



# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

## Academic Senate

### Academic Council Minutes of Meeting

April 2, 2025

#### I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. Minutes of February 26, 2025 meeting
3. University Committee on Academic Freedom Letter on Politicization of Research
4. April 23, 2025 Assembly Agenda Topics
  - a. Revision to Senate Bylaw 145 (BOARS)
  - b. Systemwide Senate Vice Chair Election
  - c. Consultation with UC Senior Managers
  - d. Revision to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 (A-G Ethnic Studies)

**ACTION: Council approved the consent calendar.**

#### II. Senate Officers' Announcements

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

**March Regents Meeting:** President Drake announced a systemwide hiring freeze effective March 31, 2025. Employment offers made before March 31 will be honored, and a follow-up review of the freeze is scheduled for July 2025. The Regents also ended standalone diversity statements in faculty recruitment, while maintaining recognition of faculty contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in advancement and promotion (see APM 210). In addition, the Regents addressed concerns about student health services—highlighting financial sustainability, the potential for integrated health record systems across campuses, and third-party billing. UC Health Executive Vice President David Rubin has been tasked with exploring these issues.

**Special Assembly Meetings:** The March 25, 2025 special Assembly meeting included discussion of a motion recommending that all UC administrators at the dean level and above “receive salary range adjustments” on October 1, aligning them with the timeline for faculty; however, the motion did not carry. There was also discussion about a possible move to a UC systemwide academic calendar. Most participants expressed a preference to maintain the status quo. Participants were encouraged to review the Academic Planning Council (APC) workgroup report examining different academic calendar models and features. A motion recommending that each Senate division vote to adopt a common calendar or retain their current system could not proceed due to a loss of meeting quorum. Discussion of this motion will continue at a future Assembly meeting.

**Senate Membership Memorials:** Divisions completed voting on two UCSF petitions to extend Senate membership to faculty with more than 50% effort in the Health Sciences Clinical and Adjunct Professor series. Certified results from all nine divisions showed that both petitions failed in every division. In accordance with Senate Bylaw 90.D.5, Chair Cheung [notified](#) divisions that the petitions did not meet the threshold required to advance to a Senate-wide mail ballot.

**Area C Update:** A February 24, 2025 letter from Regents Leib and Anguiano directed the University to postpone by one year the implementation of BOARS' recent updates to the definitions of high school courses that satisfy the mathematics (Area C) subject requirement for UC undergraduate

admissions. The updates will now apply to students who have taken courses in the Statistics or Additional Math disciplines in fall 2026 or later.

**Presidential and other Leadership Searches:** The presidential search is progressing; the Santa Barbara chancellor search is near conclusion; and the Riverside chancellor search is underway, with an in-person search committee meeting scheduled soon.

**ICAS Legislative Day:** The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS) held its annual Legislative Day meeting in Sacramento. During the meeting, ICAS held productive discussions with several elected officials, their staff, and higher education advisors, including a Republican representative and the higher education advisor to Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis.

**Resolution for Assembly Consideration:** Chair Cheung received a letter from Senate faculty petitioners requesting that a resolution be added to the agenda for the April 23, 2025 Assembly meeting. The resolution condemns attacks on academic freedom and calls on President Drake and the chancellors to publicly reaffirm their commitment to free speech and challenge federal mandates perceived as infringements on constitutional rights.

***Discussion highlights:***

- Several members appreciated the urgency of the resolution. It was noted that many divisional Senates have been drafting similar statements, indicating the need for a unified, collective response from the systemwide Senate.
- However, members also raised concerns that the resolution had been developed without broad consultation with Senate constituencies, including divisional Senate executive councils. Members emphasized the need to balance timely action with the Senate's commitment to deliberation and transparency. There were calls to refine the resolution and ensure broader input appropriate for a systemwide Senate position, and so that the process aligns with Senate procedures and bylaws.
- Council voted to decline to include the resolution on the April 23 Assembly agenda in its original form, and to convene a workgroup to develop, instead, a statement incorporating key elements of the proposed resolution while also reflecting broader input. Council will schedule a special meeting next week to discuss the statement.

