APPENDIX I: BRIEF RESPONSE TO THE CHARGE

The following text repeats the charge to the Special Committee. Each question posed to the Committee is followed by brief responses, which are highlighted with "bullets" (•).

Special Committee on the Academic Personnel Processes
Davis Division of the Academic Senate

Background

Recently, a significant number of faculty, department chairs and deans have expressed concerns about the academic personnel process at UC Davis. One concern stems from the recent AAUP report showing that average faculty salaries at Davis are among the lowest in the UC system. This ranking has a long history, extending back at least 20 years. In addition, related data reveal that the percentages of Full Professors at steps above IV and Above Scale are also among the lowest in the system.

Additional concern has been expressed regarding the academic personnel process. Specific issues that have been raised include uncertainty over the standards for advancement, the sense that contributions of service in curricular development and academic leadership are not properly recognized and frustration that the feedback provided to candidates is of limited value in encouraging improved performance.

Since the review steps in the academic personnel process involve primarily Academic Senate committees, it is incumbent upon the Senate to undertake a careful review of our current academic personnel policies, procedures and practices to identify areas where improvements are warranted.

Charge

The Special Committee on the Academic Personnel Processes is charged with reviewing all academic personnel policies, procedures, practices and outcomes with the goal of recommending changes for improvements if deemed necessary. Specifically:

1) The Committee shall review the salary and step/rank data for the Davis campus in comparison to the other UC campuses. The goal of this analysis is to identify the reasons that the campus has historically had among the lowest average salaries and relatively low percentages of Full Professors at the highest steps and above scale. The Committee should utilize data provided by UC Office of the President and any other relevant sources of information. To the extent possible, the Committee is asked to distinguish between differences in merit and compensation.

• Salaries have decreased markedly relative to institutions with the best academic reputations.
• Salaries have decreased markedly relative to those at UC Berkeley.
• Professors at UC Davis are essentially the same age, but at lower average step than at all other UC campuses, and 2 steps lower than at UCB.
• This difference in average step explains most of the salary difference compared to UCB and other UC campuses.
2) The Committee shall review the current academic personnel policies, procedures and standards at UC Davis with the goal of identifying recommendations that will improve the effectiveness of this system. Specific questions that should be addressed include, but are not restricted to:
   a) Is the Davis campus too conservative in its standards for appointments, merits and promotions in comparison with other UC campuses? If so, at what steps in the process is a conservative attitude most evident? Does this situation reflect differences in the campus culture among the campuses?

   • We conclude that the Davis campus is more conservative than other UC campuses.
   • Faculty at Davis advance more slowly than at other UC campuses.
   • Denials of personnel actions at UC Davis occur at higher rates than at other UC campuses.
   • All review agencies above the department level, except the Chancellor, contribute comparably to the overall rate of denial (19%).
   • The Chancellor overturns CAP recommendations at higher rates than at other UC campuses, usually in favor of candidates.
   • The criteria for Target of Excellence appointments are unclear and may be too stringent.

   b) Are the standards for advancement consistent at all steps in the review process, from department initiation of action through the final decision by the dean or vice-provost? Are the review standards being communicated effectively to the faculty and department chairs? Are current efforts to compare all faculty based on uniform standards across disciplines effective? Do the numbers and directions of reversals of decisions raise questions about the consistent application of the standards?

   • Standards for advancement apparently are understood differently at all steps in the review.
   • Disagreements with the recommendations of the previous review are common; both negative and affirmative recommendations are commonly overruled at the next step.
   • Rates of disagreement with the previous step in the review process are comparable (10%) at all levels, suggesting that the standards for advancement are unclear or are interpreted differently by equally competent review agencies.
   • CAP overturns 19% of the recommendations made by the deans.
   • A uniform standard of excellence in teaching, research and service does not mean that the standard should be uniformly expressed in terms of publication style or quantity.
   • Each discipline has its own research and publication culture; some parts of the academic community feel that CAP does not understand the way in which their scholarship or professional activities should be evaluated.

   c) Do personnel decisions properly reflect the degree of flexibility recommended in the Pister Report? Are teaching and curricular development given appropriate weight in the personnel review process? Are service contributions (administrative, Senate, etc.) to the functioning of the campus given appropriate credit in reviews?

   • Personnel decisions do not yet reflect the flexibility mandated by the University response to the Pister Report.
   • We affirm our dual mission of teaching and research; excellence in both is required.
   • Teaching and curricular development are now being given more weight in decisions.
   • Many faculty believe that integrative, interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and applied scholarship are undervalued at the highest levels of review.
   • We need to improve the way in which we evaluate and reward excellent service.
d) Are personnel decisions being made at the appropriate level, or are changes in re-delegation (Vice-Provost to Deans, CAP to SPC/CPC, etc.) needed?

- Evaluation of research and scholarship should take place as close to the source of expertise as is consistent with ensuring equity across the campus.
- Additional re-delegation to the deans is widely supported.

e) Are the sizes and compositions of CAP and the SPC/CPC’s appropriate for the breadth and intellectual diversity of the campus? Do CAP and the SPC/CPC’s properly balance their responsibilities in terms of oversight of the process versus detailed analysis of individual cases?

- The size of CAP is appropriate for our needs if its role is redefined.
- The role of CAP should be to evaluate evidence and recommendations provided by other review agencies.
- CAP should not undertake an independent analysis of each personnel action, except in unusual circumstances.

f) Are the benefits of our current academic personnel practices commensurate with the costs in terms of the amount of time spent by faculty and staff during Fall quarter and by the various personnel committees throughout the year?

- No. The need for improved efficiency of our personnel process is clear and major streamlining is widely supported.

g) How do academic personnel practices at Davis compare with those at the other eight general campuses? Are there best practices from other campuses that could be used to improve the effectiveness of the academic personnel process at Davis?

- At other campuses, CAP is more independent of the administration than at UC Davis.
- Some campuses use a greatly streamlined procedure for evaluation of proposed merit increases.

h) Is the feedback provided by CAP and the SPC/CPC’s effective in encouraging improvements in the scholarly work of individual faculty and in helping department chairs guide the development of their faculty?

- CAP comments are widely perceived to be destructive.

i) Is there reason to believe that compromises of confidentiality have undermined collegial respect of the academic personnel process?

- We have no evidence that compromises of confidentiality, although they may occur occasionally, have had a campus-wide detrimental effect.

j) Is the current scope of tasks defined in Appendix I of the 1999 Annual Report of CAP consistent with Davis Division Bylaw 43, pertinent system-wide Senate Bylaws and the Academic Personnel Manual?

- The tasks defined represent a fairly broad interpretation of the Bylaws.
- The faculty has expressed serious concern that any CAP lacks the expertise to make systematically sound, independent evaluations of scholarship.
- The role of CAP should be redefined for effective operation of the personnel system.