



# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Academic Senate

## Academic Council Minutes of Meeting July 23, 2025

### I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. Minutes of June 25, 2025 Council meeting
3. Master of Applied Artificial Intelligence for Science SSGPDP (UCI)
4. Master of Public Administration SSGPDP (UCI)
5. Principles for Awarding Degrees Posthumously, for dissemination to Divisions

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

### II. Senate Officers' Announcements

- **Steven Cheung, Academic Council Chair**
- **Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Vice Chair**
- **Monica Lin, Academic Senate Executive Director**

**July Regents meeting:** Chair Cheung's [remarks](#) highlighted the current challenges facing the University and included reflections from Council members, including the role of shared governance during turbulent times. The Regents appointed Dennis Assanis as the next chancellor of UC Santa Barbara, and approved a new associate vice president for strategic partnerships Senior Management Group position in UC Health. The Regents also discussed potential adjustments to the Tuition Stability Plan to better account for inflation and provide additional support for campus operations.

**ACSCOCA Proposal:** In April 2025, the 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.

### III. Interim Policy on Faculty Discipline Policies and Procedures

In June 2025, UCOP issued interim systemwide guidelines implementing recommendations from the Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on Faculty Discipline Policies and Procedures. The recommendations include establishing systemwide guidelines to calibrate disciplinary actions; aligning timelines with sexual violence/sexual harassment policies; creating a systemwide Privilege and Tenure (P&T) committee to assist Senate divisions; requiring charges to include a range of potential sanctions; enhancing case tracking and reporting; and mandating annual reports from chancellors.

The Regents initially proposed a 30-day summer review with final approval in July 2025. Chair Cheung negotiated a compromise: the recommendations would take effect as interim policy at the start of the Fall 2025 term, allowing for a standard 90-day Senate review in the fall. He argued this approach gave the Senate greater opportunity to shape the final policy than a rushed summer review. The Berkeley Division objected, calling for immediate withdrawal of the interim policy. Their letter cited concerns about shared governance and potential threats to academic freedom, especially regarding extramural speech. The Riverside Division endorsed these concerns. Chair

Cheung acknowledged the concerns but emphasized that the alternative would have left the Senate with little influence. He stressed that the interim arrangement allows for meaningful Senate input and a better chance for the Senate to shape the final policy, expected to be reviewed by the Board of Regents for approval in January 2026.

***Discussion Highlights:***

- Multiple Council members expressed support for Chair Cheung’s decision but expressed concern that a fall 2025 review might still limit input from campuses and committees not in session. Chair Cheung reiterated that the fall review will provide an opportunity for meaningful Senate engagement. He cautioned that pushing for a repeal of the interim policy could undermine the Senate’s influence. He urged a strategic and constructive approach focusing on a few key improvements. In conclusion, Council members accepted the situation as imperfect but agreed it presented a viable path to shaping the final policy.

**IV. Consultation with Systemwide Academic Personnel**

- **Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost, Systemwide Academic Personnel**

Deputy Provost Lee provided updates in executive session about academic labor negotiations.

**V. UC Health Benefits**

- **Cheryl Lloyd, Vice President for Systemwide Human Resources**
- **Maynard Jenkins, Executive Director for Benefits Programs and Strategy**

Council invited HR leaders to respond to its June 2025 [recommendations](#) for 2026 UC health benefits rate setting. Also present were Richard Kronick, Senate Representative to the Executive Steering Committee on Health Benefits Programs and Michael Ong, Senate representative to the Regents Health Services Committee.

**Escalating Health Care Costs:** Vice President Lloyd described a 10.2% projected increase in UC health plan costs for 2026, largely due to rising provider labor and service costs. She outlined a multi-pronged approach to managing this challenge, including employee surveys, a total remuneration study, actuarial modeling, and consultation with Mercer and UC Health. These efforts aim to evaluate the competitiveness and cost structure of UC’s health plans in both the short and long term.

**Senate Engagement and Cost Pressures:** Executive Director Jenkins emphasized significant Senate involvement in shaping benefits strategies, especially through the University Committee on Faculty Welfare’s (UCFW) Health Care Task Force (HCTF). He acknowledged the challenge of maintaining affordability for lower-paid employees while continuing to offer competitive benefits that attract and retain higher-paid employees who may expect more flexibility and choice.

