



**Academic Council  
Minutes of Meeting**

April 30, 2025

**I. Consent Calendar**

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. Minutes of April 2, 2025 meeting and April 8, 2025 special meeting
3. UCLA Requested Variances to Senate Regulation 780

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

**II. Senate Officers' Announcements**

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

**Senior Leadership Searches:** Searches for the UC president, UCSB chancellor, and UCR chancellor are in their final stages. The new president will be appointed at a special regents meeting on Friday, May 2, 2025. Members of the Senate Academic Advisory Committee will meet with the nominee prior to the appointment and announcement. An offer has been made by Provost Newman to the new vice provost for faculty affairs and academic programs.

**Faculty Discipline Workgroup:** A joint Senate-administration workgroup completed a draft report on faculty discipline for discussion at the May 2025 Regents meeting. It includes proposed calibration guidelines for discipline related to expressive activities based on severity of misconduct, severity of impact, and mitigating or aggravating factors. If approved by the Regents, a 30-day expedited Senate review will follow for potential regental approval in July 2025.

**Visa Cancellations:** The federal government has reinstated most of the UC international student visas it had revoked earlier in April. CCGA and UCEP developed guidance to support affected students, which clarified that Senate regulations allow for remote degree completion and thesis or doctoral defense, degree holds, and temporary withdrawals.

**Assembly Meeting Highlights:** At its April 23, 2025 meeting, the Assembly elected UCSB Professor Susannah Scott as the 2025–2026 systemwide Senate vice chair, [approved](#) amendments to Senate Bylaw 145 clarifying expectations for BOARS' consultation with the California K–12 system, [voted](#) in opposition of proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 424 (A-G Ethnic Studies), and approved [amendments](#) to Academic Council's *Defense of the University* statement to include language about safeguarding international students and scholars.

**UCAD:** The [UC Adaptation to Disruptions Task Force](#) is meeting weekly, most recently with consultants CFO Nathan Brostrom, Associate Vice President Caín Díaz and Senior Vice President Alex Bustamante, who provided budget and compliance contexts. Given time constraints, UCAD will focus on two priority areas: restructuring programs and resizing the workforce.

**Discussion highlights:**

- Council members discussed a potential procedural clarification on the amended Assembly statement—specifically, whether a vote reconsideration would be needed to revise the amendment that changed “defend” to “safeguard.” Chair Cheung will consult the Senate parliamentarian on the correct procedure.

### III. Proposed Revisions to Senate Bylaw 170 and Rescission of Senate Bylaw 192

Council reviewed systemwide Senate feedback on the [proposal](#) to eliminate the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) and reassign its responsibilities to the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP). Although many reviewers acknowledged UCOPE's diminished role after the discontinuation of the Analytical Writing Placement Exam, there was widespread concern about sunsetting the committee. Reviewers emphasized that preparatory education remains a critical and increasingly complex issue and worried about the loss of systemwide coordination, data sharing, and policy development.

#### **Discussion highlights:**

- Council members noted that UCOPE's current narrow focus on entry-level college writing had limited its broader effectiveness. However, most agreed that revitalization, rather than elimination, was the better path forward. They stressed the need for a restructured UCOPE with clearer bylaws and scope, potentially expanded to include math, STEM, AI, and coding preparation.
- Chair Cheung concluded there was no support to advance the proposal to the Assembly and asked UCOPE, UCEP, and BOARS to initiate planning for a revitalized UCOPE.

