



**ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
December 12, 2024
Minutes of Meeting**

I. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Pursuant to the call, the Assembly of the Academic Senate met on Thursday, December 12, 2024. Academic Senate Chair Steven W. Cheung presided and called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Senate Executive Director Monica Lin called the roll of Assembly members and confirmed a quorum. Attendance is listed in Appendix A of these minutes.

II. MINUTES

ACTION: The Assembly approved the minutes of June 21, 2024 with minor amendments.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY SENATE LEADERSHIP

- **Steven W. Cheung, Chair**
- **Ahmet Palazoglu, Vice Chair**

November 2024 Regents Meeting: The Regents approved the 2025-26 University operating budget, which includes a 3.7% range adjustment to the faculty salary scales, \$1.36 billion in capital projects funding, and a 9.9% increase in undergraduate nonresident supplemental tuition for incoming students. The Regents also approved amendments to Regents Policy 4400 (University of California Diversity Statement) to incorporate language about disability the Assembly approved in June 2024.

Long-serving Regent John Pérez, who has chaired the Board and the Health Services Committee, announced his resignation at the meeting. Governor Newsom nominated Robert “Bob” Myers of Santa Monica to fill the vacancy. Shortly afterward, Regent Richard Sherman also resigned, but a replacement has yet to be appointed.

Academic Labor Agreement: The University reached an agreement with the UAW to extend the collective bargaining agreements for Academic Student Employees (Teaching Assistants, Readers, Tutors) and Graduate Student Researchers to January 2026.

Mortgage Origination Program (MOP): The Standard MOP, which provides UC faculty and senior managers with below-market interest rates to purchase their first homes, is facing increased demand due to rising commercial interest rates. This has depleted current fiscal year program funds earlier than anticipated. Additionally, low interest rates have limited UC’s ability to sell loans and replenish funds. UC Office of the President (UCOP) is working with campuses to address these challenges and plans to provide additional funding in early 2025.

Special Assembly Meeting: In response to a request from 25 voting Academic Senate members and in accordance with [Senate Bylaw 110.A.3.c](#), a special meeting of the Assembly has been scheduled for January 17, 2025. The agenda will include three topics: 1) the UC president’s information security plan; 2) variance in compensation and cost-of-living adjustments between staff and faculty; 3) and the increase in UC health plan premiums.

Leadership Searches: The 13-member Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) for the UC presidential search, chaired by Chair Cheung, met with the Regents' Special Committee to finalize selection criteria for the next UC president. The criteria incorporate recommendations from the Academic Senate. The AAC will review dossiers of potential candidates over the winter break. Other leadership searches include the vice provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs in the Academic Affairs Division at UCOP and chancellor positions for UC Santa Barbara and UC Riverside.

APC Workgroups: Vice Chair Palazoglu is co-chairing an Academic Planning Council (APC) workgroup assessing the potential transition of all campuses with undergraduate programs to a semester-based calendar. The workgroup plans to finalize its report by March 2025 for a 90-day Academic Senate review. Another APC workgroup, co-chaired by former UCSB Division Chair Susannah Scott, is evaluating UC's doctoral education model. Preliminary recommendations address graduate program size, funding models, and time-to-degree options.

Benefits Study: A new study of total remuneration and benefits, administered by Systemwide Human Resources in collaboration with a contracted external vendor, is moving forward. Senate representatives have been invited to serve on workgroups shaping the vendor's analytic methods and ensuring comparability with the last study conducted a decade ago.

During the discussion:

- A member asked whether the faculty salary increase would apply to off-scale salaries and if the Senate had requested a July 1 implementation to align with the timing of salary increases for UC staff. Chair Cheung clarified that off-scale adjustments are campus decisions. The Senate has requested a July 1 implementation, which the administration is studying for feasibility.

Rules of Engagement: Chair Cheung noted that two action items are on the agenda, one of which had generated substantial interest. He said speakers would be recognized through Zoom's raise hand function. To accommodate the 135 attendees, he asked speakers to limit comments to one minute and to direct motions to Executive Director Lin via chat, which was restricted to communication only between attendees and co-hosts. Chair Cheung would recognize motion proposers and restate motions prior to any votes.

