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April 27, 2023

To: Elizabeth H. Simmons, Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
Nancy Postero, Chair, Academic Senate, Professor, Department of Anthropology
John Hildebrand, Vice Chair, Professor, SIO Department

From: The Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the Wake of COVID
Robert E. Continetti, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, co-Chair
Susan Narucki, Professor, Department of Music, co-Chair

RE: April 25, 2023 Report of the Senate Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the Wake of COVID (SAWAA)

The Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the Wake of COVID (SAWAA) respectfully submits the enclosed report of its recent discussions and conclusions related to the charge of the SAWAA committee, namely to assess the impact of the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic on the research, teaching and service missions of UC San Diego Faculty since the pandemic began in 2020. SAWAA's activities represent two years of discussion, recommendations, implementation of recommendations made by the committee, and changes in the academic landscape since the onset of COVID. The workgroup believes that this latest set of recommendations included in this report will serve both to provide immediate and continuing support to faculty, as well as to provide suggestions to future committees that may be tasked with similar work as it relates not only to COVID, but to other systemic challenges impacting faculty. We ask that you consider implementing our recommendations and are pleased to have had the opportunity to propose actions in support to campus faculty during this challenging period.

Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the Wake of COVID-19

April 28, 2023

Workgroup Membership:

Faculty Representatives

Co-Chair, Susan Narucki, Professor, Music
Daniel Arovas, Professor, Physics
Amy Cimini, Assistant Professor, Music
Shelley Halpain, Professor, Neurobiology
Matthew Herbst, Teaching Professor, ERC
Bonnie Kaiser, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Administration:

Co-Chair, Robert Continetti, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Karen Christman, Associate Dean, Faculty Affairs and Welfare, Jacobs School of Engineering
Maripat Corr, Associate Dean, Health Sciences
Victor Ferreira, Associate Vice Chancellor, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion¹
Sarah Gille, Chair and Deputy Director for Education, Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Miroslav Krstic, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor, Research Affairs
Cindy Palmer, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Personnel
Kit Pogliano, Dean, School of Biological Sciences²

¹Replaced Frances Contreras, Associate Vice Chancellor, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

²Replaced Peter Cowhey, Dean, School of Global Policy and Strategy

Executive Summary

The Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the wake of COVID-19 (SAWAA) was formed in order to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on faculty advancement. Convened in April 2021, the committee's initial discussions were wide-ranging, with representation from faculty from a broad array of disciplines and administrators in leadership roles throughout campus. Our initial set of recommendations were based on a series of best practices that developed within higher education in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as regards academic advancement, as well as a recognition of the needs of particular to our campus. Those nine recommendations are summarized in this report; we are pleased that the recommendations were broadly adopted and put into practice.

However, as the COVID 19 pandemic has waned, it is clear that the landscape that we find ourselves in is very different than pre-pandemic times. The SAWAA Committee reconvened in AY 2022-23 in order to revisit the recommendations that we had put forth, assessing their efficacy and the merit of their continuation. In addition, we wished to examine whether faculty had recovered their normative trajectories of academic advancement. Over the course of several months, we assessed both subjects from multiple angles, and are pleased to present these findings and recommendations to you. As part of our deliberations we proposed a COVID Career Support Program (CCSP) to provide teaching relief to ladder rank faculty and either teaching relief or research support to Teaching Professors. This program was very successful, and in addition to proposing further study of these issues by future Senate-Administration workgroups, we propose here an extension of the CCSP.

Report of the Workgroup

On June 11, 2021 the Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the wake of COVID-19 (SAWAA) issued a report outlining a set of 9 recommendations for reducing the impact of COVID-19 on disrupting faculty advancement. These recommendations were adopted and put into practice. They included:

1. Assessing faculty achievement relative to opportunity.
2. Encouraging Departments to provide departmental COVID-19 impact statements describing the unique impacts of the pandemic based on their discipline.
3. The addition of an optional Faculty COVID-19 impact and adaptability statement in academic review files.
4. Allowing flexibility to the October 15 file cut-off date for academic review files.
5. Extending opportunity for clock extensions for appointees hired 7/1/2020 - 6/30/2021.
6. Revision to solicitation letters to external referees to include language around the pandemic.
7. Streamlining internal processes for normal merits.
8. Offering the potential for one-time ½ step offset for advancement.;
9. Resources and programs that enable recovery of research programs/trajectories for eligible faculty.

The committee reconvened on October 27, 2022 and discussed the need to gather data regarding trends in academic advancement in order to assess whether additional efforts needed to be made to mitigate the impacts of COVID. Then, on December 9, 2022 the committee came back together to discuss the data collected. At that meeting, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Simmons asked the committee to consider the creation of a program that would focus on providing pre-tenure and pre-security of employment faculty the opportunity to enhance their research and/or pedagogical portfolio. The committee recommended the COVID Career Support Program (CCSP). The program was approved in January 2023. Supported by \$1,000,000 in funding from the Chancellor and EVCAA, this program provided either a one-time \$9,000 funding source in support of pedagogical activities for pre-security of employment teaching faculty, or course relief which could be used by either pre-tenured ladder rank or pre-security teaching faculty who met eligibility requirements. The program funds were exhausted by mid-February 2023.