### IV. Systemwide Academic Personnel (SWAP) Updates

- **Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost, SWAP**
- **Douglas Haynes, Interim Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs & Academic Programs**

Interim Vice Provost Haynes summarized the recommendations of the joint Senate-administration workgroup on faculty discipline that was charged to address concerns about consistency, transparency, and timeliness of faculty disciplinary processes across campuses. The workgroup developed eight recommendations grouped into three main categories:

- *Procedural improvements:* establish clear systemwide timelines for each phase of a disciplinary case and create a systemwide Privilege and Tenure hearing network triggered after 14 days if a campus cannot convene its own panel.
- *Consistency in discipline:* Require that disciplinary charges include a range of potential sanctions, allowing panels to adjust sanctions as new evidence emerges, and develop guidelines to align sanctions for similar misconduct across all campuses.
- *Awareness and accountability:* Develop a systemwide case-tracking system and require annual chancellor reports to the Regents summarizing case statuses and explaining any timeline extensions.

The recommendations will be presented to the Regents at their May 2025 meeting. Particular elements such as the sanction-calibration guidelines will enter a 30-day expedited systemwide Senate review following the meeting, while timeline and other procedural changes will subsequently undergo the standard 90-day Senate review process.

APM 360 (Librarian series): The [proposed revisions](#) to APM 360 reaffirm that librarians do not hold instructional titles or serve as instructors of record, consistent with [Senate Regulation 750](#). This restores the original intent of the policy after an erroneous change introduced several years ago. Librarians have objected, arguing that their duties meet the definition of instruction and research/creative activity equivalent to that of Senate faculty.

**Discussion highlights:**

- Council members asked whether the annual reports on faculty discipline would include data on informal and early resolution cases or only on ongoing cases. They proposed using a common data field framework for internal case tracking instead of a more costly real-time tracking system. Members cautioned that sanction guidelines should inform rather than dictate outcomes, preserving campus norms, shared governance, and due-process rights.
- Deputy Provost Lee clarified that the proposed guidelines are intended to inform local disciplinary decisions, and she confirmed that the Academic Senate, along with other relevant offices, will help define the common data fields and shape the calibration guidelines.
- Members expressed skepticism about equating librarians' activities with Senate faculty research and teaching, noting that occasional workshops or publications differ significantly from credit-bearing instruction and original scholarly research expected of Senate faculty.

**V. Executive Session: Mid-Career Leadership Award**

**ACTION: Council selected Professor Andrea Kasko (UCLA) and Professor Steven Hetts (UCSF) as the 2025 recipients of the award.**

**VI. Consultation with UC Senior Managers**

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

**Core Values:** President Drake acknowledged the volatile and uncertain climate facing higher education, affirmed that UC will uphold its identity and values despite political and legal challenges, and emphasized that UC will continue to support its students, patients, faculty, and staff.

**International Student Visas:** President Drake reported that the federal government had reinstated 157 of the previously revoked 159 international UC student immigration records as of April 30. The University provided support through campus international student services centers and the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center, including pro bono legal referrals. He thanked the Senate for helping affected students stay enrolled or earn credit remotely, and affirmed UC's commitment to student support, regardless of background.

**Federal Actions:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has imposed new restrictions prohibiting the use of federal research funds for certain diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) activities, and now requires principal investigators to attest that their funding does not support such programming. UC Legal is developing systemwide guidance to ensure consistent campus responses. The University is affirming that its programs fully comply with California Proposition 209 and federal law and is currently engaged in at least 12 lawsuits challenging government actions. The University is also analyzing potential changes to Pell Grant eligibility and preparing for other possible federal funding threats. President Drake and the chancellors signed a [statement](#) from the American Association of Colleges and Universities condemning federal political overreach.

**Congressional Inquiry:** UC is responding to a new Congressional investigation into its foreign relationships under Section 117 of the Higher Education Act, coordinating legal responses with impacted campuses.

**Budget Outlook:** UC faces serious budget pressures due to a state revenue shortfall. The University is awaiting the Governor's May Revision to the 2025–26 budget and advocating against the proposed 8% (\$270 million net) cut proposed in January. UC is urging the exclusion of debt service and legislative earmarks from the reduction base, which could mitigate over \$100 million of the cuts. Scenario planning is underway for further federal cuts, including potential changes to Medicare and Medicaid funding that could significantly impact UC medical centers.

