



Academic Council
Minutes of Meeting
June 24, 2026

I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. May 27, 2026 Academic Council minutes
3. UCB Master of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
4. UCD Master of Education and Teaching Credential

ACTION: Council approved the consent calendar.

II. Senate Officers' Announcements

- **Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Chair**
- **Susannah Scott, Academic Council Vice Chair**
- **Monica Lin, Academic Senate Executive Director**

UCAD Plus: Chair Palazoglu announced revised UCAD Plus timelines: work groups will submit preliminary recommendations by June 25 and final deliverables by July 13; fiscal analyses will follow in late July and August; and the final report is expected by the end of August for a 90-day fall review. He noted that the review is expected to include both formal Senate review and a parallel administrative consultation process through Executive Vice Chancellors, deans, and department chairs. Council members are invited to participate in a July 23 in-person meeting to discuss the systemwide review plans and emerging recommendations.

Discussion highlights:

- Members cautioned that the proposed administrative consultation process should circumvent formal Senate review. They emphasized that divisional Senates already have mechanisms for broad faculty engagement.
- Members emphasized that the purpose, authority, and implementation pathways for the recommendations should be clearly defined before the report is circulated for review to maximize the effectiveness of faculty feedback.
- Members noted that the scope of UCAD Plus has expanded beyond addressing the disruptions that prompted the original UCAD concerns. Chair Palazoglu reaffirmed that the Steering Committee and task force will guide the process within established shared-governance structures.

III. Executive Session

IV. Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs & Systemwide Academic Personnel

- **Monica Varsanyi, Vice Provost, [Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs](#)**
- **Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost, Systemwide Academic Personnel ([SWAP](#))**

Expressive Activities Task Force: Vice Provost Varsanyi reported that the Expressive Activities Task Force concluded its work and is preparing a report which will be available for systemwide review in mid-September. The report will focus on two questions: when extramural speech may constitute grounds for faculty discipline, and how to interpret the APM standard regarding a "significant intrusion of material unrelated to a course." The report will be organized as a series of FAQs.

Early Career Faculty Awards: Vice Provost Varsanyi provided an update on the Early Career Faculty Awards program, which will continue for a second year. Next year, UCOP is considering offering awards at multiple levels rather than only the current \$50,000. She solicited feedback on what smaller award levels might still be meaningful and useful to junior faculty across different disciplines.

APM Policies: Deputy Provost Lee reported that revisions to APM - 500, governing misconduct disclosures under Senate Bill 791 and Assembly Bill 810, and APM - 360, concerning the classification of university librarians, had been delayed because of competing priorities in her office. She noted that both policies are expected to be finalized before the fall term.

Discussion Highlights

- Council members discussed if offering multiple award levels in the Early Career Faculty Awards program would broaden participation. Several noted that funding needs vary across disciplines and suggested that graduate student support costs could serve as a benchmark when determining award amounts. Members noted that the relatively low number of applications from humanities and arts faculty may reflect issues in campus outreach and nomination processes.
- Chair Palazoglu suggested that one or more Senate committees review the program's first year and provide recommendations about program design. Vice Provost Varsanyi welcomed further Senate consultation to inform future program refinements. Additional suggestions included exploring campus cost-sharing arrangements to enhance the impact of award funding.
- Vice Provost Varsanyi also stated that she was not aware of any planned changes to the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program.

V. Report on Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARO) Implementation

- **Nael Abu-Ghazaleh, Chair, University Committee on Academic Personnel ([UCAP](#))**
- **Karen Bales, Chair, University Committee on Faculty Welfare ([UCFW](#))**

The UCAP and UCFW chairs presented a report on behalf of University Committee on Diversity and Equity (UCODE) Chair Holmquist summarizing the history and current implementation of Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARO) across UC. The report recommends codifying ARO principles in the Academic Personnel Manual (APM) to promote more consistent and equitable implementation.

Chair Abu-Ghazaleh noted that the report builds on earlier work, including the [2022 Mitigating COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Working Group](#) and a [2023 Academic Planning Council work group](#). The latter concluded that the APM provides sufficient flexibility to apply ARO principles. However, UCODE now recommends incorporating ARO principles into the APM; improving faculty awareness; tracking, assessing, and promoting greater consistency in ARO implementation; and broadening the circumstances in which ARO may be considered, including personal and health-related disruptions.

Chair Bales noted that UCFW strongly supports the recommendations. She explained that while some administrators favored relying on existing policy flexibility, faculty representatives concluded that stronger systemwide guidance is needed to ensure consistent and transparent implementation.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members expressed support for the goals of the report and agreed that ARO should be implemented more consistently. Several emphasized that it is important for faculty to understand clearly how ARO may be considered during personnel reviews.
- Members cautioned that ARO should not be used to compensate for institutional or administrative shortcomings, but remain focused on mitigating disruptions that affect faculty performance.
- Several members favored codifying ARO in the APM to promote consistency and transparency, but others expressed concern that formal APM language could reduce flexibility. It was suggested that Council consider all alternatives before determining if APM revisions are warranted.

