

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL
Annual Report, 2005-06

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

Duties

The Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP) makes recommendations to the Chancellor, the Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor (CP/EVC), and/or the Divisional Deans on appointments, promotions, merit increases, and mid-career appraisals for Senate faculty, adjunct faculty, and professional researchers. During the past year, CAP also was called upon to make recommendations on several Merit Equity/Career Review files. In addition, from time to time, the Committee advises the Academic Senate and the administration on other policy matters related to academic personnel issues. As always, CAP makes recommendations; it does not make the final decision.

In 2005-06 CAP had eight members each quarter—one from Arts, one from Engineering, and two each from Humanities, Physical and Biological Sciences, and Social Sciences. Nine faculty members served at least one quarter on CAP during 2005-06.

As in past years, as the Committee deliberated and made recommendations on specific cases, CAP members repeatedly were struck by the extraordinary number and quality of our colleagues' many accomplishments. The overwhelming majority of personnel files that we reviewed contained evidence of fascinating scholarship and cutting edge research, records of extensive and dedicated teaching, and evidence of energetic service to campus colleagues, to diverse scholarly communities, and to many important public constituencies. The Committee's heavy workload was made lighter by the exceptional talent and remarkable energy reflected in the files we reviewed. The accomplishments of the UCSC faculty are truly extraordinary; the Committee feels privileged to have you as our colleagues.

Workload

In 2005-06, CAP continued its established practice of meeting on Thursday afternoons. The Committee met 26 times during the academic year (4, 10, and 11 meetings, in fall, winter, and spring quarters, respectively), and once in the summer. As we noted in last year's Annual Report, the CAP caseload had increased consistently over the last decade. In recent years, the Committee routinely received between 75 to nearly 100 more cases per year than was typical in the mid-1990s.

In 2005-06, the Committee received 268 cases (just one more than the year before). We made recommendations in all 268 of the cases we received. There was one case held over to the next year, but this was not a case that actually came before CAP in 2005-06. Thus, with our colleagues' help, we were able not only to recommend Ad Hoc committee slates (in cases where we decided not to serve ourselves as the Ad Hoc) but also to have those committees meet, deliberate, and send their recommendations to CAP in time for us to consider them in our own recommendations.

Appointments and Retention

CAP reviewed 57 appointment files overall, including 35 appointments to Assistant, 9 to Associate, 9 to Full Professor, 3 Research Professor/Recall Professor and one Senior Lecturer. CAP recommended appointment in all cases except two.

CAP continues to be aware of the difficulties that UCSC faces in recruitment and retention as a result of our budgetary situation and the local housing market. We have done our best not to contribute to or exacerbate these challenges. It has been our practice over the past year to grant great deference to departmental recommendations with respect to recruitment and retention, consistent with campus academic standards.

CAP's Recommendations, Administrative Decisions, and Consultation

During 2005-06 there continued to be a reasonably high rate of agreement between CAP's recommendation and the final administrative decision on personnel cases. The two concurred in 79.5% of the time (213 out of 268 files). The final administrative decision did not agree with CAP's recommendation in 55 cases.

In the Committee's opinion, our relationships with the various campus administrative units remained very good overall. Just as in the previous year, however, changes in various parts of the administration posed special challenges. For part or all of the academic year, for example, all of the five Divisional Deans were serving on an "interim" or acting basis. Nonetheless, CAP felt that for the most part administrators did a very good job of maintaining communication with us and in ensuring the consistency of the personnel process. We thank them for their efforts.

As in previous years, the CAP chair and a member or two from the Committee were invited to attend meetings with the divisional chairs and respective deans to discuss general CAP policies and approaches to personnel files and related issues. We did so on several occasions and, at least from our perspective, the meetings were useful. There also were a few occasions in which the CP/EVC discussed broader personnel-related policy issues with CAP, and a few instances in which the CP/EVC discussed individual cases (although not as often as in past years). We regard the relative infrequency of meetings between CAP and the CP/EVC as an area of potential concern. In our opinion, the modest but consistent trend toward increasing numbers of disagreements between CAP and the administration on our campus—a percentage that is higher than on other UC campuses—may result in part from the relatively low number of consultations that have occurred over the last two years in cases where there are potential disagreements.