IV. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A. University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP)

- **Catherine Sugar, UCEP Vice Chair**

1. Proposed Academic Senate Statement: Characteristics of Undergraduate Educational Quality at the University of California

Background: At its July 2024 meeting, the Academic Council endorsed a UCEP-proposed statement titled *Characteristics of Undergraduate Educational Quality at the University of California*. The statement underwent a systemwide Senate review and was further revised based on feedback. It articulates the shared components of UC's academic excellence, offering a framework to guide the University's academic programs, priorities, and actions to sustain UC's success and impact.

Vice Chair's Remarks: UCEP Vice Chair Sugar explained that the statement was originally created in 2010 for the UC Commission on the Future as a reference for evaluating change. Last year, UCEP was tasked with updating the document to reflect evolving approaches to education, including instructional modalities. UCEP members collaborated extensively over several meetings to revise the statement, which included a final round of updates that incorporated feedback from the systemwide review.

The statement is intended as a concise articulation of core principles rather than a detailed roadmap of processes and criteria. It addresses key features of educational quality, including courses and programs, the distinctive holistic context in which UC students experience their education, principles of oversight and review, and expected student outcomes. It highlights the expertise of UC faculty, the abilities and engagement of UC students, and the dynamic, research-based environment that defines the University of California.

Vice Chair Sugar expressed UCEP's gratitude for the dedication of faculty on the Assembly in maintaining the University's status as a leading public educational institution that serves students and society through the discovery and transmission of knowledge, skills, and ideas.

ACTION: A motion to endorse the statement and transmit it to Provost Newman was made, seconded, and passed unanimously (56-0).

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY SENIOR UNIVERSITY MANAGERS

- **Michael V. Drake, President**
- **Katherine Newman, Provost and Executive Vice President**
- **Nathan Brostrom, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer**

President Drake opened his remarks by acknowledging the challenges facing the University and the nation, emphasizing UC's leadership in addressing issues critical to education, the community, and public policy. He expressed interest in hearing from the Assembly and highlighted the importance of collaboration and engagement.

National Elections and Research Advocacy: The University is assessing post-presidential election outcomes and their implications for UC and higher education. This includes monitoring incoming federal agency leadership and policy positions that affect students, education, research, and public health. UC is preparing to engage with new appointees to ensure continued advocacy for higher education.

UC remains the leading public research university, with significant funding from federal agencies. He emphasized the importance of maintaining relationships across political divides to advocate for research funding. He shared his optimism about UC's ability to navigate changing political climates and maintain robust funding, citing successful advocacy during prior administrations.

Undocumented Students: The University remains steadfast in maintaining a supportive environment for undocumented UC students, including offering legal services, updated "know your rights" materials, and international travel guidance.

Public Health: President Drake stressed UC's role in public health awareness, especially in light of lessons from the pandemic, and pledged that UC would continue providing evidence-based guidance to communities. He also noted that UC is prioritizing the protection of reproductive care in California, aligning with state policies.

Budget: Although UC avoided a budget cut initially proposed by the governor in 2024-25, the cut was deferred to 2025-26, allowing UC to prepare for reductions. However, state revenues have improved, raising hopes of mitigating some cuts. UC was excluded from a \$10 billion general obligation bond passed for California Community Colleges and K-12 education in November 2024. A new bill introduced by State Assemblymember Alvarez proposes a separate GO bond for UC and California State University to address capital funding needs. Securing additional state support is critical for funding housing and educational facilities.

MOP: UCOP is addressing unprecedented demand for the Mortgage Origination Program (MOP) with a \$200 million allocation to sustain the program. Efforts are underway to align the program with commercial lending practices, making it easier to sell loans on the secondary market and replenish funding.

Labor Relations: President Drake noted recent strikes at UC medical centers and ongoing bargaining with AFSCME and UPTA. He also referred to the recently ratified extension of the UAW contract to January 2026 and expressed hope for continued progress and collaboration with labor groups.

Chancellor Searches: President Drake emphasized the importance of broad community and Academic Senate input into searches for new UCSB and UCR chancellors who can advance the campuses' missions.

UC Accomplishments and Resilience: President Drake highlighted UC's leadership and achievements, including: 1) record numbers of students served and patients cared for; 2) expanded healthcare capacity, with a 50% increase in available patient beds over the past 18 months; and 3) robust growth in research funding and academic achievements. He thanked Assembly members for their continued commitment to excellence in education, research, and public service.

