

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
DAILY BRUIN

Napolitano releases UC-wide guidelines to address discrimination

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By [amanda schallert](#)

University of California President Janet Napolitano released a set of requirements Friday mandating that all University of California campuses have certain mechanisms in place to effectively address discrimination, bias and harassment.

The measures come in response to [a report released in fall](#) that found UCLA's policies and procedures for addressing racial discrimination claims among faculty inadequate.

Napolitano's guidelines call for each UC campus to have a lead discrimination officer, an ombudsperson who helps resolve disputes and complaints on an informal basis, a "one-stop-shop" website for all discrimination and diversity issues and an annual report that tracks all informal and formal discrimination complaints.

Additionally, the guidelines call for each campus to have a chancellor that advocates for diversity.

The guidelines are meant to ensure that on a systemwide basis, the UC is prepared to address claims of discrimination, harassment and bias and make progress toward the "nebulous" goal of changing the University's culture, said Dianne Klein, a UC spokeswoman.

"It's not just looking at a book and saying these are infractions and these aren't," Klein said. "These are people and the University is made up of people."

Klein said the UC already has a systemwide code of conduct and processes for responding to discrimination claims, but these new measures are meant to target this specific problem and help the UC be as open about the process as possible.

"The systemwide response has been to make it right for the victim (of discrimination, bias or harassment), but then the culture doesn't change," Klein said. "What these latest measures are aimed at doing is changing the culture, and that's not going to happen overnight."

Several UC campuses are already in full or partial compliance with the policy. For example, UCLA already has an ombudsperson to address informal complaints, and the school is currently

searching for a person to take on the job of discrimination officer. The position was created in fall quarter.

UCLA has multiple websites and webpages that hold diversity resources and address how to file discrimination complaints. But both UCLA spokesman Steve Ritea and Christine Littleton, vice provost for diversity and faculty development at UCLA, declined to comment on whether UCLA has an official “one-stop-shop” website.

Ritea and Littleton also declined to say whether UCLA releases annual reports about discrimination, bias and harassment claims.

No members of an implementation committee meant to address concerns raised by the report at UCLA were able to comment on the guidelines because their work is ongoing, but they may be able to comment at the end of the academic year, Ritea said.

On Oct. 18, UCLA Chancellor Gene Block released an internal report headed by former California Supreme Court Justice Carlos Moreno which found that UCLA’s policies and procedures for addressing claims of racial discrimination among faculty were insufficient. The report held that UCLA’s current policies did not act as deterrents for discrimination, partially because UCLA’s current structure hinders it from effectively investigating acts of racial discrimination on campus.

In response to Napolitano’s guidelines, Block said in an email statement that he supports the guidelines, and UCLA is taking steps to address the problems highlighted by the report.

“Certainly bias and intolerance are not isolated to UCLA, and I applaud President Napolitano’s leadership and dedication to making certain we combat discrimination in all forms and find ways to do better all across the UC system,” Block said in the statement.

At some UC schools, like UC Irvine, officials had already implemented Napolitano’s proposed guidelines. Other schools, like UC Davis, are working to implement some aspects of the guidelines that they did not previously have, such as an annual report.

Chon Noriega, the director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, is one of a group of faculty members who initially asked UCLA administrators to create the report.

Noriega said he supports the UC-wide guidelines, but he thinks that finding ways to address problems highlighted in the report and creating diversity are different goals.

“(The response) is appropriate to the issue that the report took up, but in terms of really speaking to diversity and inclusion as hardwired to the institution, you can’t just advocate,” Noriega said. “It really has to be part of how the institution recruits faculty and uses resources.”

David K. Yoo, a professor of Asian American studies and the director of the Asian American Studies Center at UCLA, said he thinks it is too early in the process of addressing the report to tell whether or not the new guidelines will be effective.

Yoo was part of larger conversations with administrators that helped spur the report and said he thinks there is no simple formula to approaching the problem.

“I think that it’s better to move in those directions than not,” Yoo said. “I’m not sure that those things alone will necessarily change the campus climate.”

There is no specific timeline for campuses to implement each of the requirements, but the UC Office of the President ultimately plans to collect data from each UC campus and use it to identify how to better improve campus climate, Klein said.

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