Case Flow

In 2005-06, at the request of the CP/EVC, CAP again took the unusual step of having a summer meeting. However, unlike the year before (in which the meeting was necessitated in large part because not all necessary Ad Hoc reports were ready in time for the many cases that arrived in late May and early June), this year's summer meeting involved only one case, whose timing simply precluded it from being handled during the normal academic year. Thus, in this instance, the summer meeting was an anomaly, rather than the result of a larger structural problem or issue.

Indeed, although we experienced the usual unevenness to the distribution of cases, with many more arriving in the spring quarter, especially in June, we were able to manage the increased workload. We realize that some of the unevenness in the workload is inevitable, having to do with the normal pattern of processing personnel cases. Last year we urged departments and other decision-makers in the process to try to process cases in a timely manner, and we are grateful for the fact that they apparently heeded this call.

That said, we believe that the issue of a regular summer meeting is one that the Senate and administration might consider. CAP recognizes that it is not necessarily a desirable practice. Summer schedules have to be accommodated and CAP members have to be compensated separately for their time. On the other hand, we are informed that, at most if not all of the other UC campuses, CAPs do meet as a matter of course over the summer. It would insure that CAP's June meetings are not quite so onerous and stressful, that there would be little if any business shifted to the next year's agenda, and that we (both the Committee and the campus) would be more nimble in responding to pressing personnel matters that may come up between June and late September.

Ad Hoc Committees

In 2005-06, the Committee recommended slates to the Executive Vice Chancellor for 47 Ad Hoc committees (exactly the same as the year before). However, CAP constituted itself as the Ad Hoc committee more often—20 times this year as compared to 13 times the year before. The cases in which we constituted ourselves as the Ad Hoc included 1 appointment, 1 promotion to tenure, 6 promotions to professor, 1 promotion to Senior Lecturer with SOE, 7 Professor Step VI actions, 3 merits to Above Scale, and 1 Career Review). This practice—constituting ourselves as the Ad Hoc committee in what appear to be straightforward and unproblematic cases—is one we continue to wholeheartedly endorse. In fact, we would encourage the Senate to consider liberalizing local policy to give CAP the discretion to implement this practice in any case, in accord with the internal rules we have been following.

In those cases where CAP is permitted to constitute itself as the Ad Hoc, the Committee follows a standard procedure in deciding whether to do so: In cases where there is substantial agreement in the department on the recommended action, and where there is agreement between the department and dean as to the basic recommendation, CAP votes on whether to constitute ourselves as the Ad Hoc. If we are unanimous that a separate Ad Hoc committee does not appear to be necessary, we constitute ourselves as the Ad Hoc and discuss the merits of the case at the following meeting of the Committee (giving members an additional week to review the file from the perspective of an Ad Hoc member).

We believe that the advantages of serving as our own Ad Hoc committee in unproblematic cases are significant. Ad Hoc committees are an essential part of the personnel process. However, because of the complexities involved in selecting Ad Hoc committees, and the practical difficulties encountered in arranging meetings and finalizing reports, we are convinced that they should be used only when absolutely necessary. The Ad Hoc committee component of the personnel process typically consumes the most time and is the one part of the process that is the most difficult (if not impossible) to expedite. In addition, Ad Hoc committee service consumes the valuable time of our colleagues (who, we have reason to believe, are pressed into service more often on our campus than on many others).

During 2005-06, 113 Senate members served as members of Ad Hoc committees. Three persons served 3 times, and 16 people served twice. We are deeply indebted to those persons who were willing to serve on Ad Hoc committees, and especially to those who served more than once. This is an essential part of the personnel process and we could not function without these contributions from our colleagues.