Graduate Education: Provost Newman noted that an APC workgroup is finalizing a report addressing key challenges in the traditional graduate education model. Provost Newman emphasized that the report should be widely shared and discussed across campus departments to ensure faculty engagement. She stressed the importance of discipline-specific conversations to address the varied challenges faced by humanities, social sciences, and STEM fields.

AI Survey: A new faculty survey on artificial intelligence (AI) is being developed in collaboration with immediate past Senate Chair Steintrager, the Senate AI workgroup he's chairing, and UC San Diego's survey research group, Tritonlytics. This initiative will collect faculty perspectives on AI and serve as a test case for establishing a broader capacity to survey faculty on policy issues. She urged widespread participation to ensure meaningful insights.

Systemwide Academic Congresses: A Congress on Research in March 2025 will focus on the importance of research at UC, exploring collaborations with NIH, NSF, and private foundations. It will also examine the rising costs of research, funding challenges, and strategies for communicating research value to the public. A Congress on Academic Freedom in May 2025 will address contemporary threats to academic freedom through a series of panels featuring prominent scholars and experts.

UCCS: Efforts are underway to revitalize the UC Center in Sacramento, which offers policy internships for students interested in public service careers but has faced low enrollment due to course credit transfer issues and other logistical challenges. A faculty-prepared report identifies ways to increase program participation and will be discussed with the Regents.

Academic Calendars: An APC Systemwide Academic Calendar Workgroup is exploring the potential for harmonizing academic calendars across UC campuses or adopting beneficial features like Berkeley's "RRR Week" (Reading/Review/Recitation), which provides time to consolidate learning before finals.

During the discussion:

- An Assembly member questioned UC’s commitment to employment pathways for undocumented students and expressed concern about new restrictions on campus protests.
- A member inquired about UC’s commitment to expressive activities.
- Members also expressed concern that the new graduate student contracts are impacting education and research costs, and highlighted the value of the MOP for recruitment, suggesting that MOP should prioritize new faculty recruitment.
- A member inquired about the potential systemwide adoption of a semester calendar and the inclusion of features like the RRR period at UC Berkeley.

Responses:

- President Drake reaffirmed his strong support for undocumented students and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. The Regents voted to suspend implementation of a proposal to allow undocumented students to hold paying jobs at UC after concluding that there was no viable legal employment pathway. UC has instead launched a fellowship program that is helping hundreds of students gain valuable experiential learning opportunities distinct from employment.
- President Drake emphasized UC’s continued support for free expression and clarified that updated guidelines issued by UCOP are intended to ensure that protest activities follow existing guidelines regarding encampments and blocking access to campus facilities and walkways.
- Provost Newman noted that UC wants to do everything possible to attract and support the best graduate students. However, the traditional funding model is no longer viable. She referenced the forthcoming APC workgroup report on graduate education, which addresses these challenges.
- Provost Newman confirmed that discussions about a common academic calendar are ongoing and include consideration of a semester system alignment, calendar features like consolidation periods before exams, ideal start dates for the academic year, and the potential for intersession periods. APC workgroup members are evaluating diverse needs across disciplines to determine the most beneficial changes.
- CFO Brostrom acknowledged the primary purpose of MOP is for faculty recruitment and noted its effectiveness. Future adjustments to MOP may include more targeted usage and specified purposes to ensure alignment with recruitment goals.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES (CONTINUED)

B. Academic Council

2. Proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 (A-G Ethnic Studies)

- **Steven W. Cheung, Chair**

Background: At its July 2024 meeting, the Academic Council voted (12-7) to advance proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 to the Assembly for further consideration. The revisions introduce an A-G ethnic studies requirement (Area H) for freshman admission to UC. BOARS’s Ethnic Studies Implementation Workgroup also developed revised criteria and guidelines for eligible high school courses, outlining UC’s expectations for college-preparatory ethnic studies coursework.

Chair’s Remarks: Chair Cheung emphasized that the purpose of the A-G requirements is to define faculty expectations for high school coursework that best prepares students for success at UC. The 15-course A-G pattern ensures incoming students are ready to participate in UC’s first-year programs across a broad range of fields. In November 2020, BOARS unanimously approved a proposal for a one-semester ethnic studies course requirement within the existing 15-course A-G pattern. This non-additive approach highlights the importance of ethnic studies while maintaining flexibility for high schools to incorporate the proposed new requirement across multiple A-G subject areas.