**III. Systemwide Academic Personnel (SWAP) Updates**

- **Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost, SWAP**
- **Douglas Haynes, Interim Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs & Academic Programs**
- **Yvette Gullatt, Vice President and Vice Provost, Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs**

**UC Hiring Freeze:** All open positions are subject to the UC systemwide hiring freeze; however, positions with an already issued offer letter on or before March 31 will be honored. In addition, campuses may allow exceptions for critical needs or positions supporting existing funding commitments. This includes exceptions for graduate student researchers and similar roles based on each campus' budget situation.

**Diversity Statements:** APM - 210.1.d governs how faculty contributions to diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) are evaluated during academic reviews. This policy was developed in close

consultation with the Senate and allows faculty to integrate their DEI contributions into their overall teaching, research, and service portfolios. On March 20, 2025 UC Academic Affairs issued [guidance](#) clarifying that the Regents' directive regarding diversity statements does not apply to APM - 210.1.d. The guidance confirms that DEI contributions will receive appropriate recognition as part of a holistic review process.

***Discussion highlights:***

- A Council member described uncertainty on campus CAPs about how to handle DEI contributions in academic reviews. He expressed concern that the provost's letter could be misinterpreted and requested detailed communication clarifying that APM - 210.1.d remains unchanged. He offered to work with UCAP and UCOP to compile questions and clarifications.
- One Council member noted that the Senate did not intend for "contributions to diversity" to be required or assessed as a fourth, separate advancement criterion, but given an opportunity to be recognized in teaching, research, and service.
- Council members inquired about the potential effects of the Regents' action on programs such as the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program and Advancing Faculty Diversity (AFD). Deputy Provost Lee acknowledged that while each campus may tailor its approach to integrating DEI contributions, discussion on these specifics is ongoing.

**IV. Proposed Revision to Senate Bylaw 145**

○ **Deborah Swenson, BOARS Chair**

The Academic Council reviewed a proposed revision to [Senate Bylaw 145.B.7](#), which formalizes expectations for consultation between the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) and California K-12 representatives regarding changes to undergraduate admissions requirements. The revision responds to criticism that BOARS did not sufficiently engage K-12 constituent groups when revising the definition of courses that fulfill the mathematics (Area C) subject requirement.

The UC Regents and the respective chairs of the California Assembly Committees on Education and on Higher Education have asked the Senate to codify BOARS consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE) and California K-12 representatives. Elected officials have also proposed legislation affecting BOARS: Assembly Bill 500 (Quirk-Silva) calls for formalized consultation before modifying UC undergraduate admissions standards. Assembly Bill 684 (Patel) proposes subjecting BOARS to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

BOARS has already begun engaging with the SBE, including a meeting with President Linda Darling-Hammond. The bylaw revision aims to demonstrate good faith and responsiveness to state concerns while preserving BOARS' ability to deliberate admissions policies and other matters in a productive environment. BOARS is also updating related language in Senate Bylaw 145.B.6 to clarify the scope of A-G course lists and align terminology with Senate Regulation 424.A.3.

The systemwide provost has been asked to present a proposed framework for a more robust K-12 consultation process at the May 2025 meeting of the Regents. To facilitate this, BOARS requested an expedited Council review to allow for final approval by the Assembly on April 23.

**ACTION: The Academic Council unanimously approved the revision and will forward to the Assembly for consideration at its April 23 meeting.**

**V. Systemwide Senate Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on the Dual Use Research of Concern and Pathogens with Enhanced Pandemic Potential**

Council reviewed comments from Senate divisions and committees to the proposed Presidential Policy on Dual Use Research of Concern and Pathogens with Enhanced Pandemic Potential (DURC-PEPP). This policy revises UC's existing Dual Use Research of Concern policy to incorporate updated provisions from the U.S. Government regarding the oversight of research involving biological agents and toxins. These provisions address potential risks to public health, agriculture, food security, economic stability, and national security.

