FROM THE CHAIR’S DESK

--Linda Hughes, Chair
Academic Federation

What is the Academic Federation?

You may be quite familiar with the work of the Academic Federation (AF) and its relationship to professional advancement and other professional opportunities for AF titles. Or, you may wonder what this newsletter has to do with you since you won’t recall joining the AF, paying dues, or even being aware of the organization. Succinctly stated, if you have an academic appointment of any kind other than Senate faculty, you are automatically an Academic Federation member. Our organization is unique to the UC Davis campus and was initiated by former Chancellor Jim Meyer in 1969 to provide a campus “voice” to the many academic appointees involved in one or more aspects of the University’s primary missions of teaching, research and service.

Thus, if you are in the AF, you are part of a “federation” of academic titles that is parallel in function to the Academic Senate’s role for ladder faculty. Through our Executive Council the Academic Federation provides a wide range of services to its members. These include: merit and promotional reviews for the many AF titles; selecting the recipients of our annual awards in Research, Teaching, and Service; selecting recipients of AF paid Professional Development Leave Awards; evaluating applications for funding to attend professional meetings; supporting the rights and privileges associated with academic freedom; providing representation on Academic Senate committees; and much more.

Fall quarter is well under way, and the Executive Council of the Federation is already actively at work on key issues that will ultimately impact every member. Last year as a result of former AF chair Kevin Roddy’s work with Vice Provost of Academic Personnel, Barry Klein, a committee was formed to evaluate personnel processes affecting AF members. Co-chaired by Charles Nash of the Academic Senate, and Barbara Goldman of the Academic Federation, the committee produced a report, which includes recommendations to assure greater consistency and fairness in the hiring, merit and promotion of people in AF titles.

Currently, the Federation’s primary focus is continuing our work with Barry Klein, and the Nash-Goldman Implementation Committee that he has appointed, to generate tangible improvements in the personnel processes that impact Federation titles. Among other things, formal job descriptions will be required for positions at the time of hire, as well as for merit and promotional actions. Peer review, which is present for many titles already, will become a standard part of promotional actions. The article by Steve Blank provides expanded information on this topic.

Another important AF concern is the major reductions planned for the Campus Writing Center. This program is a widely admired resource of the UC Davis campus that provides an effective cross-disciplinary approach to improving student writing. The article in this issue by Gary Goodman provides an overview of the consequences this will have for the delivery of the campus writing curriculum, and for the talented cadre of lecturers who provide the teaching for this successful program.

Please be sure to read the articles herein regarding the outstanding recipients of this year’s Academic Federation Awards. Also take note of the information provided on time and place of the activities associated
with these awards and attend if at all possible! It's a great way to learn about contributions made by Academic Federation members to UC Davis. You may also want to consider applying for one of our AF Paid Professional Development Leave Awards now or in the future; and if you are presenting at a professional meeting, you should consider applying for a Travel Grant.

Finally, this issue contains a listing of the various AF committees, and Sharon Baker has provided brief descriptions of their main functions. In addition to our own committees, AF members have representation on the committees of the Academic Senate. We look forward to your involvement in the Academic Federation now and in the future, and urge you to check out our web site at: http://www.mrak.ucdavis.edu/acadfed/federation.htm.

**ACADEMIC FEDERATION PERSONNEL ISSUES**  
**BY STEVE BLANK, ACADEMIC ASSISTANT TO THE VICE PROVOST**

For years Academic Federation members have expressed concerns over some aspects of the UCD personnel system. In general, those concerns focused on the consistency and fairness of policies and procedures used to implement the UC personnel system for people in the 14 different AF title series here at UCD. In response to those concerns, one committee and two workgroups have been working over the past two years to identify specific problems and to recommend solutions to the Vice Provost – Academic Personnel.

The “Nash-Goldman Committee,” named for its co-chairs of Charles Nash and Barbara Goldman, was originally appointed by then-Vice Provost Harvey Himelfarb to evaluate the AF personnel system and to make recommendations for improvement. Current Vice Provost Barry Klein continued support of the Nash-Goldman Committee’s goals. That group, made up of three AF members and three Academic Senate members, took a wide-ranging perspective and came up with 29 recommendations (the Nash-Goldman report is on the web at: http://academicpersonnel.ucdavis.edu/acadfed/nashgoldmanreport.cfm). Their report was submitted to Vice Provost Barry Klein. He also met with the committee to discuss the report and dialogue on the recommendations.

