



ACADEMIC COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

The [Academic Council](#) is the executive committee of the Assembly of the Academic Senate. It acts on behalf of the Assembly on non-legislative matters, advises the president, and has the responsibility through its committee structure to investigate and report to the Assembly on matters of University-wide concern. Council held 11 regular meetings and two special meetings in the 2024-25 academic year, including four at UC Office of the President, to consider multiple initiatives, proposals, and reports. Council's final recommendations and reports are available on the [Academic Senate website](#). Key issues addressed this year are summarized below.

PROTECTING UC'S MISSION IN THE FACE OF DISRUPTIONS

A major focus of the Council in 2024–25 was responding to escalating threats to the University's ability to carry out its public mission in an increasingly disruptive political environment. Council regularly engaged with senior UC leaders on the impacts of federal actions, including canceled grants; politicized oversight of academic departments; curbs on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs; and restrictions on international scholars. Council members conveyed widespread faculty concerns about visa cancellations, disruptions to federally funded research, cuts to indirect cost recovery, and threats to academic freedom and institutional autonomy. They stressed the need for stronger faculty advocacy to counteract these pressures and emphasized the importance of preserving the University's independence and academic quality, supporting affected faculty, and maintaining the University's commitment to vulnerable UC community members. Council took several actions to ensure that faculty voices and input guided the University's response:

UCAD: Recognizing the need for a Senate-led response to these disruptive conditions, Council in April 2025 charged a Task Force on UC Adaptation to Disruptions ([UCAD](#)) with developing strategies to help UC sustain its mission across four areas: 1) restructuring academic programs, 2) resizing programs and the workforce, 3) recalibrating growth objectives, and 4) realigning funding sources with mission activities. UCAD met weekly and throughout the summer, drawing on the expertise of Council members and engaging with systemwide administrative partners. Its July 2025 interim report focused primarily on the first two focus areas and offered the following preliminary recommendations:

- Coordinated support for faculty whose research has been disrupted.
- Guidance for departments and Committees on Academic Personnel (CAPs) on evaluating faculty affected by disruptions.
- Flexible approaches to reconfiguring and resizing academic programs.
- Strategies to maintain instructional continuity through increased flexibility in course offerings and modalities.

The interim report is intended as a framework for further discussion with key leaders and constituent groups. In the coming months, UCAD will turn to the remaining areas—recalibrating growth objectives and realigning funding sources—and issue additional recommendations.

Academic Council Statement: The Defense of the University: Council approved a [statement](#) reaffirming the University’s public mission and the essential role of academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and shared governance. It urged UC leaders to take bold and coordinated action to protect the academic core of the institution.

Statement on the Politicization of Research: Council endorsed a [statement](#) developed by the University Committee on Academic Freedom ([UCAF](#)) addressing the growing trend of politicized interference in faculty research agendas and calling on UC leadership to proactively defend the scholarly autonomy of UC faculty.

Academic Support for Students: Following recommendations from the University Committee on Educational Policy ([UCEP](#)) and the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs ([CCGA](#)), Council issued [guidance](#) on supporting students in good standing who are unable to complete their UC degree on a UC campus.

Support for Vulnerable Students: In January 2025, the Office of Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs (GUEA) briefed Council on efforts to support undocumented students and those from mixed-status families. The discussion focused on legal protections, available resources, faculty responsibilities, and potential risks for students navigating these challenges.

International Students: In June 2025, GUEA discussed immigration challenges facing international students and UC’s legal support efforts for affected students, faculty, and staff. Chair Cheung consulted UCOP on several [legal and export control questions](#) from UCLA about remote instruction accommodations for international students unable to obtain visas.

BUDGET ISSUES

Monthly Budget Briefings: Senior UCOP administrators provided monthly updates on the development of the 2025-26 state budget and UC budget plan; budget negotiations; advocacy efforts; federal fiscal development; finance and investment strategies; housing planning; and other issues. A subset of Council members participated in additional monthly briefings led by Provost Newman.

MOP: Council and the Office of the CFO discussed efforts to shore up the finances of the Mortgage Origination Program (MOP) amid a sharp increase in demand driven by rising commercial rates that has strained campus allocations.