Assessment of Teaching

In 2005-06, CAP continued to grapple with the evaluation of teaching performance. The suggestions we made in last year's Annual Report continue to be relevant:

1. In most cases, the return rate of student evaluations has been appropriate. Obviously, in cases where the return rate is low, CAP's ability to evaluate teaching performance is compromised. We hope all faculty, and all department chairs, will continue to ensure that the return rates on student evaluations remains high.
2. It is CAP's practice to have at least one member (and usually several) read every single student evaluation in a personnel file. At times—albeit rarely—there appears to be a discrepancy between the content of the student evaluations and the department's characterization of the faculty member's teaching. We believe that, in cases where significant problems have been identified in the evaluations, it is always more beneficial to candidates if departments provide a frank assessment of those problems and some discussion of what may have caused them. It is especially helpful to include a sense of whether and how the faculty member is addressing the problem(s) in question.
3. Departments that provide us with some numerical indexing of teaching performance greatly facilitate our reviews. A simple table that shows the percentage of "very good to excellent" responses on key dimensions of the student evaluations is often very helpful. CAP members continue to read the narrative portions of the individual student evaluations, but summaries of the numerical ratings are useful in their own right. Obviously, the clearer the evidence of teaching excellence, the easier it is for CAP to give it appropriate weight in our reviews.
4. If there is any evidence other than student evaluations, (e.g., from presentations at professional meetings, the department's view of the nature and quality of teaching materials such as syllabi used), such evidence should also be included in the department's letter.
5. CAP regards the distribution of teaching assignments (e.g., graduate versus undergraduate courses) to be a matter of departmental discretion. However, in cases where there is an unusual concentration of course assignments, it is helpful if the department's letter contextualizes this by providing a rationale.

Departmental Letters

CAP has no interest in requesting (and certainly not requiring) a particular form or template for personnel letters. Most departments follow standard practices and we have found their analyses of cases extremely useful and informative. However, we have a few suggestions intended to both

simplify the review process and insure that the Committee is able to efficiently process all of the important information that is contained in the files.

1. Very long letters (e.g., 15 pages) are not especially helpful. Although we recognize that departments rightly wish to be thorough, thoroughness should be balanced against excessive length. Letters—especially in routine or straightforward cases—might include a “summary statement” for each of the three areas of research, teaching, and service in a letter of approximately 5 pages. More complex cases, of course, might require somewhat longer narratives.
2. In terms of the contents of the letters themselves, it is helpful to clearly state the period under review. It is generally not necessary to evaluate each publication, especially in cases where there are many of them. Articles might be grouped into particular areas of inquiry or concentration, with evaluations made of the nature of the contributions to each. Some explanation of the nature of the work, in terms that non-specialists can understand, is always appreciated. Biobibs should contain page numbers (i.e., starting and ending pages) for articles, book chapters, monographs and the like (especially if the items themselves are not included with the file).
3. In nearly all cases, no more than six outside letters are needed to provide the necessary perspective of how a candidate’s work is viewed in the wider community of scholars and/or artists. The additional value of still more letters is relatively slight. As always, it is important to seek a balance between letters suggested by the candidate and those requested by the department, and to try to avoid excessive overlap with dissertation advisors, post-doc supervisors, collaborators, co-authors and the like.
4. When possible, explaining divided or split votes is helpful. We realize that, given the secret balloting procedures followed in most departments, this is difficult to do. However, in those case where areas of disagreement or alternative points of view have surfaced in the discussion of the case that help to explain the divided vote, it is useful for us to know what they are.

Other File-Related Issues

1. *Criteria for advancement:* CAP continues to read the APM as creating two classes of faculty advancements: (a) those where demonstrated excellence in *all three* areas research, teaching, and service is required, and (b) those in which there is *some* “substitutability” or “fungibility” among the three categories—that is, for example, if a candidate’s service record is weak, excellent research and/or teaching may compensate for that weakness.

Category (a) consists of: 1) promotion to tenure, 2) promotion to professor, 3) merit increases from Professor V to Professor VI, 4) all merit increases above Professor, Step VI, 5) promotion to Above Scale, 6) All salary increases of Further Above Scale.

Category (b) includes 1) all non-promotion merit increases for assistant professors, 2) all non-promotion merit increases for associate professors, and 3) all merit increases for professor below Step VI. This interpretation is based on our reading of the APM.

Department letters should reflect this.

