

COMMITTEE ON EMERITI RELATIONS
Annual Report 2008-2009

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

Committee on Emeriti Relations (CER) met throughout the year and was well aware of the budgetary crises looming on the horizon. The issues CER took up this year concerned: new fees for emeriti, library mailing policy changes, and divisional support for “actively engaged faculty”. We did so in the hope that emeriti would feel encouraged to increase their service to the campus.

Unfortunately this has been a frustrating year for CER and its efforts. No doubt in large measure due to the budgetary crises CER’s efforts either received a sluggish response (Council of Deans) in developing a “still actively engaged” Emeriti policy for IT and computer support when they are “actively engaged” in serving the campus and a negative response from the central Administration regarding the pending issue (academic year 08-09) on OPERS Wellness card fees for emeriti and retired staff.

New Fees for Emeriti

During the summer of 2008 the outgoing and incoming chairs of CER met with the Chancellor seeking a reconsideration of newly imposed OPERS Wellness card fees. Little or no consultation with Senate committees had taken place and the Chancellor agreed to fund the modest number of emeriti OPERS users (fewer than 20 faculty) until December. I am happy to report that emeriti continued to have the promised perk throughout the academic year 2008-2009 and we thank the Chancellor for that. Senate consultation on the OPERS issue had not occurred with CER during Academic year 2007-2008. The Chancellor agreed to review the matter during academic year 2008-2009 and during this past year consult with relevant Senate committees. At the same time figures were generated to indicate that the sums involved are very small since fewer than 20 emeriti held OPERS Wellness cards.

It was with sadness that we received the letter sent by the Chancellor to the Chair of the Academic Senate in June 2009 indicating that his review had been completed and that free wellness cards would not be issued for the coming academic year. The Chancellor indicated that a review by the administration staff found no promise for the permanence of this perk. It was and is CER’s view that Human Resources indicated Wellness Cards as a perk upon retiring and that indeed posters and some letters to VERIP faculty also indicated it. CER noted that the administration itself changed the language in its letters to new retirees in the past couple of years indicating safeguard language that this perk would be reviewed annually. Earlier generations of emeriti received no such language. The administration rightly pointed to budgetary issues. Still since few actually use wellness cards it was our view that the budgetary impact is minimal and if the administration at least grandfathered in those faculty who retired before the “guarded language” was added it would have procured the sort of good will and donations to OPERS which would have far exceeded the small loss in revenue. CER was sad to learn as per the Chancellor’s June 2009 letter that he terminated the OPERS Wellness card benefit for even older generations of emeriti.

Library Mailing Policy Changes

A new policy was announced by the Library ending the mailing of books directly to faculty mailstops. The measure was justified as a needed cost cutting measure. Again little prior Senate consultation appeared to have taken place. While many faculty were and are unhappy with this policy the new policy has a particularly negative impact on emeriti. Both age and at times disabilities make it difficult for some emeriti to access the library due to the location of parking lots. Several emeriti expressed concern that they are not able to walk much less carry heavy book loads and that the library had reduced disability parking spaces and there are no ten minute parking spaces. While the overall situation continues to be a difficult one for emeriti I am happy to report that Librarian Virginia Steel was very responsive to our concerns and worked with campus officials to provide at least some additional handicapped spaces which helps some but not all emeriti. Lack of easy access to the Library is time consuming for regular faculty but constitutes a special burden on emeriti. An ideal solution does not as yet exist and consultation between senate committees and campus administration is needed.

“Still Actively Engaged Faculty”¹

Any number of emeriti faculty continue to teach and do research and campus service. CER asked the Deans for an informal policy in all divisions that would develop a category of emeriti jointly with their departments to identify those faculty who are “still actively engaged” and make sure that such faculty receive the IT and computer support which allows them to work. The pattern of getting timely IT and computer support has up to now been very uneven and largely up to each Dean. Even within the same Division a new Dean has been known to precipitously order that emeriti should not get IT support. We have made the argument for support for still actively engaged faculty because we believe it is in the best interest of the campus to encourage rather than discourage still active teachers, researchers and those serving the campus actively in various capacities. Treating emeriti reasonably is cost effective since their research and service is mostly done without compensation. Emeriti teaching while compensated, benefits the campus disproportionately to cost. Enjoying the good will of emeriti also has the prospect of increasing emeriti donations to this campus. In short the work of emeriti and the acclaim that some still bring to the campus should not be undervalued. It seems short sighted to us that some emeriti scholars have had to plead for IT support when a computer crashes or data is at risk or that someone teaching at a modest stipend should be told “buy your own computer” with no campus IT assistance. Most emeriti either are no longer active or will be active for a limited number of years. Giving appropriate IT and computer support to still actively engaged emeriti strikes us as a no brainer.

