



U.C. Santa Cruz Faculty Association

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March 22, 2024

Herbie Lee, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Grace McClintock, Assistant Vice Provost- Academic Personnel
University of California, Santa Cruz

Dear Herbie and Grace,

Thank you for the illuminating discussion last week regarding how the administration is thinking about the SER and the various kinds of equity it is meant to address, the types of data and comparators that will be available at different stages in the process, and the difficulty of identifying automatic “triggers” for this new process. Thank you also for your acknowledgement that the SER proposal is linked to the potential changes in other salary programs and for waiting to move forward on these in a more comprehensive fashion. We agree that the issues of campus salary equity should be considered as a whole and should address both inter- and intra-campus equity issues.

After our meeting and further discussion, the SCFA is concerned that the SER may, counter to its purpose, introduce a variety of new inequities into campus salaries as individuals, departments, Deans, and different iterations of CAP might consider different kinds of comparative situations to be either just or unjust. Because the program does not specify what constitutes an inequitable salary situation, it is entirely open to interpretation. This could, in our view, lead the SER to be unintentionally shaped by subjective feelings about different faculty members and their worth and/or to reproduce already existing biases. The SER would increase substantially the range of outcomes for faculty salaries during a review process, but without significant delineation of how those more divergent salary outcomes are generated other than by some notion of comparison of the faculty member’s worth vs. the worth of unspecified others.

The use of UC-wide data suggests that one interest in the SER is to address inter-campus equity. SCFA’s previous counter-proposal offers an alternative method for this form of inequity, bringing up all faculty off-scale salaries via an automatic ½ step increase in off-scale for faculty members that meet expectations.

On the issue of intra-campus equity, we believe that the best option for addressing the salaries of those who are below their peers is to make the Salary Equity Program into a regular practice, to take place every 5 years. Our sense is that this program did an excellent job of correcting for some significant inversion and compression, for variations linked to the fiscal situation at time of hire, the “loyalty tax,” and inter-departmental variations in salary practices. We don’t have data

on gender and race inequities (except for the 2015 UCSC Faculty Equity Study, about which CAAD raised significant concerns and which is now almost ten years old), but would be interested to see this information if the administration has more recent data that would show the impact of the SEP on these types of inequities. The systematic approach of the SEP has the significant advantage of being straightforward, transparent, and universally applied. It also addresses the salaries of the lowest paid, which remain our primary concern.

We look forward to continuing to discuss how to best address salary inequities at future meetings.

Sincerely,

Kim Lau and Jessica Taft, Co-Chairs
SCFA