[See e.g. <http://www2.ucsc.edu/ahr/policies/CAPPM/400220.htm>, H-4 (c)]

2. *Accelerations/Greater-Than-Normal*: Requests for accelerations and greater-than-normal salary increases have become more frequent on our campus. This is a development that the 2005-06 CAP regarded as entirely appropriate (even though we could not always agree with every request and recommendation). Nonetheless, in cases in which the department is requesting acceleration or a greater-than-normal increase, the department letter should explicitly justify such an action. In addition, we found that it was particularly helpful if departments included the publications from the period under review in cases in which accelerations or greater-than-normal salary increases were being requested.
3. *Personal statements*: Department chairs would do well to advise candidates to write succinct personal statements. Personal statements should clarify issues and provide a context for the faculty member's work. There is little point in such statements recapitulating what will be contained in the department's letter. In typical or routine cases, CAP believes that candidates should be able to do this in between 5-10 pages.

Merit Equity/Career Review Cases

The academic year 2005-06 was the third year of the new Merit Equity/Career Review process. CAP considered one Career Review file this year. The Committee believes that this is an important component in the UC personnel process and we gladly assume the responsibility for making Merit Equity/Career Review recommendations. Yet, the issues posed in these kinds of cases present extremely difficult judgments for us to make, especially because they often involve disputes about factual issues that are long-standing and sometimes contentious. Our expertise is in evaluating the academic merit of the files we review; we are not especially well-positioned to serve as fact-finders (for example, deciding what did, or did not, happen many years ago) and certainly are not empowered to adjudicate disputes. Thus, we typically approach these cases by asking, "Given this faculty member's career accomplishments, what rank, step, and salary seem most appropriate?" We fully acknowledge that this question does not always yield a clear-cut answer.

Memoranda for Action

Each year CAP is called upon to review and/or comment on (and sometimes to vote on approval of) various personnel-related actions and policies proposed or under consideration by the campus administration. In 2005-06, there were 23 of these "Memoranda for Action." They included:

Endowed, Presidential Chairs – 2

Bylaw 55 Augmentation – 4

Divisional CAP memberships – 2

Unit 18 Issues – 3

Miscellaneous – 3

Policies, procedures, proposals, Senate issues – 9

1. Review of UC Task Force on Faculty Diversity Meeting
2. Review of Active Services-Modified Duties: Proposed Revised Policy

3. Special Committee on Scholarly Communication (SCSC) Draft White Papers- Responding to the Challenges Facing Scholarly Communication
4. Proposed Policy Job Description, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Review and Comments
5. Formal Review of Revised Compensation for College Provosts (CAPM 306.240.C)
6. Senatwide Review: Proposed Private Funding for Salaries
7. Formal Review of Revised Compensation for Department Chairs (CAPM 314.245)
8. Job Description Review for Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Human Resources
9. Review of Final Report on Partner Employment Task Force

UCAP and General Personnel Policy Issues

As always, the Santa Cruz Chapter of CAP was represented on the University Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP). In 2005-06, especially able representation was provided by Professor Susan Gillman. UCAP considered a number of personnel policy issues. All of the major issues were considered in the context of comparative data on academic personnel practices on all the campuses that was gathered this year. The survey included items ranging from the number of Ad Hocs convened to the availability of CAPs over the summer. Two key issues emerged:

Clarification of APM Language Pertaining to Professor Step VI and Above Scale Merit Increases: In response to long standing concerns over the wording of portions of APM 220-18, UCAP continued its review of the language describing the special merit advances from Professor Step V to Step VI and from Step IX to Above Scale. In the previous year, the Santa Cruz Chapter had been instrumental in suggesting revisions that were designed to eliminate repetition and confusion. This year, UCAP responded to additional modifications in the language proposed by the Academic Council. The final version retained the basic high standards for advancement to each of these steps (for Step VI, distinguished scholarship, excellence in teaching and service; for Above Scale, sustained excellence including highest distinction in scholarship and teaching, and highly meritorious service), but simplified the wording by which those standards were expressed.

Faculty compensation: A system-wide survey of salaries and advancement gathered comparative data by campus. To summarize the key facts: UC salaries lag behind those of the "Comparison Eight" Institutions (a group of universities, including the Universities of Illinois, Michigan, Virginia, as well as Harvard, Stanford, and Yale), a measure that has been used since 1980 as part of a regular update in the adjustment of our salaries (See UCAP report 6/12/06). In response, several campuses have taken the initiative to address the problem. The efforts at UCI and UCB have been led by campus administrators. Individual campuses have compiled internal data by rank and step/department and division to assess where most serious salary gaps occur (for example, is the lag at the assistant and associate levels rather than full professor?).

