 **Faculty Senate Office**  *Phone: (818) 677-3263*

**DATE:** xx xxxx 2018

**RE:**  When a policy change is merely editorial

**BY:**  Adam Swenson

**UPDATES AND SUPPLANTS:** 2015-02 Editorial changes

[Editorial: if vote to change is divided, can the change be editorial?]

[Update editorial memo to include that things should not be ruled editorial until after the responsible group has voted to propose the change.]

The Faculty President or Senate Executive Committee are sometimes asked to determine whether a proposed change to a policy is *editorial*. If the change is ruled editorial, no further approval is required. The purpose of ruling a change editorial is to save the Senate time by avoiding trivial matters.

In every case, the question of whether a change is editorial must be made subsequent to an appropriate affirmative vote by the appropriate body to recommend the change. For example, PPR or EPC must approve the change through normal procedure. Only then may the change be ruled editorial.

Whether a change is editorial should usually be uncontroversial. But in some cases it may help to have a clear guideline for making the determination.

I thus suggest the following criterion:

A change is *editorial* if and only if it is not possible that the change affect the reasonable application of the policy.

Modern logic understands modal concepts (e.g., possibility and necessity) via comparing hypothetical worlds which differ only the relevant properties. Thus, this principle may be put more formally:

Consider two worlds in which the policy will be applied in good faith by reasonable interpreters. In world1 the policy in its present form is applied. In world2 the policy with the change under consideration is applied. In each world, the policy is used to make decisions d0…n about cases c0…n. If we can reasonably expect that there is some case-decision tuple (ci, di) in world1 which differs from (ci, di) in world2, then the change is not editorial.