

September 27, 2019

DOUG ZIEDONIS
Associate Vice Chancellor
Health Sciences
0602

Subject:*Health Sciences Academic Personnel Appointment and Promotion
Report 2019-18*

The final report for Health Sciences Academic Personnel Appointment and Promotion, Report 2019-18, is attached. We would like to thank all participants for their cooperation and assistance during the review.

Because we were able to reach agreement regarding management action plans in response to the audit recommendations, a formal response to the report is not requested. The findings included in this report will be added to our follow-up system. We will contact you at the appropriate time to evaluate the status of the management action plans.

UC wide policy requires that all draft reports be destroyed after the final report is issued. We also request that draft reports not be photocopied or otherwise redistributed.

Christa Perkins
Interim Director
Audit & Management Advisory Services

Attachment

cc: David Brenner
 Judith Bruner
 Alexander Bustamante
 Steven Garfin
 Gene Hasegawa
 Evelyn Hidalgo
 Pierre Ouillet
 Becky Petitt
 Brandon Rhodes
 Andrew Ries
 Cheryl Ross
 Robert Ross
 Elizabeth Simmons

UC San Diego

AUDIT & MANAGEMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

Health Sciences Academic Personnel Appointment & Promotion
Report No. 2019-18
September 2019

FINAL REPORT

Performed By:

Jennifer Hornyak, Senior Auditor

Approved By:

Christa Perkins, Interim Director

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

II. BACKGROUND..... 3

III. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND PROCEDURES 4

IV. CONCLUSION..... 5

V. OBSERVATIONS REQUIRING MANAGEMENT ACTION 7

 A. Diversity and Recruitment..... 7

 B. File Quality and Content..... 8

 C. Referee Independence 10

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Audit & Management Advisory Services (AMAS) has completed a review of Health Sciences (HS) Academic Personnel Appointment & Promotion as part of the approved audit plan for Fiscal Year 2018-19. The objective of our review was to determine whether internal controls provided reasonable assurance that HS academic appointment and promotion processes were effective and efficient in supporting appointment and promotion, and compliant with University policy.

Based on our review, we concluded that internal controls provided reasonable assurance that academic appointment and promotion processes were effective and efficient in supporting appointment and promotion, and compliant with University policy. Generally, the overall processes for academic recruitment, new appointments, and reviews were performed in accordance with applicable policy, and files were complete.

We observed that UCSDH new appointments and reviews are highly complex due to the variety of titles and associated requirements. The complexity is compounded by the high volume of files processed each year, and strict timelines which must be adhered to. We noted the UCSD PPMs contain additional requirements beyond the UC APM requirements, which also adds to the challenge of ensuring timelines are achieved and all files are complete and accurate. Finally, each HS department maintains its own appointment and review processes, including voting guidelines, which can add additional steps not required by either local or system-wide policy. These factors contribute to the time required to process files and may impact the quality of the files. Consideration should be given to methods to streamline processes where possible to reduce complexity and administrative requirements in handling appointment and promotion files.

We noted the extensive review of timelines that had previously been conducted through Lean Six Sigma (LSS) and associated efforts. In this review, we augmented that work by conducting a high level review of file timelines within Academic Resources Center (ARC) vs with the department, the candidate, or other offices. We observed that significant documentation is required for each personnel action, and files are within ARC for approximately 50% of the of the timeline. We also noted that ARC had developed technology solutions to standardize and streamline processes while at the same time providing services in accordance with department requirements and voting procedures.

We identified opportunities for improvement with respect to diversity and recruitment, file quality and content, and documenting referee independence. Management action plans to address these findings are summarized below:

A. Diversity and Recruitment

1. ARC has implemented term restrictions that were included with the policy changes in July 2017.
2. ARC will ensure the departmental letter for all academic reviews include information to evaluate contributions to promote equal opportunity and diversity, to the extent that the candidate provides this information;

3. ARC will ensure the recruitment does not extend beyond one year from the publication of the original advertisement or renew as necessary;
4. ARC will be cognizant during extended appointments to ensure compliance with policy on recruitment timelines; and
5. ARC will ensure that all department letters provide a brief description of the open recruitment conducted by the department for the position and how the candidate was selected.

