



**Academic Council
Minutes of Meeting**
October 23, 2024

I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. Minutes of September 25, 2024 meeting

ACTION: Council approved the consent calendar.

II. Senate Officers' Announcements

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

Leadership Searches: Chair Cheung will lead the Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) for the UC presidential search. This committee includes a Senate representative from each campus and two additional at-large Senate members. Chair Cheung shared feedback with Regents Special Committee Chair Chu regarding the AAC's role and the selection criteria from the 2019 presidential search, incorporating input from Council and AAC members. The AAC is scheduled to meet with the Regents Special Committee on November 1.

The Senate is appointing faculty to advisory committees for upcoming chancellor searches at UCSB and UCR. Vice Chair Palazoglu will serve on both the UCSB chancellor and Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs search committees.

Workgroups:

- Vice Chair Palazoglu will co-chair an Academic Planning Council (APC) workgroup assessing the impact of transitioning all UC campuses with undergraduate programs to a common academic calendar.
- A second APC workgroup will review systemwide policies on faculty code of conduct and faculty discipline in response to state Senate Bill 108, while also addressing faculty concerns about proposed changes to APM 016 covering simultaneous academic misconduct investigations and personnel actions.
- A successor to the Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities and UC Quality Undergraduate Degree Programs will address implementation issues for fully online undergraduate degree programs.
- A systemwide Senate workgroup on artificial intelligence, led by immediate past Senate Chair Jim Steintrager, will hold its first meeting in early November.

Area C: BOARS Chair Swenson testified before the state Assembly Committee on Higher Education and Committee on Education about UC's math admissions requirement and recent reports by the BOARS Mathematics (Area C) Workgroup. The workgroup's reports address area C courses that can satisfy UC's recommendation for additional math coursework beyond the required three-course core sequence of Algebra I-Geometry-Algebra II or Mathematics I-II-III. The workgroup determined that three common data science courses no longer qualify as substitutes for Algebra II/Math III. The hearing addressed concerns from critics of this decision.

UC Faculty Survey: In early October, the 2024-2025 Academic Senate Survey of Faculty Life was sent to all Senate faculty and course instructors across the 10 UC campuses. The findings will inform the Regents about faculty experiences and well-being over the past academic year. Chair Cheung plans to integrate these findings with data from the upcoming total remuneration study to provide a comprehensive view of faculty life and concerns. Systemwide Human Resources is currently selecting a vendor for this study. Council has [requested](#) that the methods and comparators be consistent with the 2014 study to support longitudinal analysis.

During the discussion:

- Council members encouraged the Academic Calendar Workgroup to examine the potential impacts of a calendar conversion on demand for faculty, the overall faculty size, and the research enterprise. In addition, the cost of such a conversion should be closely studied.

III. The New Landscape in Academic Personnel and Fundamentals of Labor Relations

- Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost, Systemwide Academic Personnel
- Melissa Matella, Associate Vice President of Employee and Labor Relations
- Allison Woodall, Deputy General Counsel, UC Legal

The presentation highlighted recent developments in UC labor relations, emphasizing the growing representation of academic appointees and the need for faculty to understand rules regarding represented student employees so they can better support students in their dual roles as students and employees. The presenters outlined the roles of state agencies, such as the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), and key statutes like the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA) and the Public Employee Communication Chapter (PECC). Processes for establishing or modifying bargaining units, the bargaining process itself, and handling Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges were also discussed.

The presentation stressed the importance of faculty maintaining consistency in expectations, professionalism, confidentiality, and effective communication to support academic appointees while adhering to contractual obligations. UC emphasizes protecting faculty authority over academic standards and progress; however, faculty supervisors must engage with unions through Academic Personnel, avoid direct discussions with employees about work condition changes, respect Weingarten rights in investigatory meetings, and consult Academic Personnel before discussing work condition changes. Confidential information should only be shared through designated channels in coordination with Academic Personnel and Labor Relations.

Two faculty members will join upcoming union negotiations as subject matter experts. In addition, starting in November 2024, a 20-member Graduate Education and Employment Faculty Advisory Committee will advise Systemwide Academic Personnel on policies, procedures, practices, and other matters related to graduate and post-graduate education and employment.

IV. Consultation with Senior Managers

- Michael V. Drake, President
- Nathan Brostrom, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Budget: CFO Brostrom reported that at their November 2024 meeting, the Regents will review a 2025-26 budget plan, which anticipates a 5.7% state budget reduction and requests one-time capital support funding. The Regents' pension actuary will also present an actuarial valuation of the UC Retirement Plan which has achieved a funded ratio of 82.5% (actuarial basis) and nearly 85% (market basis) due to strong investment returns. The projected cost of the UC Retiree Health Benefits Program is approximately \$400 million, funded on a pay-as-you-go basis. The associated liability is \$20 billion.

