Davis Division Academic Senate

Request for Consultation Responses

REVISED: Academic Personnel Streamlining Implementation Workgroup Report

February 14, 2014

January 14, 2014 - A Revised Report with an memo explaining changes was received and distributed to committees. The previous version of the report has been replaced by the new version. In response to the STAPP (Simplifying the Academic Personnel Process) Special Committee Report and the Davis Division's recommendation for next steps, Vice Provost Stanton appointed the UC Davis Academic Personnel Streamlining Implementation Workgroup. The Workgroup's report, as well as the Division's recommendation action and a link to the full STAPP report are provided for feedback.

Affirmative Action & Diversity

February 5, 2014 1:55 PM

The Affirmative Action & Diversity Committee reviewed the Revised Academic Personnel Streamlining Implementation Workgroup Report and has the following response:

It seems like the proposed step-plus system will likely be beneficial from an equity point of view, since under the current system, people who go out of their way to schedule around one-year accelerations move up the ladder substantially faster than those who do not.

As far FPC changes, the impact is less clear. There may be the potential that department-level discrimination would be harder to catch without systematic higher review, but this is speculative.

CAP Oversight Committee

February 21, 2014 9:48 AM

Response continued on next page.

Academic Personnel Streamlining Workgroup Report

The Committee on Academic Personnel has reviewed the revised recommendations of the Academic Personnel Streamlining Implementation Workgroup (APSIW) and provides the following comments.

The APSIW recommended the immediate implementation of the Step Plus system for AY 2014-2015. They also suggested three methods to facilitate implementation: (i) the use of a substantial educational effort to begin during winter quarter 2014, led by personnel in Academic Affairs, to orient faculty and staff to this new system; (ii) a staff-led effort in the same period to rewrite personnel documents (e.g., Chair's Handbook, policies and procedures) to conform to the new protocols; and (iii) that the APSIW be followed by the formation of a standing, trouble-shooting committee, advisory to the Vice Provost-Academic Affairs and charged with ongoing oversight of implementing the Step Plus system, with annual reports to CAP, through at least the first two rounds of its use (AY2015/16, 2016/17).

CAP agrees with the revised APSIW recommendations for immediate implementation of the Step Plus system. In discussing the APSIW recommendations, CAP member urged consideration of several issues in evaluating and monitoring the effects of implementing the Step Plus system.

1. The review and recommendations of the APSIW were not clear with respect to the right of faculty to appeal in the Step Plus system. Currently, faculty have the right to request acceleration and to appeal if denied. Faculty may desire to maintain their right to appeal in the merit and promotion process. In implementing the Step Plus system, it may be useful to anticipate a faculty challenge without the clear delineation of how the Step Plus plan maintains the faculty right to appeal, or presents clear advantages or alternative that preclude the faculty's need and desire for an explicit appeal process in the merit and promotion process.

2. The limit of two successive .5 step merit advances was not favored by a minority of members.

3. The demise of the right to request acceleration may have an undue impact on faculty nearing retirement who could "time out" before the opportunity for a warranted merit advance arises.

4. The effect of the Step Plus system on the current faculty right to request a career equity review could benefit from more explicit explanation. Although it would be a separate dossier preparation, it was not clear that it needed to be limited to every six years.

5. The Step Plus system creates many more options for departmental faculty voting on merits and promotions. For example, faculty may vote on a 1-step, 1.5-step or 2-step advance in a single faculty evaluation. Would this involve separate votes on all three options, or the modal vote across all options, or some other alternative? Schools and departments will ultimately choose their own means with respect to this issue. Nevertheless, consideration of these options and the development of illustrative guidelines for faculty voting may be expected to contribute to a smoother implementation of the Step Plus system.

6. CAP agrees with the APSIW that a careful, empirical study of the impact of the Step Plus system on rate of advancement and salary increases associated with advancement (i.e. the temporary supplement plan) be conducted during the first two years of implementation. CAP recommends that a report of the results of this study to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate would contribute to an optimally informed process of implementation of the Step Plus system.

Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (AGRICULTURE)

January 21, 2014 6:10 PM

Response continued on next page.

Committee members discussed the proposal for a streamlined academic merit/promotion review process, currently posted on the Academic Senate Request for Consultation website. Two questions arose: a) if there is going to be a change in the APM for professors, has there been consideration with ANR to track similar changes for the Specialists in CE? and b) If the JPC will have a reduced administrative role, similarly, would the APC have a reduced role?

Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (ENGINEERING)

February 10, 2014 10:40 AM

Response continued on next page.

Date: January 31, 2014

From: College of Engineering Faculty Executive Committee
Re: Academic Personnel Streamlining Implementation Workgroup Report

The comments address the revised report dated January 9, 2014 which includes several changes with respect to the original report issued in December 2013.

One aspect of the proposed system that seems to make the proposed system more complex than needed is that faculty members will need to request the consideration of specific fractional step advancements (1.5 or 0.5) whereas the original streamlining concept was that any candidate requesting a 1 step advancement would automatically be considered for 1.5 and 0.5 steps, and that any one of the three outcomes (1.5, 1 or 0.5) would be viewed as "normal." The concern that Deans might use the 0.5 step advancement as a punitive action is certainly warranted, but since FPCs will remain in place, if a Dean feels the advancement proposed by a Department is excessive, it might be possible to route the case through FPC for advice prior to final disposition by the Dean (pending of course a possible appeal). Otherwise it is very hard to see why a faculty member would request consideration of a 0.5 step advancement, with a knowledge that if it is approved, the faculty member would have to wait an entire review cycle, whereas after denial of a whole step advancement, the faculty member could resubmit his/her case the following year.

All these questions make clear that potential pitfalls of the new system need to be examined carefully before commiting to an implementation timeline. It would also be useful if the conversion process from the current to the new advancement system could be outlined. Presumably, the date of the last approved advancement will serve as reference for determining the time of the next review of each faculty member.

Our commiteee supports the view expressed by the Academic Senate that Step VI letters should not be eliminated, since it appears difficult to establish international recognition without external letters, and since the need for external letters is in fact an important consideration in the decision to seek advancement to Step VI.

Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (LS: SOC SCI)

February 7, 2014 10:31 AM

This was discussed by the L&S Executive Committee on Monday, February 3, 2014, and committee members very strongly endorsed the goal of streamlining the faculty evaluation process, and of getting the new procedures into place quickly rather than discussing them for several more years. The younger members of the committee stressed that it will be very important to explain to all faculty members how the new procedures work, because they are already frustrated by the ambiguities and time-wasting steps in the old process. --Phil Shaver, Chair

Faculty Welfare

January 26, 2014 7:54 PM

The Faculty Welfare Committee agreed that aspects of the proposed personnel review system were very beneficial and more efficient, in particular the introduction of the fixed review period in conjunction with the automatic evaluation of additional steps and the elimination of extramural letters for advancement to Professor Step 6. As a compromise, the majority of the Faculty Welfare Committee also supported making outside letters for promotion to Professor Step 6 optional so that departments can weigh the time-cost and burden to letter-writers versus fair and accurate evaluation of faculty records.

However, the FWC had serious concerns about this report. Specifically, it does not address the key problem, that is the erosion of the salary scales (especially with increased UCRP contributions). Currently, faculty have a strong incentive to accelerate, generating excess workload at every stage of personnel review. The proposed procedures try to address this particular problem with little regard to the underlying cause and the possible consequences on faculty advancement.

The specific concerns/questions of the committee are :

(1) The proposed system gives too much power to the Dean or Associate Dean, with no consultation of the Faculty Personnel Committees (except post factum). The FWC opposes any change that effectively does away with peer review in the vast majority of actions.

(2) Faculty with weaker records can end up with 0.5 step and remain there for 3 years. Over time, the new system might result in a 2-tier faculty: the teaching faculty who get 0.5 steps every 3 years, and the research faculty who get 1+ steps. This outcome would radically change the nature of UC faculty. The FWC notes that UCB's system does not have the 0.5 step (as they want to maintain a research faculty), and they have the cash flow to remove the incentive to accelerate. The Workgroup does not seem to have consulted with UCSC senate to see how effectively the system works on their campus.

(3) There is question about the need for the lower advancement 0.5 step. Specifically, the FWC would like to see statistics over the past few years on the percentage of faculty (1) who postpone a normal merit review or (2) who are denied a merit, in order to justify the utility and desirability of a lower step option.

Graduate Council

December 13, 2013 9:02 AM

No response at this time.