

Remarks by Raquel E. Aldana

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**State Assembly Committee on Higher Education Oversight Hearing on Faculty
Diversification at the University of California**

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In 1996, I was a student at Harvard Law School and the Co-Chair of La Alianza. For years, La Alianza advocated for the hiring of at least one and the first Latinx faculty since the law school's founding in 1817. It would take Harvard Law School more than a decade later to hire the two faculty today who identify as Latino. La Alianza alumni celebrated these hires even when it did not change for us the way we felt by not seeing ourselves represented in the faculty during our tenure. We also worried that only two hires produced an undue representative burden on those faculty. When I returned to Harvard in 2017, the new La Alianza generation still felt lonely, especially those who like me, were first generation college students and low-income.

I share this personal story not to pick on my alma mater. Harvard Law School propelled my own academic career and that of many others with similar backgrounds. I share it to thank you for this hearing because I know that had the Massachusetts legislature had the jurisdiction and the commitment to this issue that you are demonstrating today, I and thousands of other students would have felt less lonely and more secure in our ask.

The project of diversifying the faculty is inherently slow. This does not make the need for it less urgent. The composition of the UC Davis faculty has not kept pace with the growing diversity in California nor with the changing composition of our student body. In 2017, UC Davis's undergraduate student profile consisted of 4% African American, 21% Latino(a)/Chicano(a)/Hispanic, and 1% Native American. Yet, the corresponding statistics for UC Davis ladder rank faculty for 2017 was: 2.3%, 7.1%, and 0.6%, respectively.

In Spring 2019, UC Davis will also join nearly 500 Hispanic Serving Institutions in the nation and only nine others which are also Research 1. Half of these outstanding R1 HSI institutions are part of the UC system. This is incredibly exciting. We now have both an amazing opportunity but also the awesome responsibility to be ambitious about producing excellence with equity in order to fulfill our research, educational and public service mission as an R1 land grant institution. Since this June, I have been Co-Chairing an HSI Taskforce charged with making recommendations to Chancellor May about how we can propel UC Davis into becoming a Hispanic Thriving Institution. I feel confident in saying that the Taskforce views the issue of diversifying the faculty as central to this project.

I sent you a handout with some data on faculty diversity at UC Davis and information about many of the innovations and interventions we have in place to advance faculty diversity. I will refer to this handout for the remainder of my remarks.

The second page contains a very telling graph. It tracks UC Davis's hiring year for the ladder rank faculty who are employed at UC Davis in 2017. The dates of hire at UC Davis for the 2017 ladder rank faculty dates back as far as 1966—over 50 years ago. Once hired, faculty tend to stay for a long time.

As well, our hiring practices, with few exceptions, have not added much diversity to the faculty except in last seven years. It is also only in these last seven years as well that we begin to see a greater range in the types of faculty diversity represented among the hires, with many more hires from underrepresented minority groups. These hiring trends have continued through 2018 as you can see from the hiring data for this most recent year that I've provided on the fourth page.

I fully expect these newer multicultural hiring trends will be ongoing at UC Davis. This is all good news. It will not be an easy road. The legacy of the lack of hiring with diversity at UC Davis until recently, the few opportunities to hire to replace faculty, and the ongoing challenges of a lack of a robust national pool of applicants will continue to make progress, at least at the desired pace, more challenging.

UC Davis' timeframe of hiring more diverse faculty happens to coincide with the adoption of an array of innovations and interventions seeking to diversity the faculty at UC Davis. Without attempting to identify which in particular have been most effective and having necessarily to be selective due to time constraints, I do want to take the time to highlight a few examples. I will describe these in the following categories: recruitment and hiring; retention and inclusion, and pipeline to the professoriate.

Let me first provide context for what I believe has contributed to the success for these types of innovations and interventions at UC Davis. First, in most cases, these innovations have been designed by committed and engaged faculty and with the support of the Academic Senate. Second, the implementation of these innovations has been executed in ongoing partnership and collaboration between faculty, the Academic Senate, and administrative leaders. Third, not all but many of these innovations require not just conviction but resources. For this, UC Davis has benefitted greatly from many important partners including UCOP and federal and state grants, including two important grants from the California state legislature. In addition, UC Davis has also invested substantially to incentivize hiring with diversity and to promote inclusivity and fairness in promotion and retention.

