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MEMORANDUM

TO: Laura Martin
WASC Coordinator, University of California Merced

FROM: Le'Trice Curl, Director, Student Life and Judicial Affairs

RE: Student Grievances Report

Date: August 27, 2009

Student grievances are reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs which is encompassed within the Office of Student Life at UC Merced. From UC Merced's opening day on September 5, 2005 until today, only two grievances have been filed with our office. Both grievances were resolved informally. At the request of the students, no formal action was taken on the student's behalf. Those two cases are briefly summarized below.

Incident one: December 6, 2006, a student came to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs to report a problem with her faculty member. She had been asked to leave the class by her professor because she was using a laptop during class when students had been told they could not use their laptops. She felt that she was being picked on unfairly since someone in the class during the prior class session had not been asked to leave class. The faculty member told the student that if she didn't leave class that she (the professor) would leave. The student did not leave, so the faculty member left the classroom. Shortly thereafter, the student left the class. The student was later told by another class member that the faculty member returned and finished teaching the class.

The student was concerned that she was being treated unfairly and that she might be graded negatively with finals approaching. An incident report was written by the student, and the student asked for help resolving the case. I contacted the student's academic advisor. We offered advice and counsel to the student about how to approach the situation. The Dean of the school was also made aware of the situation. The student was advised of the options that faculty have to manage their classrooms, and also what actions could be taken if the student felt that she was graded unfairly during finals. The faculty member was spoken to, and the faculty member and the student were able to talk about the situation and resolve the issue. I was notified by the student that no further action needed to be taken on her behalf by Student Judicial Affairs.

Incident two: On May 5, 2009, a student who was employed through a department on campus came in to complain that she had been terminated unfairly. She explained the circumstances of her termination. The student was being accused of causing damage to university property during her work shift, but claims that she was not responsible for that damage. I informed her about the rights

and responsibilities she has as a student employee. I also informed her about the rights employers have to terminate or release student employees from employment. I encouraged her to go back and speak with the unit director to find out more about the rationale for her termination and if any options short of termination existed.

On May 6, 2009, I received a handwritten note from the student saying that she had gone back and talked with the unit director, that everything had been resolved, and that the matter was "under control."

On May 11, 2009, I met with the student that filed the initial complaint to find out more about the meeting between her and the unit director. She said that they had worked it out, that she would finish out the school year, but would not be asked back as an employee in the fall. The student understood the rationale for the unit director's decision, and said that she wanted no further action taken on her behalf by Student Judicial Affairs. The case was closed.

Other students have come through Student Judicial Affairs to inquire about their options when they have a complaint, but these are the only two cases where students have initially wanted incident reports written and grievance investigations / resolution processes started. In all other cases, students ask us to support them and help them resolve the matter without a formal complaint being filed. We do this. For students who come in seeking assistance, students are listened to, given options, and offered information and advising about possible outcomes. Students are also followed up with to determine how the situation was resolved if they choose to handle it themselves, and to find out if they are satisfied with the outcome of the situation. Students are also advised that they are welcome to come back to Student Judicial Affairs for information and advising should any further situations arise.