Overall, the Senate supported the policy's intent to align UC with federal oversight policies, recognizing the importance of risk mitigation in research involving biological agents. However, reviewers identified several areas needing clarification and raised concerns about the policy's complexity and administrative burden.

**ACTION: Council agreed to forward the systemwide comments and a summary to Vice President Maldonado.**

**VI. Systemwide Senate Review of Proposed Revisions to APM - 675, Veterinary Medicine Salary Administration**

Council reviewed comments from Senate divisions and systemwide committees to the proposed revisions to APM - 675, which clarify that faculty on the Veterinary Medicine Salary Scale may not participate in the Health Sciences Compensation Plan, and specify the conditions under which they may participate in the Negotiated Salary Program or future compensation plans. Senate reviewers supported the proposed revisions, finding them clearly articulated and well-justified.

**ACTION: Council agreed to send the systemwide comments and a summary to Deputy Provost Lee and Interim Vice Provost Haynes.**

**VII. Systemwide Review of Proposed Revisions to APM - 036: UC Policy Regarding Academic Appointees/Employment**

Council reviewed comments from Senate divisions and systemwide committees to the proposed revisions to APM - 036. The revisions respond to California Assembly Bill (AB) 1905, which took effect January 1, 2025 and prohibits UC from issuing "official" letters of recommendation for job applicants unless the UC author of the letter verifies the applicant has faced no prior sexual harassment allegations. Faculty may still write personal letters on UC letterhead without verification, provided they include a disclaimer stating they are expressing personal views and not speaking on behalf of UC.

Senate reviewers raised substantial concerns, including ambiguities in distinguishing between "official" and "personal" letters; the verification process, its feasibility, and faculty roles; administrative burdens and implementation challenges; and legal risks and unintended consequences of the policy. While reviewers acknowledged that UC must comply with AB 1905,

they emphasized the need for further clarification and refinement to ensure the policy is practical, clear, and provides sufficient faculty guidance.

Council members highlighted that many recommendations are now submitted through online portals that use standardized survey questions and scoring systems, rather than traditional letters on letterhead. The policy should clarify whether the verification requirement applies to these evolving formats.

**ACTION: Council agreed to send the systemwide comments and a summary to Deputy Provost Lee and Interim Vice Provost Haynes.**

#### **VIII. Executive Session: Nomination of 2025-26 Systemwide Senate Vice Chair**

**ACTION: Council selected Professor Susannah Scott of UC Santa Barbara as its candidate for 2025-26 vice chair. The nomination will be forwarded to the Assembly of the Academic Senate for consideration at the April 23, 2025 meeting.**

#### **IX. Discussion of Confidentiality Breach**

Chair Cheung raised concerns about a breach of confidentiality following a recent Academic Council executive session with President Drake. He noted that information from the confidential meeting had appeared in media outlets, including a quote attributed to Council member Sean Malloy. Council then moved to executive session for discussion. Council emerged from executive session and accepted Professor Malloy's resignation from the Academic Council and the University Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP), effective April 24, 2025.

#### **X. Report on 2024 Academic Senate Faculty and Instructor Experience Survey**

- **Ahmet Palazoglu, 2024-25 Senate Vice Chair**
- **Susan Cochran, 2022-23 Senate Chair**
- **James Steintrager, 2023-24 Senate Chair**

Council reviewed a report on the 2024 UC Faculty and Instructor Experience Survey that was distributed by the systemwide Senate through divisional Senates in October 2024. Developed by former Academic Senate Chair Susan Cochran, the survey builds on a similar 2022 survey intended to track faculty experiences and campus recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey included close-ended and open-ended questions, with responses from nearly 4,500 faculty members and instructors. It covered six areas: 1) faculty job satisfaction; 2) campus pandemic recovery and climate; 3) student hardships; 4) academic labor impact; 5) satisfaction with campus resources; and 6) future expectations. Key findings include:

- Faculty morale has declined. Over two-thirds of early-career faculty have seriously considered leaving UC or academia—up from 52% in 2022.
- While some progress was reported since 2022, about 30% of faculty still struggle to meet research expectations.
- Only 36% felt campus climate had improved since recent crises; leadership and communication remain concerns.