ACTION: Council approved a motion directing UCAP to work with Academic Affairs, in consultation with UCODE and UCFW, to develop a proposal for implementing the report's recommendations and return it to Council for consideration in the fall.

VI. Consultation with Executive Leadership

- Caín Díaz, Associate Vice President, [Budget Analysis and Planning](#)
- Katherine Newman, Provost & Executive Vice President, [Academic Affairs](#)

Associate Vice President Díaz reported that the Legislature's proposed 2026–27 UC budget provides an effective 10% increase to UC's ongoing base budget. This includes a 7% increase in new funding, consisting of 2026–27 Compact funding and restoration of a portion of the deferred 2025–26 Compact increase, along with restoration of the \$129.7 million base budget deferral from 2025–26. The budget also includes \$61 million for nonresident enrollment replacement at UCB, UCLA, and UCSD, but continues the state's practice of deferring portions of Compact funding while extending UC's zero-interest loan through July 2027.

He emphasized that the budget represents a significant improvement over recent years, but does not resolve all of UC's underlying fiscal pressures. UC remains below the funding levels originally proposed for the Compact, while campuses continue to absorb enrollment growth beyond Compact targets and face increasing costs for employee compensation, health benefits, retirement contributions, and other operating expenses. As a result, much of the additional funding will have to offset existing cost increases rather than being available to support new initiatives. He also previewed planned UC messaging clarifying the role of nonresident tuition in supporting UC's core educational mission, emphasizing that nonresident enrollment has enabled UC to expand California resident enrollment and has become an important source of core operating revenue.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members welcomed the favorable outcome and noted the importance of communicating that the additional funding primarily offsets rising operating costs rather than creating resources for new programs or initiatives.
- Members suggested developing additional graphics and explanatory materials illustrating the relationship between state funding, tuition revenue, inflation, and UC's structural budget gap, and showing how increasing costs have outpaced revenue growth over time. Members supported the approach of communicating that nonresident tuition helps support educational opportunities for California students.

Provost's Announcements

Provost Newman responded to questions submitted in advance by Council regarding the planned systemwide review of the UCAD Plus report, anticipated next steps following the review, the

potential adoption of systemwide initiatives, and the process for implementing any resulting recommendations.

She explained that the goal of the systemwide review is to obtain broad faculty feedback on the recommendations before they are finalized. The Steering Committee and work groups will review the comments and may revise the report as appropriate before submitting it to the president, chancellors, and regents in early 2027. She emphasized that the review is intended to strengthen the recommendations rather than initiate implementation, and that any future systemwide initiatives would be considered through established governance and administrative processes. In addition to the formal Senate review, campuses will be encouraged to consult broadly through EVCs, deans, and department chairs to ensure that faculty beyond Senate committees have an opportunity to provide input.

She also updated Council on UC's response to proposed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directives that would introduce political criteria into the federal research grant review process. She described the proposals as a serious threat to academic research and outlined UC's advocacy efforts.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members recommended that the UCAD Plus review focus on clearly defined questions and topics to elicit meaningful feedback. They cautioned against creating a parallel review process outside shared governance, noting that some divisional Senates already have well-established mechanisms to ensure broad faculty engagement.
- Members raised the need for contingency planning should the OMB policies be implemented, including strategies such as bridge funding and more flexible use of indirect cost recovery funds to support research.
- Provost Newman agreed that the evolving federal landscape warrants additional attention and noted that UCAD Plus may need to address these emerging challenges as part of its final recommendations.

VII. Policies and Partnerships Roadmap for First-Year Undergraduate Admissions

○ **Dave Volz, Chair, Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools ([BOARS](#))**

Chair Volz presented BOARS' 2026–27 planned [roadmap](#) for examining first-year undergraduate admissions policies and strengthening UC's partnerships with California K–12. He explained that BOARS intends to establish two faculty-led workgroups: one to evaluate the potential role of standardized testing in undergraduate admissions and another to examine whether the current A–G subject requirements adequately prepare students for success at UC. The workgroups will be populated with UC faculty and include ex officio representation from CSU, K–12, and UCOP. They will develop recommendations for BOARS' consideration. BOARS expects to transmit its recommendations to Academic Council by the end of July 2027, followed by systemwide Senate review in Fall 2027.

