



# **Davis Division Academic Senate**

## **Request for Consultation Responses**

### **Reaffirmation of the Principles of Community**

**April 3, 2015**

A campus committee, including Academic Senate representatives, has proposed revisions to the Principles of Community. Academic Senate committee feedback is sought to inform the campus-wide review process.

# **Academic Freedom & Responsibility**

**April 3, 2015 8:13 AM**

The Committee on Academic Freedom & Responsibility reviewed the revised draft of the Principles of Community and would like to suggest a modification to the first bullet point found in the Principles. The Committee suggests replacing “demonstrated” with “characterized” so that the statement reads, “We affirm the dignity inherent in all of us, and we strive to maintain a climate of equity and justice characterized by the respect for each other.”

# **Affirmative Action & Diversity**

**March 30, 2015 10:01 AM**

The Affirmative Action & Diversity Committee welcomes the new edition of the Principles of Community. The changes reflect a great spirit of inclusion. Since the chair participated in the process, this response will be brief. However, we would like to pass on specific suggestions for changes in the interest of concision.

We recommend that the first sentence be split into two sentences. To wit:

“The University of California, Davis, is first and foremost an institution of learning, teaching, and research. UC Davis reflects and is committed to serving the needs of a global society comprising all people and a multiplicity of ideas.”

We also recommend splitting the last bullet point into two sentences:

“We recognize that each of us has an obligation to the UC Davis community of which we have chosen to be a part. We will strive to build a climate and culture based on mutual respect and caring.”

Otherwise, we recommend the adoption of the revised POC.

# **Faculty Welfare**

**March 16, 2015 9:10 PM**

*No response at this time.*

# **Graduate Council**

**April 2, 2015 2:28 PM**

*Response continued on next page.*

April 2, 2015

## **RFC: Reaffirmation of the Principles of Community**

The Graduate Council, based on a memo from its APD Committee, forwards their recommendations for the aforementioned RFC.

The Academic Planning and Development (APD) Committee met on March 10, 2015, and considered the Principles of Community final draft with edits.

The APD supports the sentiment and spirit of the draft. Discussion revolved around the history of the document, and that enforcement of the principles generally does not occur (and perhaps cannot occur based on the nature of the document being a statement rather than a policy). One view would be to formulate a general campus wide policy inspired by the Principles of Community that would embody many of its sentiments.

The Chair notes that one specific sentence in both the draft and the old version of the Principles of Community that could be construed as only loosely related to the main spirit of the document, and therefore unneeded, is that emphasizing the constitutionality of free speech. In the current draft, the sentence in question begins with, "We further recognize the right..." in the freedom of expression section. Although the protection of free speech is exceptionally important to the Western European concepts of freedom and democracy, it is not necessarily intimately connected to the spirit of (1) building a community that recognizes past transgressions of civility and human rights, and (2) seeking to mitigate continuing interpersonal and micro community conflicts with roots in those historical issues. There are certainly cases where hateful speech has been used within the limits of the US Constitutional free speech protections, but were antithetical to community building. The wording of the sentence seems to be more related to an attempt to include a form of legal protection (were the Principles to be a formal policy) or to mitigate political backlash against "political correctness," than something fundamental to furthering the basic sentiments of equity, respect, dignity, and community building. The other parts of the paragraph already affirm freedom of expression without sounding formally constitutional.

Finally, one possible unifying ending addition to the last sentence of the second to last paragraph might emphasize the fundamental underlying sentiment of the Principles of Community:

**"We take pride in our various achievements, and we celebrate our differences *that are an integral and valuable part of our diverse common humanity.*"**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kyaw Tha Paw U".

Kyaw Tha Paw U, Chair  
Graduate Council

/vm

C: Gina Anderson, Academic Senate Executive Director