Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group Preliminary Report

First of Two Phases, Summer 2021

Executive Summary

On January 26, 2021, the Academic Council wrote President Drake with recommendations on mitigating COVID-19 impacts on faculty advancement, morale, work-life balance, and dependent care responsibilities. In response, President Michael V. Drake requested that Provost Michael T. Brown form the Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group (MCIF-WG), formalized on April 29, 2021 with the appointment of 17 members (see roster in appendix four). The MCIF-WG was charged with the review and prioritization of fifteen "immediate" and six "long-term" recommendations from the Academic Council (AC), the assessment of actions already taken by campuses to mitigate COVID-19 impacts on faculty, and advising UCOP on data and metrics to help UC define the issues UC is facing as a result of COVID-19 and track the progress UC makes in addressing them.

The focus of the MCIF-WG in early meetings was on the assessment of actions already taken by campuses and the prioritization of AC recommendations. <u>The goal in prioritizing the recommendations was to identify actions the University system and campuses could take swiftly in Fall 2021 to respond to areas the MCIF-WG members viewed as being of greatest concern to faculty across the system.</u> MCIF-WG members ranked the AC recommendations according to priority level (high, medium, or low), deliberately narrowing its focus on proposing actions to address the three Academic Council recommendations members ranked as highest priority. It took this approach with the objective of enabling the University system and campus leadership <u>to act swiftly</u> on a few of the most pressing and timely areas of concern: academic review and appraisal, funding for research recovery, and campus-level funding to support approved teaching duty modifications. This initial report focuses on these areas so that campuses have options immediately available to them for the 2021-2022 academic year. A second and final report will be issued by spring 2022.

Highest Priority Academic Council Recommendations

MCIF-WG members identified three AC recommendations that were clear outliers in the number of members that ranked each as high priority: recommendations four, eleven, and three. AC recommendation number four, relating to academic review and appraisal, asks campuses to "adjust expectations for promotions and merit advances to conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities (ARO) principles." ARO principles, as described in the recommendation, "enable merit and promotion reviews to evaluate candidates <u>fairly</u> based on their individual review-period professional accomplishments by taking into account unexpected or disruptive circumstances during that period that may have curtailed the candidate's normal ability to achieve expected outcomes." This recommendation also advises on COVID statements in file review, which are widely in use across all campuses but with variance in how faculty are instructed to employ them. AC recommendation numbers eleven and three request the creation of funding programs to recover from research losses and to provide campus-level support for approved teaching duty modifications whenever department resources fall short.

Subsequently, the MCIF-WG did a deep dive on these three AC recommendations and was able to identify actions that could be taken swiftly to address COVID-19 impacts for which faculty have expressed particular concern across the system. In identifying actions, members were cognizant of how campuses differed with respect to culture, local priorities, resource levels, and in programs or measures that had already been enacted.

MCIF-WG Recommendations Developed in Response to AC Recommendations

With these differences in mind, the MCIF-WG organized identified actions into three separate recommendations for campuses to implement in response to the three highest-priority AC recommendations and included options to enable campus flexibility based on their circumstances. Providing options is designed to balance the need for campus flexibility and producing substantive and equitable outcomes that would address COVID-19 impacts on faculty across all campuses. MCIF-WG recommendations are summarized below, but can be found in more detail on pages 14 - 20. See also diagram on page three for a visual on how MCIF-WG recommendations relate to the three highest priority AC recommendations. For clarity, the report distinguishes between Academic Council recommendations and the subsequent Working Group recommendations by the acronyms "AC" and "MCIF-WG."

MCIF-WG Recommendations One and Two aim to address AC recommendation number four regarding academic review (see pages 14 - 17). MCIF-WG Recommendation One requests that all campuses rebrand COVID impact statements as a "COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statement" and ensure that the use of COVID statements in file review adhere to best practices identified by the MCIF-WG. If not already doing so, it requires campuses to draft language on how departments are to interpret and apply ARO principles and to incorporate department-level statements into the file review process to be used as a means to benchmark performance across disciplines. It also requests that campuses provide guidance to faculty reviewers who submit letters to a candidate's file. Reviewers should consider the candidate's performance in light of COVID impacts as well as the candidate's noteworthy contributions during the review period.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Two recognizes that some campuses have relied more on the file review deferral process while others have actively encouraged faculty to submit files with an understanding that they would be holistically reviewed using ARO principles. It provides campuses with two options based on the scenario that best matches current campus practices. For campuses relying heavily on the file deferral process, the WG recommends that they commit to retroactive pay and advancement for qualifying faculty. Because of the cascading effects of the pandemic on faculty careers, the WG agreed that these measures should be in effect for *five* years.
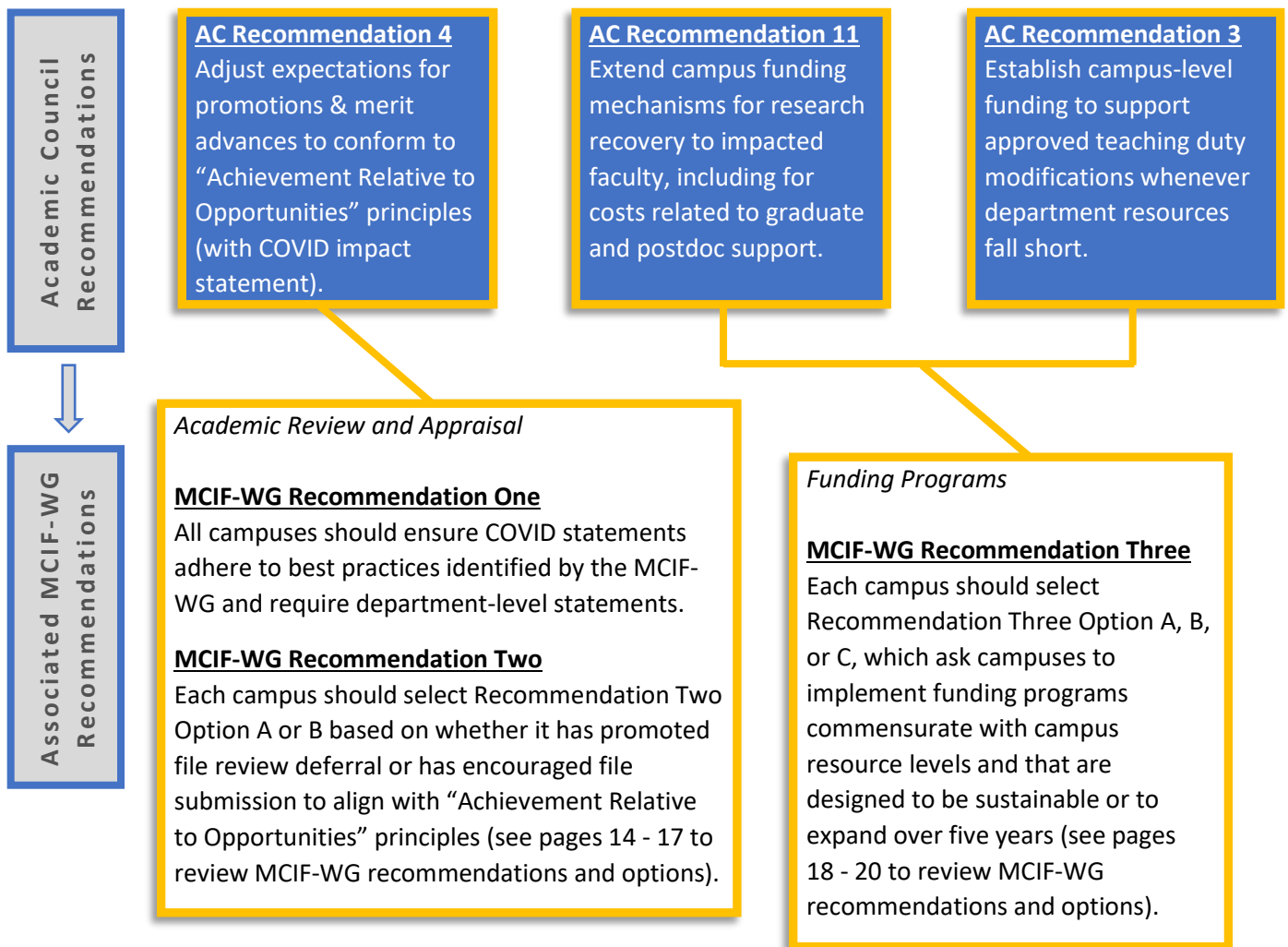
MCIF-WG Recommendation Three seeks to address AC recommendation numbers eleven and three. It asks campuses to implement funding programs for research recovery (including larger and smaller scale research activities) and to provide campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications that can be sustained or expanded over five years. This MCIF-WG recommendation offers options based on campus resource constraints (see pages 18 – 20). Eligibility for these programs would be open to all faculty. At the minimum, the most resource-constrained campuses should have a modest centrally managed *need-based* grant program in place. For moderately resource-constrained campuses, the WG asks that a centrally managed *application-based* funding program be established with a set range of award amounts that can be used for either approved teaching duty modifications or research recovery. Campuses that are least resource constrained should have one centrally managed independent funding program for research recovery with more sizable grants that faculty can apply for as well as a separate program for campus-level funding to support teaching duty modifications, with funds being distributed and managed at the school level.

