

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • MERCED • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO •
SAN FRANCISCO • SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

Santa Cruz, June 27, 2019

Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Professor Herbert Lee

Dear VPAA Lee:

I write to submit this report on the work of the Latinx faculty group I led during the academic year 2018-19, as part of the UC Santa Cruz Faculty Community Networking Program 2018-2019.

The Left Out report prepared by The Campaign for College Opportunity is widely accepted as the most current and authoritative comparative view of the state of higher education in California as seen from the perspective of equity/inequity in access to college, composition of the faculty, and participation in educational leadership. According to it (using data for 2016-17) 26% of UC Santa Cruz undergraduate students are Latinx, but only 10% of its tenured faculty, 7% of its senate faculty, 20% of its non-tenured faculty, and 11% of its Senior leadership, are. Surprisingly, given the level of under-representation exhibited, on the faculty side this compares favorably with all other UC campuses. On the senior leadership side our 11% is better than all campuses, except Davis (14%) and Irvine (31%).

Here then there is for our campus, on the one hand, a certain measure of our relative success at creating a more equal campus that is more representative of the public of California, and, on the other, an indication of the road still to be covered in our way to equity. In the highly unequal context of California's higher education, we have an opportunity to lead the way to equality and excellence, a crucial goal for our system and state.

The Latinx Faculty group met six times with an average attendance of 9 faculty per meeting and a total of 25 different faculty participating. The meetings were organized as follows: the first three were devoted to an introduction of the initiative and its goals and an open discussion about what could be the issues affecting Latinx faculty on campus. The next two meetings chose 5 issues to focus. The final lunch was devoted to polishing some of the ideas presented. While it is true that the faculty who happened to attend lunches 4 and 5 got to vote on the issues to be selected and to work on their development, it is also true that all faculty received full updates through the meeting minutes and on the issues selected. As the one faculty who attended all meetings, I can also attest that even though these are not all the topics discussed, the issues presented below were clearly recurrent in our overall discussions.

A note on authorship: while I led the discussions and presented the issues to those who were not present when they were originally discussed, the five different focuses were voted by the attending faculty and worked on by volunteers from our discussion notes. Respecting their voices and our process, I have made no attempt at blending them in one style other than correcting a few things. What I can add though is that they reflect problems which consistently rose to the top of our priorities lists. They are *not* presented in a ranked order.

1. Support Proposal for Lecturers with Active Research Agendas

In 2017, UC-AFT funded a project to investigate the research activities of UC lectures and expand access to funding opportunities through the UC system. The report was conducted by the “Increase Lecturer Power in Research committee.”

The project included a survey “asking whether or not they have applied for grant support in the past and to comment on impediments (if any) they’ve experienced when attempting to apply for funding in their position as a lecturer” (3). Follow-up interviews were conducted with lecturers who “responded positively about having applied for funding in the past” (4). While this proposal does not intend to summarize the entire findings of the report, the Latinx faculty group acknowledges the value of this investigative project as a starting point to highlight the endeavors, achievements, and needs of Latinx lecturers who engage in research activities.

According to the report, lecturers engage in research and more generally professional activities that benefit not only lecturers but also students and the university (5). Lecturers engage in professional activities that include: “presenting at conferences, serving on panels, conducting experiments, writing articles (including peer-reviewed journal articles), writing books, performing music, creating and performing works or art”(5). The report also notes, based on follow-up interviews, that while many lecturers receive support from departmental chairs to carry out professional activities, they often experience extraordinary obstacles and difficulties in “obtaining support for the professional activities outside of teaching” (5). Furthermore, the report lists a number of disincentives that negatively impact lectures’ ability to pursue professional activities: 1) professional activities outside of teaching are not often considered in review processes given the degree of departmental autonomy in deciding how they will regard this area; 2) departmental funding for lecturers’ professional development is minimal to non-existent 3) most lecturers rely primarily on one source of funding to support their professional development activities; that is, the Union’s Non-Senate Faculty (NSF) Professional Development Fund (5-6).