The proposed requirement aligns with State Assembly Bill 101, ensuring consistency with the state law for public high school graduation requirements. It affirms UC's commitment to advancing critical and interdisciplinary studies that examine race, ethnicity, and their intersections with gender, class, sexuality, and other identities, centering on the intellectual scholarship of people of color. The field is intended to help students develop inclusivity, understand diversity, connect with their communities, and gain tools to address systemic inequalities.

UC's A-G requirements historically have matched or exceeded the California public high school graduation requirements. By introducing UC criteria for ethnic studies courses, the University reinforces its role in defining admission requirements that prioritize solid academic preparation for college.

Following BOARS's initial approval of the proposal, multiple BOARS workgroups developed and refined criteria for eligible high school ethnic studies courses. In June 2023, BOARS approved a revised draft of the course criteria and guidelines by a vote of 9-2. Since November 2020, the proposal has undergone two systemwide reviews, with questions and concerns addressed at each stage. The Academic Council deliberated on the proposal three times in 2023, ultimately voting 12-7 in July 2024 to advance it to the Assembly.

Discussion highlights: The discussion featured a range of perspectives from Assembly members and other Senate faculty in attendance, including faculty from ethnic studies fields.

Pro Arguments: Individual proponents emphasized the following points:

- A-G ethnic studies aligns with California's AB 101 mandate requiring ethnic studies course offerings for all public high school students starting in 2025-26. UC's guidance is critical for implementation and signals support for equitable funding and curriculum expansion.
- The proposed requirement integrates with UC's existing A-G requirements without increasing the total number of A-G courses. The mandate is funded, with \$50 million allocated to prepare for implementation by 2029-30.
- Proponents highlighted the rigorous development process of the course criteria by UC faculty experts, emphasizing collaboration, inclusivity, and alignment with existing A-G requirements. The criteria reflect 50 years of growth in ethnic studies disciplines, which are now established as undergraduate and graduate degree programs nationwide. These fields are inherently interdisciplinary and academically rigorous.
- Ethnic Studies promotes critical thinking, civic engagement, and understanding of systemic inequities. It helps students analyze the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and class while benefiting all students, particularly those from marginalized communities.
- Ethnic Studies corrects historical Eurocentric biases and misrepresentation of diverse histories in education. The discipline provides an interdisciplinary focus on power dynamics and marginalized perspectives, fostering civic engagement and justice.
- Peer-reviewed studies demonstrate improved student engagement, academic success, and campus climate resulting from ethnic studies, preparing California high school students for success at UC and beyond.
- AB 101 positions UC as a leader in guiding implementation and supporting curriculum development. The A-G ethnic studies course criteria were crafted by UC experts, with input from educational agencies and community constituents. A former BOARS chair noted the unanimous BOARS support for an A-G ethnic studies requirement in 2020.

- Excluding Ethnic Studies would itself be a politicized decision that reinforces historical inequities and reflects institutional racism. The proposal supports a paradigm shift to decolonize education.
- UC’s adoption of the proposed new requirement supports ethnic studies amid national efforts to curtail DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) initiatives and restrict race discourse in education.

Con Arguments: Individual opponents emphasized the following points, including:

- The gap between allocated funding (\$50 million) and the estimated \$276 million needed for full implementation across the state is large. Resource-strapped school districts could struggle to comply, potentially leaving up to 5% of students—about 20,000 annually—unable to meet UC admissions criteria.
- The proposal disproportionately impacts students from under-resourced schools, private or religious schools, and out-of-state institutions that may lack access to robust ethnic studies programs. Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement, rather than an admissions requirement, would avoid unfairly penalizing these students.
- Several members highlighted logistical hurdles in scaling A-G ethnic studies across diverse high school settings, pointing to limited teacher training, regional differences in curriculum development, and a lack of robust accountability measures to ensure uniform quality.
- There are inconsistencies in ethnic studies curricula across districts and limited consultation with K-12 educators. Implementation should be delayed until AB 101 is fully evaluated, equitable access is ensured, and funding gaps are addressed.
- The ethnic studies criteria are inherently political and divisive. Making ethnic studies a mandatory admissions criterion could signal ideological bias and alienate key parties, including parents, legislators, and donors.
- The increased emphasis on ethnic studies could come at the expense of traditional academic disciplines, particularly history, whose focus may be diluted or reshaped to align with the new mandate.
- The research cited in support of ethnic studies is not robust, and research findings on improved student outcomes may not apply universally. The benefits described are aspirational rather than guaranteed.
- Critics expressed concerns about inaccuracies in the proposal’s supporting documentation, including claims about funding sufficiency and BOARS recommendations. They argued that these inconsistencies undermined confidence in the proposal’s readiness.
- Some members proposed making ethnic studies an encouraged elective or content recommendation rather than a requirement. This approach would support ethnic studies expansion without creating rigid mandates.