Conclusion

The MCIF-WG is reconvening to further consider the other 18 Academic Council recommendations that are similarly substantive. Some of the other 18 AC recommendations have links to the three being addressed herein, so the WG may identify other actions that would further refine the implementation of the MCIF-WG recommendations proposed in this preliminary report.

The WG recognizes that the system and campuses both continue to face resource constraints, but views costs associated with the highest-ranked recommendations as having sufficient importance to warrant prioritizing the identification of funds that can be allocated to these purposes. It encourages leadership to seriously consider the three MCIF-WG recommendations put forward on pages 14 - 20 with associated options and how these can be implemented, or in the case of campuses that have already taken some of these actions, how programs can be sustained or expanded for up to five years.

Summary of MCIF-WG recommendations and their relationship to the top-ranked high priority Academic Council recommendations. See pages 14 - 20.

Academic Council Recommendations

AC Recommendation 4
Adjust expectations for promotions & merit advances to conform to "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" principles (with COVID impact statement).

AC Recommendation 11
Extend campus funding mechanisms for research recovery to impacted faculty, including for costs related to graduate and postdoc support.

AC Recommendation 3
Establish campus-level funding to support approved teaching duty modifications whenever department resources fall short.

Associated MCIF-WG Recommendations

Academic Review and Appraisal

MCIF-WG Recommendation One
All campuses should ensure COVID statements adhere to best practices identified by the MCIF-WG and require department-level statements.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Two
Each campus should select Recommendation Two Option A or B based on whether it has promoted file review deferral or has encouraged file submission to align with "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" principles (see pages 14 - 17 to review MCIF-WG recommendations and options).

Funding Programs

MCIF-WG Recommendation Three
Each campus should select Recommendation Three Option A, B, or C, which ask campuses to implement funding programs commensurate with campus resource levels and that are designed to be sustainable or to expand over five years (see pages 18 - 20 to review MCIF-WG recommendations and options).

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I. Introduction

In March 2020, under the direction of governing authorities and with the counsel of public health officials, the University of California suspended onsite operations of all affiliated locations in response to the novel coronavirus, with appropriate exceptions for locations and staff performing health-related or other essential functions. These shelter-in-place orders continued to varying degrees through the end of 2020 and most of 2021. They played an important role in controlling the spread of COVID-19, keeping hospitals and other health centers from becoming overextended, and protecting the health and safety of everyone, particularly vulnerable populations.

In the face of pandemic-related challenges, the University had to be exceptionally adaptive in advancing the three pillars of its mission in teaching, research, and public service, even as campus resources dwindled from normal levels. Faculty were on the forefront of the changes necessitated by COVID-19 and profoundly felt its impacts in their work and personal lives, with disparate impacts based on gender and race. Many faced increased dependent care responsibilities and some were directly affected by the virus or saw their loved ones suffer from it.

