



**Academic Council
Minutes of Meeting
December 18, 2024**

I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. Minutes of November 20, 2024 meeting
3. UCI Master of Education Sciences with a Concentration in Artificial Intelligence and Learning Analytics

ACTION: Council approved the consent calendar.

II. Senate Officers' Announcements

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

December Assembly Meeting: The Assembly unanimously endorsed the "Characteristics of Undergraduate Educational Quality at the University of California," a statement developed by the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP). It also postponed to its April meeting any action on the A-G ethnic studies (Area H) subject requirement for freshman admission, in light of uncertainties surrounding state funding and implementation of the California public high school graduation requirement in ethnic studies.

Special Assembly Meeting: In response to a request from 25 voting Senate members and in accordance with Senate Bylaw 110.A.3.c, a special meeting of the Assembly has been scheduled for January 17, 2025. The agenda will include three topics: 1) the president's information security investment plan; 2) variance in compensation and cost-of-living adjustments between staff and faculty; 3) and the increase in UC Health Plan premiums.

MOP Funding: The University announced that it is addressing unprecedented demand for the Mortgage Origination Program (MOP) with an additional \$200 million allocation.

Academic Labor Relations: The (UAW) union representing academic student employees and graduate student researchers ratified a contract extension to January 2026.

Vote of Confidence: A vote of confidence on President Drake at the Davis Division has concluded and a ballot certification is underway. Some of the grievances include budget challenges on the Davis campus, the depletion of MOP, and a recent salary increase for the chancellor.

Common Payroll Calendar Workgroup: A new joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on Faculty Salary Range Adjustment Effective Date met to revisit the feasibility of a common payroll calendar that begins July 1. The workgroup is analyzing administrative challenges and options for moving forward, using salary data and case studies.

UCSF Memorials: The Systemwide Senate Office has received the UCSF Division's votes on two memorials related to extending Academic Senate membership to faculty in the adjunct and health sciences clinical series. Divisions have 90 days to vote on the memorials, and the local Senate office will proceed in accordance with procedures outlined in [Senate Bylaw 90](#).

AAC Meeting: The Academic Advisory Committee for the UC presidential search will review dossiers of potential candidates over the holidays. The Regents Special Committee will meet with the AAC in person to discuss the viable candidates in early 2025.

Workgroup Updates: The Academic Planning Council (APC) Workgroup on Systemwide Academic Calendar circulated an input form to Senate division chairs asking for perspectives on various calendar options. Forthcoming will be a letter from the administration to faculty informing them about the workgroup and pointing them to a feedback email address. The APC Workgroup reviewing APM 015 and 016 in response to statutory requirements in the State Budget Act has concluded that no changes are necessary to the APM, but recommended developing discipline guidelines modeled after those for sexual violence/sexual harassment. Studies administered by UC Systemwide Human Resources workgroups on total remuneration and benefits are moving forward. Senate faculty are serving on both workgroups.

Discussion highlights:

- Vice Chair Palazoglu clarified that division chairs' responses to the APC workgroup's input form will not be interpreted as representative of the division or the entire faculty. Broad consultation about the possibility to establish a systemwide academic calendar will occur with the Senate and other groups when the workgroup's initial recommendations are distributed for standard 90-day systemwide Senate review.

III. Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (Cal-GETC)

Council reviewed feedback from the systemwide Senate review of proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479, presented by the Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues (ACSCOTI). The revisions aim to increase flexibility for transfer students and improve their preparation, especially in high-unit STEM majors. The proposed changes include 1) allowing prospective transfers to defer up to two additional (four maximum) general education (GE) courses for fulfillment following UC enrollment, and 2) modifying Cal-GETC Subject Area 5 to allow students to fulfill the science requirement with two courses from different science disciplines, rather than one course each in physical sciences and biological sciences.

