Executive Summary

Purpose of the Council: To study and make recommendations on any matter of interest and welfare of the campus community, and to reward excellence in research and teaching.

- The concerns of the Council on Faculty Issues and Awards during the 2010-2011 academic year included the on-going issues of Academic Freedom, Faculty Awards, and Faculty Welfare, as well as the seven specific issues listed below.

1. Academic Council and UCLA Responses to UC Commission on the Future (UCOF) Recommendations
2. Post Employment Benefits Task Force Report
3. Proposed revisions to the Academic Personnel Manual (APM)
4. ESCI Online Proposal
5. Report of the Task Force on Senate Membership
6. Station Q Proposal
7. Draft agreement with SUN

- Four committees reviewed and deliberated over nominations for various Academic Senate awards for research, teaching, and mentoring.
COUNCIL ON FACULTY ISSUES & AWARDS
Annual Report, 2010-2011
October 11, 2011

Submitted to: the Faculty Legislature, Santa Barbara Division

MEETINGS

The Council on Faculty Issues & Awards convened for five regularly scheduled meetings during the 2010-11 academic year (two in fall, two in winter, and one in spring). Between formal meetings, when appropriate, CFIA conducted regular deliberations and consultations via email.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Gayle Binion (Chair and UCFW Rep)  Political Science
Nancy E. Gallagher (Vice Chair and UCAF Rep)  History
Peter J. Bloom  Film & Media Studies
Sharon Conley  Education
Tommy D. Dickey  Geography
Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi  Sociology
Suzanne J. Levine  Spanish & Portuguese
James M. Mattinson (Emeritus)  Earth Science
W. Doug Morgan (Emeritus)  Economics
Andrew Norris  Political Science
Jennifer E. Caselle (Non-Senate Academic Rep)  Ecology, Evolution & Marine Biology
Cynthia Martinez  Associated Students Rep
OVERVIEW

Primary concerns of the Council on Faculty Issues & Awards during the 2010-11 term can be categorized into the following main areas:

1) Academic Council and UCLA Responses to UCOF Recommendations

At its October 6th meeting CFIA considered the responses from the Academic Council and the UCLA division of the Academic Senate to the recommendations of the UC Commission on the Future (from spring 2010). The members of CFIA saw much in each response that was valuable and appropriate with respect to downsizing, moratoria on new campus building projects, etc. and determined as well that UCLA had added some very essential observations to the letter from the Academic Council to President Yudof. Among these were, most importantly, a commitment to excellence in research and maintaining access, affordability and diversity at the University of California, despite the financial constraints within which we have been operating.

CFIA did not think it was appropriate for the UCLA letter to be sent in “substitution” for the Academic Council’s submission. However, given that this is the beginning, not the end, of the process of considering the suggestions of the Commission, and given that the President has asked the Academic Council to be the main source of continuing consideration of the main points of concern that it has identified, CFIA encouraged Academic Council to apply the principles identified in UCLA’s response, to any future review of the Commission’s recommendations.

2) Post Employment Benefits Task Force Report

CFIA reviewed the report and dissenting opinion of the Post-Employment Benefits Task Force in October. Council unanimously endorsed Option C, as put forth in the dissenting opinion by faculty and staff members of the Task Force. Moreover, CFIA opposed both Options A and B.

Council’s assessment of Option C was that it would cost more for employees, but that it would result in a higher level of post-employment compensation. Council felt that the issue of post-employment benefits is closely tied to total compensation. In the absence of any indication that salaries will be increased significantly, then it is imperative that the University maintain an attractive retirement package in order to maintain its market competitiveness in recruiting and retaining high caliber faculty. It has been shown that the UC’s total compensation competitiveness will continue to be eroded with any of the plans, although to a lesser extent with Option C as compared to the other alternatives.