Vice Provost Klein then decided to appoint two implementation workgroups to develop specific policies and procedures aimed at accomplishing the goals of the Nash-Goldman recommendations. The 29 recommendations were divided among the two workgroups, based on the nature of the input needed. The first workgroup, chaired by Assistant Vice Provost Steve Blank, dealt with the recommendations involving procedural issues. The other members of that group include a department MSO, a dean’s office personnel officer, and a Provost Office personnel specialist. They submitted a preliminary report to Vice Provost Klein in the spring of 2000. The second workgroup, chaired by Professor Emeritus Richard Walters, is still working on the complicated recommendations that deal with both policy and procedural issues. That group consists of three AF members, three Senate members and another person that holds both Senate and Federation titles. They have submitted two preliminary reports to Vice Provost Klein and will submit others as their work progresses.

In response to the reports from both workgroups, Vice Provost Klein immediately adopted two of the major recommendations. In his July 14, 2000, cover letter to the “2000-2001 Supplementary Campus Guidelines for Preparation of Merit and Promotion Actions in Academic Federation Series” (available through department chairs and unit heads and on the web at: http://provost.ucdavis.edu/anncall/default.cfm) Vice Provost Klein outlined three major changes. First, written job descriptions are now required for all advancement files. Second, clear documentation of the process used to evaluate AF members must be articulated in each personnel action. Finally, units are encouraged to immediately begin identifying peer groups for each AF employee because formal peer groups will be a required part of all evaluation processes starting next year. Together, these changes are intended to address some of the major difficulties faced in providing consistent and fair evaluations to people in the diverse collection of AF title series across our campus.

Work involved in implementing the Nash-Goldman recommendations is expected to continue throughout this year. Of course, efforts to improve the personnel process for all AF members will be on going because UCD is a dynamic organization and AF members will continue to work in diverse jobs in diverse units.
ACADEMIC FEDERATION AWARDS

James H. Meyer Distinguished Achievement Award
Kevin P. Roddy is one of two recipients of the 2000 James H. Meyer Distinguished Achievement Award. Dr. Roddy holds a dual appointment as a lecturer in Medieval Studies and as Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and technology. Nominators praised his steady flow of research activities in medieval culture and his to service to his discipline as the Secretary-Treasurer and Conference Coordinator of the Medieval Association of the Pacific as well as Co-Chair for a major conference of the association. Dr. Roddy’s dedication to teaching and to the field of medieval studies has been central to the health of the humanities at UC Davis and crucial to the survival of the Medieval Studies curriculum.

Dr. Roddy’s command of medieval studies is accompanied by his expertise in computer technology, which dates back to the early 1980s, when most faculty had never used a personal computer. Through various positions he has held in computer technology for the humanities, he has taught students, staff, and faculty to utilize a variety of operating systems and programming languages. He has accumulated considerable experience in computer projects related to the humanities involving concordances, information retrieval, and data-based management.

Additionally, Kevin has served the campus as the chair of four major Federation committees and as the Secretary, as the Vice-Chair, and, for two years, as the Chair of the Federation, an association serving approximately seven hundred academic employees.

Judith M. Kysh is the other of our two James H. Meyer Distinguished Achievement Awardees for 2000. She was nominated for her outstanding and extensive contributions in mathematics education. She came to Davis in 1982 as Director for the Northern California Mathematics Project; since that time, her efforts have inspired thousands of K-12 teachers to learn more mathematics and to become more reflective of their mathematics teaching. Her work has lead to changes in the way mathematics is taught in many classrooms in California and resulted tremendous growth in math teaching skills among many teachers with whom she has worked. Her nominators praised her impact on mathematics education and the influence it will have now and in the future.

Perhaps the most notable of Dr. Kysh’s many achievements has been her empowerment of teachers, many of whom are now viewed as leaders by their peers. Interweaving her teaching experience with her knowledge of research, she has encouraged many to create their own successful visions of improved mathematics instruction.

Judith Kysh has a remarkable ability to design and conduct applied cooperative research projects on educational issues. She is a successful grant writer whose her capacity to build on her extensive knowledge has been extremely useful to a number of educational research projects. Her involvement with the Next Big Steps Project, the Portfolio Assessment Project, and the Northern California Mathematics Project have brought many educational players contact with one another, thereby catalyzing interaction and sharing of ideas.