UC Central Bank: Council and the Office of the CFO discussed the Central Bank financing model, which provides campuses with fixed-rate internal loans to fund capital projects, buffering them from market volatility and centralizing interest rate risk management at UCOP.

Budget Advocacy: Council expressed appreciation for state support but emphasized the need for sustained investment in campus infrastructure and deferred maintenance. Rising labor costs, inflation, and housing challenges remain key concerns.

Academic Senate Office Budgets: Council endorsed a [statement](#) from the Senate executive directors on re-investing in shared governance and accompanying principles for resource allocations in support of campus and systemwide Senate operations.

FACULTY WELFARE ISSUES

Health and Welfare Benefits: In June 2025, the Council received a presentation from Senate Representative Richard Kronick on projected 2026 health plan premium increases and potential UC strategies to manage rising costs. Council [endorsed](#) a letter from the University Committee on Faculty Welfare ([UCFW](#)) and its Health Care Task Force ([HCTF](#)) regarding potential health plan premium changes for 2026, highlighting concerns about affordability, equity, and the long-term viability of plans like UC Care. Discussions with UC Human Resources followed in July, and focused on efforts to balance affordability and competitiveness across pay bands, concerns about UC Care’s risk from adverse selection, and plans to align benefits with a comprehensive total remuneration study.

Recommended Changes to UCRP Funding: The Council [endorsed](#) several recommendations regarding UC Retirement Plan (UCRP) funding put forward by the UCFW and its Task Force on Investment and Retirement ([TFIR](#)) to help UC mitigate the impacts of a potential federal funding loss while maintaining long-term pension sustainability.

2024 UC Faculty and Instructor Experience Survey: Council reviewed and endorsed a [report](#) on the 2024 UC Faculty and Instructor Experience Survey that was developed by 2022-23 Senate Chair Susan Cochran to track faculty experiences and post-pandemic recovery.

RASC: Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC) leaders updated the Council on service improvements, including reduced wait times, better counseling options, and a modernized portal, and addressed faculty concerns about counseling consistency and coordination with campus offices.

Total Remuneration Study: Council discussed the upcoming Total Remuneration Study, being conducted by Deloitte in partnership with UC Systemwide Human Resources and four faculty advisors from UCFW. The study will update UC’s understanding of total compensation, which was last assessed in 2014.

Cybersecurity: Council discussed the implementation of new systemwide cybersecurity tools, particularly endpoint detection and response (EDR) tools such as Trellix, and faculty concerns about academic freedom, data privacy, and the transparency of administrative decision-making. While Council did not issue a formal statement, faculty concerns were prominently expressed in the Assembly, which adopted a [resolution](#) calling for the immediate suspension of Trellix. Council emphasized the need for any future cybersecurity measures to include early engagement with the Senate and clear communication about data access and privacy protections, and annual IT reports on types of action taken by cybersecurity teams to address threats.

ACADEMIC PERSONNEL ISSUES

Meetings with Academic Personnel Leaders: At each meeting, the Deputy Provost for Systemwide Academic Personnel and Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs & Academic Programs joined Council to discuss issues including graduate student unionization, legislation affecting academic personnel, labor relations, and other issues. One key presentation touched on the evolving landscape of academic personnel and labor relations, including the growing union representation among academic appointees and the implications for faculty who supervise represented student employees.

Faculty Discipline: At the request of the Regents, a joint Senate-administration workgroup, co-chaired by Chair Cheung, examined ways to address concerns about consistency, transparency, and timeliness of faculty disciplinary processes across campuses. The group’s recommendations

will take effect as interim policy at the start of the fall 2025 term for campuses, with a full Senate review scheduled for fall 2025. Council members expressed support for efficient disciplinary processes but also emphasized the need to preserve faculty self-governance and due process rights.

APM Reviews: Council participated in several systemwide reviews of proposed revisions to the Academic Personnel Manual (APM):

- [APM - 675](#): Clarifies that faculty on the Veterinary Medicine Salary Scale may not participate in the Health Sciences Compensation Plan.
- [APM - 036](#): Aligns with state law prohibiting UC from issuing “official” letters of recommendation for job applicants unless the UC author of the letter verifies the applicant has no prior sexual harassment allegations.
- [APM - 500](#): Brings policy into compliance with state law requiring the disclosure and consideration of any substantiated findings of misconduct, including sexual harassment, during the academic hiring process.
- [APM - 360](#): Clarifies the role of the Librarian job title series.
- [APM - 230](#): Removes the carve-out for the Visiting Assistant Professor (VAP) program in Mathematics and limits VAP appointments to individuals on leave from an academic or research position at another organization.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Principles for Awarding Degrees Posthumously: Council endorsed and issued [Systemwide Academic Senate Principles for Awarding Degrees Posthumously](#), developed by UCEP and CCGA.