In sum, the report observes that in order to carry out professional development activities lecturers either: “1) funded their projects themselves, 2) collaborated with Senate Faculty colleagues who were eligible to apply for funding, 3) sought funding from college endowments, or 4) received an exception to policy in order to apply for external funding. Solutions 1 & 2 were by far the most common; 3 & 4 were quite rare” (6). The report concludes that about 50% of the lecturers who responded to the “survey had actively sought out grants for research or instructional improvement during the time of their employment” (12). Therefore, in spite of the obstacles outlined above, teaching and research are, at least for these lecturers, clearly connected.

Finally, the committee tasked with this investigative project makes a number of important recommendations in order to increase funding opportunities for lecturers, raise their visibility and recognition for their research and contributions to the University (13-15). In line with these recommendations, the Latinx faculty group would like to advocate a campus-wide adoption of the actions outlined in the report (15). However, given the complexity of the possible process required to study and implement these recommendations, the Latinx group suggests an initial implementation of the following three recommendations so that:

- 1) “Continuing lecturers have the right to teach at least one course in their research field” (15).
- 2) “Continuing lecturers who are engaged in a verifiable [research or] creative project (who have, for example, a book contract, a performance series, a gallery show, or a sponsored documentary film) receive one sabbatical [quarter] per three-year appointment period” (15).
- 3) Continuing lecturers engaged in a verifiable [research or] creative project have access to “course abatement,” that is, the option to shuffle their courses into two quarters rather than three, without losing their benefits. In other words, a de facto sabbatical”(15).

4. In addition to the above recommendations, continuing lecturers engaged in verifiable research or a creative project have the right to course reductions, ideally from 8 to 6 courses. The latter would make items 2 and 3 achievable.

Such support shall be granted upon demonstrable:

1. Contributions to the department/unit; i.e. revision or creation of new courses offerings.
2. Sustained record of scholarly activities. These activities can include, but are not limited to, extensive and significant research that clearly underlies upper-division course offerings.
3. Demonstrable track record of professional activities. These activities can include, but are not limited to, participation and presentations of papers at conferences that impact teaching and research.
4. Publications in refereed journals stemming from both research and professional activities.

In conclusion, the committee sought concrete support for lecturer with active research agendas and the Latinx faculty group endorses their recommendations as crucial to our group .

Source:

Increase Lecturer Power in Research. Report prepared by Stephanie Lain for the UC-AFT on September 8, 2017 (Updated September 21, 2017).

2. Mentorship program across all levels of the pipeline (undergraduate, graduate, and faculty).

Although Latinx students’ participation in higher education has been steadily increasing, they remain the group with the lowest completion of undergraduate or graduate degrees, with only 16% persisting to graduation (Castillo-Montoya, 2017). Research suggests that the most common reasons for not persisting to graduation include financial challenges, insufficient knowledge about navigating college and graduate school, and difficulties coordinating their family obligations and their home and school identities (Azmitia, Sumabat Estrada, Cheong, Covarrubias, 2018; Castillo, 2017; Covarrubias, Valle, Laiduc, & Azmitia, 2017). As such, a robust Latinx mentoring network

could be a transformative resource for student success at all levels of education. While many Latinx faculty and campus organizations are already serving as key mentors, they often lack the resources to effectively serve the growing number of Latinx students on campus. Graduate mentorship is particularly lacking due to the small numbers of Latinx faculty on campus. Moreover, given the low numbers of *senior* Latinx faculty at UCSC, these faculty are also often challenged in their attempts to mentor their less senior colleagues (e.g., lecturers, assistant, and associate professors). Supporting effective mentorship streams at all levels of the pipeline (undergraduate, graduate, and faculty) is essential for the health of the Latinx community at UCSC.