Even so, faculty made a dramatic pivot to conducting instruction remotely with minimal preparation for new instruction media. As labs and other research facilities were closed, many had to absorb resulting sunk costs, literally as well as in time and energy devoted to research outcomes that could not be fully brought to fruition. With the new challenges presented by COVID-19, there were no shortages for service opportunities and many faculty during this time devoted limited time and energy to implementing new practices in response to rapidly changing developments, demonstrating an admirable commitment on holding the University to its standards of excellence.
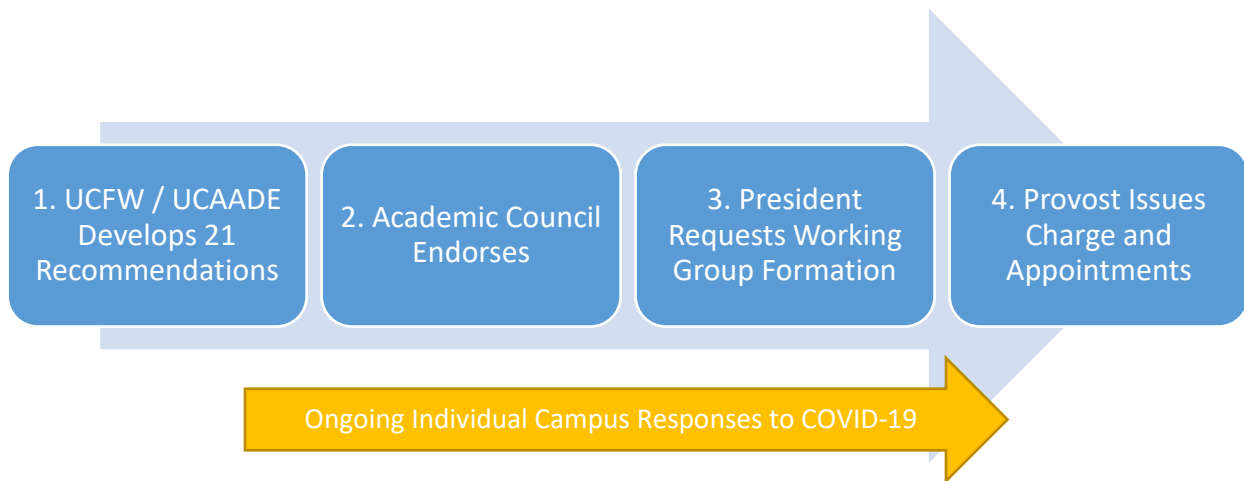
One of these service initiatives began in 2020, led by the University Committees on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) and on Affirmative Action, Diversity and Equity (UCAADE). These Committees, chaired by Shelley Halpain and Javier Arsuaga, respectively, recognized early that any impact COVID-19 would have on faculty whether with regard to career advancement, morale, work-life balance, or increased dependent care responsibilities could have a commensurate long-term impact on the University's capacity to produce desired outcomes in teaching, research, and service as well as in diversity and equity goals.

On January 26, 2021, Academic Council (AC) Chair Mary Gauvain, in a letter to President Michael V. Drake, endorsed a separate letter jointly drafted by UCFW and UCAADE that included fifteen shorter-term recommendations to mitigate against the direct impacts COVID-19 had on faculty and six longer-term recommendations that look at how the COVID-19-era could serve as a catalyst "to strengthen the values of the UC…and to make the UC 'the employer of choice' for world class academics." President Drake's response was to call for the organization of a working group comprised of Academic Senate representatives and campus leaders to address the AC recommendations.

The Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group was instituted when Provost Michael T. Brown appointed Working Group members on April 29, 2021, with Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Mary Croughan and Academic Council Vice Chair (now serving as Chair) Robert Horwitz as Co-Chairs. The following preliminary report details the activities of the Working Group in the Summer of 2021 and puts forward three MCIF-WG recommendations to address three AC recommendations, providing faculty across the system with the tools and conditions necessary to continue and elevate the University of California's trajectory of excellence.

II. Background

As prefaced in the introduction, the Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group (MCIF-WG) originated at President Michael V. Drake's request, which was informed by the Academic Council, the UCFW, and the UCAADE. UC Provost Michael T. Brown issued appointment letters to selected members in April, forming the Working Group, which was shortly followed by the Working Group's Charge in May 2021. The Co-Chairs of the MCIF-WG are Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Mary Croughan and Academic Council Vice Chair Robert Horwitz.

1. UCFW / UCAADE Develops 21 Recommendations	2. Academic Council Endorses	3. President Requests Working Group Formation	4. Provost Issues Charge and Appointments

Ongoing Individual Campus Responses to COVID-19

The Charge

The Charge for the Senate Administration Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group reflects the interests and concerns of all of the above stakeholders.[1] Provost Brown specifically charged the MCIF-WG with the following:

- "Reviewing the fifteen 'immediate' and six 'long-term' recommendations…and advising on and prioritizing the specific actions that will mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 on faculty, especially early-career faculty."

- "Preparing an inventory of actions already taken by campuses to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on faculty…and [advising] UCOP whether actions are better addressed at a system-level or by the individual campuses."

- "Advising UCOP on data and metrics that will help UC define the issues UC is facing as a result of COVID-19 and track the progress UC makes in addressing them."

The Charge laid out a plan that would include two stages, the first to take place in the summer of 2021 and the second to take place in the following fall, and called for reports to be drafted for each stage with the final report being completed in December 2021. This is the preliminary report. It puts forward MCIF-WG recommendations with associated options that the WG proposes implementing immediately based on their review and prioritization of the AC recommendations, explains how the WG arrived at identified

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[1] Foundational documents, including the Charge, are included as appendices for reference.

actions, and provides an assessment of what has already been done either at the system or campus levels to address prioritized AC recommendations. Other key documents have been included as appendices, including:

1. Academic Council Endorsement of 21 Recommendations
2. President Michael V. Drake's Response to the Academic Council
3. The MCIF-WG Charge
4. MCIF Working Group Membership
5. UCAP Guidance for Review of Academic Personnel Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic
6. Draft Pandemic Sabbatical Credit Program Proposal
7. Campus Stakeholders

The focus of this preliminary report will be to address three AC recommendations the WG ranked as of highest priority with the intent to revisit 18 other recommendations when the members meet again in the fall. It was determined that prioritization of the recommendations was necessary in order to meet one of the Charge's objectives, which was to be able to begin implementation of some of the most needed actions swiftly. The three AC recommendations the WG ranked as top priority were:

Academic Council Recommendation	Description (abbreviated)[2]
Four	Adjust expectations for promotions & merit advances to conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles (with COVID impact statement)
Eleven	Extend campus funding mechanisms to impacted faculty for research recovery, including costs related to graduate and postdoc support.
Three	Establish campus-level funding whenever department resources fall short to support approved teaching duty modifications, fostering recovery of lost scholarly productivity

The WG recognizes the cultural and organizational differences between each of the campuses, including differences in how each has responded to COVID-19 impacts on faculty to date, and has strived to build room for campus customization in how each approaches implementing the MCIF-WG recommendations. At the same time, the WG took into account the value of systemwide guidance in clarifying shared goals, maintaining consistency in application of policy across campuses, and ensuring that faculty across the system see areas of concern meaningfully and equitably addressed.

Methodology

As mentioned previously, the 21 recommendations developed by UCFW and UCAADE were categorized according to the estimated timelines needed for implementation. In their original letter to the AC, they wrote, "We have divided our…recommendations…into two parts to emphasize the need for (a) urgent and immediate action (in the time frame ranging from this month through the next two to five years); and (b) to initiate discussion on how the University of California may address critical, systemic challenges in order to create a University environment that values a diverse faculty and fosters equity

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[2] Recommendation descriptions have been modified from the original language for clarity and to comport with the how the MCIF-WG thought they should be implemented.

and inclusion throughout its mission." Fifteen recommendations fell in the first category with six in the second.