**Cybersecurity:** President Drake acknowledged faculty concerns about the new cybersecurity investment plans, particularly their potential impact on research and privacy. He reaffirmed that implementation and oversight would continue to involve Senate consultation and emphasized his commitment to transparency, academic freedom, and the protection of personal and research subject data.

**NAGPRA Audit:** A state audit on the University's compliance with the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) will spur intensified campus compliance efforts under a firm timeline.

**Finance:** To help maximize internal liquidity, a May 2025 Regents item will propose pausing a scheduled 0.5% increase in UC Retirement Plan (UCRP) employer contributions, which would delay full funding by two years without significantly affecting long-term projections if increases resume next year. Another proposal would defer \$700 million in STIP borrowing for UCRP. CFO Brostrom expressed cautious support for a UCFW Task Force on Investment and Retirement proposal to raise the UCRP discount rate from 6.75% to 7–7.25%, potentially reducing pension liabilities by \$2 billion. While UC's current rate is among the most conservative in California, volatile market conditions may generate resistance among Regents. UC has also expanded its commercial paper capacity from \$2 billion to \$4 billion and is pursuing bond refunding and new financing opportunities with state and industry partners.

***Discussion highlights:***

- Several members requested confirmation that Senate consultation about the new cybersecurity plan is ongoing, particularly regarding the Trellix platform replacement, and whether mandates could conflict with human subjects research confidentiality. President Drake confirmed that ongoing faculty engagement and shared governance will guide final decisions. He committed to sharing privacy assessment materials and noted that UC is fully committed to safeguarding personal and research subject data.
- A member asked about potential cuts to federal Medicaid and Medi-Cal funding and implications for UC Health systems. President Drake said UC is monitoring proposed changes and conducting scenario planning.
- A Council member inquired if renaming DEI initiatives might invite greater scrutiny. President Drake advised that any program renaming should reflect genuine mission alignment rather than capitulation.
- A Council member asked if UC intends to contest the recent terminations of research awards by the National Science Foundation (NSF), and whether UC is collecting qualitative data on the consequences of terminations. President Drake responded that UC is closely monitoring the

issue, advocating actively on behalf of affected researchers, and working with federal agencies and professional associations to raise awareness and address the issue.

- A member asked if UC might seek flexibility on the 18% nonresident undergraduate enrollment cap to increase revenue. Provost Newman responded that the cap is part of the governor's compact, and any change would require state approval. UC and state leaders continue to discuss balancing fiscal needs and access.

## **VII. Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)**

### **○ Glenda Humiston, Vice President, ANR**

**Overview:** UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) serves all 58 California counties and embodies the land-grant mission of the University. Its work spans agriculture, natural resources, climate change mitigation, nutrition, youth development (e.g., 4-H), and rural economic development. UC ANR operates through a network of county-based advisors, statewide specialists, research centers, and partnerships with local governments. ANR translates UC research into on-the-ground solutions for Californians, particularly in underserved, rural, and agricultural communities.

**Vision 2040:** UC ANR's [Strategic Vision 2040](#) will guide its operations over the next 15 years. The plan was developed with extensive stakeholder input and identifies seven Grand Challenges where UC ANR can have the greatest impact. These include three established ANR strengths—agriculture and food systems; thriving people and communities; and natural ecosystems and working landscapes—and four emergent areas driven by public feedback: climate change; innovation; regulations, policy and compliance; and systemic inequities.

**Ag Innovation Center:** ANR is in the early stages of developing an Agricultural Innovation Center in partnership with the US Department of Agriculture. The center will promote innovation, entrepreneurship, and climate-smart agriculture, with a focus on the needs of small and mid-sized farms. ANR is currently building out the center's scope and seeking federal funding. The center may also include business incubator functions and extension services.

