Davis Division Academic Senate

Request for Consultation Responses

Conceptual Framework: Implementation of Regents Resolution on Administrative Effeciencies

February 16, 2011

The Conceptual Framework was received by the Davis Division on December 23, 2010. The document is a draft implementation plan for the UC Regents Resolution on Administrative Effeciencies. Despite the late receipt and short turn around, the Division has decided to forward the documents for full Divisional review. The Division has knowingly assigned a deadline well past that provided in the cover memo. However, the implications may have far-reaching impact; thus we have notified campus leaders that the Division will opine following a six week review.

Administrative Partners (DANN TRASK)

February 18, 2011 2:45 PM

Dear Professor Powell,

The L&S Executive Committee has discussed the "Conceptual Framework: Implementation of Regents Resolution on Administrative Effectiveness" draft plan and has the following comments:

• While this issue is of substantial interest and importance, the Executive Committee found the draft to be so general and vague that it was difficult to offer much in the way of comment or recommendation.

• Concerns were expressed, though, about the nature, composition and authority of the proposed steering committee. This presents a potentially dangerous model, i.e. a high-level committee with such broad powers, yet little specificity regarding the limits on their application. The Executive Committee urges particular attention by the Academic Senate to this element of the plan.

• Questions also were raised as to whether this plan represents more of a reshuffling of responsibilities rather than real streamlining, and how the plan relates to the concurrent UCOP funding-stream proposal.

Sincerely,

Patricia C. Boeshaar, Chair
Executive Committee
College of Letters and Science

Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES)

February 24, 2011 10:02 AM

We found this to be a vague document, lacking the specific details necessary for full evaluation. Our overall reaction is that administrative consolidation needs to consider carefully the real costs in time and effort that may result from centralization. Our experience is that intteractions with remote "faceless" individuals for administative tasks are much less productive than those with local people. One specific example is the difficulty in purchasing items more than $5,000, which requires working with remote individuals; this often is extremely slow and inefficient. By contrast, purchases less than $5,000, done locally, almost always go smoothly (and the few problems that arise can be corrected quickly and efficiently). Overall, we feel strongly that departments need authority to act locally.

Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (MANAGEMENT)

February 16, 2011 9:53 AM

While there may be gains to imposing a common solution in certain settings, doing so may reduce innovation and tailored solutions that might be more appropriate for a particular unit. Can we think creatively about a way to create incentives to improve efficiency (e.g., allow units to keep some of the cost savings for use elsewhere).

Information Technology

February 9, 2011 3:58 PM

The Information Technology Committee has reviewed **Conceptual Framework: Implementation of Regents Resolution on Administrative Effeciencies** and has the following response:

This implementation plan gives a very high-level description of an attempt to reduce administrative costs by identifying areas where the use of common tools may lead to economies of scale. This is commendable, but in the present budget situation that UC faces, this is a luxury we probably cannot afford. Such a strategy, if implemented efficiently, (i.e. without hiring yet more administrators), could possibly lead to savings over the next five years. However, other more immediate issues should be given higher priority in this time of budgetary crisis. For example, an outdated research and IT infrastructure seriously compromises the ability to compete for research grants and to attract new students, which in turn directly impacts the ability to generate revenue for the University.

The implementation plan does not give any estimate of the amount of savings that could be accomplished. In particular, the hidden cost of disrupting current business practices is not addressed. The administrative cost of such a study (time of members of the CSSC committee and any additional hires in consulting and IT personnel) should be estimated and included in a more comprehensive analysis. It also might be more cost effective to initially only focus efforts on just a few areas which affect UC at a systemwide level. The report outlines that one component of the proposed committee's role would be to 'evaluate progress'. This would, of course, be necessary. However, it would be good to know that if progress has not been achieved, that a structure is in place to re-evaluate whether the committee needs to be continued (especially if it costing a lot of money through external consultation fees).

In summary, we should start by adopting the principle that we can't hire more administrators to figure out how to save money on administration, and we should make sure that we are not setting out on a course of paying corporations to figure out how we can pay corporations less.