UCCS Credit and Visibility: Council [endorsed](#) a UCEP letter encouraging academic departments to adopt more flexible and transparent articulation policies for UC Center Sacramento (UCCS) courses to support student participation in the UCCS Program and ensure the coursework counts toward graduation requirements. The UCCS Academic Program Modeling Workgroup co-chairs also discussed the workgroup’s recommendations to improve UCCS’s financial stability, expand enrollment, and increase campus participation while addressing barriers such as course crediting, housing concerns, and limited visibility of the program.

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT PREPARATION

A-G Ethnic Studies: UC High School Articulation updated Council on UC’s response to California’s new ethnic studies graduation requirement for all public high school students, to support the Senate’s consideration of a proposed revision to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 introducing a one-semester ethnic studies requirement to the A–G course pattern. The Assembly [declined](#) to approve the revision.

Cal-GETC: Following a systemwide Senate review, Council approved a proposal from the Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues ([ACSCOTI](#)) to modify Cal-GETC Subject Area 5 to allow students to fulfill the science requirement with two courses from different science disciplines, rather than one course each in physical sciences and biological sciences.

ACSCOTI: Council approved a proposal to sunset ACSCOTI, with future transfer-related work handled by a subcommittee of the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools ([BOARS](#)). It also [approved](#) ACSCOTI’s proposed consolidation of four existing Transfer Pathways into a single Biological Sciences Transfer Pathway to streamline guidance for prospective students.

Revisions to Senate Bylaw 145: Council endorsed revisions to the bylaw for BOARS intended to strengthen and clarify BOARS' responsibilities in its engagement with California K-12 education partners. The Assembly [approved](#) the revisions in April 2025.

Proposed Sunset of UCOPE: Following a systemwide Senate review, Council declined to endorse a [proposal](#) to eliminate the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) and reassign relevant elements of its charge to UCEP. UCOPE is drafting an updated committee charge to focus on near- and medium-term priorities.

GRADUATE EDUCATION

Degree and School Approvals: Following recommendations from CCGA, UCEP, and the University Committee on Planning and Budget ([UCPB](#)), Council approved the following degree programs, schools, and program name changes.

- [Master of Applied Artificial Intelligence for Science at UCI](#) (7/25)
- [Simple Name Change for the UCSD Graduate School of Marine Sciences](#) (6/25)
- [Master of Public Administration at UCI](#) (7/25)
- [Master of Global Public Affairs with PDST at UCLA](#) (6/25)
- [Name Change for the UCSB College of Engineering](#) (5/25)
- [Master of Urban Studies and Regional Planning at UCSD](#) (2/25)
- [Master in Education Sciences at UCI](#) (12/24)

Doctoral Education: Council discussed the [final report](#) of the Academic Planning Council (APC) Workgroup on the Future of Doctoral Programs with workgroup Co-Chairs Susannah Scott (UCSB) and Gillian Hayes (UCI). The report includes six actionable recommendations and several bold ideas and highlights innovative models to strengthen doctoral programs.

RESEARCH

Office of Research and Innovation: The Office of Research and Innovation (R&I) joined Council to discuss R&I initiatives, efforts to examine UC policies on restricted research, the impact of the new federal administration on research, and faculty concerns about research administration support on campuses.

MRU Reviews: Council approved the University Committee on Research Policy's ([UCORP](#)) Five-Year Multi-Campus Research Unit (MRU) review of the [UC Observatories](#) (UCO) and the [Bioengineering Institute of California](#) (BIC), as specified by the Compendium, with participation by members of UCPB and CCGA.

Federal Policy Research: UC's Federal Governmental Relations team briefed the Council about efforts to engage Congress and federal agencies to protect research funding and promote UC's contributions to innovation, public health, and the economy amid shifting federal priorities.

