February 20, 2018

Shane White
Chair, Academic Council


Dear Shane,

The Executive Board of the UCLA Academic Senate discussed the second Systemwide Review of the proposed revisions to APM Sections: 285, 210-3, 133, 740, 135 and 235 at its meeting on February 8, 2018, as well as at the Council of Faculty Chairs meeting on January 22, 2018. The Executive Board solicited comments from standing committees of the Senate, as well as the Faculty Executive Committees, to maximize faculty feedback. The individual responses from the various committees follow this summary.

Without reservation, the Executive Board members strongly opposed the proposed revisions to APM Sections 285, 210-3, 133, 740, 135 and 235 related to the Lecturer with Security of Employment faculty series. Below are the major concerns.

The Working Title Professor of Teaching

The current proposal establishes a Security of Employment (SOE) series rather than a Teaching Professor series as in the previous proposal. Assistant, Associate, and Professor of Teaching can now be used as working titles. However, many faculty continue to oppose the use of the title “Professor” when the primary function of the title-holder is teaching, with little expectation for research. Many were concerned that the new series and working title options could erode the professorial series by implying that ladder faculty do not or are unwilling to do their fair share of teaching.

Creation of an Unhealthy Two-tier or Three-tier System

Because SOE faculty will by design have greater teaching loads than faculty in the professorial series, it is almost inevitable that a two-tier system will emerge in units and departments. It is difficult to anticipate how visible this two-tier system will be since there are no predetermined limits on the number of SOE faculty (this is something that is negotiated locally with the Chancellor and Academic Senate, by unit or department). We were especially concerned about the perceived fluidity between the series in that professorial faculty at the associate or full professor levels could be asked by the Chancellor, with their consent, to change to the SOE series. We were concerned that this fluidity could be used as a mechanism to “demote” nonproductive professorial faculty rather than strategically working with them to promote continued advancement within the series in which they were hired. We continue to worry that women and members of underrepresented groups would be disproportionately recruited into the less prestigious SOE series (with its lure of a professor title) when, in fact, they had the qualifications for the professorial series. In addition, growing numbers of SOE faculty could undermine Unit 18 lecturers and the unions that represent them, which could contribute to a 3-tier system of professorial faculty, SOE professors of teaching, and Unit 18 lecturer in many units and departments.

Evaluation of SOE Faculty

SOE faculty will be members of the Academic Senate and will be advanced on the same rank and steps within rank schedule as professorial faculty. This process continued to raise questions about how faculty in this new series will be evaluated. Innovation in teaching is no longer required, which all of us found perplexing, especially for more senior SOE faculty. One of the three criteria for advancement is “professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, including creative activity.” Examples of these activities included in the revised APM 210
suggested that advancement would require a great deal of activity in addition to classroom teaching, meaning SOE faculty may have to do less of the very activity that was the justification for the series. We viewed this ambiguity about criteria for advancement as especially problematic since SOE faculty are also eligible for accelerations and sabbaticals.

Allocation of Limited Resources

With no clear cap on the number of SOE faculty the campus or each unit may employ, there were worries that deans may be tempted to use this series as a way to save money in this era of undergraduate enrollment growth without additional resources. We were concerned that cost savings would further undermine our academic mission in which research and teaching are integrally aligned with one another. The ratio of non-ladder to ladder faculty has increased dramatically in recent years, especially in the teaching of undergraduate courses. Unchecked use of this new series could further exacerbate the decline in the number of faculty in the professorial series.

A few campuses apparently are already using this series on a limited basis. It might be worthwhile to gather data from these campuses on how the series is working before we vote again on whether it should be made permanent.

As always, the Executive Board appreciates the opportunity to opine. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sandra Graham
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

cc:  Hilary Baxter, Executive Director, Systemwide Academic Senate
     Susan Cochran, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
     Joseph Bristow, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
     Michael LaBriola, Principal Policy Analyst, Systemwide Academic Senate
     Linda Mohr, Chief Administrative Officer, UCLA Academic Senate