COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM
Stuart Gansky, DrPH, Chair

MINUTES
Thursday, November 16, 2006
9:00 – 10:30 a.m., Room S-118

Present: S. Gansky, Chair, Miriam Kuppermann, Descartes Li, Mary White, Maurice Zwass

Absent: Elizabeth Boyd, C. Anthony Hunt, J. Lightwood, Victor Reus

The November 16, 2006 meeting of the Committee on Academic Freedom convened at 9:10 in Room HSE-1303. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes of the meeting on September 12, 2006 were approved.

Chair’s Report – Stuart Gansky

Meeting Schedule
The December 21, 2006 meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting of the Academic Senate Committee on Academic Freedom is scheduled for January 18, 2007, from 9:00am to 10:30am in S-118

Elizabeth Boyd and Victor Reus, are members of the Task Force Reviewing the Recommending Comment to the Systemwide Report on Institutional Review Boards (IRB).

The charge of an IRB is to protect human subjects by ensuring that the benefits of the research outweigh the risks, that subjects have given informed consent and that the selection of subjects if done equitably. UCAF cited a growing number of reports of IRB interference with faculty research and suggested that the situation called for the establishment of systemwide standards for Institution Review Boards. A Communication on the findings is due to Chair Greenspan on November 28, 2006.

University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAF) Report – Miriam Kuppermann

UCAF Representative Miriam Kuppermann reported that following issues were presented to the committee at the November 7, 2006 meeting:

- The use of “collegiality” in evaluating faculty for merits and promotions.
- The role of Research and Instruction Funds in providing some fiscal independence and restoring these funds to faculty members.
• On-line publication of papers by-passing Editors and Reviewers. Is this a threat to Academic Freedom?

ACTION: Chair Gansky will discuss with Vice-Chair Walsh the issue of the role the term “collegiality” plays in merits and promotions.

New Business
None

Old Business

Reimbursement by Faculty of Grant Cost Overruns

Chair Greenspan and Academic Senate Tamara Maimon have stated that there is no written rule or regulation on the subject of faculty overspending or cost overruns. Each case is reviewed independently. During the last Committee meeting, the following questions were raised: Who is actually responsible for the funds? Does it lie completely with the PI? Is the Department liable? If not, can the Department assist in payment? Is it at the discretion of the Department Chair and if so, is it fair and equitable? Is there an appeals process? The committee will research possible regulations and policies to determine the proper legal course that can be taken.

The committee discussed Contracts and Grants policy 300-19, III. A.4 which states that in the case of cost overrun, the PI is responsible for the transfer of such overrun out of the project, and policy 300-19, III. B.4 which states that if an overdraft is not cleared by the PI in a timely manner, the accounting office has the authority to transfer the over-expenditures to other funds.

ACTION: Submit a Communication to Chair Greenspan regarding funding expenditures.

Symposium in Politicization of Science

Due to the illness of Professor Paul Berg, Nobel Laureate at Stanford University, who has agreed to speak at the Symposium on the Politicization of Science, the Symposium has been postponed until early 2007.

Chair Greenspan has agreed to sponsor this Symposium.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.
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Prepared by:
Kathleen Dargan
Senate Analyst/Coordinator
476-1308
kdargan@senate.ucsf.edu
www.ucsf.edu/senate