

# **ACADEMIC COUNCIL SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAB ISSUES ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22**

## **TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL:**

The Academic Council Special Committee on Lab Issues (ACSCOLI) was established by the Academic Council to provide broad-based Senate oversight of UC's relationship with the National Laboratories – Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL, also called the Berkeley Lab). ACSCOLI advises the President and Regents on general policies relating to the National Laboratories, which includes the dispersal of UC's share of net fee monies, policies that affect the lab science management, and the quality of science being performed at the labs. ACSCOLI is also concerned with evaluating the benefits of UC's continued participation in the management of the labs and has been charged by the Academic Council with stimulating closer connections between the lab staff, faculty, and students.

ACSCOLI met twice during 2021-2022 academic year (AY). Both meetings were held via videoconference. A summary of the committee's discussions is below. On June 22, ACSCOLI Chair Michael Todd joined the Academic Council meeting to give a presentation on ACSCOLI's discussions over the past year.

### **UC OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL LABORATORIES**

At each ACSCOLI meeting, Vice President Craig Leasure, Associate Vice President June Yu, and Executive Director Alan Wan provided updates on the national labs and the work of the UC Office of the National Laboratories.

UC is the prime contractor for the management and operation of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL). The University is a partner in the Lawrence Livermore National Security, LLC, (LLNS) that manages Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) and in Triad National Security, LLC, the partnership that manages Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). LLNS and Triad are overseen by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Energy. The UC Office of the National Laboratories coordinates this work for the University.

### **NATIONAL LABORATORIES UPDATES**

Using the ACSCOLI checklist as a guide, Vice President Craig Leasure updated the committee at each meeting on the status of the three national laboratories. ACSCOLI members learned how the labs were dealing with employees returning to work after the Covid-19 shutdown, including the ups and downs of variant surges. The labs ramped up testing and offered N95 masks to on-site workers and continued to have a portion of their workforces working remotely. The committee heard about significant events affecting the labs, including safety incidents, scientific breakthroughs, conferences, and the status of signature projects.

Each year, the US Department of Energy conducts an evaluation of the scientific, technological, managerial, and operational performance of the contractors who manage and operate its national

laboratories. These evaluations provide the basis for determining annual performance fees and award term extension, if applicable. All lab scores this year were very good, including the best score for Berkeley Lab since 2005.

### **HERTZ HALL**

ACSCOLI has been kept apprised of the planning for the “Hertz Hall” complex on the Lawrence Livermore campus. In January, Patricia Falcone, Deputy Director for Science and Technology at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and co-chair of the Hertz Hall Complex Advisory Council, joined the ACSCOLI meeting to talk about Hertz Hall, LLNL’s Science & Technology unit, and the value that UC management brings to the lab. The lab benefits from having faculty members from UC and other institutions serve on important lab committees and provide support for special events. The lab recently launched an ambassador program to make its staff available to campuses. There are special efforts with campuses through the lab’s institutes and centers, including summer opportunities and week-long sessions with undergraduate students. The newest program is a mini sabbatical program that will fund a few-month visit for a faculty member. The Hertz Hall complex will mean more room on site to enhance these options and make more opportunities available. The hope is that the complex will attract new partners, deepen existing relationships, and allow for new approaches to collaboration, including with the other two UC-managed labs.

### **UC OFFICE OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION**

UC Vice President for Research & Innovation Theresa Maldonado and her staff joined ACSCOLI meetings to discuss areas of common interest, including progress on joint appointments. VP Maldonado also provided general updates on changes to UC patent policy and patent tracking system and discussed delays in grant application processes due to campus staffing shortfalls.

### **UC LAB FEES RESEARCH PROGRAM**

ACSCOLI provided input on the thematic areas for last year’s Collaborative Research and Training (CRT) award competition. This year, the Lab Fees Research Program awarded close to \$20 million in grants to five multicampus projects (out of 36 proposals received). All campuses are represented on initiatives that are focused on the pre-determined themes of: de-carbonization, pandemic preparedness, and meso-materials. More at: <https://www.ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/lab-fees/2022-lfrp-awards.html>

### **JOINT APPOINTMENTS**

Joint appointments continue to be a point of discussion between ACSCOLI and the administration. In addition to facilitating these arrangements, ACSCOLI would like to help create a culture in which joint appointments are valued. Vice President for Research and Innovation Theresa Maldonado reported that the original idea of using a basic template that could be modified by campuses turns out to be a lot of work locally. Although ultimate responsibility for approving joint appointments may be at the level of Vice Chancellor, decisions about individual joint appointments resides with the department. A simpler plan may be to focus on what can be done at the campus rather than systemwide level.

Meanwhile, test cases involving UC San Diego, UC Irvine, and LANL are moving through the joint appointment process.

#### **BOARD OF REGENTS NATIONAL LABORATORY COMMITTEE**

The Chair of the UC Board of Regents' National Laboratory Committee Jay Sures joined ACSCOLI's October meeting to talk about the priorities and interests of the committee, which provides strategic direction and oversight to UC's lab management contracts. The Regents approve budget allocation for UC's share of the net fees earned from management of the labs, a portion of which goes to the Lab Fees Research Program (LFRP). The total this year was \$26.7 million. Other initiatives supported by the fees include capital projects such as Hertz Hall and the SoCal Hub to facilitate collaboration and networking between national labs and campuses. Sures mentioned the public-private ATOM consortium, founded in 2016 by scientists at Lawrence Livermore, Frederick National Lab, and UCSF, as an example of the collaborative work being done. The partnership seeks to accelerate drug development timelines using machine learning, high-performance computing, and big data. As Chair of the Regents' Committee, Sures said that his priorities for UC's lab management are safety, cybersecurity, and diversity. He sees lab relationships as beneficial for the university is interested in targeted expansion of the portfolio.

#### **REPRESENTATION AND OTHER UPDATES**

UC Davis Professor Robert Powell, Chair of the Science, Technology, and Engineering Committees for the two NNSA labs, provided updates from his perspective as Faculty Observer to LANL and LLNL Boards. UCSB Professor Ram Seshadri serves on the LBNL Advisory Board on behalf of the Academic Senate and also provided the committee with updates about the Berkeley Lab and its impressive leadership.

ACSCOLI members do not report back to a corresponding campus committee, but the committee received Senate leadership updates at each meeting. These regular updates to standing and special committees help all faculty members have a broader view of the university.

In spring 2022, ACSCOLI Chair Michael Todd also chaired the Search Committee for UCOP's Associate Vice Provost Research & Innovation job position.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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- Craig Leasure, Vice President for the National Laboratories
- Theresa Maldonado, UC Vice President for Research & Innovation
- Jay Sures, Chair of the UC Board of Regents' National Laboratory Committee
- Alan Wan, Executive Director for Laboratory Programs
- June Yu, Associate VP for the National Laboratories

Respectfully submitted,

2021-22 ACSCOLI members:

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