe and processes for extension of the Step Plus system to other academic title series.** It is my hope that SAWSPPP will collaborate with appropriate Academic Senate and Academic Federation leaders so that guidelines for incremental step advancement can be drafted for other faculty titles, especially Adjunct Professor, Professor of Clinical \_\_\_\_, Health Sciences Clinical Professor, and Cooperative Extension Specialist. There is also great interest in extending Step Plus to the Academic Federation research titles (Specialist, Project Scientist and Professional Researcher).
- **Develop options for faculty voting within the Step Plus framework that departments can consider for adoption.** Appropriate voting options will depend in part on whether faculty candidates will request a specific merit advancement or whether each merit dossier will simply be put forward for advancement review.
- **Assist with drafting of interim procedures to replace relevant portions of current UCD APM 220 until permanent changes can be written, reviewed by the Senate and finalized.**

**Proposed timetable for Step Plus implementation--** Because faculty, department chairs and administration will need guidance on standards and practices as soon as possible, recommendations emerging from SAWSPPP will be discussed at the April 2014 meeting of the Representative Assembly and voted on at the June 3<sup>rd</sup> Representative Assembly meeting. Accordingly, our workgroup will need to commence work quickly, and will be very active for the next six months.

- **March 2014: SAWSPPP** commences work on establishing proposed guidelines for Step Plus advancement and specific policies and practices for merits and promotions in the Step Plus system for the Professor series.
- **April 2014: SAWSPPP** advancement guidelines draft discussed at meeting of the Representative Assembly. Workgroup #2 (Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup for Campus Calibration; SAWCC) formed.
- **Late April-May 2014:** In consultation with deans, department chairs and relevant Senate committees, **SAWSPPP** finalizes recommendations on critical practices under the Step Plus system for the Professor, and develops partnerships to enable extension of the Step Plus system to non-ladder Senate faculty. Workgroup #2 (SAWCC) begins development of outreach efforts and programming to calibrate faculty, review committees and administrators to advancement guidelines developed by **SAWSPPP**.
- **May 2014:** Workgroup #2 (SAWCC) launches online and in-person outreach to disseminate guidelines for advancement under Step Plus.

March 12, 2014

Page 4

- **May-June 2014:** VP-AA and **SAWSPPP** draft *Interim Step Plus Policies and Practices* document to supersede relevant sections of APM UCD-220.
- **June 3, 2014:** Representative Assembly discusses and votes on **SAWSPPP** recommendations for Step Plus implementation.
- **May-September 2014:** Davis Division of Academic Senate begins to shape the Step Plus Advisory Committee.
- **Fall 2014:** Step Plus system fully is implemented. Workgroup #2 (SAWCC) completes online and in-person outreach to faculty, review committees and administration regarding guidelines for advancement under Step Plus. Academic Senate Step Plus Advisory Committee consults with chairs, deans, FPCs, CAP and VP-AA to identify unanticipated problems and to recommend further interim solutions.
- **Fall-Winter 2014:** Step Plus Advisory Committee proposes a process and timeline for consideration of other streamlining changes that might be implemented for future merit cycles. Senate provides feedback on proposals.

Lynn Daum will be in touch about SAWSPPP scheduling; please respond to her requests as soon as you can. We must organize a number of meetings quickly, and it will be extremely helpful to use a consistent time slot, so please consider unusual timeframes, e.g. 4-6 pm or 5-7 pm! And, with apologies, I want to acknowledge that we are unlikely to achieve a schedule in which all SAWSPPP members will be able to attend all meetings. Nonetheless, we will do the very best we can to maximize opportunities for all of us to participate.

Thank you all very much for your assistance in making our merit and promotion system more efficient, flexible and equitable!

Sincerely,



Mau Stanton  
Vice Provost- Academic Affairs  
Professor, Evolution and Ecology

/lmd

Attachments