

Committee on Professional Matters (CPM) Report May 2020

To start, I would like to recognize the committee members—Senators Kathryn Hoffmann, Katherine Davis, Jinan Banna, Vanessa Irving, and Camaron Miyamoto—all of whom worked hard on committee business this year; a special thanks goes to Senator Truc Nguyen, our SEC liaison, whose guidance was indispensable. In Fall 2019, the CPM returned to the unfinished business from the previous year and began to address new business. I will review the business from the previous committee that we resolved before discussing the new issues we handled.

Unfinished Business:

The issue of Primary Investigator Changes and Employee Misconduct: we returned to the data turned over by the office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, and determined that the evidence warranted no further investigation, especially since no formal complaints had been submitted. We also returned to the UH Conflict of Interest Policy: the 2018-2019 CPM had asked the university for clarification of AP 12.304 as well as clarification on the listing of the UH Foundation as an external financial institution in MyGrant. Since no official complaints had been forwarded to us, we decided that the issues no longer demanded our attention. Similarly, we determined that there were no longer issues pertinent to this committee with regard to the UH Policy on Minors. By addressing these matters, we concluded the unfinished business from the previous year's committee.

New Business:

The first piece of new business the committee handled were complaints raised about the New Faculty Orientation hosted by Office of Faculty Development and Academic Support (OFDAS). Several complaints focused on a panel about the TMT project and Mauna Kea, claiming that the event was one-sided. We met with Kathy Kane, the Director of OFDAS, to discuss this event and its organization. After that discussion, the Committee on Professional Matters then thoroughly reviewed all pertinent information related to said complaint and found no cause to move forward with an investigation. It is not the role of the CPM to determine the content of any program. We did express our hope that faculty and administrative offices make new faculty feel welcome and part of a diverse community. With the Director of OFDAS, we also discussed another issue raised by faculty about the onerousness of the tenure and promotion process; our discussion with the Director focused on mentoring faculty through such processes. To facilitate our discussions, we then met with Professor Mary Jo Noonan, one of the co-developers of the Faculty Mentoring Program in the College of Education. Once we had gathered further research on faculty

mentoring for the tenure and promotion processes, we forwarded that information to the Senate Executive Committee (SEC).

A faculty member brought new business to the committee: Associate Professor Marc Moody asked the committee to look at the waiver required of faculty with terminal degrees that are not PhDs. This waiver is not only signed upon hire, but faculty also submit it during tenure and promotion applications. Associate Professor Moody contends that the process demeans faculty, especially those working in the creative arts in which doctorates are not the typical terminal degree, who have expertise equivalent to the doctorate. We also met with the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Academic Personnel, Beverly McCreary, who clarified that this issue arises from the language used to define faculty classifications in Executive Policy 5.22. As a committee, we then gathered substantial research on our peer institutions who do not require waivers for those without a PhD and whose definitions of faculty do not explicitly require a doctorate in the field of expertise, which obviates the need for a waiver. We sent that research on to the SEC for their consideration; after these meetings, the Vice Chancellor of Academic Personnel issued a memo determining that the waiver should only happen once upon hire. To change the terms of faculty classifications would require consultation across all campuses since it is a change to Executive Policy, which is beyond the purview of the CPM. After reviewing this research, SEC informed CPM that they have forwarded the issue and research to the administration. However, the CPM reserves the opportunity to return to this issue in the future.

We also initiated a conversation with the Committee on General Education (CGE) after their resolution about course-based general education designations did not pass. Our aim was to further discuss the potential academic freedom issues that arose during the senate's debate on this resolution and to facilitate their work in revising this resolution, should they wish to bring it back to the senate in the future. Both the CPM and CGE found this dialogue fruitful.

Once the 'stay at home' orders happened in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we held a special meeting to discuss the creation of a policy at UH to allow a one-year delay in the promotion, tenure, and contract renewal clock for those faculty who wished to do so. This kind of policy would be similar to one adopted by well over two hundred other institutions—of various ranks—across the mainland; it would be optional, and it would only require an individual faculty member's consent to delay. We distributed a survey to the faculty, and with over four hundred responses, faculty affirmed that such a provision should be put in place. Because this issue falls under the purview of the University of Hawai'i's Professional Association (UHPA), we passed our survey results over to them, so they could pursue this issue with the university administration.

Future Business:

A majority of the committee has agreed to continue to work on issues that need to be addressed, especially in light of the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic. At our next meeting, we discussed Regents Policy 1.210 and UHPA's R20, Parts 3 and 4, which focus on the protocol for consultation between the UH administration, UHPA, and the Senate since the urgency of the pandemic has raised several issues about consultation and communication roles. We highlighted the importance of defining words like 'to advise' and 'consultation' should any of these policies undergo revision at a later date. Additionally, we deliberated about the lack of consultation of faculty about the conditions of our return to work in the fall; to address this, we designed a survey, and the results of this survey are pending. We will analyze this data and provide our finding to the SEC and UHPA in the near future.

Submitted Respectfully,

Derrick Higginbotham
Associate Professor and Chair of CPM