ACADEMIC BUSINESS OFFICERS GROUP
ANNUAL LIST OF PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR 2016-17

WAGES AND EQUITY

History and Status:
The 2014-15 Academic Business Officers Group (ABOG) Priorities Memo included a category titled Non-Represented Staff Salaries. This year, the category of wages and equity was ranked the number one priority in our annual survey. We are pleased that non-represented staff salaries have an increased focus within the UC system at this time and that there will be a merit program this year. Although the return to a merit based model (Pay for Performance) importantly intends to allow for reward of outstanding work, we must convey a few concerns. Lack of cost of living increases at times when costs such as parking, housing, and other routine expenses are increasing, waters down the value and intent of the program.

In the 2014-15 memo we wrote: "We respectfully request that UCSC's top-level administrators consider committing a percentage of the current local funding streams to fund fair compensation for non-represented UCSC staff, especially since many of them are directly supporting program, faculty, and undergraduate and graduate growth." We understand and appreciate that the Pay For Performance program is calling our leadership to do just that.

The structural challenge of how UCSC's salary scales are determined affects the ability to attract, develop, and retain high-quality employees who may not have the same incentive to stay for a UC pension which is declining in value in lieu of a higher salary. More than ever we need to re-evaluate the parameters for determining the salary scales to include neighboring counties, such as Santa Clara and San Mateo in order to attract potential employees from those diverse communities, and to retain employees who may otherwise pursue employment there due to their higher salary rates.

National studies continue to rate Santa Cruz as an exceptionally expensive place to live. One recent survey[1] listed Santa Cruz as the most expensive place to live in California, indicating that it takes 9.4 years of income to be able to buy a house. This survey reported that "Less than 30 percent of people living in Santa Cruz can afford housing here. Not only is Santa Cruz one of the most expensive places in terms of housing but even rentals are considered one of the highest in the country." We contend that the cost of living, combined with out-of-step salary scales,

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[1] http://www.insidermonkey.com/blog/9-most-expensive-cities-to-live-in-california-368651/

negatively impacts the diversity of our staff, who cannot afford to come from San Jose or Salinas on a daily basis, and they cannot live in Santa Cruz county without competitive salaries, cost of living increases, or rent control laws.

ABOG is appreciative of this year's salary equity program for non-represented staff. Although the funding could not completely address salary equity issues, the program allowed for closing or diminishing gaps in a number of areas.

Proposed Actions:
We respectfully request that, in their meetings at UCOP, our Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor advocate for adding Santa Clara and San Mateo to the list of counties considered in determining UCSC's non-represented salaries, that merit increases continue to be supported, and that the implementation of regular COLAs, enhanced by merit-based pay, be kept alive in compensation discussions.

In addition, we ask leadership to develop a regular cycle of equity reviews–thus ensuring some predictability in the frequency of these reviews–in order to address equity issues that may surface through labor contract-related salary compaction (salaries of represented versus non-represented staff supervisors) or through the Career Tracks process.

Benefits:
Adjusting existing non-represented staff salaries to competitive levels is growingly crucial to our ability to maintain the highly-skilled workforce that is needed as we continue to do more with less. Increasing salary scales to rates more appropriate to the counties from which UCSC does and should attract long-term employees will also increase diversity among staff. As noted in our 2014-15 priorities list: "Attracting top talent to non-represented positions will result in long-term cost savings to the university by bringing the productivity, quality work, and expertise needed to grow and support our academic and business units. Attracting and retaining top talent to campus leadership, management, and supervisory positions will provide additional cost saving benefits by reducing employee grievances, leaves, and turnovers."

STAFFING LEVELS IN ACADEMIC UNITS

The second highest priority noted in our annual member survey was related to workload. UCSC is fortunate to have a very devoted staff. We take pride in supporting our students and faculty in order to ensure their success. That said, there is a sense of nearing the breaking point in maintaining day-to-day activities versus supporting creative endeavors as they arise.

One particular area that surfaced as a high concern this year is managing the added work of larger incoming classes of students. Of particular note is the increased workload associated with space management of offices for more instructors, and additional lecture, lab, and section needs for classes, and the increased pressure on space for DRC testing and proctoring. Another significant concern is management of routine business while attempting to adequately support and plan around the various interdepartmental formal programs, the shared faculty (senate and non-senate), and the informal initiatives that increase work associated with the management of curriculum, meetings, additional personnel actions, etc. We understand that some of these topics may be viewed as division-specific matters; however, the growing challenges in these areas leave us desiring collaboration on ways to better plan before approvals occur.

A related cluster of topics that arose in our survey includes activities that take employees away from their workplace longer than may be necessary, which further impacts workload, increases stress, and decreases morale. These activities include inaccessibility of parking on campus, and challenges getting to and from Staff HR off-campus (for sign-ups, trainings, and meetings) for employees who have chosen alternate forms of transportation or know they will have issues with parking upon returning to campus, thus extending their time away from the office. Such considerations have already prevented some ABOG members from participating in regular meetings and valuable trainings. We know this to be the case for some UCSC staff outside of ABOG as well.