CFIA was wary of any retirement plan that is coordinated, in terms of contributions and benefits, with the Social Security system as currently structured. Recognizing that there are political risks and uncertainties with regard to Social Security, Council felt that it would be unwise to use this as a factor in determining future benefits to retirees. Furthermore, Council was concerned by the increased risk to retirees posed by the uncertainty of inflation.
3) Proposed revisions Academic Personnel Manual (APM)

The Council on Faculty Issues & Awards reviewed the proposed revisions to the Academic Personnel Manual (APM) sections 010 and 015 in January. CFIA acknowledged the importance of protecting the rights of faculty who participate in shared governance. The university’s system of shared governance constitutes a responsibility for faculty participation – an obligation that is more than just a right or “freedom.” Accordingly, members of the faculty are ethically obligated to take action, speak up, and report a problem which it is brought to their attention. Council supports the attempt made herein to protect the faculty’s right to express opinions related to institutional policy and governance. CFIA endorses the proposed amendments to the Academic Personnel Manual defining the reaches of academic freedom.

In March CFIA also reviewed proposed technical revisions to the Academic Personnel Manual intended to correct improper references or typographical errors, or to ensure uniformity among existing policies. CFIA saw these as necessary corrections and had no objections to the changes.

4) ESCI Online Proposal

In June CFIA reviewed the multi-phase plan for implementing online course evaluations (ESCI: Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction). Council agreed with the importance of an evaluation system, and CFIA appreciated the goal of improving faculty teaching by soliciting student feedback. CFIA noted that one possible advantage of the proposed system, which falls primarily beyond the purview of the council, is the financial savings that may occur if we move to a fully online system.

Nonetheless, CFIA sought greater attention to the alleged advantages weighed against the very substantial downsides of the electronic approach, and Council expressed several concerns with the proposal with regard to the following:

- Potentially changing the nature of the evaluation process away from an “educational/informational” tool for instructors.
- The anticipated response rate of the evaluators to online distribution. Council was unconvinced that the proposed incentives would encourage students to go online and complete the evaluations.
- The new system may give more latitude than the present one to students who rarely, if ever, go to class but will submit comments on courses they have not attended.
- Soliciting student evaluations four weeks before the end of the quarter would allow for exceptionally premature evaluations.
- The possibility not only of non-attendees getting into the evaluation process in greater numbers but also of a “slap-dash” approach by students receiving simultaneous requests/reminders for review of each of their courses.
- The ability of faculty to further tailor the questions asked or pose their own questions.
In light of the concerns expressed above, Council suggested that UCSB retain the current system of course evaluations until a process that will improve on the status quo has been developed.

5) Report of the Task Force on Senate Membership

CFIA reviewed the recommendations by the Task Force on Senate Membership at its January meeting. CFIA agreed that the report was well-balanced and addressed important issues. Council endorsed the Task Force recommendations, which essentially propose maintaining the status quo. In particular, CFIA shared the unease that the automatic conferring of Senate membership to administrative titles may be of concern as many of these positions have become increasingly professionalized and removed from academics.

6) Station Q Proposal

The Council on Faculty Issues & Awards reviewed the Station Q proposal at its February meeting. Council expressed concern about whether this proposal would codify the corporatization of the university, and that companies may have undue influence in directing research and/or faculty hiring. Allowing an external corporate funder (e.g. Microsoft) to direct the development of our faculty and its research agenda is problematic. If research funds/ grants/ etc. are made available to work on Microsoft projects, why not make this a “carrot” for a department’s recruitment plan, rather than allow the Microsoft project to hire with a departmental placement as its carrot?

Furthermore, CFIA expressed concern about what precedent this would set; these concerns could become magnified were the University to significantly expand this practice.

7) Draft agreement with SUN

CFIA reviewed the draft agreement between UCSB and Sustainable University Now (SUN) at its February meeting. In general, CFIA agreed with the goals of the document to increase the transparency of the university, promote more accountability to the community, and provide for sustainable growth of the campus.

Nonetheless, CFIA raised several concerns and questions related to the following:

1. Parking and transportation concerns, particularly with regard to parking rates, parking spaces, car-sharing programs, and alternative transportation.
2. Fiscal impact of the agreement
3. Reporting requirements
4. SUN membership and representation
ACADEMIC SENATE AWARDS

Committee on Distinguished Teaching Awards

The Distinguished Teaching Awards acknowledge the efforts of up to five Senate faculty members and one non-Senate faculty who have successfully united excellence in teaching with their creative and scholarly work. The award is intended to recognize the distinguished teaching accomplishments of the faculty, which may be exhibited at any time during a faculty member’s career.