Recruitment and Hiring

On the third page of the handout, left hand side, I have provided a graph of the entire faculty hiring process at UC Davis, from recruitment to actual hire. On the side, I have added descriptions of many of the innovations adopted centrally by UC Davis in recent years. Some of the most important include:

- *Process incentives – such as conducting open searches or allowing search waivers to facilitate hires with diversity.* In fact, we are very excited to rely on our recently awarded nearly half a million grant from the California legislature to carry out open searches for 8 positions across campus which will have as a core requirement for the job a demonstrated evidence of commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- *Faculty Peer-to-peer mandatory training for Chairs and all members of faculty search committees on implicit bias and recommendations on best practices for ameliorating these biases.* Since its inception in 2012, more than 1500 faculty participating in faculty searches have been trained through our program known as the Strength Through Equity and Diversity (STEAD).
- *Accountability Measures:* Two very important accountability requirements for all faculty searches are that each search plan must include a list of at least eight scholars who are prominent in the relevant fields and who will be asked to suggest names of potential applicants from groups underrepresented within that area of scholarship/creative activity or within higher education generally (e.g. women and other underrepresented minorities). In addition, as part of all academic searches, Academic Affairs reviews the list of applicant pools and those selected a candidates to be interviewed to ensure that both are consistent with the workforce availability pool.
- *Hiring incentives for hires:* UC Davis has committed over 3 million dollars to support the steady hire of 35 scholars who would contribute to academic diversity. The incentives work similarly to the Presidential Post-Doctoral and the Chancellor's Post-Doctoral Fellowship programs, and grant the academic units \$85,000 each year for five years to support the salary or other benefits the scholars who bring multicultural perspectives both in STEM and in the humanities, arts, and social sciences. Since 2012, we have hired a total of 30 scholars.

Retention and Inclusion Initiatives

On the right side of the third page of the handout, I have listed some of the most important initiative related to retention and inclusion. These are designed to support our academics once joining UC Davis and in their continued careers. Collectively these programs are considered some of the best within the UC System as well as across the nation. I will very briefly touch on only two:

- *CAMPOS*: Under the leadership of a faculty director, the Center for the Advancement of Multicultural Perspectives in Science (CAMPOS) has created a community of scholars who are supported in several ways including through networking and professional development opportunities. Additionally, during their first year on campus, CAMPOS scholars receive structured mentoring ([LAUNCH](#)) committees to help them integrate into and start their careers at UC Davis.
- *Salary Equity Program*: Several years ago, UCOP asked all UC campuses to consider how to improve the salary equity issues for faculty. At UC Davis, we have addressed the issue through a collaborative and statistically sound faculty salary equity program, which includes millions of dollars invested by the Provost to further the impact of our equity program. Through this program, in 2016 UC Davis undertook an equity study of salaries and committed to equitable salary adjustments. UC Davis continues to monitor equity centrally and by each dean at the school and college level.

Pipeline to the Professoriate

A significant barrier to diversifying the faculty remains our slow progress toward a more inclusive and representative pool of applicants for the professoriate. On the last page of the handout, we have provided national and UC Davis data on the graduate and professional schools pipelines and our post-doctorate pools. We have a lot of work to do still to improve these numbers and I want to highlight a few important UC Davis innovations:

- *The Alliance for Multi-Campus, Inclusive Graduate Admissions (AMIGA)*: Unlike undergraduate education, graduate admissions practices are far behind in adopting sound holistic admissions practices. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, UC Davis is leading efforts to try to change this in partnership with UCLA and USC.
- *Post-Doctoral and Professoriate Pipeline*: UCOP's PFP program has produced a robust pipeline of faculty including at UC Davis. UC Davis sponsors its own UC Davis Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, which brings usually an additional four scholars a year into the program. Since 2003, 29 UC Davis faculty have been hired from these programs, joining UCLA, UCSC, and UC Irvine as having hired the most scholars through these programs.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

I do want to end with a few recommendations and a brief message for our students, if I may:

- First, for UC Davis: It is important for UC Davis to approach the project of diversifying the faculty as one that will require structural changes in order to create a culture of deep commitment to inclusive excellence. This must mean not only that faculty who are diverse will be hired but also that UC Davis will recognize, value and reward their

contributions, including in their commitment to our students. We still have work to do at UC Davis in this regard. Moreover, unlike academic hiring, hiring administrative leaders at UC Davis in top and visible positions is more nimble and plausible yet remains a challenge in the system. In November, UCOP is sponsoring a Latinix/Chicanx Leadership Summit, which follows a similar program by African American and African diaspora faculty and staff. UC Davis and the UC System should take heed of these efforts and embrace the talent and different voices that a rich pool of leaders in the making bring to the table. Achieving a critical mass of leaders who are at the table and are empowered to lead will also help push academic diversity forward.

- Second to you – our public officials: Thank you for partnering with us in this project and for holding us accountable. We need you to invest and believe in us more. This is hard work and it requires resources and patient persistence. Stick with us please.
- Finally to our students, especially those who are low income, first gen, or URM: In my short time at UC Davis, I have encountered so many faculty, executive leaders, staff and alumni who are working very hard and sacrificing so much because they believe in the transformation that your very presence on this campus brings – not only for your own lives but for the communities that raised you. We see you. I know it doesn't always feel like we do. . But many of us do. We believe in you and this hearing is for you.

Thank you.