**Budget and Strategic Priorities:** ANR's current priorities include rebuilding the cooperative extension infrastructure; expanding academic positions on campuses and in counties; serving as a bridge between campus research and federal funding opportunities, particularly in climate-smart agriculture, water resilience, nutrition, and fire science and mitigation; and expanding partnerships with public and private entities to address California's technical, social, and environmental challenges. ANR is also establishing a UC Policy Institute to translate UC research into trusted, science-based policy guidance, and is increasingly engaged in international work, leveraging its expertise to collaborate on global agricultural and environmental challenges.

**Workforce and Hiring:** ANR is expanding its academic workforce by hiring Cooperative Extension (CE) Advisors and Specialists, restoring a presence in under-resourced counties, and also developing joint faculty appointments with UC campuses. Some ANR academics face challenges getting appropriate recognition during academic reviews because their work blends research, outreach, and applied scholarship. Vice President Humiston urged Council to help ensure Senate processes recognize this distinct but rigorous academic profile.

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

- A Council member described ANR as “connective tissue” between campus researchers and communities and asked about its role in grantmaking. Vice President Humiston explained that campus-based CE Specialists and Agricultural Experiment Station faculty bridge basic and applied research, while county-based CE Advisors extend that knowledge to local communities. ANR also convenes multidisciplinary teams and is enhancing its post-award support services to improve grant administration.
- A member asked why “regulation, policy & compliance” emerged as a Grand Challenge. Vice President Humiston cited widespread demand for science-based, credible data to combat misinformation and inform policy—especially around food and agriculture—and stressed UC’s role in providing unbiased evidence.
- In response to questions about randomized-control trials versus population-level approaches, she offered to connect members with the Nutrition Policy Institute, which employs a range of methods to inform state and federal nutrition policies.

### **VIII. Implementation of Achievements Relative to Opportunities (ARO) Principles**

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

UCAADE, UCAP, and UCPT asked Council to support committee efforts to survey deans, Committees on Academic Personnel, Executive Vice Chancellors, provosts, and vice chancellors to gather information and record how they have implemented the Achievement Relative to Opportunities (ARO) principles in divisional merit and promotion processes first recommended in a 2022 [report](#). Early campus feedback suggests wide variation in practices.

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

- Council members expressed support for collecting data to create an inventory of campus actions, and to support more informed decision making, especially given the potential for grant terminations and additional disruptions in the coming years. Several suggested relying first on existing campus reports and communications rather than conducting extensive interviews, to help reduce demands on overtaxed campus staff.

**ACTION: Council voted by acclamation to endorse UCAADE’s letter.**

### **IX. UCFW and TFIR Recommendation for Changes in Pension Funding**

- **Juan Pablo Pardo-Guerra, UCFW Chair**

UCFW and TFIR requested Council’s support for three pension funding changes to help UC mitigate the impacts of a potential federal funding loss while maintaining long-term pension sustainability.

1. Maintain the UC employer contribution at 14.5% for the coming year, rather than proceeding with the scheduled 0.5% increase.
2. Pause the planned transfer of \$700-\$800 million from the Short-Term Investment Pool (STIP) to UCRP in the current year.
3. Increase UCRP’s assumed rate of return (discount rate) to 7.0%. This would reduce reported UCRP liabilities by approximately \$2 billion and create liquidity flexibility during a period of financial uncertainty.

**Discussion highlights:**

- A Council member asked whether the 7% return expectation was based on future projections or historical performance. Chair Pardo-Guerra acknowledged uncertainty about future returns but noted that long-term benchmarks have historically supported a 7% assumption. He noted that the rate is re-evaluated during the actuarial experience study conducted every 5 years.
- Chair Cheung added that the Regents have been considering whether UC's current discount rate is too conservative, and that market benchmarks support a higher rate. He recommended that the letter include language acknowledging current market volatility.