B. File Quality and Content

1. ARC will remind ARC Analysts regarding departmental letter policy requirements so that they can ensure that the template provided to departments contains this information, and review department letters for the required elements.
2. ARC will consider performing a periodic quality review on a sample of academic recruitment, new appointment and review files for compliance with UC and UCSD policies and procedures.

C. Referee Independence

ARC will consider alternative methods to obtain an independence statement from outside reviewers.

Management agreed to all corrective actions recommended to address risks identified in these areas. Observations and related management action plans are described in greater detail in section V. of this report.

II. BACKGROUND

Audit & Management Advisory Services (AMAS) has completed a review of Health Sciences Academic Personnel Appointment & Promotion as part of the approved audit plan for Fiscal Year 2018-19. This report summarizes the results of our review.

Academic recruitment, appointment, and promotion activities must conform to a number of policies at both the University of California (UC) system-wide, and local campus level. The UC Academic Personnel Manual (APM) policies include *Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination in Employment, APM-035*; *UC Recruitment – General, APM-500*; *UC Appointment and Promotion, APM Section 200*. The UCSD Policy & Procedure Manual (PPM) contains several policies within the *Personnel-Academic, Section 230* and the *Academic Personnel Services (APS) Authority and Review Chart, effective April 20, 2017* which govern appointment and promotion processes. In addition, *UC Bylaws of the Academic Senate, Departmental Voting Rights, Bylaw 55* must be adhered to.

Personnel actions associated with UCSD Health Sciences (HS) academics are overseen by the Vice Chancellor Health Sciences (VCHS) Academic Affairs unit, and primarily facilitated within the Academic Resources Center (ARC), a shared service center which provides administrative support services for faculty, academics, scholars, and department liaisons in the areas of recruitment, appointment, academic reviews, personnel administration, and compensation. Prior to the establishment of ARC in 2014, these functions were performed within the departments. Departmental participation in ARC services is voluntary; however, ARC currently performs services for most HS departments. ARC must work closely with HS departments and divisions in the processing of personnel actions.

The VCHS Academic Affairs office has delegated authority for certain personnel actions, however many require coordination with the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Ad Hoc Committees, the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP), the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Chancellor.

For the past two academic years (2016/2017 and 2017/2018), ARC has processed a combined 674 New Appointments and 1,369 Reviews for academic titles. Approximately one quarter of all academic actions performed by ARC were performed for the Department of Medicine. The remainder academic personnel actions were performed on behalf of 18 other HS departments.

ARC has initiated a series of process improvement initiatives over the last few years designed to improve efficiency and customer service in the operation. In 2016 a review was charged by the Chief Financial Officer and Health Sciences leadership to evaluate the ARC unit, which resulted in the following recommendations:

- Implement a mutual accountability and governance model for both service and cost;
- Create a full service “all in” model for HS departments through Service Partnership Agreements;
- Implement technology solutions to streamline processes;
- Identify policy, process and system improvements to reduce costs by 10% per capita over the next three years; and

- Develop flexible models reflective of size and needs with focus on relationship management with departments.

Following that review, the ARC Steering Committee was established. This group has been meeting since 2016 to evaluate and make recommendations for improvement. A 2017 report to the ARC Steering Committee on the status of the 2016 recommendations highlighted the following improvements:

- Non-Compliant recruitment delays were reduced from 1-2 years to 4-8 months,
- Automated reappointment notices reduced processing time from approximately 10 minutes per reappointment case to 1-2 minutes;
- Voting portal reduced set up time from up to 1 hour to up to 15 minutes;
- DocuSign implementation improved the onboarding process for non-salaried positions;
- Coordination with Business Applications Development Group (BADG) to automate updating of host faculty salary worksheets to reduce time required for updating.

