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Members of the UC Davis Academic Senate,

We write to offer some context for questions that have arisen about some of our recent and current faculty searches and in particular the use of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statements in those searches.

The State of California, the Regents of the University of California, the UC Academic Senate, and the Office of the President have all, in various ways, emphasized the paramount importance of considering diversity, equity, and inclusion for the good functioning of the university, and specifically in the hiring and evaluation of faculty. With funds provided by the state in its appropriation for the university, and for this express purpose, the Office of the President created the UC Advancing Faculty Diversity Program and solicited proposals from the campuses. UC Davis is honored to be the recipient of *four* grants totaling more than \$1.5 million in this program. One grant was completed in 2016-2017, another in 2018-2019, and two are currently underway.

With UCOP's submission of its "[Final Report on the 2018-19 Use of One-time Funds to Support Best Practices in Equal Employment Opportunity in Faculty Employment](#)" to the Legislature last month, we welcome the opportunity to elucidate last year's grant, "[The UC Davis Pilot Study in Centrally Co-Led Open Searches to Prioritize Academic and Educational Excellence](#)," and share with you important aspects of its origins, procedures, and outcomes.

The genesis of this grant, as well as the grants awarded to other UC campuses, originates in the words of [UC Academic Personnel Manual \(APM\) 210-1\(d\) - Criteria for Appointment, Promotion, and Appraisal](#):

The University of California is committed to excellence and equity in every facet of its mission. Contributions in all areas of faculty achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity should be given due recognition in the academic personnel process, and they should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements. These contributions to diversity and equal opportunity can take a variety of forms including efforts to advance equitable access to education, public service that addresses the needs of California's diverse population, or research in a scholar's area of expertise that highlights inequalities. Mentoring and advising of students and faculty members, particularly from underrepresented and underserved populations, should be given due recognition in the teaching or service categories of the academic personnel process.

An approach previously established at UC Davis to having such contributions recognized in faculty advancement is through providing statements of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a component of the merit or promotion dossier.

Our grant built upon that important principle: now that these contributions are explicitly valued as integral components of research/scholarship, teaching, and service during the academic reviews of our current faculty, it follows that these are also precisely the attributes that we should seek in our prospective faculty. When applicants for faculty positions provide us with their statements, they afford

us a window into how their past experiences, actions, and aspirations may translate into skills that will contribute to their future academic success and impact at UC Davis. Since 2016, these statements have been required of all applicants for ladder rank faculty positions at UC Davis, as they currently are at seven of the other UC campuses. Moreover, in response to [Recommendations for The Use of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Statements for Academic Positions at the University of California](#) submitted in February 2019 by the University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity and the Systemwide Equal Employment/Affirmative Action Administrators Group, the [Chair of the UC Academic Council](#) wrote:

The Academic Council has unanimously endorsed the attached set of recommendations for the use of Statements on Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for UC academic positions. The recommendations were authored jointly by the University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity, and the Systemwide Equal Employment/Affirmative Action Administrators Group.

The six recommendations address guidelines for the content and use of DEI statements. They are intended to promote clarity and consistency in the use of statements across campuses, and to raise awareness of and regularize the implementation of existing APM language. In doing so, they support the core UC values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and advance the goal of further diversifying the professoriate.

Recommendation #1 was to require all faculty applicants at the University of California to submit a DEI statement.

While the APM provides the policy rationale for using these statements, learning to use them most effectively in both the advancement and appointment processes is very much a work in progress. Our 2018-2019 grant allowed recruitment committees for eight new, open-discipline searches to explore ways of using the statements by reading them prior to any other components of the application, scoring them using a rubric of their choice, and deciding which applicants to consider further using the entirety of the application. Exercising their discretion, faculty on some committees elected to move most applicants forward, while others (especially from the large colleges) preferred to continue with less than 50% of the original applicant pool. Providing recruitment committees such latitude is entirely consistent with our current practices in evaluating applications.

It is important to recognize that the rubrics the recruitment committees chose to adopt were intentionally aligned with the values cited in APM 210-1(d) above. Members never sought applicants with a single, specific perspective, nor was there any ideological “litmus test” implied in the rubrics used. Such latitude and flexibility was intentional, since the ways that faculty can positively engage and impact students, particularly those from communities that have been historically excluded from opportunities that others have enjoyed, are myriad, defy enumeration, and will necessarily vary across the vast disciplinary landscape of our university.

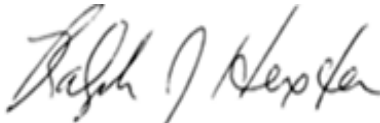
UC Davis was fortunate to again competitively receive a two-year (2019-2021), \$500,000 grant to continue its exploration into practices leading to the hiring of faculty capable to making outstanding contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The intended outcome, as before, will be to hire gifted faculty researchers and scholars who also have an accomplished track record (calibrated to their career stage) of teaching, research, or service activities addressing the needs of female and/or historically underrepresented students or communities. More information about this new grant can be found [here](#). In a change from last year, recruitment committees constituted by participating deans will initially be examining two anonymized documents: 1) Statements of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion; 2) either the Statement on Research or the Statement on Teaching. As in the previous grant, recruitment committees will evaluate and score the two statements, and they will again have full discretion to determine which applicants will move forward for further evaluation with the complete dossiers. Regular department procedures for establishing shortlists and interviewing candidates will remain in effect. In this first year, deans from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the School of Medicine elected to allow some of their searches to be included. Other colleges and schools are not participating in the first year, but may elect to join in the second year.

So far, our results have been very rewarding: The candidates who we hired last year from our grant all care deeply about issues affecting the education of our students. Some showed outstanding awareness and provided their visions for how they want to contribute, while others further along in their careers had personal experiences they recounted to us. It was impressive how even graduate students and postdoctoral scholars found meaningful ways to reach out to underserved and underrepresented individuals not because they were expected to, but because they wanted to. With career stage-appropriate impressive and laudable records of research, scholarship, and teaching, they exhibit exactly the characteristics of outstanding faculty at a R1 Doctoral University that we want in opening up educational opportunities to all our students.

We encourage you to learn more about our grants by visiting our dedicated Academic Affairs [website](#). As our campus learns more about the options available to recruitment committees in the use of statements and other features of our hiring practices, we look forward to continuing to engage in a discourse with our university's academic community.

With best wishes,



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