One effective mentoring strategy in higher education involves assigning a mentor to each entering student and faculty member. At UCSC, for example, EOP's Bridge program has been extremely successful in promoting sense of belonging and providing academic mentorship to Latinx undergraduates as well as underrepresented students from other ethnic backgrounds. Yet, this program serves only a small fraction of Latinx students, and many other Latinx undergraduates often feel excluded from this important service. Transfer students are also not eligible for the EOP Bridge program, and although STARS provides courses that help these students learn to navigate the UCSC college culture, the courses are small and thus, also only serve a limited number of students. We request that the administration provide funds for designing and implementing a campus-wide mentoring system wherein all entering Latinx undergraduate and graduate students, as well as lecturers and ladder rank faculty, are assigned a mentor to help support their successful degree completion and promotion.

Sources:

- Castillo-Montoya, M. (2017). Deepening understanding of prior knowledge: What diverse first-generation college students in the US can teach us. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 22(5), 587-603.
- Azmitia, M., Sumabat-Estrada, G., Cheong, Y., & Covarrubias, R. (2018). "Dropping Out is Not an Option": How Educationally Resilient First-Generation Students See the Future. *New directions for child and adolescent development*, 2018(160), 89-100.
- Covarrubias, R., Valle, I., Laiduc, G., & Azmitia, M. (2017). "You Never Become Fully Independent": Family Roles and Independence in First-Generation College Students. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 0743558418788402.

3. How faculty service is measured, compensated, and considered for advancement.

Protecting junior professors must always be a priority, but this is particularly true for minority and female faculty members, who almost invariably have burdensome service obligations. Members of minority groups are often invited to serve on college-level committees as soon as they arrive on campus. The requirement for diversity on such things as search committees is a good idea in theory, but it becomes onerous if the few minority professors available are required to serve repeatedly.

Faculty service is unequal by definition. It is unequal across divisions and across departments. Some departments are smaller and their size results in more service weight due to a larger student-to-faculty ratio, size of the department, ladder-rank-to-lecturer ratio, etc. This inequality is inherent in the system and it goes beyond the faculty's background.

However, in an effort to increase diversity on campus, faculty of underrepresented minorities often serve on many more committees and are tied to larger service expectations for this precise reason. This further increases inequity in service expectations. For instance, in a typical week, a minority faculty member may have to deliver a presentation to a multiracial group of students, attend search-committee meetings, mentor minority students from a variety of majors, and speak at a gathering designed to foster racial harmony on campus. This faculty member will also be expected to bring in research funding and publish, and teach too. Juggling so many different obligations is one reason that some minority faculty members have trouble conducting research.

The categorization of what constitutes “excellent” or “outstanding” service is also less clear and quantifiable than research or teaching. It is harder to judge. This results in faculty who have too much service on their plate not being awarded substantially more practical recognition than someone who has “just” a considerable amount of service that comes with the position (i.e., it is easier to separate someone who publishes two journal articles than someone who publishes eight, but this is often not as clear-cut when referring to service)

Faculty from minority populations must “wear too many hats”. This leads to early burn out and limited time to work on research and teaching obligations, which is more heavily considered in merit reviews, and more critical for advancement.

Suggestions

- 1) Greater attention to tenure and promotion practices. We need fair promotion practices (at every stage of review) where service and the actual burden placed on Latinx faculty is considered. This is even more important for reviews on junior faculty.
- 2) Protect junior Latinx faculty from excessive teaching, advising, and service assignments.

4. Permanent funding for Research Center for the Americas.

Since 1992, the Research Center for the Americas (formerly the Chicano Latino Research Center from 1992-2018) has made UC Santa Cruz a vibrant hub for Latin American, Chicano/Latinx, and migration studies. Since its founding by faculty in Latin American and Latino Studies, its work explores the incredible diversity of the Americas; it is a forum for investigation and dialogue that brings together over [90 faculty](#) at UC Santa Cruz in every single division. Though it primarily draws from and brings together the social sciences, humanities, and arts, the RCA's scope has been hemispheric.