Many reviewers praised the proposed revisions for offering a more flexible and equitable pathway for transfers, especially for STEM majors needing to prioritize pre-major preparation, and for aligning transfer requirements more closely with those for first-year admits. However, they also noted several concerns about the potential strain on already impacted lower-division courses at UC, the additional workload needed to support tracking deferred GE courses under the new rules, and the need for improved advising infrastructure and software to manage deferrals.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members emphasized their campuses' commitment to removing barriers for transfer students, noting that allowing deferral of additional GE courses could better align student preparation with major requirements, potentially improving outcomes and reducing advising workloads.
- Members also raised concerns about the need for new advising infrastructure and software to track deferred GE requirements, and that deferring more GE courses could overburden already impacted lower-division courses.
- Executive Director Lin clarified that the tracking of Cal-GETC certifications occurs at the California Community Colleges, not at UC.
- There was concern about community colleges' ability to meet increased demand for physical and biological sciences courses if students are encouraged to complete them pre-transfer. In

addition, deferred GE courses could push students to take classes in summer or less-supported formats, potentially undermining their education.

- There were also concerns about perceived inequities between transfers allowed to defer GE courses and four-year students who must complete them on a stricter timeline.
- There were requests to clarify what counts as “two distinct academic disciplines,” in Cal-GETC Area 5, and to analyze the budgetary, administrative, and instructional impacts of deferring GE courses.
- ACSCOTI Chair Volz noted that Cal-GETC is set to take effect in Fall 2025, with two-course deferrals already embedded in the Cal-GETC standards. He recommended using the time before implementation to address concerns about the proposed four-course deferral.
- Several members supported separating the two proposed changes. This approach would allow for action on the less contentious Area 5 revision while enabling further ACSCOTI study of the GE deferral impacts.

ACTION: A motion was made and seconded to split the proposal, approve the modifications to Cal-GETC Subject Area 5, and return the proposed extension of the post-transfer GE course deferral to ACSCOTI for further review, including a cost analysis. The motion passed unanimously (16-0).

IV. Report of the UC Center Sacramento (UCCS) Academic Program Modeling Workgroup

- Douglas Haynes, Interim Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs
- John T. Scott, Executive Associate Dean, College of Letters and Science, UC Davis

The co-chairs of the UC Center Sacramento (UCCS) Academic Program Modeling Workgroup summarized the workgroup’s recommendations. UCCS is facing several challenges, including financial instability due to an overreliance on UCOP subsidies, uneven campus participation, and fluctuating student enrollment. Provost Newman charged the workgroup to evaluate UCCS’s academic programming and financial sustainability and to propose models for long-term viability, focusing on enrollment expansion, barriers to student participation, and financial models.

The workgroup considered several financial models for UCCS:

- A. A summer-only program that shifts UCCS’s focus exclusively to summer. (Rejected as it limits internship opportunities and misaligns with the State legislative calendar.)
- B. A campus-based program that shifts the academic-year program to UC Davis and limits other campuses to summer participation. (Rejected as it limits broader UC engagement.)
- C. A systemwide academic program focused on mandatory financial contributions and enrollment targets from all undergraduate campuses to make the UCCS a self-supporting systemwide program. (The workgroup prefers this model for long-term viability.)
- D. A multi-campus model focused on voluntary enrollment targets and financial contributions from 4-5 “anchor” UC campuses. (The workgroup recommends this model as a practical and collaborative approach to expanding enrollments incrementally.)

The workgroup defined the ideal UCCS program as having higher systemwide student participation through robust outreach, faculty engagement, and scholarships; budgets aligned with program costs and supported by streamlined operations and diverse funding sources; and enhanced marketing to attract a broader student demographic and build partnerships with Sacramento organizations. The workgroup recommends the following:

1. Continue UCCS as UC’s flagship program in the state capital that supports its commitment to high-impact experiential learning and involvement in California public policy.

2. Adopt a 3- to-5-year phased financial strategy, starting with the multi-campus model (option D) and transitioning to a systemwide model (option C) within 5 years.
3. Expand faculty engagement in UCCS, including through promotion of the program in relevant departments to better align participation with major requirements.
4. Increase UCCS's visibility among students through targeted outreach and marketing.
5. Identify new operational efficiencies while exploring philanthropic support to fund scholarships and paid internships to reduce financial barriers to participation.