Campus Climate: The Campus Climate Initiative (CCI) addresses the requirements of state Senate Bill 108, which requires UC to strengthen campus climate and enhance preparedness and consistency in managing protests and other events. The CCI will enforce content-neutral policies in five areas: blocking access to buildings and public spaces; camping on campus property; constructing unpermitted structures; masking to hide one's identity while committing a violation of law or policy; and refusing to show identification when requested by University personnel. This initiative aims to protect free speech while maintaining a safe, inclusive environment and enabling University operations. The University supports the right to protest and encourages students to speak out on issues.

Post-Pandemic Report: The November Regents meeting will feature a report looking back at UC's pandemic response, focusing primarily on public health outcomes for UC's community.

Undocumented Students: UC has received criticism for not offering campus employment opportunities for undocumented students. The governor recently vetoed a bill that would have allowed California public universities to employ students without federal work authorization, citing federal legal concerns. UC remains committed to supporting undocumented students by enhancing financial aid and increasing experiential learning opportunities.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members asked about UC's strategy to promote its inclusion in future state general obligation (GO) bonds for education.
- A Council member emphasized the value of the Mortgage Origination Program (MOP) for faculty recruitment and retention, noting conflicting information on MOP's continuation.
- Concerns were raised about faculty morale, with the rise in healthcare costs cited as a significant factor.
- Council members also asked about campus flexibility in implementing Time, Place, and Manner (TPM) policies.

Responses from Senior Managers:

- **CFO Brostrom** shared that UC will collaborate with the state to explore various funding options for capital projects, including lease revenue bonds and potentially a higher education-focused general obligation bond.
- **President Drake** noted that rising healthcare costs partly stem from increased post-pandemic utilization of healthcare and mental health services. UC invested \$200 million in health plans last year to curb cost increases and is considering a systemwide health officer to help manage

utilization and costs. He acknowledged widespread societal anxiety as a contributing factor to community morale at UC.

- **MOP:** President Drake affirmed MOP's importance for faculty recruitment and morale, noting that UCOP is assessing options for sustaining the program at current levels.
- **TPM Policies:** President Drake clarified that UC's TPM policies are designed to align with state and federal law and to increase consistency across UC locations, with campuses retaining limited discretion for interpretation based on unique circumstances.

V. Visit with Board of Regents Chair Janet Reilly

Chair Reilly expressed thanks to Council members for their service to UC, emphasizing the essential role of faculty in UC's excellence and the importance of shared governance to UC's success. She voiced her commitment to collaborating with the Senate on key issues and acknowledged both the challenges and opportunities ahead, including campus climate concerns, the presidential search, budget shortfalls, and deferred maintenance. Chair Reilly also expressed disappointment over UC's exclusion from the upcoming November general obligation bond measure and highlighted the ongoing challenge of communicating UC's impact to the Legislature. She discussed her role in founding the UC Student and Policy Center in Sacramento to strengthen UC's profile in the state capital and foster connections between UC research and public policy. Chair Reilly outlined four main priorities:

1. Supporting UC's mission while ensuring free speech and a respectful, safe campus climate.
2. Expanding access within existing constraints while preserving educational quality, with online education and potential campus satellite locations as possible solutions.
3. Determining the optimal size and role of UC's healthcare enterprise.
4. Enhancing public engagement to highlight UC's contributions to California's economy and public health.

Discussion highlights:

- A Council member raised concerns about the Regents' recent decision to permit campuses to purchase military-grade equipment. Chair Reilly clarified that this was a routine annual request from UCPD.
- When asked about UC's governance structure, Chair Reilly reaffirmed that shared governance is central to UC's success and that the Regents have a collaborative and respectful relationship with the Senate.
- Council members voiced concerns over shrinking graduate programs, advocating for renewed focus on PhD growth as a budget priority. Chair Reilly agreed that graduate education deserves more attention and cited events and initiatives, such as Grad Slam and UC Inspires as steps toward raising its profile.
- When asked about UC's future, Reilly shared her vision of integrating artificial intelligence to support students, faculty, and staff and to develop essential 21st-century skills. She hopes to see UC research address California's and global challenges, while exploring new revenue sources, such as philanthropy and research commercialization.

