November 7, 2013

Scott L. Waugh
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
UCLA

Re: Report on the Taskforce on Academic Freedom

Dear Scott,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and opine upon the report from the Taskforce on Academic Freedom. Upon receipt, I requested review by the Council on Research, the Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications, Faculty Welfare Committee, and all Faculty Executive Committees (all received responses are attached). The Executive Board, which speaks for the Senate on such matters, reviewed both the report and the responses from the committees. The reception of the report has been positive, and the Executive Board adds its endorsement to the report and the resource guide. Even so, we recommend the following:

1. The information technology landscape continues to change, and, as the GSEIS FEC notes, “the abundance, variety and technical evolution of new communication technologies creates an incredibly complex and fast-moving environment for recordkeeping, where legal rules for discovery are being determined by courts…” Is data generated from online education platforms, for example, considered public records? UCLA should periodically (annually) review the Faculty Resource Guide for California Public Record Requests, and as changes are required, continue to seek Academic Senate consultation.

2. The Faculty Resource Guide for California Public Record Requests should be expanded to address the question of email hosted on a common server or back-up tapes (see, for example, the response from the GSEIS FEC).

3. Can the resource guide also provide language to assist faculty with retention and disposal practices pertaining to social media?

Finally, the Council on Research has suggested three revisions to the Principles document. Rather than rehearse them here, I refer you to their response, which is attached.

Sincerely,

Jan Reiff
Chair, Academic Senate

Cc: Maryann Gray, Assistant Provost
    Jaime Balboa, Academic Senate CAO