Chaired by CFIA’s Vice Chair, this committee is otherwise comprised of former recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Award:

- Nancy Gallagher, History (Chair)
- Kevin C. Almeroth, Computer Science (2007)
- David R. Seibold, Communication (2010)
- Simon Williams, Theater & Dance (2010)

The committee spent four weeks reviewing the files of the award nominees. The committee met the second week of March to make its final decisions on this year’s recipients:

- Mary Bucholtz (Linguistics)
- Phillip Conrad (Computer Science)
- George Lipsitz (Black Studies)
- Laurie Monahan (History of Art & Architecture)
- Stefanie Tcharos (Music)
- Michael Petracca (Writing Program) non-Senate recipient

The recipients were honored at the April 21st meeting of the Faculty Legislature.

Committee on Graduate Mentor Awards

This award program was initiated in 2005 by the Academic Senate Graduate Council to encourage and reward excellence in mentoring graduate students on the Santa Barbara campus. The award recognizes between one and three faculty members annually who meet the highest standards in graduate mentoring.

The Committee on Graduate Mentor Awards was chaired by Dar Roberts from the Department of Geography. Other committee members included former recipients as well as one representative from CFIA and two from the Graduate Council.

- Dar Roberts, Geography (2008 recipient) Chair
- Sarah Cline, History (2010)
The committee was given four weeks to review the files of each of the award nominees. The committee met the second week of March to make its final decisions on this year’s honorees:

- Divyakant Agrawal (Computer Science)
- Aaron Ettenberg (Psychological & Brain Sciences)

The awardees were honored at the April 21st meeting of the Faculty Legislature.

**Committee on Outstanding Teaching Assistants**

The Committee on Outstanding Teaching Assistants was chaired by Tamara Afifi. Committee members included faculty, a CFIA representative, and a graduate student former award recipient:

- Tamara Afifi, Communication (Chair)
- Jennifer E. Caselle, Marine Science Institute
- M. Patricia Fumerton, English
- Mario A. Guerrero, Graduate Student (2009 recipient)
- Nicole A. Molinari, Graduate Student (2009 recipient)

The Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards recognize the contributions of graduate students to the teaching and learning process of UC Santa Barbara. The committee was given four weeks to review the files of each of the award nominees. Each year, four recipients are honored. The committee met the second week in March to make its final decisions on this year’s recipients:

- Laura Behymer (Classics)
- Bryce Boe (Computer Science)
- Nathan French (Religious Studies)
- Jason Linn (History)

The awardees were honored at the April 21st meeting of the Faculty Legislature.

**Committee on Faculty Research Lectureship**

The Faculty Research Lecturer is the highest honor bestowed upon a faculty member by his/her peers at UCSB. The Committee on Faculty Research Lectureship is traditionally chaired by the previous year’s recipient, with the remainder of the committee comprised of other former recipients. The make-up of this year’s committee was as follows:
- Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, History (2010) Chair
- David Awschalom, Electrical & Computer Engineering and Physics (2008)
- Howard Giles, Communication (2006)

The committee was given four weeks to review the files of each of the award nominees. The award guidelines were revised in 2010 to allow for candidate nominations to be reviewed for a period of three years (during which time they could be appended or withdrawn). Because of this change, there were significantly more files for the committee to review this year. The committee met in February to make its final decisions on this year’s recipient: Linda Petzold (Computer Science and Mechanical Engineering). Professor Petzold was honored at the March 3rd meeting of the Faculty Legislature. She will present her campus lecture in fall 2011.

**Important Issues for 2011-12**

Issues that are likely to be important for the following academic year include:

- **Budget Challenges.** In light of the continuing budget crisis, the campus will be asked to find additional ways of making up for budget shortfalls. Various proposals are expected that may include scaling back services or the elimination of programs.

- **Faculty Salaries.** Salary equity issues will continue to be a concern of the council, including benchmarking to “Comparison 8” institutions. In addition, incentives / pressure for faculty to secure external funding will continue to be an issue.

- **Online instruction**

- **Parking rates**

- **Academic freedom issues**

**Council Committees**

Committee on Distinguished Teaching (N. Gallagher, Chair)
Committee on Emeriti(ae) and Retirement (D. Morgan, Chair)
Committee on Faculty Welfare & Academic Freedom (G. Binion, Chair)