Also, a series of Lean Six Sigma (LSS) projects were initiated to evaluate business processes and timelines, and encourage continuous improvement, in particular, a LSS Black Belt project completed in February 2018 on the UCSD New Appointments Process Improvement Project.

Subsequently, in 2018, the Office of Operational Strategic Initiatives (OSI) conducted a review to further evaluate Academic Personnel processes, which recommended elimination of ad-hoc departmental committees and file review which may add to ARC timelines. VCHS leadership was discussing these items with departmental leadership.

In 2019, the ARC Steering Committee continues to focus on current priorities including client engagement strategies, costing model, operational readiness for UC and Campus-wide initiatives, and staff engagement.

III. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND PROCEDURES

The objective of our review was to determine whether internal controls provided reasonable assurance that HS academic appointment and promotion processes were effective and efficient in supporting appointment and promotion, and compliant with University policy. In order to achieve our objective, we performed the following:

- Reviewed:
 - Current UCSD Academic Personnel Delegations of Authority;
 - ARC Steering Committee presentations and documents;
 - ARC organization chart;
 - ARC recruitments, new appointments, and recruitment process maps and information on recruitments, new appointments, and reviews;
 - Applicable sections of the *UC APMs*, *UCSD PPMs*, applicable sections of the *UC* and *UCSD Academic Senate Manual* and *Academic Senate Bylaws*;
 - ARC process documentation; and

- Applicable Academic Personnel Services (APS) resources and tools for recruitments, new appointments, and reviews;
- Interviewed:
 - Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Personnel;
 - Academic Affairs Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel;
 - Academic Affairs Associate Vice Chancellor for Resource Administration;
 - Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion;
 - Leadership and Key Members of ARC;
 - Three HS Department Administrators; and
 - Key Members of a Campus Division.
- Evaluated:
 - 2016/2017 ARC client survey results; and
 - Timelines for the sample of HS files selected for file testing; and
- Reviewed a sample¹ of the following:
 - Fifteen appointment files and associated recruitments; and
 - Fifteen review files.
- Conducted an analysis of timelines on data from Academic Personnel On-Line (APOL) for 2018-2019 new appointments and reviews for the Department of Medicine and one large campus division.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on our review, we concluded that internal controls provided reasonable assurance that academic appointment and promotion processes were effective and efficient in supporting appointment and promotion, and compliant with University policy. Generally, the overall processes for academic recruitment, new appointments, and reviews were performed in accordance with applicable policy, and files were complete.

We observed that UCSDH new appointments and reviews are highly complex due to the variety of titles and associated requirements. The complexity is compounded by the high volume of files processed each year, and strict timelines which must be adhered to. We noted the UCSD PPMs contain additional requirements beyond the UC APM requirements, which also adds to the challenge of ensuring timelines are achieved and all files are complete and accurate. Finally, each HS department maintains its own appointment and review processes, including voting guidelines, which can add additional steps not required by either local or system-wide policy. These factors contribute to the time required to process files and may impact the quality of the files. Consideration should be given to methods to streamline processes where possible to reduce complexity and administrative requirements in handling appointment and promotion files.

We noted the extensive review of timelines that had previously been conducted through LSS and associated efforts. In this review, we augmented that work by conducting a high level review of file timelines within ARC vs with the department, the candidate, or other offices. We observed that

¹ AMAS selected a random sample of 15 files for new appointment testing and 15 files for review testing from the largest department, a very small department, and one other HS department for testing. Recruitment files selected for testing were associated with the new appointments sample.

significant documentation is required for each personnel action, and files are within ARC for approximately 50% of the of the timeline. We also noted that ARC had developed technology solutions to standardize and streamline processes while at the same time providing services in accordance with department requirements and voting procedures.