- Chair Reilly stated that she does not foresee UC Health separating from the University but rather expanding its role in improving healthcare access, particularly in underserved regions, notably the Inland Empire and Central Valley.
- Council members highlighted the need for the expansion of faculty lines, noting that increased enrollment targets from the state budget compact have not been matched with sufficient faculty hiring. This has impacted pedagogy and faculty workload significantly. Chair Reilly acknowledged these concerns, emphasizing that expanding student access should not compromise quality. She underscored the importance of maintaining low student-to-faculty ratios to ensure students have personal access to faculty, stressing that growth without adequate resources would jeopardize UC's educational mission.
- Council members called for increased support for research administration and highlighted the importance of the "One University" principle to ensure cohesive support across UC's diverse programs. Reilly affirmed that the "Power of 10" strengthens UC's unique collective impact.

VI. Systemwide Senate Review: Revisions to Presidential Policy on Externally Supplied Medications in UC Outpatient and Clinic Settings

Senate reviewers generally supported the proposed policy revisions, which aim to improve compliance with federal medication tracking requirements and reduce reliance on practices of "white bagging" and "brown bagging." Reviewers recommended clarification on the policy's applicability to UC Health affiliate sites and non-clinic settings. They also suggested including exceptions for evidence-based interventions in cases affecting patient safety and adding a "catastrophic circumstances" exception to allow flexibility during emergencies.

ACTION: Council approved forwarding a summary of comments to UC Health Executive Vice President Rubin.

VII. Systemwide Senate Review: Revisions to Program Attachments #3–7 to the Policy on Vaccination Programs

Senate reviewers expressed general support for the revisions, which require UC students to be current on certain vaccinations and to complete tuberculosis screening as a condition of physical presence at University locations. Reviewers also requested further clarity on faculty roles in enforcing vaccination requirements and managing exemptions, as well as guidance on handling non-compliance. Additional concerns included potential weakened protections from non-medical exemptions and the need for equitable vaccination access, especially for international and low-income students. Reviewers also suggested making vaccinations free for all incoming students.

ACTION: Council approved forwarding a summary of comments to UC Health Executive Vice President Rubin.

VIII. Reports from Senate Division Chairs

- Several divisions raised concerns over ongoing budget uncertainty, with some anticipating significant cuts next year. Campuses are modeling budget-cutting strategies and are concerned about how cuts may affect graduate enrollment, faculty hiring, and faculty

workload. Chairs also highlighted challenges related to deferred maintenance, resource diversion to athletics, self-supporting graduate programs, and the increase in impacted majors.

- Campus climate issues are a key focus. Concerns include ensuring safe and respectful interactions, monitoring social media behaviors, and protecting faculty from doxing and unauthorized filming. Campuses are developing frameworks to manage disruptions and maintain campus access during protests or crises. Some are collaborating with emergency preparedness groups and establishing new committees focused on crisis response. There is some concern about heavy police presence on campus.
- Divisions are addressing various academic challenges, such as improving math preparedness among incoming undergraduates, enhancing support for graduate students, and reestablishing PhD growth as a budget priority. Additionally, one campus is restructuring the workflow for the Committee on Academic Personnel to address significantly increased workload.
- There are concerns about leadership stability on a campus experiencing numerous vacant administrative positions.
- One chair reported ongoing issues with faculty receiving accurate and timely information from the Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC) during the transition to retirement.
- Campuses are monitoring the rapid growth of the medical enterprise and its evolving role relative to the main campus. This includes managing new hospitals and balancing medical expansion with core academic commitments.
- UCSF plans to propose memorials advocating for expanded Academic Senate membership to cover health sciences clinical and adjunct faculty.
- Division chairs underscored the importance of strong shared governance engagement on these issues, and emphasized the need to advocate for UC's interests in the state legislature, particularly regarding budget support, deferred maintenance, and UC's contributions to public policy.

IX. Campus Climate Initiative

- Cynthia Dávalos, Associate Vice President, Graduate, Undergraduate & Equity Affairs

The Campus Climate Initiative (CCI) aims to enhance UC's campus environment by establishing a consistent, systemwide framework for addressing incidents and fostering inclusion. Aligned with California Senate Bill (SB) 108 requirements, the CCI adopts a three-part approach: creating a framework for campus policy assessments, guiding campuses in developing climate action plans, and providing ongoing strategy sessions.

Campus climate refers to the collective attitudes, behaviors, and policies shaping individuals' perceptions and interactions on campus. Responses to critical incidents, particularly those rooted in identity-based or political ideologies, have a significant impact on campus climate.