- Student academic performance has slightly improved, but instructional support cuts have led to lighter student workloads and increased faculty burden.
- Job satisfaction has dropped significantly due to staff shortages and rising administrative demands. Job satisfaction remains lower among women, underrepresented minorities, LGBTQ+, and disabled faculty.
- Many respondents criticized University leadership, especially in crisis communication.
- Many faculty feel exhausted in the wake of multiple crises. While they remain deeply committed to their academic mission, they are uncertain about the University's direction and are increasingly concerned about UC's ability to respond to future challenges.

The survey report concludes with recommendations for the systemwide and campus administrations, the systemwide Academic Senate, and the divisional Senates, identifying opportunities to improve transparency, strengthen faculty support, and foster more engaged leadership.

### ***Discussion highlights***

- Council members praised the report as a valuable resource for planning. One member noted that the findings align with campus qualitative data, especially around faculty workloads.
- Council members emphasized concern about worsening faculty morale, noting that morale problems have serious consequences for UC's functioning and that poor communication, particularly around academic labor, was one major contributor. Members noted the need for improved administrative transparency and communication as a key takeaway.
- Members discussed the need to clarify and elevate the recommendation to the administration to strengthen research administrative support to better reflect the urgency of this issue. The report should highlight this need more directly, given the severe staffing shortages and administrative inefficiencies on some campuses that are hindering faculty research.

**ACTION: Council approved forwarding the report to President Drake and Provost Newman.**

## **XI. A-G Ethnic Studies Presentation**

- **Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions**
- **Chase Fischerhall, Director, A-G and Transfer Articulation Policy**

To understand how California public high schools are preparing to implement California Assembly Bill (AB) 101, which implements ethnic studies as a high school graduation requirement beginning in 2029-30, UC High School Articulation distributed a survey to high schools offering courses UC has approved for A-G course lists. The 2025 survey updates findings from a 2023 survey and asks about plans to implement or expand ethnic studies course offerings, types of ethnic studies courses offered or in development; challenges in developing courses; and supports needed to meet the requirement.

UC High School Articulation also updated a 2023 analysis of potential ethnic studies courses by estimating how many courses on 2024-25 A-G course lists may qualify as ethnic studies, based on course titles and keywords. The survey sample is not representative of all California high schools, though the number of responses increased from 388 in 2023 to 472 in 2025. Key findings included:

- Between 2023 and 2025, the estimated number of ethnic studies courses in California high schools grew by over 1,000—a 41% increase. In contrast, the overall growth rate of A-G courses across all subjects during this period was just 3.8%.
- In 2024-25, more high schools offered ethnic studies courses than in 2022-23, with continued growth projected into 2025-26. Among all survey respondents, 74% from both public and private schools reported that their institution had at least begun planning for AB 101 implementation.
- Ethnic studies course availability continues to vary by region. Coastal and urban areas are seeing the fastest growth.
- Public schools are more likely to offer ethnic studies, particularly in densely populated regions. This distinction is expected, as AB 101 applies only to public high schools.
- In 2025, a higher proportion of respondents (45%) reported that partnerships with universities or local community colleges were supporting implementation.
- The top challenges reported in 2023 and 2025 were consistent: teaching staff availability, lack of ethnic studies expertise, and already full student course loads. The top supports requested were professional development, course development, and funding, with the latter especially notable given the current uncertainty about AB 101 state funding.

***Discussion highlights:***

- Members noted that schools further along in implementation were more likely to respond, and since the survey was opt-in, those choosing to respond were probably more interested or invested in sharing success or highlighting needs. Director Fischerhall acknowledged that these dynamics could be at play.
- Director Fischerhall noted that now the draft A-G ethnic studies course criteria and guidelines are available, it would be technically possible to do a sample review of which courses in the A-G portal would meet the draft course criteria, and to estimate what percentage of students would have access to A-G ethnic studies courses.