He noted that recent concerns about student math preparation have brought heightened attention to the work, which reflects ongoing BOARS priorities. He acknowledged concerns that the Senate's 2020 Standardized Testing Task Force ([STTF](#)) had already made a recommendation on standardized testing and that the roadmap timeline is lengthy. However, he emphasized that significant changes to standardized tests since that previous review warrant a new, evidence-based assessment. He also stressed that the workgroups will consult broadly while independently developing recommendations.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members supported BOARS' evidence-based approach and emphasized the importance of engaging faculty, K–12 educators, and others.
- Members discussed changes to the SAT and ACT since UC's earlier review, possible use of other measures of academic preparation such as Smarter Balanced assessments, and the potential effects of testing requirements on applications at some campuses.
- Several members emphasized preserving campus flexibility, recognizing that campuses and disciplines have different admissions needs and enrollment goals. Discussion included whether future recommendations might allow campuses flexibility in deciding whether and how to use standardized testing.
- Members emphasized that UC admissions policies should reflect its public mission by promoting broad educational opportunities while ensuring students are prepared for success at UC.

VIII. UCPB Report on Athletics Funding

- **Robert Brosnan, Chair, University Committee on Planning and Budget ([UCPB](#))**

Chair Brosnan presented a UCPB report examining the financial impacts of intercollegiate athletics on UC campuses. The report recommends campus-specific cost-benefit analyses and evaluation of systemwide options to better align athletics funding with UC's core academic mission. It was prompted by concerns that growing athletics expenditures are contributing to campus budget deficits and diverting resources from other priorities. UCPB found that most UC athletics programs operate at a deficit covered at least partly by institutional support and other campus resources. The report notes particularly large deficits at UCB and UCLA and argues that standard federal athletics reporting can obscure the extent of campus support by treating subsidies as athletics revenue. It outlines options ranging from maintaining or supplementing current funding models to reducing NCAA competition levels, pursuing federal reforms, or developing a new educational model that better integrates athletics into the academic mission. It also recommends campus-specific analyses and consideration of a systemwide task force.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members agreed that athletics budgets and funding deserve greater attention given campus financial challenges. They emphasized the need for more transparent and consistent financial reporting and for campuses to assess the sustainability of their athletics funding models. Members also noted that programs vary considerably in size and purpose across campuses, and that solutions should reflect local circumstances.
- Members noted that athletics programs contribute to student recruitment, retention, and campus identity, and that these benefits should be considered along with the opportunity costs of institutional subsidies.
- Council encouraged UCPB to share the report with divisional planning and budget committees and expressed support for systemwide efforts to standardize athletics financial reporting.

IX. UC Online Recommendations

- **Catherine Sugar, Chair, University Committee on Educational Policy ([UCEP](#))**

Chair Sugar presented UCEP's recommendations for improving the governance and oversight of UC Online (UCO). She noted that after a decade of discussions about UCO's operations and effectiveness, UCEP concluded that the challenges are not only operational but also reflect broader structural and governance issues. The committee developed recommendations directed to both UCO and the Senate. These include recommendations for an independent audit of UC Online; a restructured advisory committee with independent leadership and oversight; more

substantive reporting and documentation; assessment of student and faculty experiences; clearer governance and mission; and a Senate entity focused on online education.

Discussion highlights:

- Members supported greater transparency, accountability, and professionalized reporting on UCO's activities, finances, and outcomes.
- Members emphasized that the central concern is not the Senate's authority over individual online courses, which remain subject to regular Senate review processes, but the need for UCO to play a role in developing broader educational initiatives that include sufficient Senate consultation.
- Members discussed the need to clarify UCO's mission and relationship to UCOP and the Senate, and expressed concern that the unit is increasingly being used to advance educational initiatives that extend beyond its original purpose.
- Members supported establishing a more focused Senate structure for addressing online education, and observed that some of the concerns raised about UCO have parallels in other areas, including Extension programs.

ACTION: Council endorsed the recommendations as a basis for a letter from Chair Palazoglu to Vice President and Vice Provost Gullatt.

X. UCOLASC Recommendations on the Report of the Academic Senate AI Workgroup
 ○ **Abraham Stone, Chair, University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication ([UCOLASC](#))**

Chair Stone presented UCOLASC's response to the [Report](#) of the Academic Senate Artificial Intelligence Workgroup. He emphasized that the library and UCOLASC should be represented in future systemwide AI discussions because AI issues intersect with libraries, scholarly communication and publishing, and information literacy. He highlighted UCOLASC's concerns about the relationship between open access (OA) publishing and AI training. UCOLASC argues that publishing articles behind paywalls, or using more restrictive OA licenses, would not reliably prevent commercial AI use because publishers may retain or obtain rights to license content for AI training and because such uses may be protected as fair use. The committee therefore reaffirms its longstanding support for OA publishing, emphasizing that it preserves greater author control and public access to research without materially increasing the risk of AI training. The committee also emphasizes the importance of protecting scholars' ability to use lawfully accessed materials for computational research, supporting AI literacy, safeguarding unpublished materials and research data, and ensuring that evaluation of scholarly work remains in the hands of human peers.

