

## Academic Assembly Council President's Report: June 2019

# University of California

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Chris Greer  
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June 19, 2019

Dear UC ANR Academic Assembly:

Your Academic Assembly Council (AAC) met in October, February, and May to discuss and present academics' input, feedback, and concerns with ANR senior leadership, as well as to carry out our mission to enhance the impacts of Cooperative Extension programs and address professional needs of academic employees.

Recent accomplishments of AAC include the following:

- Established a new representative committee for Multiple Academic Titles.
- Represented UC ANR academics on the UCOP systemwide Working Group on Privileges and Responsibilities of Non-Faculty Academic Appointees.
- Conducted an anonymous survey to assess academics' retirement plans for future academic workforce planning.
- Revised travel award processes to increase AAC ability to support academics' participation in qualifying professional competence activities.

Please consider sharing input with your representative committee or joining us for the next AAC meeting in Davis on August 13th. For more details on our meeting discussions, approved minutes are posted on our website (listed below).

Sincerely,



Katherine E. Soule  
President  
Academic Assembly Council

For more information about the UC ANR Academic Assembly Council, including travel awards, committees, and publications, visit our website at:

<http://ucanr.edu/sites/UCAAC/>

### **Increasing Morale**

A recurring concern brought to AAC has been increasing workload demands on academics and County Directors, especially as we slow hiring of new academics. There is a general sentiment that employee morale could be improved and that turnover is becoming an increasing problem. AAC has been in conversation with leadership about this concern and several efforts to improve communication to foster better connections have resulted:

- A [Town Hall](#) was held on March 21 where Glenda shared the budget situation, strategies to reduce costs and suggestions for county-based solutions. She also emphasized that academics and staff need to focus on doing “less with less” rather than struggling to maintain a program as a predecessor did, when budgets were stronger. Future Town Halls will be held in August 15 and November 21.
- Academic HR is conducting voluntary exit interviews with Advisors who leave ANR before retirement. At this time, the sample size is too small to draw conclusions, but HR is aware that ARC and AAC are interested in the results.
- A monthly [Open Office](#) with leadership, intended for newer academics, was developed in November 2018 to provide a forum to answer questions and address concerns.
- John Fox will share information about a new Climate Survey, developed at UCSD, that UC ANR will implement in January 2020.

Furthermore, the upcoming August [ANR Regional Information Sessions](#) will focus on maximizing effectiveness of teams and measuring condition changes as a method of telling our story. ~ Betsy Karle

### **Proposed Academic Personnel Manual Section 011**

AAC represented ANR academics in the Working Group on Privileges and Responsibilities of Non-Faculty Academic Appointees, appointed by the UC Systemwide Provost. This working group proposed the new APM-011, Academic Freedom, Protection of Professional Standards, and Responsibilities of Non-Faculty Academic Appointees to address the academic privileges, rights, obligations, and responsibilities of non-faculty academic appointees. The proposed new section is currently under a systemwide review. Please review the draft policy and related resources at: <https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/academic-personnel-policy/policies-under-review/apm-011.html>

Comments and questions should be sent to Robin Sanchez at [rgsanchez@ucanr.edu](mailto:rgsanchez@ucanr.edu) no later than July 1, 2019.

### **New Multiple Academic Titles Representative Committee**

The Multiple Academic Titles Representative Committee met for the first time in April. This committee represents academics who previously did not have representation at AAC. The committee will send out a quarterly survey to identify and collect input from academics on issues impacting their programs, as well as communicate updates from AAC to their membership.

Thank you to Karina Diaz Rios for chairing the committee, as well as to committee members: Max Moritz, Doug Parker, Tapan Pathak, & Annemiek Schilder.

**Academic Retirement Intention Survey Report**

Historically, the number of expected academic retirements within UC ANR for a given year is uncertain until the academic submits a letter of intent to retire. Academic HR keeps a running list of expected retirements based upon academics' self-disclosures about their anticipated retirement plans to their supervisor, Academic HR and/or UC ANR senior leaders. This system has not always been accurate in predicting actual retirements in a given year. At the request of AVP Powers, AAC conducted a survey of UC ANR academic retirement intentions to inform ANR of potential, impending academic retirements within the next few years for the purpose of improved academic workforce planning needs; including mentoring, recruitment capacity, professional development, recall appointment practices, etc.

Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to the UC ANR academics in the CE specialist, CE advisor, academic coordinator and academic administrator titles using the ANR e-mail lists for these titles. The first request was sent 2/7/2019 followed by a reminder on 2/20/2019. The survey consisted of only two questions and was administered using Qualtrics. All responses were anonymous and no identifying information was collected with the exception of the individual's academic title. ~ Chris Greer

	<b>CE Advisor</b> <i>n</i> = 166 response rate of 65%	<b>CE Specialist</b> <i>n</i> = 107 response rate of 59.8%	<b>Academic Coordinator</b> <i>n</i> = 31 response rate of 77.4%	<b>Academic Administrator</b> <i>n</i> = 7 response rate of 71.4%	<b>Total</b> <i>n</i> = 311 response rate of 64.8%
Earliest Anticipated Retirement Date					
2019	6.48%	4.69%	0.00%	0.00%	4.98%
2020	7.41%	6.25%	0.00%	0.00%	5.97%
2021	4.63%	7.81%	4.17%	0.00%	5.47%
2022	4.63%	6.25%	12.50%	0.00%	5.97%
2023	5.56%	15.63%	8.33%	20.00%	9.45%
I do not plan to retire in the next 5 years	71.30%	59.38%	75.00%	80.00%	68.16%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Figure 1.** Percentage of respondents for each academic title indicating the earliest year they anticipate retiring from UC.

### **Expectations of Academics with Administrative Responsibilities**

Personnel Committee reviewed the draft "Expectations of Academics with Administrative Responsibilities." In this document, it is suggested that percentage of effort requirement in the criteria for advancement be reduced for academics with substantial administrative responsibilities. Among these appointments are County Directors, REC Directors, Statewide Program Directors, Institute Directors, Assistant Vice Provosts, Strategic Initiative Leaders, and Vice Provosts; as well as, academics with substantial program staff supervision responsibilities.

Personnel Committee discussed the document at length and submitted points for clarification and consideration. In more recent drafts of this document, the committee's concerns were addressed. In the revised version, it is clearly stated that EFNEP and 4-H Advisors are appointments in which greater flexibility is required. ~ Tom Turini

### **Welfare & Benefits**

During the last AAC meeting the Welfare & Benefits Committee Chair presented information about the UC Retirement System (UCRS), including funding and performance of the UC Retirement Plan (UCRP). Compared to many public pension plans, the UCRP is in very good shape and was 85% funded as of last November's UCRS Advisory Board Meeting. The asset mix seems appropriate for the plan and is monitored for its conformity to percent asset allocation ranges. Further growth in funding depends on performance of equities in particular, but funding percentage is also dependent on actuarial assumptions, such as number of potential retirees, benefit levels, and longevity. There were 75,924 benefit recipients for FY2017-18. The current discount rate (expected return on investment) used for actuarial assumptions is 7.25%. The calculated liability is very sensitive to this rate.

UC ANR employees have an advantage with regard to their UC retirement benefit, since many join UC in their early career stage, and hence have opportunity to accrue many years of service credit, a key determinant in the amount of benefit. The relatively low number of years of service credit of faculty and staff, 20-24 on average, limits their benefits.

About half of UC employees participate in the UCRS savings program, making contributions to their individual 403b and/or 457 accounts. There was strong interest at the Advisory Board meeting for UC to offer a Roth account as an additional savings vehicle. At the April 2019 annual spring meetings of the World Bank, the UC Chief Investment Office (CIO) received recognition as one of the world's 25 leaders in responsible asset allocation. The UC Financial Report, with a UCRS section, as well as a report on UCRS itself, are available on UCOP and CIO websites, respectively. ~ John Karlik

### **Travel Award Program Update**

To improve the efficacy and efficiency of the travel awards program, AAC has reduced the number of calls for applications to twice a year. The first call will cover travel between July and December. The second call will cover travel between January and June. The total amount of awards granted and the criteria for awards remain unchanged. Applications are scored based on established criteria. Priority scoring is given to applicants new to their positions, presenting papers, or with special functions within the society/meeting. To submit a request, visit this website: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/ucaac/> ~