

October 5, 2007

Tom Rice
Vice Chancellor of Academic Personnel

Dan Mitchell
Chair of the Council on Academic Personnel

Howard Reber
Immediate Past-Chair of the Council on Academic Personnel

In Re: Proposed Changes to the Call

Dear Tom, Dan, and Howard,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the recommended changes to the Call (CALL?), forwarded to my predecessor, Vivek Shetty, dated July 31, 2007, from Professor Reber and Vice Chancellor Rice. The Executive Board has reviewed the proposal and is generally very supportive. While the Executive Board has endorsed these changes as written, I would like to take this opportunity to convey areas where the Board suggests revisions.

Regarding the third bulleted item, “The language for Step VI (p. 12) was more terse than in the APM (Section 220.18(b)(4), so we have substituted the slightly more detailed APM language.”

The Board agrees that this clarification is appropriate. However, it also believes this would be an ideal opportunity to convey explicitly the guiding principles related to the evaluation of university service. We therefore suggest inserting the following line: “All evaluations for Professor Step VI actions will be anchored to an evaluation of the faculty's cumulative record of university service.”

Regarding the fifth bulleted item, “Perhaps the major change is allowing the deans to have final authority in an area that, until now, was under the jurisdiction of CAP and the Vice Chancellor. Currently, deans (except those in one-department schools) have final authority for one-year accelerations. We do not suggest changing that for the Assistant and Associate Professor ranks because anything more would constitute skipping an entire step. However, we do suggest allowing deans to have this authority for two-year accelerations at the Full Professor level (except Step VI) so long as they do not exercise it for a particular faculty member two years in a row.”

The Executive Board concurs, though not unanimously.ⁱ This delegation of administrative authority to the deans would allow local and timely responses to external recruitment efforts. One Board member recommended including the one-department schools such as Dentistry into this policy. The current trigger for senate review (two-consecutive 2 year accelerations) would check for any misuse of this privilege. Alternatively, it could be restated as "two 2-year accelerations within 8 years would require Academic Senate review."

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for the work you have done on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you have any questions or need further clarification.

Regards,



Elizabeth Ligon Bjork
Academic Senate Chair

Cc: Michael Goldstein, Academic Senate Vice Chair
Vivek Shetty, Immediate Past Chair of the Senate
Jaime Balboa, Academic Senate CAO
Carolynne Hogg, CAP Principal Policy Analyst

ⁱ Professor Paul Davis dissented. I include his response to the Executive Board in full, as a minority report.

To: The Executive Board, Academic Senate
From: Paul Davis
Re: Proposed Call Revisions

With respect to the proposed revisions I support all but the two that deal with transferring more authority to Deans: the two year accelerations and deferred merits.

My greatest concern is regarding the proposed 'major change' to give deans authority to grant or deny two year accelerations. One of the hallmarks of our system has been the impersonal nature of CAP, that critical decisions have not rested with one person, in this case a dean. This approach has worked well in the past for all who have worked their way through the system. Should we drop barriers now? On the positive side the change will cause less work for CAP, give Deans greater flexibility in retention cases, avoid skipping steps and take pressure off off-scale salaries. But I am more concerned about the negative side. An individual would be making critical decisions that could go either way, reducing standards if too lenient, or demanding unrealistic standards if too rigorous and causing disappointment. I understand the change would be rolled back if CAP and the Vice Chancellor conclude too many cases do not merit two-year acceleration. To my mind, once in place, this will be difficult to do.

For similar reasons I believe delayed merits should also continued to be reviewed by CAP rather than a dean. A dean is too close to the Department, its chair, the personalities. For contentious cases, an impersonal committee can judge the case on its merits, freed from personal involvement in the history.

I understand the committee has spent a lot of time in coming to these conclusions, including working on CAP and gathering the relevant data, for which we must all be grateful. Nonetheless, our system of checks and balances is among the best there is, and I can not support such major changes.

Yours sincerely.

Paul Davis