Presidential Policies: Council participated in the systemwide Senate review of three UC presidential policies related to research:

- [High-Containment Research](#): Strengthens biosafety and regulatory compliance across UC's High-Containment Laboratories.
- [Use of Animals in Research, Teaching, and Testing](#): Enhances animal welfare protections, clarifies responsibilities in animal use, and ensures compliance with regulatory standards.

- **[Dual Use Research of Concern and Pathogens with Enhanced Pandemic Potential](#)**: Revises UC policy to incorporate updated federal provisions regarding the oversight of research involving biological agents and toxins.

CAMPUS CLIMATE AND SAFETY

Campus Climate Initiative: GUEA briefed Council on the Campus Climate Initiative (CCI), developed to promote consistent, content-neutral enforcement of policies on protests and campus safety. Council discussed concerns about racial profiling, ID policies, and militarized policing, and called for Senate involvement in emergency planning. Division chairs described local actions to increase faculty engagement, coordinate messaging, and support campus healing.

Campus Safety: Council and the Office of Systemwide Community Safety discussed UC police acquisition of military-grade equipment and reporting compliance with State Assembly Bill 481. Council learned that much of the equipment classified as “military grade” in the legislation has been used by UC campuses for decades and is not exclusively for military use.

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

Diversity Statements: Council discussed the Regents’ decision to eliminate standalone diversity statements in faculty recruitment, while maintaining recognition of faculty contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in advancement and promotion.

ARO Implementation: Council endorsed a letter from the University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity ([UCAADE](#)) supporting a multi-committee effort to survey campuses on their implementation of Achievement Relative to Opportunities (ARO) principles in merit and promotion processes.

UCAADE Bylaw and Charge: Council approved a fall 2025 systemwide review of UCAADE’s proposed updates to the committee’s name and charge to better reflect its current focus and responsibilities.

HEALTH SCIENCES

Senate Membership Memorial: In December 2024, the systemwide Senate office received certified votes from the San Francisco Division on two memorials petitioning for extension of Senate membership to faculty with >50% effort in the Health Sciences Clinical and Adjunct Professor series. Divisional voting was opened for 90 calendar days and concluded in March 2025. The Senate office released a summary of the [certified results](#) of the vote, indicating that both memorials failed in all nine divisions.

ACSCOCA Proposal: In April 2025, Council discussed a proposal for an Academic Council Special Committee on Clinical Affairs (ACSCOCA) intended to strengthen shared governance for UC’s clinical faculty. However, the proposal did not gain support from UC Health or the medical school deans and is no longer under active consideration.

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Living Laboratory: Professor Roger Bales (UCM) and Chief Sustainability Officer Matt St. Clair presented recommendations from the Fossil-Free UC Task Force encouraging the “Living Laboratory” model to engage the UC community in scalable, campus-based decarbonization efforts that integrate education, research, and operations to help achieve UC’s climate goals.

Proposed Senate Committee: Council approved the circulation in spring 2026 of a proposal to establish a systemwide Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability.

OTHER WORKGROUPS

APC Systemwide Calendar Workgroup: Vice Chair Palazoglu co-chaired an Academic Planning Council (APC) workgroup that assessed the impact of transitioning all UC campuses with undergraduate programs to a common academic calendar. This work received a great deal of attention from Council members and other faculty concerned about disruptions to research, faculty effort required to redesign courses, and reduced flexibility in classroom space scheduling. Following a systemwide Senate review of the workgroup draft report, Council issued a [letter](#) reflecting strong systemwide opposition to any calendar change.

AI Workgroup: Immediate past Senate Chair James Steintrager led a Senate [Workgroup on Artificial Intelligence](#). In July 2025, he presented a draft report examining AI's transformative impact on teaching, research, and service. The report highlighted rising faculty workload, key policy gaps, and the need for proactive Senate engagement guided by principles of agency, adaptability, and trustworthiness.

LEADERSHIP SEARCHES

Presidential Search: Chair Cheung led the 13-member Academic Advisory Committee for the UC Presidential Search. Council updated the 2019 presidential search criteria and sent the document to Regent Chu, chair of the Special Regents Committee to Consider the Selection of the President. Council requested stronger collaboration between the Senate's Academic Advisory Committee and the Regents' Special Committee in the search.