We also compared timelines using APOL 2018-2019 data for Department of Medicine (Medicine) new appointments and reviews processed by ARC to another large campus division, and noted that new appointments took an average of 78 days for Medicine and 19 days for the campus division. Reviews took 52 days in Medicine and 111 days in the campus division. We noted that Medicine new appointments and reviews represented approximately four times the activity of the campus division for 2018-2019, so volume may have an impact on those timelines. Also, new appointments are generally performed throughout the year for HS, while campus appointments are primarily performed for the beginning of each academic year.

We determined that additional information should be contained within the files to ensure full compliance with University policy regarding diversity commitments and recruitment timelines. Timelines may be impacted by the complexity of the personnel actions, variations in HS departmental practices, as well as, the volume of personnel actions. As part of our review, we determined that improvements can be made in the timeline for filling recruitments from the date of publication of the original advertisement, and in the file documentation used to evaluate contributions to promote equal opportunity and diversity in the academic personnel process for reviews and appraisals. Standardizing processes among UCSDH departments and/or streamlining departmental processes may assist in reducing the timeline associated with personnel actions.

UCSD policy (*PPM Section 230*) establishes requirements that should be included in the appointment and promotion of academic personnel. In files we reviewed, we determined the file quality could be improved to ensure that all of the elements specified by policy are included. Items most commonly missing from the department letter within the file were salary, verification that a complete file was presented for voting members' consideration, statement from the chair regarding any conflicts of interest, and a description of the open recruitment conducted by the department and how the candidate was selected. The academic personnel file is the basis from which personnel action evaluations are performed; therefore, the quality of the file is essential to ensure a comprehensive and efficient evaluation of the candidate is performed.

Solicitations of evaluations (referee letters) from individuals who are independent of the candidate, who are expert in the candidate's field, and who are able to provide an objective appraisal of the candidate's work are beneficial and required by UCSD policy (*PPM Section 230*) in evaluating the appointment or review of many candidates. However, in the course of our review of files, we determined most of the evaluators did not include a specific statement to this effect, which made ARC's task of verifying independence challenging. Therefore, consideration should be given to alternate methods to document that these evaluators are independent.

V. OBSERVATIONS REQUIRING MANAGEMENT ACTION

A.	Diversity and Recruitment
Additional information should be contained within the files to ensure complete compliance with University policy regarding diversity commitment, and timelines for open recruitment.	
Risk Statement/Effect	
Academic recruitment, appointment, and review files should contain all of the information specified in policy to provide evidence that policy was followed, and candidates met the specified criteria for the academic personnel action.	
Management Action Plans	
A.1	ARC has implemented term restrictions that were included with the policy changes in July 2017.
A.2	ARC will ensure that the departmental letter for all academic reviews include information to evaluate contributions to promote equal opportunity and diversity, to the extent that the candidate provides this information.
A.3	ARC will ensure the recruitment does not extend beyond one year from the publication of the original advertisement or renew as necessary.
A.4	ARC will be cognizant during extended appointments to ensure compliance with policy on recruitment timelines.
A.5	ARC will ensure that all department letters provide a brief description of the open recruitment conducted by the department for the position and how the candidate was selected.

A. Diversity and Recruitment – Detailed Discussion

University policy (*APM 210 UC Review and Appraisal Committees*) states that contributions in all areas of faculty achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity should be given due recognition in the academic personnel process, and they should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements. These contributions to diversity and equal opportunity can take a variety of forms including efforts to advance equitable access to education, public service that addresses the needs of California's diverse population, or research in a scholar's area of expertise that highlights inequalities. We observed that 11 of 13 review files we examined (85%) did not provide information to evaluate contributions to promote equal opportunity and diversity in the academic personnel process for reviews and appraisals as required by policy. HS has indicated that CAP has provided differing interpretations of the level of detail needed. However, the current *CAP's Top Ten Tips for Personnel Files – Candidates Under Review* available at the UCSD Academic Senate Committee on Academic Personnel website states that the impact and significance of contributions to diversity within the context of research, teaching, and service should be discussed.

