April 2, 2024

Andrea Kasko, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Report of the Joint Faculty Rebuilding and Renewal Task Force

Dear Chair Kasko,

At its March 5, 2024, meeting, The Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) reviewed the Report of the Joint Faculty Rebuilding and Renewal Task Force.

FWC strongly agreed with the issues and recommendations identified within the report. It highlights many of the issues and concerns regularly discussed by FWC, including the increased difficulty in recruiting faculty to UCLA, falling faculty salaries with respect to the cost of living in Los Angeles, the lack of affordable, available faculty housing and places in the daycare/school’s system, the limited value of increasing administrator positions/salaries, and the need for better recruitment of postdoctoral fellows to support the research mission of the university.

The FWC notes that these issues have been raised for decades and that these continuing problems are only getting worse. Thus, it has become critical that the administration immediately address them. Most notably, the FWC notes:

1. **The campus has not kept pace with hiring ladder-rank faculty.** The FWC strongly supports the recommendation that UCLA hire 369 ladder-rank faculty across the schools to thereby return to the 2010 student-to-faculty ratios. Since 2010, there has been a worrying and disproportionate hiring of non-ladder faculty (65% increase) compared to ladder-rank faculty (1% increase) during a period when the undergraduate body increased by 26%. It is unacceptable for the FWC to replace ladder faculty with non-tenure track faculty. This undermines the teaching and research mission of the university, as well as diminishing our structure of shared governance. The FWC thus requests an explanation for the slow rate of hiring ladder-rank faculty and the lack of additional FTEs.

2. **The campus needs to invest in further faculty housing and the UCLA schools’ system.** The FWC requests that the university conduct further studies to assess investing in the Los Angeles residential market. Other UC campuses have access to affordable housing; given the cost of living in Los Angeles, it is now essential that UCLA make similar investments. Education also remains a central issue for the FWC; access to affordable daycare and K-12 schools is a critical quality of life issue for faculty families.

3. **Faculty are at a breaking point.** The FWC is concerned that fewer faculty are being asked to teach more with diminished resources, which is in stark contrast to the continued proliferation of administrative positions.

4. **UCLA needs to find new revenue sources.** The FWC recognizes that significant investment is needed to rebuild the faculty. We support the report’s recommendations to advocate for restoring state funding levels and work to support these goals with increased philanthropy.
We thank you for the opportunity to opine. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at butlersj@ucla.edu or via the Committee analyst, Renee Rouzan-Kay, at rrouzankay@senate.ucla.edu.

Sincerely,

Samantha Butler, Chair
Faculty Welfare Committee

cc: Kathleen Bawn, Vice Chair/ Chair-Elect, Academic Senate
    Jessica Cattelino, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
    April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
    Renee Rouzan-Kay, Senior Policy Analyst, Faculty Welfare Committee
    Members of the Faculty Welfare Committee