

# News from Academic Personnel

From CAP and the Academic Personnel Office

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## Upcoming Events

(see Page 3 for details)

- 01/23 Series of Events—Guest  
Dr. Virginia Valian
- 04/16 Preparing for Academic  
Personnel Review

## Changes to The UCLA CALL

The CALL, which governs the academic personnel process at UCLA, was recently revised. Faculty should be especially aware of the following three changes. They apply to academic personnel cases that are evaluated during the 2007-08 academic year with an effective date on or after July 1, 2008.

**(1) The Use of Review Committees by CAP.** At one time, the Council on Academic Personnel (CAP) sent many cases to campus-wide "Review Committees" (RCs, also known as *ad hoc* committees) for an appraisal. When this procedure is used, it results in delayed case decisions and also becomes a major drain on faculty time. Assembling an RC involves selecting appropriate members, having the RC meet at times convenient to its members, and the preparation of a written report. CAP then considers the RC report and makes its recommendation on the merits of the case.

For the reasons noted above, CAP now uses RCs on a more limited basis. In general, CAP will send a case to an RC when there are specific circumstances that require a specialized review of the case (e.g., the field is one that requires expertise not represented on the Council) or if there are indications in the file that there are particular concerns about the merits of the proposed action (e.g., a split departmental vote and/or equivocal extramural letters).

Although CAP had decreased its use of RCs in recent years, the language of The UCLA CALL did not reflect the change. Accordingly, new language has

been substituted indicating that CAP will utilize an RC "as appropriate" to the particular case. This new language, to reiterate, does not constitute a change in current policy; it simply involves making the official CALL language accord with contemporary CAP practice.

**(2) Two-Year Accelerations as "Dean's Finals".** Until this academic year, deans (except those in one-department schools) have had final authority for one-year step accelerations. More rapid advances were reviewed by CAP and the Vice Chancellor of Academic Personnel. The new language changes this policy to allow deans to have final authority for two-year accelerations within the full Professor series. (The change does not apply to the Assistant and Associate ranks because a two-year acceleration would entail skipping a step.) This change affects all step advances except to Step VI and Above Scale (since those two advances still are subject to CAP review). CAP and the Vice Chancellor will continue to monitor all two-year accelerations to determine implications of the new policy for the integrity of the merit review system. Note also that CAP and the Vice Chancellor will review cases (presumably rare) in which two-year accelerations are requested in consecutive years.

**(3) Personnel Actions "Deferred" Two or More Years.** Finally, the CALL is being revised to remove CAP from merit advances that have been deferred two or

## Changes to the CALL

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more years beyond the normal cycle (every two years at Assistant and Associate Professor, and every three years at full Professor). Such deferred merit step increases will be administered by deans ("Dean's Final"). The only exception is if the faculty member chooses to have a CAP review. Prior to this change in policy, CAP had reviewed merit step advances in which the deferral was two or more years.

For academic personnel reviews, the two changes regarding deans' authority over merit adjustments should

speed the decision process. Moreover, providing deans with discretion for two-year accelerations at the full Professor rank will provide schools with enhanced discretion to retain deserving faculty. Similarly, the earlier shift to more limited use of external RCs — now being recognized in The UCLA CALL language — is also designed to speed the process. It is expected that these changes will allow UCLA to better compete for and maintain its distinguished faculty. ■

## Merit Equity Reviews (MERs)

The U.C. personnel system provides for the advancement of its ladder faculty through regularized academic reviews. Recently, a new review alternative—the Merit Equity Review (MER)—was added to provide a mechanism for ensuring that faculty members are at the appropriate rank and step consistent with their achievement.

This relatively new review option was introduced in July 2003, and the revised version, adopted in 2005, is detailed in Appendix 35 of The UCLA CALL (<http://www.apo.ucla.edu/call/append35.htm>). Here is a summary of the MER process.

**1. Purpose of the Merit Equity Review.** A MER is intended to correct a documented and significant discrepancy between a faculty member's current rank or step and a more appropriate rank or step consistent with the prevailing U.C. and UCLA standards as reflected in the status of his/her peers in the discipline. The purported discrepancy may be the result of a variety of factors, including initial appointment at an inappropriately low rank, uneven advancement practices in the department, or inappropriate evaluation standards. Alternatively, there may be no identifiable errors in past processes,

but the faculty member may, nevertheless, be at a lower rank than appropriate. The MER allows a faculty member to seek redress through a systematic review procedure that focuses on the faculty member's career performance and on the claim that there is serious inconsistency in rank in view of the candidate's achievement.