Excellence in Teaching
Donna Nincic of the Department of Political Science will receive the Academic Federation's Excellence in Teaching Award for 2000. Dr. Nincic was a Lecturer at UC Davis from 1991-1994 and returned to the University during the 1998-1999 academic year. During the intervening two years, she taught at George Washington University and was a Visiting Scholar at the Hoover Institute at Stanford.

Described as "one of the most talented instructors we have had," she is particularly recognized for the care and thoroughness with which her lectures are prepared. She has developed a course on "Ocean Politics" for the program in International Relations--one of the few courses on campus that teaches environmental issues from a social science perspective and that does not have extensive prerequisites. Her knack for telling a story and conveying difficult conceptual issues to students without extensive background has been marked.

Her students describe her as "everything that a professor should be: intelligent, clear, and friendly," with the ability to inspire her students to learn and work hard. She is able to develop a rapport with an entire class very quickly. She is particularly noted for her talent for taking a students' own inchoate ideas and helping the student focus them into a research assignment that is both innovative and original.

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Michael Guinan of the Department of Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior is also a recipient of the Academic Federation’s “Excellence in Teaching” Award for 2000. Considered an “exemplary lecturer” for his organization, preparation, clarity, energy, understanding of the material, and availability to his students, he was praised by a number of his undergraduate students for his ability to make science interesting for his students.

Dr. Guinan’s teaching is characterized by his attention to student participation and the creation of a comfortable learning environment for students—an environment made possible by his approachable and non-intimidating manner. His enthusiasm for his subjects was frequently mentioned and his command of comparative anatomy was described as “phenomenal.”

Michael Guinan has taught at all levels, from lower-division non-majors in NPB 10 to upper-division majors in Anatomy, Physiology, and Cell Biology 100 to first-year veterinary students. He has developed an innovative interactive computer program for laboratory material in APC 100 allowing students self-paced access via the web. His dedication to moving students to an active learning mode, through the use of hands-on activities that he has developed, was singled out for special praise. He recruits and actively mentors twenty senior undergraduate students to lead discussion in NPB 10, giving generously of time and energy. Students find his love of teaching “refreshing.”

Excellence in Research
Marilyn M. Olmstead, a Specialist in the Department of Chemistry, is the first winner of the Academic Federation’s Excellence in Research Award. She was cited for a combination of her outstanding accomplishments in complex recent research, her warmth and skill as a mentor, and her skillful work in motivating the students with whom she works. Dr. Olmstead has been at UC Davis since 1969; she came to Davis after receiving her Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

During her career, she has received a number of awards, including the Administrative and Professional Staff Achievement Award and five Professional Development Awards. A recent survey of the chemical literature indicated that Dr. Olmstead’s contributions had been cited 4,889 times, making her the 175th most cited scientist and the highest-ranking woman on the list. One of the foremost authorities in the world on structures containing fullerenes (buckyballs), which are difficult to characterize because of pervasive, disorder problems.

She has been praised as running the most efficient and effective X-ray facility in the country. Portrayed as an “heroic crystallographer,” she was also acclaimed for her ability to extract structural information from the most recalcitrant crystal. It was also been pointed out that “no one has a more consistent record of success in the face of adversity than does Dr. Olmstead.”

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Reception
Excellence in Teaching and Excellence in Research
Wednesday, December 13, 2000
5:00-7:00 P.M.
University Club Lounge
No RSVP necessary

Dinner
J. H. Meyer Distinguished Achievement Award
Tuesday, January 9, 2001
5:30-8:30 P.M.
University Club Lounge
RSVP by 5:00 Wednesday, December 27, 2000
to Academic Federation, 356 Mrak Hall
Attn: Norma Rice
TRAVEL AWARDS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS
APPLICATIONS DUE NOVEMBER 17, 2000

The Academic Federation Committees on Research and Professional Development wish to remind all AF members that the application deadline for BOTH Travel Awards and Professional Development Leave is November 17, 2000. All AF members not otherwise eligible for sabbatical leave and who have five years of continuous service in a salaried position at 50% time or more in titles described at the website below are eligible for Professional Development Awards to support leaves of up to one quarter for projects which will enhance their effectiveness in their current position. All AF members who have PI status and who will be presenting original research work of their own scholarship at domestic or international meetings are eligible for Travel Awards.