Discussion Highlights

- Council members noted that many departments require petitions for credit from UCCS courses, particularly for upper-division electives, which can discourage participation. Greater flexibility and systemwide alignment on crediting are needed.
- Some members raised concerns about mandatory enrollment targets, likening them to unfunded mandates. Others argued that the campuses and UCOP should view UCCS as an investment in the University's public visibility and policy engagement.
- Members observed that students are concerned about maintaining housing at their home campus while relocating to Sacramento for a semester/quarter, and also about losing momentum in fulfilling major requirements and degree progress.
- Members agreed that strategic outreach to faculty and students is necessary to highlight UCCS's benefits. There was a suggestion to expand the program's scope and recruitment efforts to include science and engineering majors interested in policy.
- Co-chairs noted that the workgroup recommends that campus housing offices explore flexible leasing options, that departments articulate credits with UCCS coursework, and that campus leaders do more to promote UCCS and integrate it into relevant majors as a credit option.

V. Consultation with Senior Managers

- Michael V. Drake, President
- Katherine Newman, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs
- Nathan Brostrom, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Shared Governance: President Drake emphasized the importance of shared governance as a cornerstone of UC's success, and stressed the need for accurate and common understanding of basic facts to foster effective collaboration.

FAFSA Challenges: In January 2025, the Regents will discuss UC's collaboration with the Department of Education to avoid a repeat of the technical issues that plagued last year's federal rollout of the new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). A related issue of concern is the potential risk to mixed-status families in completing the FAFSA.

Faculty Discipline Process: Individual regents have raised concerns about the perceived inefficiency of faculty disciplinary processes and the length of time between violations and sanctions. The Senate and Office of Systemwide Academic Personnel will lead a discussion on faculty disciplinary processes at the January 2025 Regents meeting. President Drake highlighted the importance of balancing efficiency with due process, ensuring fair outcomes for faculty.

National Labs: The Regents will review the Department of Energy's performance grades for UC's management of the Berkeley, Livermore, and Los Alamos Labs. The outcome of UC's bid to manage the Frederick National Cancer Lab in Maryland will be known soon.

Expanding Healthcare: President Drake highlighted the 50% increase in available patient beds at UC medical centers over the past 18 months and described how expanded capacity supports training sites, clinical research, and broader community healthcare needs and alleviates pressure on high-acuity facilities.

Information Integrity and Appreciation for Faculty: President Drake reflected on the challenges of navigating a landscape where misinformation influences public discourse and decision-making, and he reinforced UC's commitment to creating, transmitting, and adhering to knowledge and truth as core institutional values. He also praised faculty efforts during a tumultuous year, noting their role in maintaining educational excellence, advancing research, and supporting students. He acknowledged the ongoing challenges in the world and higher education, emphasizing the need for the University to remain resilient and focused on its mission.

Academic Affairs: Provost Newman addressed several topics:

- The Provost's Office is preparing a report on faculty discipline for the Regents, emphasizing the legal and UC policy underpinnings of due process. She invited Council to consider structural improvements to the discipline process, such as creating backup options to avoid delays caused by unavailable personnel.
- There is an ongoing effort to analyze the timing of salary adjustments for faculty, particularly on- and off-scale adjustments. UC Irvine volunteered to serve as a model campus for a detailed review.
- She welcomed suggestions for addressing course credit transferability issues that create barriers for students participating in UCCS, and emphasized the program's importance in offering public service opportunities.
- A joint Senate-Administration workgroup is collecting constituent input on a proposal to harmonize academic calendars across UC campuses. There is interest in adopting semester calendar features like consolidation periods before exams, and in addressing constraints like grant deadlines.
- Recent state legislation requires withholding official letters of recommendation if the requester has pending sexual harassment claims. Provost Newman clarified the distinction between "official" and "personal" letters, noting that most faculty-written letters fall under the personal category. Faculty will soon be required to add disclaimers to letters stating they are personal views. She acknowledged faculty confusion, particularly for those in dual administrative and academic roles, and committed to further clarifying the implications of the legislation.