Among the remaining discussion items: How to assess market forces (notoriously difficult) in producing salary variations among disciplines, and what is the viability of using multiple scales by discipline? How have different campuses elected to pay for increased salaries?

CAP recommendation: In the upcoming academic year, CAP recommends that the campus constitute a Joint Task Force of CAP and the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB), present and former members, plus, if it is deemed desirable, several, relevant administrators, to address, substantively and strategically, the compensation issue. Specific campuses have different strategies/programs--see UCAP report, 6/12/06)--and we can adopt or adapt some or all of them.

CAP's Suggestions for Further Consideration

There are several issues that the Committee would like to raise for Senate consideration. These are observations with potential action implications that the Committee has made and discussed over the past year.

We have noted above that this year's level of disagreement between CAP and the campus administration has continued a modestly but consistently increasing trend. In fact, the degree of disagreement on our campus appears to be somewhat greater than on others in the UC system. One mechanism for reducing unnecessary disagreements would be to establish a presumption that the CP/EVC (or his/her representative) will meet with CAP in cases where a substantially different recommendation is being contemplated. We would encourage the administration to consider implementing such a policy.

Because it has been the source of some confusion and concern, we think it would be useful to explain the pace at which CAP processes cases and to address the potential source of delays in case resolution. CAP policy is to review and make recommendations in cases as expeditiously as possible. This year, as in previous years, we virtually always decided every case on our agenda at the meeting the case was first brought to us. The only regular exceptions involved cases in which we voted to constitute ourselves as an Ad Hoc (wherein an additional week was provided for CAP members to review the case in the role of Ad Hoc members). In addition, in very rare instances of cases that we regarded as particularly sensitive or complex, the Committee tabled a final vote until the next meeting. Once a case has been decided, in those cases in which a CAP letter is to be written, the case file and letter are not forwarded to AHR until the next week, after all members have an opportunity to review, suggest modifications and/or approve the letter drafts. We do not believe that this process can proceed more rapidly without sacrificing the quality of the reviews in which CAP engages. To the extent that there are continuing concerns about the timeliness of decisions, we believe that additional data are needed to identify the actual sources of delay in the processing of personnel cases.

During 2005-06, as in past years, CAP proceeded mindful of the broad and legitimate concerns on campus with respect to faculty salaries, real and perceived inter- and intra-departmental inequities, and the like. With respect to equity, CAP members consider one of their primary functions to be ensuring equity among individuals, departments, and divisions by applying, as best we can, a campuswide and UC systemwide standard of merit and excellence to the cases we review. In addition, we have been receptive to requests and recommendations for accelerations and greater-than-normal salary increases (which we of course must evaluate within the larger framework of the APM). In addition, we have tried to contribute to the change in campus culture

and practice that now recognizes the merit advancement from Professor Step V to VI as less of a “barrier” and more of the threshold to the higher full professor steps. However, the existence of an overall pattern of depressed faculty salaries is not one that is easily addressed through a process of decision making that proceeds, as ours does, on a case-by-case basis. Indeed, because

of the nature of the reviews in which we engage, we have become acutely aware of the importance of addressing the issue of faculty salaries on a more systemic basis. We believe that it would be useful for the campus to consider establishing a committee to address this pressing issue in a broad and fundamental way. Other UC campuses have begun to do the same, and some have even begun to implement potential solutions to various interrelated salary issues. We believe that our campus should take steps to do the same.

Acknowledgment

None of CAP’s work would be possible without the extraordinary contributions of the exceptionally competent staff of the Committee and of Academic Human Resources. We especially thank Pamela Edwards for her continuing good cheer and stability (even in times of crisis), and for her unfailingly swift responsiveness to any and all requests for information and assistance. We are also deeply indebted to Barbara Brogan, Breck Caloss, Leslie Clark, Elizabeth Dane, Nancy Degnan Jonni Dungan, Susan Fellows, Nancy Furber, Pamela Peterson, Monica Torres and Linda Tursi. Their support, wisdom, and detailed knowledge of the intricacies of the personnel process helped to ensure its integrity and certainly made our lives much easier.

Finally, we once again thank all of our colleagues who have contributed to the personnel process. The process works as well as it does only because of your hard work.

Respectfully submitted,

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