On January 19, 2023, the SAWAA committee met again to review aggregated academic advancement data sorted by rank, discipline, gender, ethnicity and school. The data was evaluated with the goal of potentially identifying trends that would reveal disparate negative

impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by these factors. Although the assembled data was rich in detail, the committee was not able to draw conclusions; the committee determined that more data would need to be gathered over the course of several years in order to provide a more complete picture of how academic advancement in the post-COVID environment compared with established patterns of normative academic advancement. Therefore, the committee did not make additional mitigating recommendations.

On April 20, 2023, the committee again reconvened to evaluate the CCSP program and to determine whether this program could and should continue. During the discussion, the committee expressed concerns about a wide range of issues related to academic advancement. Some were directly related to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic; some related to implementation of administrative and fiscal systems, some related to changes that have occurred due to other factors. All, in some way, have impact on faculty success and academic advancement. These included:

- Challenges related to ESR (Enterprise Systems Renewal). In particular, the transition to Oracle created a lack of access to appropriate information related to funding support. The lack of access to information, in some instances, led to underproductivity as a result of underspending, or lack of funds to continue to support activities as a result of overspending.
- Challenges related to ESR also contributed to an increase in staff attrition in the area of fund management. A downstream impact of this situation is a lack of well-trained staff handling faculty funds. The committee is concerned about the increased burden this is placing on faculty and the impact it has had, and will continue to have, on faculty success and overall climate.
- Impacts related to collective bargaining. A number of issues were discussed related to how the recent bargaining agreements have impacted faculty, including rebudgeting of current funds, decreased ability to support lab personnel and campus climate in general.
- Staff turn-over related to COVID. The campus has seen an increase in staff turn-over, more generally speaking, as individuals leave to take positions that allow remote work, or provide more competitive compensation packages. The staff turn-over and attrition has led to a loss of institutional knowledge.
- Lack of a complete picture of the disparate impacts of COVID. As stated above, we cannot articulate with specificity in the present moment whether or not faculty as a whole have fully recovered from the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic. What is clear is that while faculty in some disciplines may have been relatively unharmed, and even flourished, faculty in other disciplines have been adversely affected. As one member pointed out, some faculty in the humanities and social sciences who disseminate their research through publications may have initially appeared to have been unaffected by

the pandemic; but this is due to the long lag time between submission and publication. The committee also discussed instances of faculty members who changed research focus during COVID and may be restarting their career. These types of situations may, for years to come, cause significant challenges and change the trajectory of a faculty member's career.

As previously stated, based on the data gathered, the committee was not able to assess trends related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A more complete assessment would necessitate compiling and assessing data from a much longer timeline; and correlating broader, discipline specific challenges and trends with the trajectory of academic advancement of faculty and academic units at UC San Diego. It would also need to be correlated with faculty attrition, which, particularly in the near term, should be monitored, reviewed and assessed.

In short, the committee believes that it is appropriate and necessary to provide support for those that may still be impacted, particularly through the continuation of recommendations and programs that have been implemented and have been judged to be successful.

Committee recommendations

1. Preserve the concept of achievement relative to opportunity as an evaluative concept for circumstances other than COVID-19. The recent academic labor actions provide an example whereby faculty opportunities at potentially critical junctures in their academic careers are impacted by conditions outside their control. It is therefore important to have a method for making merit-based assessments that take into account the accomplishments of the individual despite reduced opportunities for achievement. Related to this, faculty are encouraged to make use of the Career Equity Review process to ensure that the totality of their career, including the circumstance of it that relate to COVID, are being considered as the advance. Alternatively, or in addition to, faculty may also be considered for acceleration by recalibration at the time of a normal career review.

2. Continuation of the Flexibility to the October 15 file cut off.

SAWAA recommends that faculty continue to be allowed an extension to the file cut-off date for certain career review actions (tenure or security of employment) by allowing CAP or the final decision maker to request an update to the file. The update may be solicited by CAP or the final authority (VC/Dean/Dean equivalent, EVC or the Chancellor) in lieu of a preliminary negative decision. If solicited, candidates will be allowed a one-time file update through April 30. Acceptable updates for these cases include inclusion of significant service commitments, additional teaching evaluations, updates to grant awards and publications, and previously solicited extramural letters that arrived late.

3. Continuation of the COVID Career Support Program, but with modifications.

On January 11, 2023, the COVID Career Support Program (CCSP) was announced to UC San Diego faculty. The program provides teaching reduction for qualified pre-tenured ladder rank faculty; and teaching relief, or an equivalent \$9,000 fund source for eligible pre-security of employment teaching faculty. The program was funded by a \$1,000,000 fund source from the EVCAA and Chancellor. Within hours of announcing the program, there were 21 requests submitted. A week and a half later, there were more requests in the queue than could be funded. Despite this, the request form was allowed to remain open until Academic Personnel Services could review the submitted requests, determine program eligibility, and conclude that no further requests could be funded. On February 14, 2023, the form was closed to new submissions.