Early on in the process, it was determined to focus the WG's attention on the first 15 shorter-term AC recommendations in this first stage given that one of the key objectives was to be able to implement actions swiftly in Fall 2021. The MCIF-WG is comprised of 17 members with representation largely balanced across all campuses. Campus representatives include both faculty and administrators, with faculty making up a slight majority in the WG.

The WG held three meetings over the course of June and July 2021 (June 4, June 25, and July 13). Prior to the first meeting, each WG member received a "recommendation matrix" template with the first fourteen shorter-term AC recommendations listed.[3] UCOP acknowledged themes and interrelationships between the AC recommendations and grouped them accordingly. These themes related to academic performance review and appraisal, culture, equity, and funding.[4] Instructions to WG members asked them to rank the priority level of the 14 recommendations as high, medium, or low, with limits on how many could be ranked at each priority level. Four recommendations were allowed to be ranked as high priority; five could be ranked as medium; and the remaining five recommendations would be ranked as low.

For each of the four recommendations WG members ranked as high priority, they were also asked to provide suggested actions that could be taken over the summer, in the fall, and through five years' time, as well as to explain the corresponding impact on their campus and challenges encountered in addressing the issue. WG members also indicated whether they considered each to be better addressed with a system or individual campus approach for each of the fourteen recommendations.

Another of the first steps UCOP took prior to the first meeting was to put out a request for information on the measures campuses had already taken to address COVID-19 impacts on faculty. All ten campuses responded with information that was insightful and useful in understanding the broader landscape, where there were similarities in approach and where there were differences, whether big or small.

The recommendation matrices submitted by the WG members combined with the campus action inventories the campuses submitted to UCOP Academic Affairs provided key information and perspectives that would serve to structure and inform the WG's kickoff meeting on June 4. For example, through analysis of the data matrices, UCOP Academic Affairs was able to determine which of the fourteen AC recommendations were highest-ranked in priority by most WG members. UCOP Academic Affairs was then able to assess these rankings in light of inventory actions reported by campuses to understand the extent to which these actions were able to address the recommendation or whether gaps existed that could warrant further action.

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[3] Recommendation fifteen was not included as it was taken as a given that it would be implemented and pertains more to evaluating the University's success in addressing COVID-19 impacts. It advises that "Chairs, Deans, University Administration, and appropriate Senate committees should frequently quantify and evaluate the success of these support measures & make adjustments as needed." It continues that system-wide Academic Personnel ought to…"gather data on the policies and programs and outcome measures, including metrics pertaining to gender, race, ethnicity, and LGBTQ identity."

[4] "Funding" recommendations included those that specifically advised where direct funding ought to be made available. Recommendations that could have implicit resource considerations were not included in this category.

The WG discussed these findings in the first meeting on June 4, 2021. As reported above, the discussion centered on AC recommendations that received the most "high-priority" rankings from WG members, with numbers four, eleven and three being clear outliers from how other recommendations were ranked.[5] Based on this discussion, it was decided to dedicate the subsequent two WG meetings of this first stage to honing in on the highest priority recommendations, so that actions could be taken swiftly on these areas that members viewed as having a considerable effect on faculty at their campuses.

The June 25th meeting focused on AC recommendation number four, which relates to academic review and appraisal. The July 13th meeting focused on AC recommendation numbers eleven and three, which call for programs that provide funding for research recovery and funding for campus-level approved teaching duty modifications, respectively.

Review of Highest Priority AC Recommendations

#	AC Recommendation Title	Working Group Consensus	Inventory[6]
4	ARO-conforming promotion and merit expectations	11 of 17 members	ALL CAMPUSES
11	Campus funding mechanisms for research recovery	10 of 17 members	SOME CAMPUSES
3	Campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications	8 of 17 members	SOME CAMPUSES

AC recommendation number four, discussed on June 25, was ranked as high-priority by the largest number of WG members (eleven out of seventeen ranked it as high). It calls for adjusting expectations for promotions and merit advances to conform to "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" (ARO) principles. As described in the full text of the recommendation, ARO principles "enable merit and promotion reviews to evaluate candidates fairly based on their individual review-period professional accomplishments by taking into account unexpected or disruptive circumstances during that period that may have curtailed the candidate's normal ability to achieve expected outcomes."

In the WG's subsequent meeting on July 13, AC recommendation numbers eleven and three were discussed. Recommendation eleven closely followed recommendation four in the number of WG members who viewed this as high priority with ten out of seventeen classifying it as such. Although recommendation three on campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications did not see a majority of WG members mark it as high-priority, it had the third largest consensus on prioritization and,

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[5] To a certain extent, top-ranked recommendations have a symbiotic relationship to others, such that if one of these is addressed in a meaningfully way, other actions could, by consequence, be taken on others. For example, addressing recommendation three which calls for campus-level funding to be made available for teaching duty modifications could then open the way for strengthening COVID-related Dependent Care Modified Duties programs and awarding additional sabbatical credits which are both associated with recommendation two.

[6] This reflects how many campuses have taken action on each of the top-ranked recommendations (all, most, some, few), though more actions are needed to fully address the recommendations, including where all campuses have taken action. Since the WG's first meeting on June 4, campuses communicated new information and/or programs on recommendations which warranted modifying the inventory assessment from what was originally presented to the WG.

as with four and eleven, could be seen as an outlier from other recommendations for which WG member prioritization was more broadly distributed.

When polled specifically on academic review and appraisal in the June 25 meeting, WG members were near unanimous in agreeing that these measures should continue for up to three to five years (versus one to two years). In the subsequent meeting on July 13 focused on funding for research recovery and campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications, the WG affirmed that the same timeline should be equally applicable for these and necessary funding should be budgeted into out-years. According to recommendation matrices submitted, a significant majority of WG members felt that there was a role for the system in addressing recommendation number four. A slight majority felt that there was a role for the system in recommendation numbers eleven and three, relating to funding programs. The recommendations the MCIF-WG identified reflect part of the role MCIF-WG members saw for the system, bringing campuses better into alignment with one another on foundational principles and practices.

System and Campus Actions on Highest Priority AC Recommendations

As indicated in the table above, all campuses have responded to the concerns in AC recommendation number four, though further actions are necessary to fully address the spirit of the recommendation as well as to provide for alignment and equity across the system. One step all campuses have taken has been to communicate to faculty on their intent to review academic personnel files holistically and in light of COVID-19 impacts. At the system-level, the University Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP) also provided support for these actions in guidance that the Academic Council circulated with campus CAPs on April 1, 2021.[7] The UCAP guidance provides targeted recommendations for CAPs, departments, and faculty on the academic review process. This guidance has provided campuses with a common reference point to help direct decision-making on the academic review process. However, it is also noted that "this is guidance and campus' policy/guidance would take precedence in case of conflict." This open-endedness is important for campus operational flexibility, but could also make it difficult to ascertain which elements of this guidance are ultimately adopted and to what extent policy and processes are equitable for faculty across all campuses.