### **2. Who Can Request a MER?**

Those at Associate Professor and above (including Lecturers with Security of Employment and Senior Lecturers with Security of Employment) may initiate a MER; and a MER may be proposed as well by the relevant Chair or Dean in the interest of the faculty member.

### **3. What are the Limitations for a MER?**

There are a number of provisos that apply: (a) a MER cannot be used as a recourse for over-turning a negative personnel decision that was made in the current or prior academic year; (b) the MER is not a mechanism for salary adjustment; its focus is on the academic status of the candidate (i.e., rank or step); (c) the MER process is limited in its frequency: it can be used only once at the Associate Professor level, and twice at the full Professor level (once prior to advancement to

Step VI, and once after Step VI); (d) a MER cannot be scheduled soon after a prior personnel review that involved a review by the Council on Academic Personnel and a decision by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel ("soon" means before two years for Associate Professors and three years for full Professors).

### **4. What are the Requirements in a MER?**

The dossier needs to make the case in a documented and persuasive way that the candidate's achievements—in all the requisite areas (research, teaching, service, and professional activity) are seriously undervalued in comparison with the comparable peers in his/her department and the standards in the discipline. If the recommended action requires extramural letters, such letters need to be included in the dossier. The dossier should include requisite information regarding the candidate's employment at UCLA, including rank, step and salary at appointment; the history of personnel actions; and a discussion of the grounds for the perceived discrepancy in rank. All of the safeguards regarding personnel reviews are to be observed—those, for example, regarding confidentiality and transparency

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## Merit Equity Reviews

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(e.g., the candidate is provided the opportunity for rebuttal or commentary). The review is conducted in accordance with the deadlines that are established for MER actions (available at the Academic Personnel Office website) at: <http://www.apo.ucla.edu/deadlines.asp> In all cases, the department will discuss and vote on the requested action according to its bylaws and practices governing decision-making for the relevant rank and step.

### 5. *The Role of the Council on Academic Personnel.*

As an important player in the personnel process, the Council has the advantage of being an interdisciplinary body

with a campus-wide perspective and broad knowledge of the standards and practices in a variety of disciplines. It has the ability to collect and compare files drawn from across the campus; hence, its evaluation is a central aspect of the MER process, and it may employ a campus ad hoc committee as well. As usual, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel makes the final decision in consultation with the Council.

As noted, further information on Merit Equity Reviews is found in Appendix 35 of The CALL, and faculty who may have further questions can seek advice from the staff of the Academic Personnel Office in 3109 Murphy Hall. ■

## DID YOU KNOW?

For all personnel actions reviewed by the *Council on Academic Personnel* (CAP), you can receive a copy of the CAP report after a final decision has been reached by the Dean or the Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel. If you do not receive it, feel free to ask your department Chair. Assistant Professors should make sure that they receive a copy of their 4<sup>th</sup> year appraisal CAP report, which will provide useful guidance in preparing for promotion to the Associate Professor rank. ■

Every member of the faculty must have an academic performance review at least every five years. The “*Five Year Review*” is not optional; it is mandatory (as detailed in Appendix 12 of the CALL, and in APM Section 200-0). The purpose of the Five-Year Review is to identify any impediments to success; to develop, where applicable, alternative strategies for improvement; and to assess the likelihood that a faculty member will earn a normal advancement to the next step or rank within a designated period following the Five Year Review. These reviews typically are conducted in the spring of the academic year that ends a period of five years in which the faculty member has not been reviewed. ■

## Upcoming Events

A series of events will be held in conjunction with a visit to campus by Dr. Virginia Valian, author of “Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women” and professor of Psychology and Linguistics at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center. Dr. Valian will present a workshop for women faculty during a breakfast meeting, followed by a presentation for Deans, as part of the Leading Through Diversity, Partnership for Faculty Equity and Diversity annual symposium, being hosted by UCLA. She will address department chairs during a Chair Forum luncheon and conclude her visit to UCLA with a public lecture and faculty dinner meeting in the California Room at the Faculty Center. Additional information about these workshops and presentations will be available soon on the Faculty Diversity & Development website and invitations to these events will be sent to faculty members.