To date, 85 CCSP approvals have been issued, 2 have been withdrawn in order to participate in GCCP (General Campus Compensation Program), and 1 is pending a final decision. There remain ~40 applications that were started before the application was closed to new submissions.

The distribution of the utilization of these awards by quarter is by follows:

<i>Quarter of Use</i>	Number approved
<i>SP 23</i>	5
<i>AY 23-24</i>	10
<i>FA 23</i>	20
<i>WI 24</i>	23
<i>SP 24</i>	13
<i>AY 24-25</i>	3
<i>FA 24</i>	5
<i>WI 25</i>	3
<i>SP 25</i>	1
Total:	83

Since closing form submissions, many faculty have asked to be considered for the program and/or have submitted exception requests. All have been turned down due to lack of funding.

Many of the justifications for the request for 'late' funding were related to situations outside of faculty control. For example:

- The faculty submission of the form was timely, but the department chair or dean did not route it for approval. In some cases, the dean or chair was not aware that the form was in their queue;
- Database errors prevented some applications from moving forward;
- Faculty inexperienced with using Quali forms resulted in some instances of duplicate applications, thereby confusing approvers and causing delay;

Given the robust demand and the desire to help as many assistant level faculty as possible achieve tenure, we wish to pursue solutions to keep this program funded.

Proposal

The committee respectfully requests additional funding in the amount of \$500,000 to extend the program for a final cohort of faculty on a first-come-first-serve basis. The initial program was open to Assistant Professors (LRF) and Assistant Teaching Professors (LPSOE) who were Pre-tenure, Pre-Security of employment in the 2020-2021 and/or 2021-2022 academic years. As demonstrated in the table below, this would not support all remaining currently eligible assistant level faculty.

School	Total Eligible	Total Funded	~# of potential unfunded requests	Cost Per Course	Total Cost
A&H	31	11	20	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 243,900.00
Biological Sciences	29	16	13	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 158,535.00
Colleges	3	0	3	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 36,585.00
Engineering	53	2	51	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 621,945.00
HDSI	9	3	6	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 73,170.00
Health Sciences	22	0	22	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 268,290.00
Phys Sci	34	14	20	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 243,900.00

RSM	18	4	14	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 170,730.00
SGPS	7	3	4	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 48,780.00
SIO	16	0	16	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 195,120.00
Social Science	66	30	36	\$ 12, 195.00	\$ 439,020.00
<i>Total</i>	288	83	205		\$ 2,499,975.00

Therefore, we propose the following:

- Narrow the eligibility to only those that will be proposed for tenure effective July 1, 2024 or July 1, 2025. This will limit the eligible applicant pool to those that are currently at the most critical juncture of their career. Allocation of \$500,000 to support this program will allow the support of 41 more faculty.
- Reverse the approval process, whereby the forms are received first in the Sr. AVC’s office and finalized at the Department level. This process will allow for a true “first come-first serve” opportunity.
- Continue to approve requests only for eligibility purposes once the funding has been depleted and allow the Dean’s and Departments to fund any remaining requests that cannot be funded by this program. This would be done in consultation with and buy in from the respective Deans.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and believe this extended program could play an important role in supporting faculty impacted at a pivotal moment in their academic careers.

In addition, the committee recommends that, in the future, the campus consider establishing an annual allocation of funds that can be used to address unforeseen impacts, particularly for mid-career and more senior faculty who were not the focus of this committee. This could be accomplished by augmenting the funds already provided to the research committees of the Academic Senate, to support a broader bridge funding program. We feel that the need for such support may become clear over the next few years, as a more complete picture of which particular faculty and which disciplines may be in need of further support develops.

Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic posed considerable challenges to our campus community. As our initial report indicated, UC San Diego faculty gave of their time and expertise in a manner that was above and beyond the call of duty. In the midst of unprecedented difficulties, faculty pivoted to remote instruction, in order to serve the student population and continue to support the teaching mission of the university. As the pandemic has waned, we are pleased to see that many faculty are able to resume their research trajectories as well as their engagement in service. But we believe that many of the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic created, coupled with the disruption of the recent academic labor actions on campus, will be with us for some time to come.

For this reason, the committee recommends that a new committee be empaneled that can meet on an annual basis to assess current trends impacting faculty, whether directly or indirectly related to the impacts of COVID. We need to be vigilant in monitoring long term effects of the pandemic; effects that are not currently visible. In addition, due to the number of changes that have taken place on our campus, as articulated above during the discussion of April 20, 2023, we recommend that the newly-formed committee be charged with a broader scope, to continue to examine, evaluate, and illuminate systemic stressors that are negatively impacting the success and academic advancement of our faculty.

We know that we share a common goal; to support our remarkable faculty in their extraordinary and innovative research, committed, high quality teaching, far ranging service and unparalleled contributions to society. We are, and remain, grateful for the support that faculty have received as we begin to move forward in the post-COVID reality.