In addition to communication to faculty on the holistic review of academic files, all campuses have provided individual faculty members with the option to include an individual statement in their file on how the pandemic has affected work during the performance period (commonly referred to in shorthand as a "COVID impact statement," and which the WG suggests be referred to in the future as a "COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statement"). However, campuses differ in instructions to faculty on the drafting of the statement and to what extent they take into consideration privacy concerns as well as the positive contributions faculty made in the COVID-era. As the WG anticipates the use of a COVID Opportunities and Challenge Statement in file review for up to the next five years, it will be important for some elements of these statements to be common across all campuses. For example, the development of a checklist consisting of stock language representative of common professional faculty situations could enable individuals to quickly select situations that pertained to them without divulging personal information. WG members agreed that faculty statements should not include personal

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[7] "Guidance for Review of Academic Personnel Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic", April 1, 2021.

information at all with a focus on how they were impacted and not why. Additionally, requesting positive examples of how faculty went above and beyond to contribute to the University's mission during this time has the potential to alter the tone of the performance narrative in a more optimistic direction. Beyond the two universal commonalities of holistic review and the opportunity to provide a statement, campuses differed in some important areas (see table below).

Review and Appraisal Topic	Differing Campus Practices	UCAP Guidance / Other Notes
Deferrals as Relating to Compensation and Advancement	1. Deferral with commitment to retroactive pay 2. Deferral without commitment to retroactive pay 3. File submission with formal step percentage applied for lost productivity to permit advancement 4. File submission within a campus culture of holistic review to permit advancement	To departments: "Avoid deferral of file reviews…[but] deferrals should be allowable." Note: MCIF-WG members expressed concern for faculty who could defer based on wrongly underestimating their achievements.
COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statement	1. Encouraging or requiring a department-level statement in addition to individual statement 2. Explicit request for positive ways faculty made special contributions in addition to how they were negatively impacted 3. Varying levels of detail in instructions to faculty on statements, particularly in accounting for privacy	To departments: "Provide a brief statement to your campus CAP describing how the pandemic impacted the disciplines in your department." Note: Department statements could serve as a benchmark for a given discipline.
Evaluation Areas	1. Temporary modification or not of evaluation requirements, such as exclusion of teaching evaluations 2. Temporary modification or not of evaluation area weight, such as putting more weight on teaching/service efforts where research progress was limited	To departments: "Acknowledge innovations in teaching, with enormous shift to creating and delivering online course curricula." "Consider temporarily adjusting expectations…to 75%...of the usual level of productivity." Note: MCIF-WG members suggested enabling faculty to request how much weight an area be given versus others.

Most campuses have not been able to address AC recommendation numbers eleven and three, which call for campus-level funding programs to support research recovery and to enable campus departments more flexibility to allow for teaching duty modifications. This is largely due to resource constraints. Established programs necessarily differ in their scope, eligibility, and award amounts based on the level of resources participating campuses were able to dedicate to them.[8] The WG considered these types of funding to be essential in mitigating the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on faculty and in the recovery of the University, recommending that funding be allocated over five fiscal years.

Five campuses submitted communications to UCOP detailing research recovery programs they had instituted. Two of these were announced recently, with one of these as recent as July 9, 2021. Another that had been in place expired with the end of Fiscal Year 2020-2021, reflecting the challenges of sustaining such funding in the midst of the number of other priorities campuses face.

Eligibility for all of the programs focused on Assistant Professor level faculty, with one having expanded eligibility for Professor-level awardees who needed to report a higher threshold of research losses. One campus initially designed a program with more narrow eligibility requirements for Assistant Professors, however these did not hold in practice. The WG recommends that in the future eligibility for these programs be open to all faculty as senior faculty manage many of the larger research enterprises, with staffing implications, and have reduced access to many federal grants that are targeted more toward junior faculty.

Three of the campuses had an application process with one of the primary criteria being the extent to which COVID-19-related restrictions resulted in lost research productivity and funding. These campuses tended to have higher-dollar awards that could be made if applicants could justify them based on research expenses. Two of the more recent programs that have been launched have a more automated process with flat commitments to all assistant professors of either a specified dollar amount or, in the case of one, the hiring (or extension) of a PhD or MFA student for one academic year, inclusive of tuition, fees, and salary. This latter option allows the campus to tap into specific pools of funding, such as state lottery funds or one-time relief funds, that may not have been able to be used for other purposes. It also addresses the needs of graduate students who also experienced disruptions to their research.

UCOP Academic Affairs highlighted four examples of campuses providing funding for teaching duty modifications to the WG, which, on the whole, relied on more limited resources than funding mechanisms made available for research recovery. One campus was able to offer eligible faculty who apply a quarter of teaching release with an accompanying funds matching program whereby the Office of Academic Personnel would match the department up to $3,000 per course, up to two courses. Another campus established a program that would provide faculty who applied with a flat amount of funding based on "acute need for assistance" due to the impacts of the pandemic. This funding can be used for a wide range of purposes, including research and teaching support. Other campuses took advantage of state lottery and federal relief funds, available through 2022, to cover the costs of TA classroom support or expanded the use of pre-existing programs set-up to provide limited replacement teaching funds for faculty making use of modified duties provisions.

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[8] Campuses, in most cases, did not provide the total allocated to each program, though general deductions could be made based on how much funding could be awarded at an individual level.

III. MCIF-WG Recommendations in Response to AC Recommendations

As the WG discussed the various ways COVID-19 had impacted faculty across the system, members were very cognizant of how campuses differed with respect to culture, local priorities, resource levels, and in programs or measures that had already been enacted. The WG was also mindful of all the campus efforts that have been ongoing from spring 2020 until present day given different campus considerations.
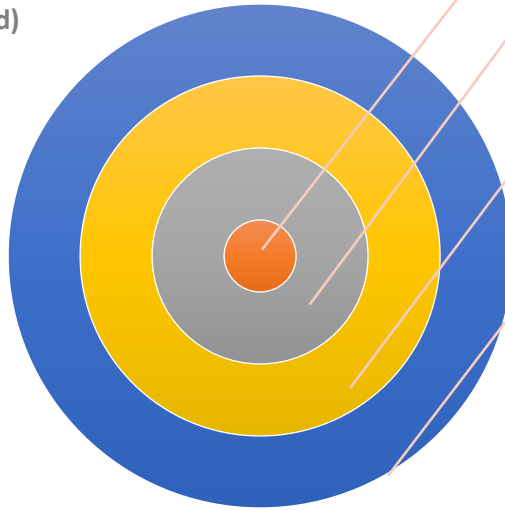
In this context, the WG reviewed the AC recommendations with an eye toward developing recommendations in response that would provide campuses with flexibility, increase equity across the system, and offer meaningful solutions in areas where faculty have expressed the most concern. In this first stage of the WG's work, MCIF-WG recommendations are centered on the highest priority AC recommendations reviewed above. The WG determined that the best way to both mitigate COVID-19 impacts on faculty across the system and provide the flexibility described above was to put forward a "menu" of options to be selected from based on an individual campus's unique situation. A noteworthy exception where some degree of standardization could be valuable to the system is in the guidance campuses provide to faculty on their inclusion of a "COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statement" in their academic files.

