COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM  
Mark Eisner, MD – Chair

MINUTES  
Tuesday, March 15, 2005  
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. / Room S118

Absent: No absences.

The meeting of the Committee on Academic Freedom convened at 9:03 a.m. on Tuesday, March 15, 2005 in Room S118. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of February 15, 2005 were approved with no changes.

Chair’s Report

None.

Systemwide Report

None.

Update on UCORP Resolution Relating to Restrictions on Research Funding

Chair Eisner reported that the Task Force Reviewing the UCORP Resolution Relating to Restrictions on Research Funding submitted its final report to Chair Zegans concerning the UCSF faculty’s position on this measure. Each of the four schools ultimately supported the Resolution, with some caveats. The Committee indicated that the report adequately articulated the reservations of the Committee on Academic Freedom, including those regarding research integrity and limitation of funding opportunities. J. Lightwood requested that Committee members be sent a copy of the appendix to the Task Force report summarizing the feedback of the Committee on Academic Freedom. P. Braveman suggested that an online forum be established for continued discussion of the academic freedom implications of the Resolution, which will continue to have systemwide significance.
Update on Speakers for Proposed Symposium on “Science, Government and Academic Freedom in a Polarized Political Environment”

Chair Eisner updated the Committee on speaker commitment for the Symposium on “Science, Government and Academic Freedom in a Polarized Political Environment.” The Committee believes that four speakers are preferred for the event and having only secured two of the invitees at this late date, the Committee voted to postpone the Symposium until fall 2005. Future Committee meetings will be devoted to continued Symposium planning.

Academic Freedom Panel of Advisors

The Committee briefly discussed the proposal to establish an Academic Freedom Panel of Advisors. The role of the Advisors would be to field questions from faculty and determine whether inquiries fall under the purview of the Committee on Academic Freedom. This would help to ensure that the investigatory function of the Committee is not compromised in the event that an initial inquiry ultimately comes before the full Committee for consideration.

Committee members indicated that they do not believe there are sufficient academic freedom inquires at present to warrant the establishment of a Panel of Advisors. M. Wallhagen added that when she chaired the Committee they did a survey which indicated that there was very little awareness of the Academic Freedom Committee among faculty and that faculty with potential academic freedom issues did not think of bringing the issue to the Academic Freedom Committee. In addition, even with enhanced faculty awareness from the survey, only one question was brought to the Chair. The Committee agreed to revisit this issue if and when the need for a Panel of Advisors arises.

Academic Freedom FAQ

The Committee concluded the meeting with a discussion of the proposal to include a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on the Academic Freedom website. The Committee agreed that a FAQ page would help to promote the Committee and raise awareness among faculty of the Committee’s role on campus. Committee members suggested that the FAQ could include examples of past issues handled by the Committee and links to the websites of other academic institutions and/or consortia discussing issues of academic freedom (e.g., the Association of American Universities). The Senate office will prepare draft FAQ for review at the next meeting. Committee members were asked to bring additional ideas and suggestions.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.
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Prepared by:
Alice Kessler
Senate Analyst/Coordinator
476-8827 / akessler@senate.ucsf.edu