Budget and Finance:

- CFO Brostrom noted that the governor's January budget is likely to include a \$270 million cut to UC for 2025-26. While state revenue projections are stronger than expected, their final impact on the budget may not be clear until the May 2025 budget revision.
- Large capital funding requests are unlikely to be approved in the current budget cycle. A \$2 billion bond issuance is planned for January 2025, primarily to refinance \$1.3 billion in bonds, saving campuses approximately \$100 million. Total financing needs for 2025 are estimated at \$5-5.5 billion, with a focus on hospital and housing construction.
- Healthcare services account for over 50% of UC's revenue, making potential changes to Medicaid and Medi-Cal policies significant risks. UC is monitoring federal policy changes that could impact Affordable Care Act subsidies and increase the number of uninsured patients.

- Federal budget concerns under the new administration include potential clawbacks of unspent funds from the Inflation Reduction Act, CHIPS and Science Act. UC research funding could face cuts, especially for projects related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, reproductive rights, or stem cells.
- UC issued more MOP loans over the past 18 months than any time in its history, and the program is now over \$1 billion. UC plans to explore aligning MOP with commercial loan standards to sustain the program. Discussions are ongoing about tailoring similar programs for broader staff groups in collaboration with the California Housing Finance Agency.

Discussion highlights:

- Council members expressed support for efficient disciplinary processes but also emphasized the need for due process that supports just outcomes. The Regents should understand the different elements of the discipline process, some of which are not controlled by the Senate.
- President Drake expressed his strong commitment to due process and said it is also important to consider potential improvements to processes.
- Questions arose about how faculty in administrative roles should navigate writing letters of recommendation that may be perceived as official, and about whether tenure and promotion letters might fall under the new legislation’s scope. Provost Newman suggested erring on the side of caution and consulting administrative colleagues when uncertain. She doubted case letters would qualify as letters of recommendation but promised to confirm with legal counsel.
- Council members raised concerns about potential targeted cuts to research funding. CFO Brostrom noted that some policies, such as indirect cost reductions, could significantly affect campus budgets. Provost Newman added that UCOP would be sharing guidance on managing international student travel and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement interactions.
- Concerns were raised about political scrutiny of MOP as a faculty benefit, potentially affecting its long-term viability. CFO Brostrom suggested forming a workgroup to develop strategies for MOP’s sustainability and alignment with evolving needs.

VI. Proposed Senate Regulation 627 (Posthumous Awarding of Degrees)

Council reviewed feedback from the systemwide review of a proposed Senate Regulation 627 (Posthumous Awarding of Degrees) introduced by UCEP and the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA). The policy aims to provide a framework for granting undergraduate and graduate degrees to students who die during their studies and are in good academic standing. It allows a request for the awarding of the degree to be initiated by a family member, a faculty member, a dean, or a fellow student. The ultimate objective is to create a Regental policy. Reviews were mixed, with most reviewers expressing at least some support, and some others requesting clarifications and changes.

Discussion highlights:

- Several members expressed strong support, emphasizing the importance of compassion and the profound impact of the degree on grieving families. They shared stories illustrating the significance of posthumous degrees in providing solace to families.
- Some members questioned the need for a systemwide policy, noting that most campuses already have local practices for awarding posthumous degrees. These members favored issuing guidelines rather than a policy. Others noted that a systemwide policy would ensure

consistency and equity across campuses, and if adopted by the Regents, highlight the matter even more.

- There were also concerns raised about ambiguous terms like “good academic standing” and “family.” “Good academic standing” was flagged as potentially too restrictive; lowering the barrier for awarding the degree would prioritize compassion over rigid criteria like GPA or credit completion thresholds. Replacing “family” with a broader term like “family and/or survivors” will accommodate diverse relationships. Other suggestions included clarifying exceptions for extraordinary circumstances (e.g., disciplinary actions or unresolved legal issues) and avoiding the term “posthumous” on diplomas to prevent distress for families.
- Members also highlighted the need to ensure the policy does not unintentionally create inequities or procedural barriers, and the importance of automating the process to ensure all eligible families are informed about the option.
- Several members expressed discomfort with making substantial changes during the meeting without further consultation with divisions and committees. Chair Cheung proposed referring the proposal back to UCEP and CCGA with Council comments. This would allow proposers to address concerns and suggestions before Council reevaluates and votes. Council agreed.