We have worked diligently all year to bring forth a response from the Deans. Again, it was disappointing to receive an email from the outgoing Chair of the Council of Deans in June indicating that they had not discussed the issue fully and would not this academic year. Even more disappointing was his assertion that CER had not spelled out the how and why a “still actively engaged” category was needed and what it would entail and that in any event we already have a category of “On Recall”.

¹ See Appendix A: Policy on “Still Actively Engaged Faculty”

Our definition of “Still Actively Engaged Faculty:” included those:

- who do considerable free labor without being on Re-call- such as supervise independent studies, graduate students, sit on Senate Committees, serve on Ad hocs etc.;
- who serve on College committees, give lectures, set up conferences etc.;
- who still teach, prepare course materials and courses outside the 10 weeks when they are literally teaching and considered on Recall.

So far, at least, our request seems not to have made sense to the Deans. The Deans email made the point that these matters are best handled on a Divisional basis. This argument has merit but our proposal was merely to set up some umbrella norms and we had suggested that Deans and Department Chair determine who fits the still “actively engaged” category, determine reasonable needs and when a person qualifies. The level of support process would be reviewed as determined by the department and Dean.

CER will continue to work on the above issue. However we wish our colleagues to know that the emeriti do not seek special consideration in times of hardship. Rather CER is trying to sustain and develop the conditions under which emeriti are willing to help the University with teaching, research and service activities in larger numbers than during better times when the campus has less need for the augmentation of activities by emeriti.

CER also received the appointees for the 2009-10 Dickson Professorships. Please join us in congratulating: Ralph Abraham, Audrey Stanley and David Cope. The professors will be teaching courses starting in fall quarter.

The Chair of CER maintained contact with the officers of the UCSC Emeriti Group.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON EMERITI RELATIONS

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Appendix A: “Still Actively Engaged Faculty” Divisional Support Policy

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“Still Actively Engaged Faculty” Divisional Support Policy

By the
Committee on Emeriti Relations

Introduction:

This document proposes a policy to deal with one of the concerns expressed by emeriti faculty on the Santa Cruz campus through a survey conducted by the Committee on Emeriti Relations in December 2007. Although most emeriti are generally satisfied with their relationship to the campus, several emeriti still active in teaching, research, or service noted that they have not received support for their computer and teaching needs or have been warned that they may not receive such support in the future.

From the administrative point of view, the problem is one of financial resources and priorities. Administrators would like to have (1) a way to know which faculty are still engaged with the university and to (2) some guidelines as to what kind of administrative support the emeriti would like to receive.

Proposal:

We propose that all emeriti who can be defined as “still actively engaged” by any one of the following three criteria should be eligible for administrative support as defined by the department chair and dean.

First, all those who have the title “Professor Recalled,” whether paid or unpaid, should be considered as active emeriti because they are teaching classes, sponsoring independent studies, or serving on senior thesis or doctoral committees.

Second, all those who have the title “Research Professor” should be considered as active emeriti because they have already provided evidence of their continuing scholarly involvement to their departments and the Committee on Academic Personnel through (1) publishing journal articles, monographs, or books; (2) serving on panels at scholarly meetings; (3) applying for research grants from off-campus sources; or (4) receiving research support from on-campus sources, such as the Committee on Research.

Nature of the Support:

Our proposal is a simple and limited one that is consistent with the policies that pertain for regular faculty, but does not suggest that emeriti receive quite the same level of support as regular faculty:

- (1) Active emeriti should receive servicing for the computer the university provided them before they were retired. Because the university does not service regular faculty's personally owned computers, emeriti would not receive such service either;
- (2) If the computer used by an active emeriti becomes dysfunctional or out of date, emeriti should be eligible to receive a used replacement computer—not a new one, as is the case with regular faculty.
- (3) The needs of active emeriti should be included in the licensing of various software applications provided to regular faculty in the retiree's academic division.
- (4) Active emeriti should be eligible to be on the waiting list for a laptop loaner for teaching or research needs if their academic division provides laptop loaners to regular faculty.

Conclusion

Many emeriti continue to write works of scholarship or produce artistic work that brings recognition to the campus. Others are teaching courses or working with graduate students. Still others provide service to the campus as consultants or volunteers for campus organizations. The Committee on Emeriti Relations urge that these contributions be recognized by providing administrative support—as defined by each Division—for active emeriti—a status that has been defined in this document.