We also noted instances where recruitment timelines and advertisement dates were not in strict compliance with policy. UCSD Policy (*PPM 230-6*) states “because of the continuing change in the pool of available candidates for academic positions, if a position is not filled within one calendar year following the date of publication of the original advertisement, a new *UCSD Academic Affirmative Action Recruitment Plan Summary Form* must be completed and approved by the Office of Academic Affirmative Action and a new advertisement must be placed.” We determined that offers were extended greater than one year after the date of publication of the original advertisement in three of the six recruitments (50%) we tested. We were advised by ARC that for HS, search plans are initiated once a year to cover recruitments over the course of the year. When recruitments are being performed at the end of the year, recruitment appointment dates may exceed the one calendar year criteria. In our review of specific files, we observed some instances where the timeline was extended by the circumstances of the recruitment rather than ARC search plan and advertising practices. For compliance with the UCSD Policy (*PPM 230-6*), ARC should consider re-performing the search plan and advertising positions to ensure the recruitment does not extend beyond one year from the publication of the original advertisement. The policy does not contain a provision for exceptions to this requirement. Due to the complexity of some UCSDH academic appointments and associated timelines, some recruitments may be difficult to fill, in particular if they relate to a highly specialized medical field. It may be beneficial to consult APS in coordination with EDI regarding the annual academic affirmative action recruitment requirements of *APM 230-6, Academic Personnel Affirmative Action Program*, to determine the if the policy can be revised for alignment with the UCSDH academic recruitment timelines for these circumstances, and/or provide avenues for exceptions to policy.

We also noted that 2 of the 15 new appointments (13%) did not meet the APM restrictions. These APM restrictions were associated with the appointment term restrictions of an HS Assistant or Associate Clinical Professor. We were advised by ARC that the implementation of the policy restricting appointments was delayed as files were already in process as of the effective date of the policy. Although the delay in implementation was understandable with consideration to the files that were already in process, appointments performed during this time would not be compliant with policy. ARC should also be cognizant during extended appointments to ensure compliance with policy.

This same policy (*UCSD PPM Section 230*) also requires the department letter to provide a brief description of the open recruitment conducted by the department for the position and how the candidate was selected. Although information was provided in the departmental letters regarding the candidate’s eligibility for appointment based on the four primary criteria for academic appointment, 11 out of 12 letters (92%) did not address the department’s recruitment process or how the candidate was selected.

B.	File Quality and Content
Additional information should be contained within the academic personnel files to ensure compliance with policy requirements and to perform diligent and efficient evaluations of candidates.	
Risk Statement/Effect	
Academic recruitment, appointment, and review files should contain all of the information specified in	

policy to provide evidence that policy was followed, and candidates met the specified criteria for the recommended or proposed academic personnel action.

Management Action Plans

B.1	ARC will remind ARC Analysts of departmental letter policy requirements so that they can ensure that the template provided to departments contains this information, and review department letters for the required elements.
B.2	ARC will consider performing a periodic quality review on a sample of academic recruitment, new appointment and review files for compliance with UC and UCSD policies and procedures.

B. File Quality and Content – Detailed Discussion

UCSD policy (*PPM Section 230*) establishes requirements that should be included in department letter for the appointment and promotion of academic personnel. These requirements include:

- Discussion of the proposed action addressing the teaching, research and creative work, professional competence and activity, and University and public service criteria with supporting evidence and evaluated in terms of the department’s established norms and expectations;
- Report the nature and extent of consultation on the matter within the department (including any vote taken) and present any significant evidence and differences of opinion which would support a contrary opinion;
- Discuss the proposed title, rank, step, salary, effective appointment date(s);
- Justify the recommended rank, step, and salary based on the criteria specified for the series, including justification for an off-scale salary, if applicable;
- Include verification that a complete file was presented for voting members' consideration;
- Provide information about the nature and extent of consultation on the matter within the department, including the results of any vote taken and the reasons (if known) for any negative votes;
- Include a statement regarding external referees’ recommendations, ensuring that individuals who have provided confidential letters of evaluation are not identified in the departmental letter except by code; and
- Include a statement from the chair regarding any conflicts of interest.