VII. Executive Session

VIII. Office of Research and Innovation

- Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research and Innovation (R&I)

Vice President Maldonado provided updates on initiatives in UC’s research enterprise, focusing on restricted research policies, the National Laboratory Fees Research Program (LFRP), impacts of potential federal policy changes, and concerns about the erosion of research administration support.

Restricted Research: UC does not have a formal policy prohibiting restricted research but follows longstanding practices and guidance based on a 1980s memo signed by the chancellors. This includes a general prohibition on extramural agreements or publications that include citizenship-based restrictions, often dictated by funding sponsors, a principle rooted in UC’s commitment to nondiscrimination and open dissemination of research. However, UC is re-evaluating these practices in the context of the new federal CHIPS Act, which provides funding to boost domestic semiconductor research and manufacturing, and includes some citizenship restrictions.

- Council members raised questions about restrictions on international students and emphasized the need for clear intake processes to prevent wasted effort on ineligible funding opportunities.

LFRP: R&I is preparing to launch the 2025 LFRP, a competitive grant program funded by the fee income UC receives every two years for managing the national labs. One of the tracks in this year’s competition will be artificial intelligence. The timeline is accelerated, and letters of intent are due imminently. Competitions in clean energy technologies and fusion energy research will also proceed on standard timelines.

Federal Policy Changes: The impact of the incoming administration on research is unknown. An NSF task force is drafting a report for the new administration on a vision for American science and technology and the importance of research partnerships with academia and industry.

Research Administration Support: Council members reported widespread issues, including delays in processing invoices, grant closeouts, and award setups; staff shortages and turnover in sponsored projects and accounting offices; inefficiencies in new financial systems; and frustration among faculty unable to manage basic research operations. The challenges are driving some faculty to disengage from pursuing grants, particularly junior faculty and those working with industry.

- Vice President Maldonado pledged to engage with vice chancellors for research to address systemic issues and improve alignment between systemwide offices and campuses, emphasizing faculty-centered solutions.

IX. Reports from Senate Division Chairs

Divisional chairs reported on a range of campus issues.

- Budget constraints continue to shape decisions across campuses, affecting both faculty and administrative priorities.
- As campuses navigate leadership transitions and policy reforms, strengthening shared governance is a central focus.
- The common calendar discussion has sparked strong reactions among faculty, with positions ranging from resistance to cautious support, depending on perceived impacts to student time to degree, faculty workload and institutional support.
- A lack of clear communication regarding an information security mandate has caused confusion and anxiety among faculty, fueling concerns about privacy, academic freedom, and administrative overreach.
- The challenges of communication and transparency in systemwide initiatives are recurrent themes, underscoring the need for clearer messaging.

Campus-specific highlights

- UCSF has initiated the formal process for two memorials concerning Senate membership for adjunct and health sciences clinical faculty.
- UCSD launched two Senate-Administration workgroups: one to reimagine admissions policies post-SAT and another to restructure the Committee on Academic Personnel due to overwhelming workloads.
- Significant budget challenges at UCSC have prompted an Administration-led committee to propose major structural changes, including division reorganizations and revised graduate education funding models.
- At UCLA, the arrival of a new chancellor and CFO from non-UC backgrounds has prompted efforts to introduce them to UC shared governance principles.
- UCR is preparing for a chancellor search amid the impending retirement of its vice chancellor for planning and budget, raising concerns about leadership continuity. Plans for a new campus hospital are under consideration.
- Progress continues on the new medical education building at UCM, expected to benefit the Central Valley.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm

Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director

Attest: Steven W. Cheung, Academic Council Chair