**UC Care:** Executive Director Jenkins addressed concerns about UC Care, stating that while the plan is not currently in a “death spiral,” it is at some risk due to adverse selection. Notably, more than 50% of UC Care enrollees are in the lowest pay bands, reflecting the plan’s importance despite its higher cost.

**Pay Bands and Plan Design:** HR is evaluating whether the current pay band structure equitably serves all employees. Changes are being modeled over a 10-year period. While modest

adjustments to co-pays and deductibles are under consideration, HR cautioned that significantly reducing plan generosity could make UC benefits uncompetitive.

**Total Remuneration and Future Planning:** HR is aligning benefits planning with an upcoming study of total remuneration being led by Deloitte, in consultation with the Senate representatives serving on HR's Total Remuneration Advisory Committee, which will assess UC's compensation competitiveness, including salary, health, and retirement benefits, relative to peer institutions. Final decisions will be informed by data from Deloitte, Mercer, and internal employee surveys. The discussion also referenced the new UC president's background in the University of Texas (UT) system, where employee benefits are structured differently (e.g., no premiums). HR is evaluating whether any UT approaches might be applicable at UC.

**Discussion highlights:**

- Council members raised concern that UC HR appeared committed to preserving UC Care without first conducting a cost-benefit analysis. They reiterated that the Council's letter called for a data-driven assessment of UC Care's impact on other plans, particularly HMOs like Kaiser. Some noted that UC Care functions as a "luxury" option for some and should not be subsidized without clear justification. Vice President Lloyd confirmed that a detailed actuarial analysis is underway and will be included in HR's formal response.
- Members from UCSC and UCSB raised concerns about limited provider networks in their regions and urged HR to consider access equity when evaluating plan changes. HR acknowledged the issue and expressed a desire to improve access.
- Several members criticized the recent employee benefits survey as inadequately designed, where respondent fatigue may introduce unreliable data. Vice President Lloyd acknowledged the feedback and noted that Deloitte is conducting a deeper analysis of the responses.
- There was also interest in offering fire insurance as a voluntary benefit, given increasing challenges with coverage in California.
- It was noted that HR aims to finalize options for 2026 open enrollment by late August 2025 ahead of a briefing with incoming President Milliken. Senate leaders will continue representing faculty perspectives over the summer as discussions with HR continue. Council members appreciated HR's engagement but noted that difficult trade-offs, especially for lower-paid employees are likely, given the scale of projected cost increases.

**VI. Consultation with UC Senior Managers**

- **Katherine Newman, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs**

Provost Newman opened by thanking the Council for its thoughtful engagement throughout the year and reaffirmed the importance of faculty input in shaping UC policy and strategy.

**Leadership Appointments:** She announced several key leadership roles.

- Jaimey Fisher, Professor of German and Cinema & Digital Media at UC Davis, will serve as director of the UC Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI).
- Dan Waite (formerly at Rutgers) has been appointed Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director of the UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP).
- Christopher Witko (formerly at Penn State) will lead the UC Center in Sacramento (UCCS) as executive director.

**Expanding UC's Presence in Sacramento:** Provost Newman announced new efforts to elevate UC's visibility and influence in the state capital:

- The California Policy Lab (CPL) will relocate to the UCCS for three years.
- UC Berkeley's Goldman School will launch a Master of Public Affairs (MPA) program in Sacramento this fall.
- Catharine Baker, UC's Faculty Director of Sacramento Engagement, will lead initiatives to connect faculty research with state policy discussions.

**Legal Matters:** Provost Newman referenced ongoing federal investigations involving UC, including inquiries into antisemitism, hiring practices, undergraduate admissions, and foreign influence. UC is also a plaintiff in lawsuits challenging reductions in federal indirect cost recovery rates from NIH, NSF, and DoD. She noted that internal audits are underway to assess risks and legal exposure.

**Faculty Discipline Report:** Provost Newman affirmed that a full 90-day systemwide Senate review of the faculty discipline recommendations will occur in fall 2025. She emphasized UCOP's shared commitment to shared governance and to upholding the principle of faculty self-governance in disciplinary matters.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) Survey:** Provost Newman shared preliminary findings from UC's first systemwide faculty AI survey, conducted by Tritonlytics at UC San Diego. Over 6,300 faculty responded (~7% response rate). Roughly 40% reported using AI tools weekly or daily, primarily for literature reviews, coding, manuscript drafting, and grant writing. The survey also produced over 3,000 open-ended comments. Final results are expected by September 2025, and UCOP hopes to repeat the survey regularly to track faculty experiences and evolving needs around AI.