Additionally, for appointments, the letter should include:

- The proposed title, rank, step, salary, effective appointment date(s), and discussion of any funding contingencies;
- A brief description of the open recruitment conducted by the department for the position and how the candidate was selected;
- Documentation of the participation and membership of the departmental ad hoc committee; and
- A description of the candidate's expected role in the department; research to be conducted and/or classes the candidate will teach; the candidate’s anticipated contribution to the department's instructional mission at both the undergraduate and graduate levels; and a

description of the department's teaching requirements and how the candidate's teaching load meets those requirements (for applicable titles).

Some of these requirements are beyond those required by the UC APM. UCSDH has indicated that the levels of information requested within departmental letters over time has been variable, adding to the confusion associated with what information should be included and the level of detail. As a result, we observed that the departmental letters often did not contain all of the information required by policy requirements. Of the 11 new appointment and 13 review department letters contained in files we reviewed, we determined that all (100%) were missing one or more of the departmental letter elements specified above. Items most commonly missing were salary, verification that a complete file was presented for voting members’ consideration, statement from the chair regarding any conflicts of interest, and a description of the open recruitment conducted by the department and how the candidate was selected. The academic personnel file is the basis for which the evaluations are performed; therefore, the quality of the file is essential to ensure a comprehensive and efficient evaluation of the candidate is performed. ARC should remind ARC Analysts reviewing these files of departmental letter policy requirements so that they can ensure that the template provided to departments contain this information, and review department letters for the required elements. A periodic quality review on a sample of academic recruitment, new appointment and review files for compliance with UC and UCSD policies and procedures would also be beneficial in ensuring compliance.

Finally, we observed one new appointment file that had additional approvals than were required by the UCSD Authority and Review Chart. ARC was unable to definitively indicate why additional approvals were sought. The approvals that were obtained were more than required by the current authority and review chart; however, this would increase the timeline if additional approvals are sought than required.

C.	Referee Independence
Referee letters did not consistently provide the requested statement that the referee has not “been a co-author, mentor or collaborator on a proposed research project within the past five years” needed to establish their independence.	
Risk Statement/Effect	
Information regarding a referee’s independence is beneficial when considering the information provided in external referee letters obtained as part of the new appointment and review process.	
Management Action Plan	
C.1	ARC will consider alternative methods to obtain an independence statement from outside reviewers.

C. Referee Independence – Detailed Discussion
--

Solicitations of evaluations (referee letters) from individuals who are independent of the candidate, who are expert in the candidate’s field, and who are able to provide an objective appraisal of the candidate’s

work are required by the UCSD policy (*PPM Section 230*) in evaluating the appointment or review of many candidates. Policy states that when evaluating the candidate's clinical activity and professional competence, appointments above the entry level should be from reviewers independent of the candidate. ARC practice has been to evaluate statements regarding the relationship contained within the letter to ascertain this independence. In our review of files, we determined that the solicitation letter does include a request that the person evaluating the candidate include a statement commenting on their relationship with the candidate, "making sure to note if [they] have been a co-author, mentor or collaborator on a proposed research project within the past five years." This specific language is not required by policy; however, University practice has used this language to confirm and document independence. In our evaluation of the files, we saw evidence of ARC attempting to gain an understanding of referee independence when it was not clear in the letter provided.

We determined that all of the evaluators did not include the requested independence statement in all six (100%) of the new appointments and in two of the three (67%) review files that required referee letters. Although we noted effort performed by ARC to obtain the independence statement, consideration should be given to alternative methods to obtain the independence statement from outside reviewers, such as a form provided with the request whereby the outside reviewer indicates by checkmark whether they have or have not been a co-author, mentor or collaborator on a proposed research project within the past five years.