Proposed Actions:
Campus Provost/EVC Galloway suggested we work on a white paper regarding interdepartmental endeavors and their impact on workload. ABOG will discuss forming a subcommittee to work on such a paper.

ABOG plans to reach out to VPAA Lee and colleagues to collaborate on program development, external review, and other policies to find ways to draw more attention to whether the staffing needs for new and existing programs are being adequately addressed. For example: which questions might be added to proposal guidelines for staff managers to address; should the external review self-study guidelines include a stated expectation that MOUs for interdepartmental programs be renewed and bylaws be reviewed as a regular part of external reviews and/or mid-point reviews; if–at the point of hire–specific curricular expectations exist that are interdepartmental, should there be a stated expectation that an MOU be developed regarding that shared teaching, etc.?

We ask that campus leadership continue to support Staff HR in finding ways for staff to accomplish HR-related work without heavy impacts on us to get to/from a Scotts Valley

location, such as a weekly on-campus option for new employee sign-up. We have again this year benefited greatly from collaborations with Staff HR and look forward to continued partnership. Some ideas that may be worth exploring are new employee orientations with an online or webinar option, and use of Google Hangout for some meetings.

Benefits:
Finding ways to make workloads more stable and fluctuations more predictable will enable staff to participate in more trainings, contribute to reductions in workers' compensation claims, increased retentions, and in general contribute to improved morale.

Closer analysis of staffing needs prior to program approval, including assessing the amount of work associated with endeavors that affect faculty teaching across units, will benefit faculty, students, and staff by allowing staff to plan for these efforts while maintaining their pre-existing responsibilities. We think it is particularly important for the campus to consider the impact of increased numbers of students in determining whether adequate staffing is in place to support new programs. Creating regular staffing structures that ensure on-going faculty support for existing programs will aid in timely decisions around curricular revisions, and better identify when it is time to consider discontinuation of a program.

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT

History and Status:
Last year ABOG felt so strongly and uniformly about the need to improve the campus curriculum management tools that we chose to list it as our one and only major priority for the year. We greatly appreciate Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor Galloway's decision to provide financial support to move forward with the initial phases of the project. We strongly encourage continued funding to ensure the project advances to completion. ABOG plans to maintain an active role on the project through the Curriculum Management Team. Since the need for change has been present for nearly a decade, we are eager to see substantial progress.

Proposed Actions:
We request that the project continue to move forward as quickly as possible and without the delays that sometimes occur when other, new systems appear before pre-existing projects have been completed.

Benefits:
For a detailed description of the benefits of the project, we attach last year's priority memo as an addendum.

GRADUATE STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (GSIS)

History and Status:
Many departments have benefited in recent years by the addition to AIS of the graduate student milestone module, part one of the project sponsored by the Graduate Division to enable sharing of a database with students' information, and to create a planning environment that is more stable than the old FileMaker Pro systems some units still use. Some departments, however, await completion of the funding tier of the project before moving away from their local shadow system; otherwise, using the system would cause an unmanageable workload increase.

Proposed actions:
As noted under curriculum development, we request that the project continue to move forward as quickly as possible and avoid the slowdowns that may occur when new systems appear before pre-existing projects have been completed. This project has also been on our priority list for many years and we are eager to see it completed.

Benefits:
Completion of this system will save time and create efficiencies in the sharing of student support data between the various units that support graduate student employment, as well as minimize the potential for error caused by duplicate entry of the same information.

ACADEMIC BUSINESS OFFICERS
ANNUAL LIST OF PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR 2015-16

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT

History and Status:
For eight consecutive years, department managers (now Academic Business Officers Group or ABOG) have requested that new campus systems be adopted or existing systems be appropriately modified to improve curriculum management. We appreciate the recent letter of endorsement from the Deans and Assistant Deans of each of the five academic divisions to EVC Galloway, supporting a broad curriculum management project. Below is a brief overview of ABOG's recurring priority. We also attach two supplemental documents, curriculum management information from ABOG's 2014-15 priorities list and the Curriculum Management Team's Executive Summary, to further support this request.

Proposed Actions:
Invest in a large-scale project aimed at identifying the best and most sustainable curriculum management solution(s) to be implemented over the next few years.

Benefits:
ABOG agrees with the Curriculum Management Team that this investment will result in long-term cost savings for the campus. We also believe that embarking on a well-managed and well-funded curriculum management improvement project will further support the campuswide strategic plan "Envision UC Santa Cruz," by advancing student success and increasing employee morale.

Improving our curriculum management tools and processes will:
- eliminate duplicate processes (i.e. eliminating multiple points of data entry)
- eliminate multiple handoffs and manual processing
- improve accuracy
- improve student success through increased time for direct advising
- have a positive effect on student success by freeing up faculty and staff time to support student retention and time-to-degree initiatives
- improve the student experience with timely and accurate scheduling of classes and associated labs and discussions and possible end products such as an interactive and searchable general catalog
- reduce processes that are cumbersome and non-intuitive that also require frequent relearning or correction/intervention
- improve reporting
- increase employee morale by reducing long-standing frustrations
- streamline the repetitive processes currently required to produce centralized student information (major and advising pages, etc.) for associated needs such as orientation and admissions