***Discussion highlights:***

- Council members welcomed UC's growing presence in Sacramento but encouraged broader faculty outreach and more inclusive participation in policy engagement efforts. Provost Newman affirmed that CPL is a systemwide initiative and welcomed ideas for broader inclusion.
- Council members shared campus efforts to form AI advisory groups and offered to coordinate and share findings with UCOP and the systemwide Senate to support policy development.
- Several members emphasized the need for Senate input to be taken seriously during the faculty discipline policy review and reaffirmed the Senate's essential role in governance. Provost Newman reiterated UCOP's commitment to working collaboratively with the Senate to preserve and strengthen faculty self-governance.

**VII. Proposed Revision to Senate Bylaw 140**

- **Katherine Meltzoff, Chair, University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity (UCAADE)**

Council reviewed UCAADE's revised proposal to update the committee's name and charge to better reflect its current focus and responsibilities.

***Discussion highlights***

- Council members generally supported the intent of the proposed changes but suggested refining the language to more clearly link "accountability" to equity and anti-discrimination efforts.
- Several members recommended renaming the committee "Accountability in Equity and Anti-Discrimination," which would clarify its scope while preserving the acronym, UCAADE.
- There was support for adding UCOP to the list of entities the committee advises, to reflect its systemwide relevance beyond Senate divisional issues.

- Rather than postponing the proposal until fall 2025, members encouraged UCAADE to revise the language over the summer and confirm committee and Council agreement via email, allowing the proposal to proceed to systemwide review in the fall.

**ACTION: UCAADE will revise the proposed bylaw amendments based on Council feedback. Council will confirm consensus via email for a fall 2025 systemwide review.**

### **VIII. Academic Senate Artificial Intelligence (AI) Workgroup**

- **James Steintrager, AI Workgroup Chair**

Chair Steintrager presented key findings from the Senate’s AI Workgroup, which has been examining how AI is transforming UC’s core missions of teaching, research, and service by reshaping workload, student relationships, and core UC operations. He emphasized the complexity of the issue, comparing AI’s disruptive potential to institutional shocks like the pandemic and labor strikes. While often framed as an efficiency booster, AI is also increasing faculty workload by requiring time-consuming tasks such as auditing AI outputs and redesigning assessments to uphold academic integrity.

The draft report focuses on four key areas: data stewardship, research, instruction, and admissions, and is organized around three principles: **agency** (preserving meaningful faculty decision-making through shared governance); **adaptability** (ensuring UC can respond to rapid technological change); and **trustworthiness** (promoting transparency, accountability, and responsible data practices). The report identifies key policy gaps and calls for proactive Senate engagement in each area.

#### ***Discussion highlights***

- Council members voiced concern over the limited role of faculty in current campus AI decisions and the lack of Senate consultation, particularly regarding instructional tools. They warned that top-down administrative adoption of AI tools without proper vetting for privacy, pedagogical appropriateness, or academic freedom could erode instructional quality and shared governance.
- Members emphasized the need for clear Senate guidance on academic freedom, instructional autonomy, and data stewardship in the AI context.
- Some encouraged campuses to form joint Senate-administration committees to guide AI planning, and favored flexible, decentralized frameworks over one-size-fits-all policies.
- Concerns were raised about AI’s potential effects on staffing, labor agreements, and faculty workload.
- Members recommended that the final report more directly address implementation strategies, governance structures, and the need for workload support to help faculty navigate the changes.

### **IX. Proposed Revisions to APM - 230, Visiting Appointments**

Council reviewed feedback from nine Senate divisions and three systemwide committees to the [proposed revisions to APM - 230](#). Most campuses expressed support for the two “technical” revisions: 1) The removal of the carve-out for the Visiting Assistant Professor (VAP) program in Mathematics, now that the Math Fellow title has been created; and 2) the removal of the prohibition on visiting appointees participating in Health Sciences or other special compensation plans, bringing APM - 230 into alignment with APM - 670.

However, several Senate divisions raised significant concerns about the proposed “substantive” revision limiting VAP appointments to individuals on leave from an academic or research position at another educational institution. Reviewers questioned the need for this change, noting that it would exclude qualified candidates from industry, government, and nonprofit sectors such as think tanks and research labs that have historically contributed to the UC academic community.