One of the outcomes from the initial June 4 meeting in which the highest priority recommendations were confirmed was an acknowledgement of the resource implications attendant to all of them as well as the indirect relationships they had to other recommendations. AC recommendation numbers eleven and three (funding for research recovery and campus-level funding for teaching duty modifications), of course, have clear need for the allocation of identified funding to be addressed. AC recommendation number four, while focused on how academic files are reviewed, also has indirect resource implications, such as when and whether merit increases are applied when a faculty member requests a file review deferral. Additionally, campus-level funding for teaching duty modifications could be used to buttress Dependent Care Modified Duties programs or make awarding additional sabbatical credit more feasible.

The diagram on page 13 represents cost implications of options put forward by the WG to address the highest ranked AC recommendations and how to consider each in light of each campus's varying resource constraints. For example, one of the actions the WG proposes is that all campuses which have relied heavily on a deferral process for faculty whose work has been impacted by COVID-19, no matter their level of resources, should commit to retroactive pay for these faculty members with rare exception. Deferrals have career and salary implications which, in turn, have equity implications.

The other rings in the diagram represent funding program options the WG recommends establishing based on each campus's assessment of whether it is most resource-constrained, moderately resource-constrained, or least resource constrained. In summary, the most resource-constrained campuses should prepare to establish a *need-based* grant program, if not already in place, that can provide modest support to faculty who have been hardest hit in the pandemic whether due to personal circumstances or professional circumstances. Campuses that are less constrained are asked to establish programs that have increasing levels of capacity to support faculty in teaching duty modifications and research recovery. Finally, the WG envisions that these funding programs ought to be designed to be sustained or expanded over five years, so campuses, including those that have already implemented similar programs, should keep this in mind as budgetary circumstances change over the next several years. More details on these funding program options can be found on pages 17 – 20.

1. Retroactive pay
(all campuses promoting deferrals should make this committment no matter constraints)

2. Need-based grant program
(option for most resource-constrained campuses; single modest amount awarded from central fund)

3. Application-based program
(option for moderately resource-constrained campuses; a range of amounts awarded from central fund)

4. Expanded programs
(option for least resource-constrained campuses; range of amounts for research bridge funding awarded from central fund; campus-level funding for approved teaching modifications managed by schools)

Pandemic Sabbatical Credit Program

As external support to campuses, the University is also considering a new Pandemic Sabbatical Credit Program that would award faculty additional sabbatical credits for efforts in teaching and/or service over the course of the pandemic. This program, still under discussion, could provide eligible faculty members additional bandwidth to focus on their research goals, which were challenged during the pandemic. Once the program is more fully defined, the University could explore and identify available resources that could complement campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications.

MCIF Working Group Recommendations

The next seven pages include three MCIF Working Group recommendations to be implemented at each campus to address the highest priority AC recommendations. Options have been provided where it makes sense to enable campus flexibility based on individual circumstances.

MCIF-WG Recommendations One and Two are specifically oriented toward addressing the concerns raised in AC recommendation number four (on academic file review). MCIF-WG Recommendation Three hones in on funding programs which relate to AC recommendation numbers eleven and three (campus-level funding for research recovery and approved teaching duty modifications).

Both MCIF-WG Recommendations Two and Three offer campuses options to choose from in how they address the relevant AC recommendations. MCIF-WG Recommendation One that focuses on COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statements does not include multiple options and does not have direct cost implications, though campus implementation could have implications on salary expenditures and timing of salary expenditures. The purpose of Recommendation One is to help provide faculty with

similar, if not identical, instructions on how to approach these types of statements in their academic files. It also requests that all departments submit a statement on behalf of the discipline to accompany that of the individual faculty member. It is recommended that campuses review other campus approaches for input.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Two recognizes that campuses have differed in how much emphasis they have put on deferrals as an option versus file submission with the expectation of holistic review. MCIF-WG Recommendation Two Option A recognizes that the use of the deferral mechanism could lead to concerns regarding inequity as individual faculty members may underestimate their achievements vis-à-vis their colleagues who chose to submit files. MCIF-WG Recommendation Two Option B recognizes a need for formalization of standards when a campus encourages all to submit files, if not to dictate outcomes, to guide file review and decision-making. MCIF-WG Recommendation Three addresses funding programs, which, as already described, provides options based on campus budgetary situations, though asks campuses to investigate whether expanding modest programs in the future would be a possibility.

Campuses with existing funding programs similar to the options provided should review them in light of the below options to determine whether any modifications or conversions would be warranted that would not be disruptive to faculty. They should consider whether existing programs comport with the spirit of MCIF-WG Recommendation Three below, serve a fair number of faculty of all levels and from across disciplines, and make campus-level resources accessible for both research recovery and teaching duty modifications. They should also consider the relative sustainability of the programs to continue or expand through five fiscal years and any transition plans that may be necessary to enable programs to continue.

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MCIF-WG Recommendation One

Academic Review and Appraisal: COVID Impact Statements

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➢ *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Four:* Adjust expectations for promotions & merit advances to conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles (with COVID impact statement)

➢ ***Applicable to all campuses*** *that have not already taken all of these actions (**no options**)*

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MCIF-WG recommends the following actions:

1. Rebrand these statements as a "COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statement".

2. Ensure that guidance to faculty includes the following elements, reviewing other campus approaches as needed:
   a. Instructions to provide positive contributions made during the pandemic in addition to ways faculty may have been negatively impacted.
   b. List of examples of what can be included in the statement or questions to help faculty consider what to include.
   c. A checklist including stock language for common professional circumstances enabling individuals to quickly select situations that pertained to them without divulging personal information. WG members agreed that faculty statements should not include personal information at all with a focus on how they were impacted and not why.