January 23, 2008 – Faculty Center – All Day

**Preparing for Academic Personnel Review** – An informal discussion about the review process for Assistant Professors. Topics include understanding the review cycle, fourth year review, dossier preparation and review for Associate Professor.

April 16, 2008 – Faculty Center–Downstairs Lounge – 12:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.

To Participate Please Contact: Lori Davison at [ldavison@conet.ucla.edu](mailto:ldavison@conet.ucla.edu)

## New Salary Scales: Frequently Asked Questions

In its September meeting, the U.C. Regents adopted a new faculty salary scale for the 2007-08 academic year, effective October 1, 2007. All UCLA faculty will receive a 2.5% cost of living adjustment (COLA). Moreover, those faculty who were previously on-scale, or near scale, will receive an additional “market” adjustment to bring them up to the new scale. In addition to the COLA, the pay scale will rise by about 8% for Assistant and Associate Professors, as well as for Professors up through Step III. The increase will be smaller for those who are Professor Step IV and above. The new scales can be found at: <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/tab0708/tabcont.html>

Below is our best “take” on answers to several frequently-asked questions:

**Question: Why was the salary scale changed?** Over time, the faculty salary scale, which has been a hallmark of the UC system, has eroded such that it does not reflect the realities of the academic market. In addition, salaries at UC have lagged behind our “Comparable Eight” institutions (four public, four private). The change was made to help bring the salary scales closer to market, with the intent of making UC campuses more attractive for prospective and current faculty, and to reduce the number of faculty who are paid more than the scale (“off-scale”).

**Question: How are UCLA faculty affected?** Our calculations show that about 15% of faculty who are paid on a nine-month basis will benefit from the scale increase.

**Question: I am 20% off-scale now. What happens to me?** In future salary advancements, your salary will rise at the same rate that it would have previously risen. However, because the scale has increased, your percentage off-scale will decline.

**Question: Why wasn’t this augmentation of salaries shared among everyone?** In a sense, it was. System-wide, faculty received a 5.8% increase in overall salaries. Only 1.5% of this was due to the market adjustment of scales. The bulk of the increase, 4.3%, is shared among all faculty: 2.5% for the COLA, and 1.8% to fund all merit increases.

Moreover, faculty who are substantially off-scale have already benefited from UCLA’s previous efforts to keep our salary levels competitive; these efforts will be continued. In that regard, there are no future plans to take faculty who are substantially off-scale and put them back on-scale.

**Question: How are faculty on comp plans affected?** Acting Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Scott Waugh will be writing a letter to faculty in the medical and dental schools—who are paid on a fiscal year basis—explaining how they are affected by the salary scale changes. Because the answer is somewhat more complicated than for faculty paid on an academic year basis (e.g., it depends on the faculty member’s “X” and “Y” salary components), those on a comp plan should refer to that letter.

**Question: What happens to faculty who are above-scale (i.e., beyond Step IX)?** The campuses are given flexibility on how to treat above-scale faculty. UCLA has chosen to award them a 3.5% increase, a percentage point higher than the general COLA.

**Question: What is the plan for the future?** This has not been announced, and obviously depends on the future budget picture. The Office of the President hopes that this is the first year of a four-year process of augmenting faculty salaries. The distribution of future increases between scale adjustments and COLAs has yet to be decided. ■

## Key Links

Academic Personnel Forms -- <http://www.apo.ucla.edu/forms.asp>  
Academic Personnel Manual: <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/apm/welcome.html>  
Academic Personnel Office (APO): <http://www.apo.ucla.edu>  
AP Newsletter Volume 1, Issue 1: [http://www.apo.ucla.edu/docs/Newsletter\\_Spring07.pdf](http://www.apo.ucla.edu/docs/Newsletter_Spring07.pdf)  
Council on Academic Personnel (CAP): <http://www.senate.ucla.edu/committee/cap/cap.htm>  
Deadlines: <http://www.apo.ucla.edu/deadlines.asp>  
Emeriti Information: <http://www.errc.ucla.edu>  
Faculty Diversity: <http://faculty.diversity.ucla.edu>  
Faculty Handbook: <http://www.apo.ucla.edu/facultyhandbook>  
Faculty Searches: <http://faculty.diversity.ucla.edu/03recruit/index.htm>  
The UCLA CALL: <http://www.apo.ucla.edu/cal>  
UCLA Salary Scales: <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/tab0708/tabcont.html>