



ACADEMIC COUNCIL SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAB ISSUES ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

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 three times during 2023-2024 academic year (AY). Two meetings were held via videoconference, and one was held at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. A summary of the committee's discussions is below.

OFFICE OF THE UC 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 (LLNS), LLC, 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 office of the UC National Laboratories coordinates this work for the University.

At each ACSCOLI meeting, leaders from UC's office of the National Laboratories provided updates on the national labs and the work of the office to foster collaborations and expand UC's laboratory management portfolio. In January, Vice President Craig Leasure announced his retirement and Associate Vice President June Yu was subsequently appointed as interim vice president.

Executive Director for National Laboratory Programs Alan Wan provided updates throughout the year on the Early Career Faculty Initiative, UC's partnership with LLNL's Strategic Deterrence Directorate. The award, which provides \$1m over five years, is part of ongoing efforts to build enduring relationships with the labs. This year's topic is advanced materials and manufacturing. In addition to sponsoring meaningful research, the initiative is intended to foster connections between UC and LLNL researchers and technical staff, enable the hiring of UC postdocs and students, provide LLNL researchers with opportunities to collaborate and connect with the UC community, and develop a cadre of UC faculty who appreciate and support LLNL in the long-term. UC is looking into forming a similar award program with LANL.

Last summer, the UC National Laboratories joined with UC Investments to send a select group of 28 UC doctoral and postdoctoral students to the Lindau Nobel Laureate meeting in Germany.

After receiving approval from the UC Board of Regents last year to submit a bid for the management contract for the Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research, ACSCOLI was regularly updated on the process. A decision was expected early in 2024, but now the results will not be known until December 2024.

MEETING WITH CHAIR OF THE REGENTS' NATIONAL LABS COMMITTEE

In October, ACSCOLI was joined by Regent Jose Hernandez, Chair of the Board of Regents' National Labs Committee. Regent Hernandez described his years of experience at LLNL and at DOE headquarters and his interest in nuclear energy sources for lunar and mars explorations that would work in other applications as well. The National Labs Committee receives briefings from national lab directors and reports on the achievements of the labs to the Board. The Regents support UC's bid to manage the Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research (FNLCR), which it believes will bring strategic and scientific advantage to the university and the faculty. Regent Hernandez is interested in expanding opportunities for interactions with the national labs, including building relationships that would increase diversity in STEM fields.

UC OFFICE OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION

UC Vice President for Research & Innovation Theresa Maldonado and her staff joined ACSCOLI meetings during the year to discuss the DOE's Hydrogen Hub, the federal government's CHIPS Act, and other research-related topics. Regarding joint appoints at the labs, the vice chancellors of research are investigating whether joint appointment agreements that were developed at UC Irvine and UCSD might be expanded to be usable for all campuses. These umbrella agreements facilitate the creation of individual agreements.

UC LAB FEES RESEARCH PROGRAM

After hearing feedback from past participants, this year's Lab Fees' Collaborative Research and Training (CRT) award competition dedicated more time to the development of group proposals, including workshops that convened potential collaborators before the RFP deadlines. The current CRT themes are Research Advancing Microelectronics and Community-Engaged Research for Clean Energy Solutions. An additional theme will either be Fusion Energy or Scientific Applications of Artificial Intelligence. Seven new fellows were awarded in the latest In-Residence Graduate Fellowship competition: three at LANL and four at LLNL. In January, the Research Grants Program Office presented a new customizable dashboard that will enable tracking of outcomes from the graduate and CRT awards. This type of measurement capability responds to ACSCOLI's past requests for metrics for the programs.

MEETING AT LAWRENCE BERKELEY NATIONAL LAB

Thanks to assistance from local staff, ACSCOLI was able to hold its January meeting on site at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. The committee met with LBNL Director Mike Witherell and heard a presentation from research scientist Hanna Breunig on the lab's involvement in ARCHES (the Alliance for Renewable Clean Hydrogen Energy Systems) and the large-scale development of a clean hydrogen energy environment. Associate Laboratory Director for Computing Sciences Jonathan Carter gave a quick overview of artificial intelligence work at the lab. Committee members were given a tour of the supercomputer center by ALD Carter and of the Advanced Light Source facility by ALS Director Dimitri Argyriou.

CHARTER REVISION

At the end of the year, the ACSCOLI charter was revised to clarify issues around membership and to prepare for the potential addition of a new national lab to UC's management portfolio. Originally conceived as a special committee that would be chaired by the Academic Council chair, that role has been delegated to a member of the committee for many years. The revised charter, which was approved by the Academic Council on July 24, 2024, reflects this practice and clarifies the appointments of at-large and ex-officio members.

REPRESENTATION AND OTHER UPDATES

- On June 26, ACSCOLI Chair Peggy O'Day joined the Academic Council meeting to give a presentation of ACSCOLI's discussions over the past year to Council members.
- ACSCOLI Chair Peggy O'Day attended spring meetings of the LLNL Science & Technology (S&T) Committee and LBNL Advisory Board.
- ACSCOLI members do not report back to a corresponding campus committee, but the committee was regularly joined by Senate leaders who provided updates about the work of the Senate. These regular updates to standing and special committees help all faculty members have a broader view of the university.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACSCOLI wishes to acknowledge the contributions of its consultants and guests:

- Scott Brandt, Associate Vice Provost for Research & Innovation
- Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office
- Jose Hernandez, Chair of the Board of Regents' National Labs Committee
- Craig Leasure, Vice President for the UC National Laboratories (until Jan. 2024)
- Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research & Innovation
- Rebecca Stanek-Rykoff, Program Officer, Research Grants Program Office
- Alan Wan, Executive Director for Laboratory Programs
- Mike Witherell, Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab
- June Yu, Interim Vice President for the National Laboratories

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy O'Day, UCM, ACSCOLI Chair

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Timothy Fisher, UCLA

Darrell Long, UCSC

Lorenzo Valdevit, UCI

Ex-officio:

James Steintrager, Academic Council Chair

Steven Cheung, Academic Council Vice Chair

Robert Powell, UCD, Chair of the Triad LLC Science, Technology, and Engineering Committee

Ram Seshadri, UCSB, Representative to the Advisory Board of the Lawrence Berkeley

National Laboratory (Sept-Jan)

Staff: Joanne Miller, Academic Senate Committee Analyst