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MCIF-WG Recommendation One
Academic Review and Appraisal: COVID Impact Statements

- ➤ *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Four:* Adjust expectations for promotions & merit advances to conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles (with COVID impact statement)
- ➤ ***Applicable to all campuses*** that have not already taken all of these actions (**no options**)

3. Draft standard campus language for departments to refer to on how to interpret and apply Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles in file review and confirm broad agreement across departments on this language.

4. Require departments to draft a statement on behalf of their discipline which can be used as a benchmark in evaluating individual faculty members from the discipline. This statement ought to reiterate departmental expectations for achieving a merit, tenure, or full professorship in light of Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles and the research, teaching, and service pillars of the University's mission.

5. Provide guidance to submitters of external evaluation letters to comment on how COVID impacted the candidate's productivity as well as the field more broadly (including positive contributions).

6. Strategically communicate these updates to departments and faculty.

Considerations

- Campuses differed in the level of guidance provided to faculty on "COVID Impact Statements" (which the WG recommends be rebranded as "COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statements"). As these statements will be in use for up to five years, this is an area where faculty would benefit from some degree of standardization across the campuses.

- Campuses were mixed in their usage of COVID Opportunities and Challenges Statements written by department chairs on behalf of the discipline.

- Campuses have not broadly, if at all, formally requested that submitters of external evaluation letters provide comment on COVID impacts and a candidate's contributions in response.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Two
Academic Review and Appraisal: File Submission & Review

> *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Four:* Adjust expectations for promotions & merit advances to conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles (with COVID impact statement)
> ***Each campus should select either Option A or Option B*** *based on which scenario most closely aligns with current campus practice.*
> *Both options stress the incorporation and communication to faculty and review committees of "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" (ARO) principles in file review.*

Recommendation Two: Option A	**Recommendation Two: Option B**
Scenario: Campus promotes deferral of file review and extension of clock for faculty whose performance period was significantly impacted by COVID-19.	*Scenario: Campus encourages file submission for all faculty no matter how significantly impacted by COVID-19 with a commitment to holistic review.*
MCIF-WG recommends the following actions: 1. Commit to retroactive pay and advancement for faculty in a performance review following a COVID-related deferral. 2. Issue communication to faculty that lays out expectations for performance review following a COVID-related deferral that take into account "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" principles, including how to incorporate deferral year accomplishments. 3. Develop specific criteria for CAP and review committees to identify <u>rare cases</u> in which a faculty member <u>should not</u> be retroactively paid or advanced and how to sensitively address these cases, with communication to review committees, cognizant Deans, or CAP. 4. Provide faculty with the opportunity to rank evaluation areas by how much weight they should be given in file review. 5. Institute a formalized faculty-to-faculty mentorship program that ensures all faculty who deferred have the opportunity to consult with experienced faculty outside of a formal supervisory relationship on this decision.	MCIF-WG recommends the following actions: 1. Quantify acceptable deviation from normal levels of performance, not to dictate file report outcomes, but to serve as a guidepost in reviewing the faculty member's performance according to "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" principles.[9] 2. Develop specific criteria to identify when additional compensation may be awarded but <u>not</u> a formal step advancement, if appropriate for specific cases. 3. Develop specific criteria for CAP and review committees to identify <u>rare cases</u> in which a faculty member <u>should not</u> receive a merit or advancement, outline how these cases should be sensitively handled, and communicate this guidance to review committees, the cognizant Deans, or CAP. 4. Develop and implement communication plan to inform faculty and enable those who may have already deferred to submit a file belatedly. 5. Provide faculty with the opportunity to rank evaluation areas by how much weight they should be given in file review.

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[9] For example, UCAP guidance to departments suggested reducing expectations to 75%. A few campuses are granting percentages of a step to make up the difference of lost productivity due to COVID or taking into account future performance in light of past performance.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Two
Academic Review and Appraisal: File Submission & Review

- *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Four:* Adjust expectations for promotions & merit advances to conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles (with COVID impact statement)
- ***Each campus should select either Option A or Option B*** *based on which scenario most closely aligns with current campus practice.*
- *Both options stress the incorporation and communication to faculty and review committees of "Achievement Relative to Opportunities" (ARO) principles in file review.*

Recommendation Two: Option A	Recommendation Two: Option B
(Continued from page 16) Considerations - Faculty who determine to defer could overestimate expectations in light of COVID-era based on individual perception. They may face career and salary implications that are avoidable, which could decrease equity. - Files withheld from review may not differ greatly from files submitted for review in quality which could create different outcomes for equally performing faculty. - Faculty members who defer file review may not have made their decisions based on consultations with others outside of a formal supervisory relationship. - Some faculty may have put in exorbitant amount of effort into the teaching and service pillars of the University's mission, but withhold their file due to a bias in the review process toward research outcomes and publications.	*(Continued from page 16)* Considerations - Strategic communication is central to ensuring that all faculty are aware that campus leadership is supportive of having all files go through review. - Setting clear standards of expectation, including for review committees, becomes more important as fewer faculty members self-select out by requesting deferral. - Some faculty may have put in exorbitant amount of effort into the teaching and service pillars of the University's mission, but withhold their file due to a bias in the review process toward research outcomes and publications.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Three
Funding Programs

- *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Eleven:* Campus funding mechanisms for research recovery
- *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Three:* Campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications
- **Each campus should select Option A, B, or C** *based on the scenario closest to the campus's current situation.*
- *Campuses with capacity beyond the option that best describes their scenario can incorporate elements of the other options if so doing does not diminish their ability to make resources accessible to a fair number of faculty.*

Recommendation Three: Option A	Recommendation Three: Option B	Recommendation Three: Option C
Scenario: Campus resources are most constrained	*Scenario: Campus resources are moderately constrained*	*Scenario: Campus resources are least constrained*
MCIF-WG recommends the following actions: 1. Establish a centrally managed need-based grant program through which all faculty are eligible to be awarded a modest amount to be directed toward a wide range of eligible expenses. Expenses would include support for approved teaching duty modifications, and limited compensation for losses in research productivity, which could include the hiring (or extending) of graduate students. 2. Set an internal target of how many such grants the campus expects to be able to provide each fiscal year in order to gauge fairness in distribution across individuals and disciplines. 3. Develop a sustainability plan for fund to continue as is for over five years or expand to Options B or C.	MCIF-WG recommends the following actions: 1. Establish a centrally managed application-based funding program for which all faculty are eligible that can be dually used to support approved teaching duty modifications or expenses related to research recovery, such as hiring (or extending) of graduate students or other operational costs. 2. Develop a range of set amounts from lowest to highest the campus is willing and able to provide as grants to faculty over the course of each fiscal year and under what circumstances. 3. Set internal targets of how many grants of each amount the campus would be able to distribute. The internal target for the lowest possible amount should remain constant, keeping grants accessible to a fair number of faculty members, unless insufficient faculty apply by deadline set by the campus.	MCIF-WG recommends the following actions: 1. Establish a centrally managed research recovery funding program for which all faculty are eligible and that can provide grants through an application process for a range of set dollar amounts, *including amounts suitable for larger research enterprises* that were impacted by the pandemic. 2. Set internal targets of how many research recovery grants the campus is able to issue each fiscal year for which amounts and determine a grant maximum amount based on that number. The internal target for the lowest possible amount should remain constant, keeping grants accessible to a fair number of faculty members, unless insufficient faculty apply by deadline set by the campus. 3. Establish a separate pool of funding for distribution to departments/disciplines for approved teaching duty modifications, a distribution