Please see http://provost.ucdavis.edu/academicpersonnel/programs/pdpafletter.cfm for Professional Development Award guidelines or contact Steve Blank, Assistant Vice Provost-Academic Personnel at 752-4847 or scblank@ucdavis.edu. For information regarding Travel Awards please see http://www.mrak.ucdavis.edu/senate/cor/acfedtrv.html or contact Audrey Ashford at atashford@ucdavis.edu.

WRITING PROGRAM CRISIS
by Gary Sue Goodman

UC may have the healthiest budget in years, but the UCD Composition Program faces evisceration. Despite rising enrollments of ESL students and complaints about poor student writing, the new Dean of Humanities Arts and Cultural Studies, Elizabeth Langland, is seeking cheaper ways of “delivering” writing instruction.

Proposals include: teaching writing in large lecture classes with TAs; replacing the current upper division requirement with a second lower division course that graduate students could teach; eliminating lecturers, and expanding the graduate program, especially the masters program. Thus, experienced writing faculty and long-time UCD career employees (lecturers in English average 12.5 years of service) could be replaced by first year masters candidates, many fresh out of college and with no experience or interest in teaching.

The Composition curriculum, an array of interdisciplinary and pre-professional advanced writing courses lauded as “a model for other campuses” in its last external review, could be curtailed. Already cut is the Composition mentoring program and the Campus Writing Center workshops that train faculty and TAs across campus to respond to writing could also suffer. The writing program is currently under further review. Reports from external evaluators and from a task force headed by former Chair of English Karl Zender are due by the end of fall.

However, cuts in lecturers’ contracts suggest that a decision have already been made. Over the summer, eight writing program faculty, who had met and exceeded the department’s standards of excellence, received reduced three-year contracts from the dean: 57% the first year, 43% the second, and 14% the third. After pressure from the union, the second year was raised to 57%, assuring benefits, at least. Stay tuned for future developments.
COMMITTEES OF THE ACADEMIC FEDERATION, by Sharon Baker

Academic Freedom, Rights, and Privileges: Kim Coontz, Chair
This committee is concerned with academic freedom as well as any other matter concerning the welfare of Academic Federation members.

Administrative Series Personnel: Joe Stasulat, Chair
This committee makes recommendations respecting appointments, promotions, merit increases, personnel policies and standards, salaries and related matters for members of the Academic Administrator series, the Academic Coordinator series, the Assistant and Associate Law Librarian series, and the Assistant/Associate University Librarian series.

Affirmative Action and Diversity: Peg Durkin, Chair
This committee review standards and policies concerning affirmative action and their application to members of the Academic Federation.

Educational Affairs: Kevin Roddy, Chair
This committee is concerned with the education policies and practices of the University when appropriate to the responsibility and expertise of Academic Federation members. A standing subcommittee of this committee issues the call for nominations for the Federation Award for Teaching Excellence and selects the recipient of the award.

Internet Activity: Andy Jones, Chair
This committee maintains an Academic Federation presence on campus-wide computer networks, and maintains on the AF website an archive of all documents and announcements pertinent to the employment, advancement and general well being of the membership.

Joint Academic Federation/Academic Senate Personnel:
Makes recommendations respecting personnel actions for members of the following series: Agronomist, Cooperative Extension Advisor, Cooperative Extension Specialist, Specialist, Specialist in Cooperative Extension, and Professional Research.

Meyer Distinguished Achievement Award:
Issues the call for nominations for the James H. Meyer Distinguished Achievement Award, and selects the recipient of the award.

Personnel: Jim Smith, Chair
Provides recommendations regarding appointment, promotion, merit increases, personnel policies and standards, salaries and related matters affecting Academic Federation members.

Planning and Budget Review: Susan Autry-Conwell, Chair
Advises regarding campus and University plans, policy, and actions affecting academic planning, budget and resource allocations.

Professional Development: Gary Sue Goodman, Chair
Promotes the professional development needs and interests of members of the Academic Federation. It also reviews, evaluates and ranks applications for professional development leaves.

Public Affairs: Kathleen Ward, Chair
Advises on matters relating to public service and is also responsible for the publicity and arrangements for public functions sponsored by the Academic Federation.

Research: Steve Anderson, Chair
Advises regarding policies related to research endeavors on the Davis campus, issues the call for nominations for the Excellence in Research award, and selects the recipient of the award.

Rules & Elections: Sue Williams, Chair
Prepares changes and additions to the Academic Federation Bylaws, and conducts all elections for the Academic Federation.

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