## **XII. Reports from Senate Division Chairs**

**Budget Uncertainty:** Several chairs relayed concerns about ongoing budget instability driven by federal actions, projected state budget cuts, and structural deficits. Several campuses are already facing significant reductions in federal funding, with serious impacts on research programs, the health sciences, and job security. Faculty are anxious about how cost-cutting measures will affect academic programs and Senate operations, and some divisions have experienced reductions to divisional Senate staff.

Several divisions have hosted town halls and special meetings to address budget and policy concerns. These efforts aim to increase Senate visibility, strengthen faculty engagement, and counter perceptions of disengagement. Senate chairs are also facing pressure from faculty to issue public statements on national and global events. Some chairs are navigating this by surveying faculty or supporting open letters.

At UCSB, the Senate secured participation in a joint Senate-administration task force on budget cuts, an example of inclusive shared governance. In contrast, UCLA continues to face challenges in gaining meaningful involvement in budget matters.

**Faculty Mobilization:** Several divisions reported an increase in faculty activism and engagement. At UCB, faculty organized a rally that energized the campus. UCSB also reported a shift in climate, with previously disengaged faculty now speaking out and pressing for change. This activism suggests a shift toward more vocal and engaged faculty communities.

**Shared Governance:** Individual chairs described a deterioration in faculty-administration relationships, on some campuses marked by reduced consultation and transparency. On these campuses, faculty reported being excluded from major decisions related to budgets, restructuring, and academic planning. In some cases, Senate leaders were brought into discussions only after decisions had been made, or were asked to support predetermined outcomes. Breaches of confidentiality have further eroded trust.

**Other issues:**

- UCB raised concerns about a top-down rollout of AI tools and cybersecurity policies, and insufficient support for faculty working with students who require disability accommodations.
- UCD highlighted the spread of misinformation in the absence of clear administrative communication, particularly on cybersecurity issues.
- Multiple campuses are engaged in or recently completed high-level administrative searches.
- Divisions continue to discuss the Academic Planning Council's UC Systemwide Academic Calendar Workgroup draft report.

### **XIII. New Business**

**Senate Task Force on UC Adaptation to Disruptions (UCAD):** The administration declined to participate in a proposed joint task force to address disruptions at UC, but the task force will move forward as a Senate-only group chaired by Vice Chair Palazoglu. The group will include several systemwide committee chairs or vice chairs, four divisional chairs, and administrators joining as consultants. It will review developing plans to sustain UC's teaching, research, and public service missions amid federal executive orders, anticipated budget cuts, and a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

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Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm  
Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director  
Attest: Steven W. Cheung, Academic Council Chair



**Academic Council**  
**Minutes of Special Meeting**  
April 8, 2025

**I. Statement on Defending the University of California**

Several Council members collaborated to draft a statement for Council’s consideration. The statement is a call to action and a reaffirmation of the University’s public mission in the face of threats to higher education nationwide. It highlights the essential role of shared governance and urges President Drake, UC campus chancellors, and UC Regents to take bold, coordinated steps to protect academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and the safety and privacy of UC faculty, students, and staff. The statement is focused on values, not strategy.

**ACTION: Council unanimously approved the statement.**

**II. Enabling Student Degree Completion**

Provost Newman has asked the systemwide Academic Senate to consider how the University can provide guidance on academic support for undergraduate and graduate students in good academic standing who are unable to complete their UC degree on a UC campus. Possible approaches include student-specific accommodations allowing online completion of outstanding degree requirements and expedited exceptions or waivers to existing policies to permit remote course and degree program completion.

Chair Cheung has asked UCEP and CCGA to develop systemwide guidelines that address proximity to graduation, flexibility in the timeline for degree completion, cross-campus enrollment options, and tuition and fee policies for remote students. UCEP and CCGA were also asked to examine available policy tools (such as emergency terms or exceptions to senior residency requirements) and provide procedural recommendations.

- Council members expressed strong support for assisting students whose lives and education have been disrupted. It was noted that the Senate eased certain rules during the COVID-19 pandemic to enable transition to remote instruction, and that a consistent, coordinated response across campuses will be helpful.

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Meeting adjourned at 8:55 am  
Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director  
Attest: Steven W. Cheung, Academic Council Chair