MCIF-WG Recommendation Three		
Funding Programs		
➤ *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Eleven:* Campus funding mechanisms for research recovery ➤ *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Three:* Campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications ➤ ***Each campus should select Option A, B, or C*** *based on the scenario closest to the campus's current situation.* ➤ *Campuses with capacity beyond the option that best describes their scenario can incorporate elements of the other options if so doing does not diminish their ability to make resources accessible to a fair number of faculty.*		
Recommendation Three: Option A	Recommendation Three: Option B	Recommendation Three: Option C
(continued from page 18)	*(continued from page 18)* 4. Develop a sustainability plan for fund to continue as is for over five years or expand.	*(continued from page 18)* based on the ratio of average courses taught in a semester/quarter per department faculty member. 4. Provide guidance to deans to ensure that teaching duty modification funding will be fairly and proportionately distributed among faculty members, taking into account that teaching loads vary by discipline and faculty members. Other factors outside of the control of the faculty member can also be taken into consideration in decision-making. 5. Develop a sustainability plan for fund to continue as is for over five years or expand.
Considerations • Applicants would need to establish the extent to which the pandemic disrupted their work and/or research relative to other applicants, so requests should be reviewed in groups. Course load, extent of research losses, career implications, and other similar factors should be taken into account.	Considerations • Hiring or extending of graduate students or TAs can be done through state lottery funds or one-time relief funds. One-time relief funds are available through 2022. • Applications should be reviewed in groups to allow for cross-comparison and informed decision-making. Course load, extent of research losses, and	Considerations • Where resources exist, WG members noted the high expenses it takes to fund certain types of research to build back up the University's research capacity. • WG members noted such programs are particularly important for faculty on soft money.

MCIF-WG Recommendation Three
Funding Programs

- *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Eleven:* Campus funding mechanisms for research recovery
- *Addresses AC Recommendation Number Three:* Campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications
- **Each campus should select Option A, B, or C** *based on the scenario closest to the campus's current situation.*
- *Campuses with capacity beyond the option that best describes their scenario can incorporate elements of the other options if so doing does not diminish their ability to make resources accessible to a fair number of faculty.*

Recommendation Three: Option A	Recommendation Three: Option B	Recommendation Three: Option C
(continued from page 19) • Balance would need to be struck between number of grants and dollar-amount of the grants while making them accessible to a fair number of faculty members. • Hiring or extending of graduate students or TAs can be done through state lottery funds or one-time relief funds. One-time relief funds are available through 2022. • Applicants seeking this funding to compensate for research losses that do not entail teaching duty modifications or hiring additional research support should explain how they could use the modest funding to meaningfully recover from losses.	*(continued from page 19)* other similar factors should be taken into account. • If a deadline for the lowest grant amount is set earlier in the fiscal year and not all funding set aside is used, the campus could choose to issue fewer, larger grants later in the fiscal year. • Applicants seeking this funding to compensate for research losses that do not entail teaching duty modifications or hiring additional research support should explain, not only the purpose of the research, but how limited grant funding amount will set them up for success in recovery of a larger research enterprise. • Larger research resource needs may emerge in two to three years when faculty look to renew grant funding. • As teaching loads are variable across disciplines, an equitable approach could mean directing more teaching modification funding to disciplines with greater teaching loads and more research recovery funding going toward applicable disciplines.	*(continued from page 19)* • WG members pointed out that the need for bridge funding for research may increase substantially two to three years from now due to lost productivity during peak COVID era. • Applications should be reviewed in groups to allow for cross-comparison and informed decision-making. Course load, extent of research losses, and other similar factors should be taken into account. • Campuses should be mindful that teaching loads are variable across disciplines, so an equitable approach could entail more teaching modification funding being directed to disciplines with the larger teaching loads and more research recovery funding being directed toward those disciplines.

IV. Conclusion

Over the past year and a half, University of California faculty have faced a number of different impacts stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessary response. Faculty have met the challenges that have come their way with admirable fortitude and resilience, continuing to show up every day to advance the three pillars of the University's mission in teaching, research, and service as well as diversity and equity goals. At the same time, many faculty members faced increased dependent care responsibilities and some were directly affected by the virus or their families were.

The impacts of COVID-19 did not fall evenly across the University. There were disparate impacts based on gender and race, on career phase and hiring type, as well as discipline. Additionally, some campuses were better equipped to manage these impacts, which is reflected in the campus actions that were able to be taken earlier to address AC recommendation numbers four, eleven, and three discussed in this preliminary report. AC recommendation numbers eleven and three which call for funding programs for research and approved teaching duty modifications were particularly a tall order for some given budgetary circumstances during the peak of the pandemic.

Faculty play a central role to the University's mission. As the University transitions out of the most difficult period of the pandemic and considers strategies that will keep the University on its continued trajectory of excellence, it should not overlook how addressing COVID-19 impacts on faculty will amplify the success of these strategies.

This preliminary report reflects the Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group's initial review and prioritization of 21 recommendations drafted by the UCFW and UCAADE and that were reviewed by the Academic Council, Provost Michael T. Brown, and President Michael V. Drake. While the MCIF-WG will reconvene in the fall of 2021 to further consider the other 18 Academic Council recommendations, the MCIF-WG deliberately narrowed their focus on developing and proposing recommendations to address the three AC recommendations they ranked as highest priority. They took this approach with the objective of enabling the University system and campus leadership to act swiftly in Fall 2021 on a few of the most pressing areas of concerns: academic review and appraisal, funding for research recovery, and campus-level funding for approved teaching duty modifications.

The MCIF-WG recognizes that the system and campuses both continue to face resource constraints, but views costs associated with the highest-ranked AC recommendations as of sufficient importance to warrant prioritizing the identification of funds that can be allocated to these purposes. They encourage leadership to seriously consider the three MCIF-WG recommendations put forward on pages 14 - 20 and how these can be implemented, or in the case of campuses that have already taken some of these actions, how programs can be sustained or expanded over five years.