**ACTION: Council agreed to forward all comments and a summary letter to Deputy Provost Lee and Vice Provost Varsanyi.**

**X. Task Force on UC Adaptation to Disruptions (UCAD)**

○ **Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Vice Chair and UCAD Chair**

Vice Chair Palazoglu presented the interim report of UCAD. The task force was established by the Council in April 2025 to address growing external threats to UC’s academic mission, including political instability, targeted defunding of federal research, and broader financial uncertainty. Composed of Senate committee and divisional leaders, the task force met weekly during spring 2025 and developed initial recommendations in four focus areas: research funding assistance, academic personnel evaluations, academic program restructuring, and course modality flexibility.

**Research Funding Assistance:** In response to federal actions terminating grants, defunding research, and reducing facilities and administration (F&A) support, UCAD recommends:

- Bridge Funding for temporarily paused projects
- Transition Funding to wind down irrecoverable research and support trainees
- Recovery Funding to help faculty pursue new research directions

**Academic Personnel Evaluations During Disruptions:** Building on “Achievement Relative to Opportunities” (ARO) principles used during the pandemic, UCAD recommends:

- Greater flexibility in review timelines and expectations
- Voluntary rebalancing of faculty duties (e.g., more teaching/service)
- Creation of a joint Senate-administration workgroup to define systemwide ARO policies for constrained research conditions

**Program Restructuring and Resizing:** To support long-term academic sustainability while preserving quality, UCAD encourages faculty-led efforts to:

- Reassess the size of graduate student cohorts
- Explore new instructional and faculty hiring approaches
- Strengthen program review and develop systemwide criteria for restructuring or sunseting programs

**Flexibility in Course Offerings and Modalities:** In response to student visa disruptions, UCAD recommends expanding access to remote and cross-campus courses. A systemwide policy framework developed in collaboration with UC Online should support flexibility while upholding divisional authority over course approvals.

The recommendations are organized by intended audience (divisional Senates, systemwide Senate, campus leadership, and/or UCOP). The task force will continue its work in the fall, focusing on growth calibration and funding realignment.

***Discussion highlights:***

- Council members questioned whether PhD admissions should pause systemwide due to financial and labor pressures. Chair Palazoglu responded that while program-level pauses may be appropriate, a systemwide moratorium would be impractical and potentially harmful.
- Concerns were raised that language around systemwide course sharing could be misinterpreted as infringing on divisional authority. UCAD was asked to reaffirm that local Senate-controlled course approval processes will remain intact.
- There was a question about whether bridge funding should come from UCOP or campuses. Chair Palazoglu clarified that while UCOP and donors might assist, campuses are expected to provide primary support.
- Members requested clarification on the implications of expanding teaching professor and joint appointment roles, including potential effects on Senate faculty responsibilities and the balance between research and teaching.

**ACTION: Council endorsed the interim report for transmittal to Senate divisions, President-designate Milliken, and Provost Newman.**

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

**Senate Processes:** Chairs from UCD, UCSB, UCM, and UCB reported efforts to strengthen Senate operations through better training, retreat planning, and early engagement with incoming chairs. Several campuses emphasized committee orientation, and intentional planning for the year ahead. UCLA noted gains in shared governance over budget issues, though some tensions remain.

**Budget Pressures:** UCSF reported the most severe financial strain, including ongoing layoffs and contingency plans for deeper cuts. UCSB and UCI are addressing structural deficits and budget transparency concerns. UCM continues to struggle with flat enrollment, while UCR is facing unexpectedly high undergraduate enrollment and associated resource pressures.

**Administrative Transitions:** UCSB, UCSC, UCI, and UCR are undergoing major senior leadership changes. Several chairs emphasized the importance of rebuilding relationships and ensuring faculty input during transitions. UCI reflected on recent campus tensions and highlighted the Senate's role in restoring trust and community.

**Academic Values:** UCSD offered a reflection on the University's public mission, the importance of student-centered decision-making, and maintaining hope in challenging times. UCD and UCM highlighted efforts to defend academic freedom and prepare for potential external threats. UCSB and UCB are shaping the agenda for AI and online education.

**Cybersecurity:** UCI reported de-escalation of previous cybersecurity-related tensions, while UCR continues to face friction between IT mandates and academic operations.

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Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm

Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director

Attest: Steven W. Cheung, Academic Council Chair