**ACTION: Council endorsed the UCFW/TFIR letter by acclamation, with the understanding that minor edits would be made to acknowledge market conditions and long-term planning.**

**X. Proposed Academic Council Special Committee on Clinical Affairs (ACSCOCA)**

Chair Cheung opened a discussion of a proposed systemwide Academic Council Special Committee on Clinical Affairs (ACSCOCA). The goal is to strengthen shared governance for UC's clinical faculty who often serve dual roles as faculty and health system providers by giving them formal, structured channels to raise issues with both their divisional health administrators and UC Health leadership, thereby improving policy input, professional well-being, and reducing clinician burnout.

**Core Proposal:**

- Each campus division would establish a Clinical Affairs Committee (open to clinicians or including general campus faculty) that meets regularly with divisional health leaders.
- Chairs of local committees would constitute a new systemwide special committee of Academic Council, ensuring divisional concerns can escalate to UC Health leadership.

**Alternative Model:**

- A governance body wholly distinct from the Senate, composed only of clinicians, with independent authority over clinical-faculty merit and policy, bypassing existing Senate structures.

**Discussion highlights:**

- Council members expressed a preference for the integrated model (local + systemwide committees under Academic Council) rather than a fully separate clinical body.
- Members stressed that any new body must preserve the Senate's authority over curricula and degree requirements and should not grant non-Senate members voting power on those matters.
- Several members noted that many campuses already include clinical faculty on Faculty Executive Committees and suggested extending voting rights there as an alternative to a new structure.
- Concerns were raised about the staffing and resource implications and the risk of fragmenting shared governance by establishing a parallel body.
- It was agreed that the committee's primary role should be advisory, providing structured input to UC Health leadership rather than exercising decision-making authority.
- Members emphasized the importance of clearly defining the committee's scope and membership to ensure it strengthens clinician engagement and advances clinical faculty well-being without duplicating existing forums.



- Chair Cheung will consult with Provost Newman and UC Health leadership on the committee's scope, membership, and resourcing.

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

**Cybersecurity:** Nearly every campus reported confusion or concern surrounding the implementation of new systemwide cybersecurity tools. Chairs described misinformation circulating among faculty and tensions over shared governance and consultation processes. Several divisions are hosting or planning information sessions or town halls to clarify facts and allow dialogue. Berkeley's Senate is drafting a letter to President Drake and Provost Newman to express concerns.

**Federal Disruptions:** Most campuses are grappling with the termination of federal research grants, particularly NSF-funded projects, and revocation of visas. Campuses expressed frustration with perceptions of uncoordinated communication and response plans. Faculty are pushing for greater transparency and proactive planning for future disruptions. Several campuses have created or are discussing joint Senate-administrative workgroups to develop contingency funding strategies. Many are processing or debating resolutions related to academic freedom, political speech, and federal/state actions. UCB's [resolution on academic freedom](#) is serving as a model for others. Chairs noted increasing tensions around procedural clarity and how to process resolutions. Some campuses are debating whether to join national pacts with other higher education institutions. There are divided views on whether such actions are strategic or potentially divisive. DEI-focused Senate committees are under pressure, and members are withdrawing over fears of being targeted.

**Campus Budgets:** Budget shortfalls and planned cuts are widespread, with most campuses preparing for or experiencing significant reductions and anticipating structural deficits. Some campuses reported little or no Senate input in budget planning.

## **XII. New Business**

**Total Remuneration Study:** UCFW Chair Pardo-Guerra reported on emerging concerns related to the ongoing Total Remuneration Study (TRS), being conducted by Deloitte in partnership with UC Systemwide Human Resources and four faculty consultants from UCFW. The study is meant to update UC's understanding of total compensation for faculty and staff, the last version of which was completed in 2014.

UCFW has two main concerns:

- 1) The methodology used by Deloitte simplifies the analysis in problematic ways.
- 2) Faculty consultants working with Deloitte and UCOP have more limited access to data than in previous TRS cycles.

**Next Steps:** Council agreed to invite guests from UC HR and Deloitte at the May 28 meeting.

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