In light of uncertainties surrounding state funding for AB 101 and unresolved implementation challenges, some participants recommended postponing any action on the proposal until these issues can be more fully addressed.

ACTION: A motion to postpone the vote on the A-G ethnic studies proposal until the April 2025 Assembly meeting was made and seconded. The motion passed in a vote of 42-12, with two abstentions.

VI. SPECIAL ORDERS

- A. Consent Calendar [NONE]
- B. Annual Reports [2023-24]

VII. UNIVERSITY AND FACULTY WELFARE REPORT [NONE]

VIII. REPORTS ON SPECIAL COMMITTEES [NONE]

IX. PETITIONS OF STUDENTS [NONE]

X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS [NONE]

XI. NEW BUSINESS

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director, Academic Senate

Attest: Steven W. Cheung, Academic Senate Chair

Attachments: Appendix A – Assembly Attendance Record, Meeting of December 12, 2024

**Appendix A – 2024-2025 Assembly Attendance Record
Meeting of December 12, 2024**

President of the University:

Michael Drake

Douglas (Bert) Winther-Tamaki (absent)

Academic Council Members:

Steven W. Cheung, Chair
Ahmet Palazoglu, Vice Chair
Amani Nuru-Jeter, Chair, UCB
Katheryn Russ, Chair, UCD
Valerie Jenness, Chair, UCI
Kathleen Bawn, Chair, UCLA
Kevin Mitchell, Chair, UCM
Kenneth Barrish, Chair, UCR
Olivia Graeve, Chair, UCSD
Steven Hetts, Chair, UCSF
Rita Raley, Chair, UCSB
Matthew McCarthy, Chair, UCSC
Deborah Swenson, Chair, BOARS
James Bisley, Chair, CCGA
Kristen Holmquist, UCAADE Chair (alt for
Katherine Meltzoff, Chair)
Sean Malloy, Chair, UCAP
Catherine Sugar, UCEP Vice Chair (alt for
Rachael Goodhue, Chair)
Juan Pablo Pardo-Guerra, Chair, UCFW
Susanne Nicolas, Chair, UCORP
Tim Groeling, Chair, UCPB

Los Angeles (7)

Christopher Colwell
Mekonnen Gebremichael (absent)
Ronald D. Hays
Jody Kreiman
Reynaldo Macias
Moritz Meyer-ter-Vehn
Robert Zeithammer

Merced (1)

Shilpa Khatri

Riverside (2)

Jennifer Hughes
Manuela Martins-Green

San Diego (5)

Marianna Alperin
Kimberly Cooper
Gabriella Caballero Hernandez
Julia Ortony (absent)
Deborah Stein

San Francisco (5)

Ifeyinwa Asiodu
Robin Corelli
David Hwang
Margaret Wallhagen (alt for Kewchang Lee)
Soo-Jeong Lee

Santa Barbara (3)

Eileen Boris
Sabine Fruhstuck
Isabel Bayrakdarian (alt for Charles Jones)

Santa Cruz (2)

Melissa Caldwell
Rita Mehta

Secretary/Parliamentarian

Katherine Yang (UCSF)

Berkeley (5)

Mark Goble
Tyrone Hayes
Mina Aganagic (alt for Jonah Levy)
Daniel Sargent
Dean Toste

Davis (6)

Niels Gronbech-Jensen
Kristin Lagattuta
Walter Leal
Abigail Thompson
Rena Zieve
Karen Zito (absent)

Irvine (4)

Noah Askin
German Andres Enciso
Oliver Eng