The RCA sponsors [Research Clusters](#) on topics proposed by UC Santa Cruz faculty and students, offers modest [Individual Faculty Research Awards](#) and [Graduate Student Mini-grants](#), and co-administers the [Lionel Cantú Memorial Award](#) with the Latin American and Latino Studies and Sociology Departments. With its support, RCA affiliates have produced numerous publications, including single-authored books, edited volumes, [research reports](#), [working papers](#), and [scholarly think pieces](#). The RCA puts Chicano/Latino and Latin American studies in dialogue with border and migration studies on a global scale and shows how those fields can and should inform each other. Over 2016-17, the Center led [Non-citizenship](#), UC Santa Cruz's Andrew W. Mellon Foundation John E. Sawyer Seminar on the Comparative Study of Culture. It has also collaborated with Mexican institutions and individual scholars across the Americas and is a member of [Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales](#) (Latin American Council of Social Sciences).

The RCA is committed to bridging the university and community. It supports research on the city and region in which it makes its home and hosts free, public conferences, symposia, workshops, public lectures, and film screenings both on and off campus. Over 2018-19, the RCA is co-leading a yearlong journalism community project titled [Escuchar, Compartir, Comunidad \(Listen, Share, Community\)](#) in partnership with [KZSC radio](#) and the [Digital NEST](#) (Nurturing Entrepreneurial Skills with Technology) in Watsonville, California with funding from the [Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County](#) and UC Santa Cruz's Chancellor's Graduate Student Internship Program.

The RCA teaches UC Santa Cruz undergraduates how to think critically and helps prepare them for graduate and professional school by providing them with mentorship and hands-on research experience via its [Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program](#) (URAP). Over 2015-16, RCA's undergraduate researchers helped establish [Nuestras Historias: The CLRC/RCA Archives](#), a trove of information about the CLRC/RCA's past and the vital role it plays at UC Santa Cruz. Over 2019-2020, the URAP program will launch a [new human rights investigations lab](#).

The current RCA Director, Dr. Sylvanna Falcón, is its 8th one. The RCA Directors have long argued we are in dire need of permanent funding for the research center to truly thrive. During a meeting with the Social Sciences Division on October 18, 2017, both the former director (Dr. Catherine Ramirez) and the current director argued that without modest permanent funding, which would secure a permanent staff position, it would be difficult to do the necessary planning that is standard for a UC research center.

The RCA Director assumes this role on top of existing expectations and responsibilities as a professor (continues teaching, mentoring students, serving on dissertation committees, etc.). Thus, the RCA Director relies on the part-time staff position to maintain a robust public profile for the center with its updated website and a number of programming events, apply to external grants, and process numerous internal awards. Currently the dedicated part-time staff person is hired on a [contract base](#), and the current contract expires on June 30, 2019. Fortunately, Dr. Falcón secured funding from the Student Fee Advisory Committee to continue the staff position until June 30, 2020. But again, this are not permanent funds, but rather soft money. The staff issue will return next year making any kind of long-term strategic planning difficult, if not impossible.

Permanent funds would also allow hiring a GSR again. GSRs who have been hired starting in AY 2018-2019 academic year have occurred by the Director applying to internal competitions because the GSR funding was cut last year.

Relying year after year on soft money makes it impossible to plan for the near future (literally) with such financial uncertainty. For a research center with a nearly three decade history, securing permanent funding is essential to realize a long-term vision that supports, promotes, and advances the scholarly visibility of RCA faculty affiliates and graduate students, that positions the RCA as a leading institution for the general public, journalists, and K-12 teachers, and that serves as an international site for visiting appointments for postdoctoral fellows and senior scholars to support intellectual engagement across the world. It also makes it difficult to address the need to reach out and involve even more faculty and students from underrepresented divisions on campus.