Other Searches: Vice Chair Palazoglu served on the UCSB chancellor search advisory committee and the search committee for the vice provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs. Chair Cheung served on the search committee for the UCR chancellor.

SPECIAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

Council members participated in two special Assembly meetings: one in February 2025 to discuss faculty concerns about the president's information security plan, the timing of faculty salary adjustments, and rising healthcare premiums; and a second in March 2025 to discuss faculty concerns about the consultation process for any proposed common academic calendar for the UC system, and a motion to recommend that all UC administrators at the dean level and above receive salary range adjustments at the same time as the regular faculty.

OTHER BRIEFINGS AND ISSUES

Senior Managers: President Drake, Provost Newman, and Chief Financial Officer Brostrom joined Council each month, as their schedules permitted, to exchange views with the faculty on issues concerning campus climate, federal disruptions, legal matters, online education, the UC budget, Regents' agenda items and presentations, and other initiatives and topics.

Meeting with Chair of the Regents: Board of Regents Chair Reilly met with Council in October 2024 to discuss her priorities and engage with the faculty on common goals for access, affordability, and continued excellence; improved state funding and state relations; support for the UC research and

graduate education mission; and opportunities to leverage UC research power to solve environmental and social problems.

SGR: The Office of State Governmental Relations (SGR) briefed Council on the state legislative and budget process, the status of several proposed bills with impacts on undergraduate admissions, UC operations, and UC-sponsored legislation.

ANR: Council met with Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) to discuss their statewide work translating UC research into practical solutions for California communities and its Vision 2040 priorities, including climate resilience, equity, innovation, and rebuilding the cooperative extension system.

ECAS: Council met with the Office of Ethics, Compliance and Audit Services (ECAS) to discuss systemwide compliance priorities, including training requirements and risk areas such as cybersecurity, research security, and clinical operations. Council members emphasized faculty workload concerns and the need for more collaborative compliance strategies.

ACSCOLI: Academic Council Special Committee on Laboratory Issues ([ACSCOLI](#)) Chair Valdevit briefed the Council about the work of ACSCOLI and the UC-managed National Laboratories.

Mid-Career Leadership Award: UC San Francisco Professor Steven Hetts and UC Los Angeles Professor Andrea Kasko were the selected recipients of the 2025 [Academic Council Chairs Award for Mid-Career Leadership in the Academic Senate](#).

Reports from Division Chairs: Council set aside time at each meeting for reports from Senate division chairs. These touched on a wide range of topics, including the engagement of faculty in campus budget discussions; campus adaptation to disruptions; strategies to amplify faculty voices in decision-making during times of political and budgetary uncertainty; and concerns surrounding the implementation of new systemwide cybersecurity tools. Chairs also raised issues related to shared governance and administrative transparency, faculty workload concerns, struggles with access to affordable housing, staffing vacancies, and the impact of deferred maintenance. Other recurring themes included the increase in impacted majors, campus climate and free speech, graduate student support and mentoring, faculty recruitment and retention in high-cost areas, the implications of academic labor union negotiations, campus planning in the context of enrollment growth and limited space, and concerns about a potential move to a systemwide academic calendar.

ADDITIONAL SYSTEMWIDE REVIEWS

In addition to those previously mentioned, Council sent comments on the following presidential policy revisions circulated for systemwide Senate review:

- [Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-63: Risk Transfer and Insurance Requirements](#)
- [Program Attachments #3–7 to the Policy on Vaccination Programs](#)
- [Presidential Policy on Externally Supplied Medications in Outpatient and Clinic Settings](#)

RELATIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNING BODIES

Board of Regents: Chair Cheung and Vice Chair Palazoglu executed their roles as faculty representatives to the Regents throughout the year, acting in that capacity on Regents' standing committees and the full board. Chair Cheung delivered remarks to the Regents at each meeting; these can be found on the [Academic Senate website](#).

ICAS: It was UC's turn in 2024-25 to lead the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS) which represents the faculty Senates of the three segments of California public higher education (University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges). Representing UC at ICAS meetings were Chair Cheung as ICAS chair, Vice Chair Palazoglu, and the chairs of BOARS, ACSCOTI, and UCEP.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Respectfully submitted:

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