Under CCI, campuses must issue annual notifications before the fall 2024 term to inform students, faculty, and staff about existing campus climate policies and resources. The initiative also defines policy requirements for expressive activities and conduct, supported by a tiered response plan for policy violations, including those involving unauthorized structures, encampments, masking to

conceal identity, movement restrictions, and refusal to reveal identity. Additional guidance promotes consistent disciplinary responses to policy violations that impact expressive activities.

To help prepare campuses for incidents related to campus climate, the CCI includes scenario-based exercises, such as managing protests following the 2024 Presidential Election. These exercises help campuses execute their tiered response plans effectively.

SB 108 also mandates that campuses develop action plans focused on governance, safety, and inclusivity. Systemwide, UC is partnering with Hillel International on combating antisemitism, and with the Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership & Social Innovation to conduct campus self-assessments to foster safe and inclusive campus environments.

Discussion highlights:

- A Council member expressed concern that the CCI may oversimplify the varied experiences of students, some of whom face differing patterns of discrimination and safety perceptions around police. Associate Vice President Dávalos acknowledged that the initial CCI phase prioritizes structural aspects, such as policy frameworks and transparent communication on sanctions, per state legislative requirements. Plans to address specific group experiences are anticipated in future phases.
- Another member inquired about increasing faculty involvement in the initiative. AVP Dávalos noted that each campus team includes a faculty representative and that UCOP encourages broader faculty consultations.

X. Campus Safety

- Jody Stiger, Director, Systemwide Community Safety

Director Stiger provided an overview of the Regents' recent action allowing UC police departments to acquire certain types of military-grade equipment. He explained that State Assembly Bill 481 mandates reporting on such purchases, though much of the equipment referred to as "military grade" in the legislation has been used by UC campuses for decades and is not exclusively for military use.

Recent acquisitions include training ammunition, foam launchers to replace bean bag guns, and a drone pilot program at one campus. Such equipment is primarily intended for non-lethal crowd control. Although UC police have access to AR-15s, they are designated as standard equipment for active shooter situations only. UC voluntarily included AR-15s on the AB 481 reporting list, despite not being required to do so.

Discussion highlights:

- A Council member raised concern about the lack of consultation with campus police advisory boards (PABs) prior to submitting equipment purchase requests.
- Director Stiger explained that campus police departments have 30 days to consult with the community before equipment requests are submitted, though consultation approaches vary by campus. While PAB charters do not always require consultation, he agreed that informing PABs is reasonable and supports greater consistency across campuses on safety matters.
- A member advocated for Academic Senate representation on the Council of Chiefs.

XI. Mortgage Origination Program (MOP)

- Meghan Gutekunst, Associate Vice President, Financial Management
- Jennifer Mays, Director, Office of Loan Programs

The Mortgage Origination Program (MOP) offers UC faculty and senior managers an opportunity to purchase a first home, helping to address recruitment and retention challenges in California’s high-cost housing markets. The program, centrally funded through the Short-Term Investment Pool (STIP) and allocated to campuses, provides adjustable-rate loans at 2-3% below the commercial rate with only a 10% down payment. With no points or application fees, MOP loans are accessible and offer favorable terms compared to commercial mortgages.

Demand for MOP has surged, driven by higher commercial interest rates. MOP loan volume has increased by 200% in 2022-23 and by 74% in 2023-24. In 2023-24 alone, MOP funded a record 515 loans, totaling \$533 million. This demand has rapidly depleted program funding, leading some campuses to exhaust their MOP allocations sooner than planned. The low interest rate has also limited UC’s ability to sell these loans as a means to replenish funds.

UCOP is actively working with campuses to manage these challenges, including exploring temporary backup funding sources and, in some cases, pausing the program at certain campuses. UCOP has requested additional funding that it expects to reach campuses in January 2025. UCOP aims to ensure consistent principles across campuses for nominating faculty for MOP loans, while also assessing improvements to better align the program with campus needs.

Discussion highlights

- A Council member suggested exploring a more sustainable MOP structure, such as securitizing MOP cash flows to create a liquid investment instrument and potentially expanding eligibility to other faculty series and staff. Another idea proposed was to commodify the loans, allowing employees to invest in them through their 403(b) plans.
- Council members inquired about whether MOP has analyzed the demographics and rank of faculty beneficiaries and whether needs-based criteria should be considered.
- Members also encouraged UCOP to develop a new communication strategy to clarify the program’s current status and address widespread confusion on the campuses.

UCOP representatives responded that short-term solutions to maintain liquidity are being considered alongside long-term funding adjustments to ensure MOP’s sustainability. They noted that the [MOP annual report](#) includes breakdowns by faculty rank and salary, with the program primarily serving entry-level faculty.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm
Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director
Attest: Steven W. Cheung, Academic Council Chair