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**Committee on Academic Freedom**

**Melike Pekmezci, MD, Chair**

**September 23, 2020**

**1:00pm – 2:00pm**

**ZOOM**

PRESENT: Melike Pekmezci (Chair), Donald Taylor (Vice Chair), Monica McLemore, Andrea Hasenstaub, Steven Altschuler, Terumi Kohwi-Shigematsu

**Draft Minutes**

Chair Pekmezci convened the meeting at 1:00pm. A quorum was present**.**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Pekmezci reviewed CAF’s committee charge and formal duties as listed in the Senate bylaws [(attachment 1)](https://senate.ucsf.edu/bylaws#no140)

**UCAF Updates**

Donald reported on the most recent UCAF meeting, which largely focused around the question of who is represented when a dept makes a public statement, and more generally, the concept of ‘departmental academic freedom’. Departments at other UC campuses have recently published statements in response to national/international issues and/or causes that may or may not represent the views of faculty within that dept. Members discussed some of the recent statements that have been published by both the Chancellor and Departments at UCSF and whether there has been any controversy around them. Melike shared that UCAF was considering drafting guidelines on this subject and reps were seeking input from campuses. CAF members highlighted the distinctions between university statements and individual faculty statements and the ways in which each are differently regulated. Additionally, members considered the distinction between a faculty member’s individual expression of personal views/opinions versus statements made in their professional capacity.

Separately, Donald advised that there was a discussion concerning recordings of classes/lectures/meetings and the potential speech/expression issues that arise from that practice.

More generally, CAF members discussed the importance of having a shared language with which to engage on sensitive issues. Additionally, Monica highlighted the importance of providing anonymous channels for the purpose of helping to diffuse/resolve conflicts among faculty/staff/learners/etc. For example, the SON utilizes a ‘virtual suggestion box’ that allows folks to submit anonymous comments/concerns/criticisms directly to the SON Dean for consideration without fear of individual repercussions or retaliation.

Committee members considered whether CAF could help to develop some type of broader channel that UCSF could utilize more broadly. Terumi noted that she has observed certain discrepancies in the treatment of clinicians’ vs research scientists, often at the department level, but there’s no place that folks can go to raise their voices about this type of problem outside of their dept. Members suggested this could potentially be taken up by the Committee on Faculty Welfare, but agreed that there should be better avenues for addressing/reporting such differential treatment and/or policies.

The committee also considered how statements on social media fit into this, particularly when so many academics are becoming more active on twitter. Monica spoke of some of her experiences being an academic with a very active social media presence/followers. Despite UCSF having published social media policies—one specific to [UCSF-hosted accounts](https://www.ucsf.edu/communications/social-media-guidelines) and another for [non-UCSF-hosted accounts](https://www.ucsf.edu/communications/social-media-personal)-- there remains a lot of nuance and complexity left to be addressed. Additionally, many folks may not be as familiar with the policies or even know they exist in the first place.

Analyst McRae suggested this topic could be incorporated into the proposed CAF town hall, either as part of the politicization of science discussion, or as an entirely new focus. Members asked Analyst McRae to collect additional information/resources on this topic to explore further.

**Current CAF Resources**

Chair Pekmezci advised members of the two resource documents that CAF had begun to review/update at end of last term—the Guidelines for Academic Freedom Investigations [(attachment 2**)**](https://senateserviceportal.ucsf.edu/v3/meetings/2680/files/GuidelinesforCAF.Review%281%29.pdf)& the CAF FAQ Document [(attachment 3)](https://senateserviceportal.ucsf.edu/v3/meetings/2680/files/2005_CAF_FAQ_with_edits.pdf). She requested that Analyst McRae send them again to members in word format so the group could continue suggesting edits.

Meeting adjourned at 2:09pm