5. Strategic Latinx faculty cluster hire.

The problem: There are 28% of Chicax/Latinx undergraduate students at UCSC and only 6% of Chicax/Latinx Faculty. Latinx faculty have an overload amount of service, including mentoring undergraduate and graduate students. Due to the so-called “leaky pipeline” in academia, there is admittedly a small pool to draw from for URM faculty candidates. Even so, there are factors that

reduce these numbers even further. The number of URM faculty in pools of applications does not reflect the percent of Ph.D. graduates or even postdocs who come from underrepresented groups. Furthermore, the demographics of selected top candidates, such as those invited for interview, also, do not reflect the pool of already reduced applicants.

The goal: Increase faculty diversity through hiring and retaining Latinx faculty.

Proposed solutions:

1. Encourage Latinx and URM faculty hires and retention: Acknowledging that social sciences and humanities will most likely benefit from cluster hiring, it is essential to also recruit and retain Latinx hires from regular calls, provide funding to offer competitive salaries and start-up packages for Latinx faculty not part of the cluster hire. Here, we are most concerned with hiring faculty who are committed to increasing diversity as demonstrated by their CVs.
2. Cluster Hiring: in a span of 3-5 years, hire URM faculty across divisions.

Proposed Methods:

1. Latinx Topics: Hire faculty that work on Latinx topics or topics that especially affect Latinx communities. The group encourages hires of candidates that exhibit interdisciplinary research (e.g.: environmental justice, race, immigration, inclusive methodology, etc.). The candidates would belong to a home department, but the more their research crosses traditional disciplines, the higher the chances of contributing to bridging gaps and creating networks across divisions. The Academic Priority Areas from the Strategic Academic Plan could be used as a first way to organize the interdisciplinary hires.
2. Evaluating Applications: We propose a systematic method of filtering through applications that is equitable. For example, weighing value of diversity statement, actual service and leadership benefitting Latinx communities as much as we value research will help bring to light excellent candidates who might otherwise go overlooked. Increasing the number of faculty committed to diversity and service will also help to reduce the load on current URM faculty. In order for this approach to be successful, we must set high standards for the diversity statement and record of community orientation in the cluster hire and in general hires. It is also imperative to note that, although the research statement must be competitive, we should reduce emphasis on the specific field of research required. The broad search is most effective when the pool of candidates is already small and when it is difficult to align research with matters of social justice such as in math and engineering.
3. Obtaining buy-in from the department. Obtaining buy-in from the department is one of the most challenging obstacles to overcome in the efforts to increase URM faculty. Ultimately, it is the faculty in the department who decide whom to make offers to. They have the power to vote for or against faculty hires. It is not in the best interest of a candidate to be given an offer in a department that has expressed resistance to their hire. If history provides any evidence of how to achieve social justice amidst resistance, it is through mutual benefit of opposing parties. Departments are often looking to increase department size through requests for FTEs. If additional “bonus” FTEs are offered for target hires, then the department would willingly look for suitable candidates. These FTEs can be given in a competitive way. For example, consider the situation

where BSOE has 5 FTEs for target hires. Each department may put forth a candidate with a letter of support. This is assuming that each department is in support of the candidate. Then a diversity committee would decide based on the criteria mentioned above (strategy to target URM faculty), the candidates that merit the FTE. This can also be done at the level of UCSC much like the Cota-Robles Fellowships are administered.

In closing, let me point out that we tried to focus on a limited number of issues whose potential solution was realistically within reach. We hope the campus leadership will seriously consider them when identifying its priorities for the short and medium-range future. Most of these issues resonate with those also identified by the other groups participating in the UC Santa Cruz Faculty Community Networking Program 2018-2019 as can be seen by reading the Conveners' Joint Statement. Finally, I want to thank you for the opportunity to lead this group — creating for a few months a space that was both a valuable professional forum and an important social sphere— and ask that you consider making these groups permanent or at least longer-term than the original one year program.

Yours,

Juan Poblete
Professor, Literature Department