Discussion highlights:

- Members expressed appreciation for UCOLASC's analysis of copyright, fair use, and open access issues related to AI. They discussed proposed federal restrictions on grant funding for article processing charges and the potential implications for UC's open access strategy; concerns about AI-generated materials in merit and promotion reviews; and the need to coordinate with other Senate committees when AI-related issues overlap with educational policy, resource allocation, or personnel matters.
- Chair Stone emphasized the importance of ensuring that libraries have the resources to support expanded responsibilities in AI literacy and training.

XI. Report from the Academic Council Special Committee on Laboratory Issues ([ACSCOLI](#))
 ○ **Lorenzo Valdevit, Chair, Academic Council Special Committee on Laboratory Issues (ACSCOLI)**

Chair Valdevit summarized ACSCOLI's work in 2025-26 and reported that UC campuses' relationships with the three affiliated national laboratories remain strong. He highlighted Katherine Yelick's appointment as director of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and efforts to strengthen UC-laboratory research collaboration.

This year, ACSCOLI focused on the proposed restructuring of the UC Lab Fees Research Program. In a letter to the vice president for national laboratories, it advocated for a program that advances both laboratory and UC priorities, promotes broad systemwide participation opportunities, including for junior faculty and campuses with historically fewer connections to the laboratories, supports talent development, and embeds Senate engagement in governance and oversight.

He also noted growing investments in artificial intelligence and nuclear technologies, declining federal support for basic science, and opportunities for expanded UC-laboratory partnerships.

XII. UCFW-TFIR Proposal to Increase the Actuarial Rate of Return for UCRP

- Karen Bales, Chair, University Committee on Faculty Welfare ([UCFW](#))
- David Brownstone, Member at Large, [TFIR](#)
- Jim Chalfant, Member at Large, [TFIR](#)

Chair Bales introduced a UCFW-TFIR proposal to increase UCRP's assumed actuarial rate of return from 6.75% to 7.25%. Professors Brownstone and Chalfant led the presentation, describing TFIR's modeling and its conclusion that the current assumption is unnecessarily conservative. TFIR argues that the higher assumption would better reflect expected long-term investment returns, reduce pension contribution requirements, and save UC hundreds of millions of dollars annually while maintaining an acceptably low level of pension funding risk.

TFIR estimates that the proposed change could reduce required contributions by approximately \$600 million to \$1.7 billion annually, depending on investment returns and funding level requirements. Professors Brownstone and Chalfant noted that the Regents' funding policy provides mechanisms to increase contributions if investment performance falls short of expectations and emphasized that the proposal would not reduce benefits.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members expressed appreciation for the analysis and discussed the importance of balancing the risks of overfunding and underfunding the pension plan. They raised questions about the treatment of inflation, uncertainty and risk associated with higher return assumptions, and lessons from the period when UC suspended pension contributions and later faced a substantial funding shortfall.
- Professors Brownstone and Chalfant responded that the Regents' existing funding policy is intended to adjust contributions over time in response to investment performance and to avoid the need for a return to contribution holidays.
- Council members agreed that UCPB should review the proposal before Council acts.

ACTION: Council deferred consideration of the proposal until the July meeting to allow TFIR to present the analysis to UCPB and incorporate additional feedback.

XIII. Reports from Senate Division Chairs

Division chairs compared campus plans for implementing the 4% salary range adjustment for policy-covered academic appointees in 2026-27, including varied approaches to applying the increase to base, off-scale, and above-scale salaries.

Several chairs described continuing budget pressures. UCM reported staff layoffs as part of a multi-year budget-reduction plan. UCSC discussed projected faculty reductions and the suspension of professional Extension programs. UCLA and UCR also reported concerns about structural deficits, including the financial impact of athletics at UCLA.

Chairs reported on academic planning and governance issues. UCR is preparing for its WSCUC review. UCSD discussed faculty concerns about admissions practices and the use of a math index in enrollment management. UCLA reported that faculty pushed back on administrative proposals concerning the future of undergraduate and graduate education, prompting the administration to form a faculty-led work group to reconsider them.

UCI reported that its Assembly approved a new standalone Council on Academic Freedom and described efforts to improve budget transparency by providing the Senate through school-level budget summaries for the Senate. Additional topics included leadership transitions and searches, libraries' roles in campus AI planning, UC Scout and online course oversight, and efforts to strengthen Senate engagement with campus government and community relations offices.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm
Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director
Attest: Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Chair