

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting

July 24, 2024

I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. Draft Minutes of June 26, 2024
3. Revised ACSCOLI Charter
4. UCEP Review of UC Washington Center

ACTION: Council approved the consent calendar.

II. Senate Officers' Announcements

- James Steintrager, Academic Council Chair
- Steven W. Cheung, Academic Council Vice Chair
- Monica Lin, Executive Director

July Regents Meeting: Chair Steintrager's [remarks to the Regents](#) emphasized the importance of returning to a student-faculty ratio that supports a quality education. The Regents approved a new policy on public and discretionary statements by academic units, which is nearly identical to the Senate's 2022 recommendations, but takes the form of a mandate, requiring that discretionary statements not appear on a department's main homepage and include a disclaimer that the statement does not represent the position of the University or the campus.

The chair of the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) and the chair of the BOARS Area C Workgroup (ACW) presented the ACW's Stage 2 report to the Academic and Students Affairs Committee, focusing on UC's definition of foundational mathematics for college preparation. The president of the State Board of Education delivered a letter to the Regents requesting more clarity about Area C courses that will fulfill UC's recommendation of additional math coursework beyond the required three-course core sequence of Algebra I-Geometry-Algebra II or Mathematics I-II-III. A response letter under joint signature by Chair Steintrager and Provost Newman is forthcoming.

Incoming Chair Janet Reilly outlined her priorities, which include more uniform adherence to time, place, and manner policies across campuses; increased educational access (online and otherwise); expanding healthcare access to underserved regions of California; and enhancing public advocacy to showcase UC's accomplishments. The Regents also approved settlement terms with the California State Attorney General in connection with UCSF's purchase of two San Francisco hospitals from Dignity Health.

During the discussion:

- Council members urged the University to enhance communications that highlight research and graduate education. They noted the benefits of inviting more Regents to events like UC Grad Slam showcasing graduate student research.

III. A-G Ethnic Studies

Council continued its consideration of proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 424, including follow-up discussion on the June 26 Council sessions with guests about questions raised during the systemwide review, and the next steps for the proposal. Chair Steintrager noted that the proposal allows UC faculty to take a leading role in defining curricular standards for college-prep (A-G) ethnic studies. He requested Council’s approval to move the proposal forward to the Assembly for possible adoption.

During the discussion:

- Individual Council members noted that the June 26 presentations clarified outstanding questions raised during the systemwide review. There is now broad support for the Area H course criteria, which have been revised multiple times to be more inclusive and clearer to those outside the discipline. The issue for UC is not AB 101 itself—since the one-semester ethnic studies course requirement is already state law and includes a budget to help public high schools meet the requirement—but whether UC wants high school ethnic studies courses to be of college-prep quality. The criteria emphasize critical thinking and analysis and will aid schools in course development. A college education involves more than just earning passing grades in academic classes; it also involves training students to be global citizens and exposing them to diverse perspectives.
- Other members noted that they had not received clear answers to questions raised during the review. They voiced concerns about implementation issues, including student access to Area H-eligible courses, the ability of non-coastal regions to meet the AB 101 and Area H requirements, and the ambiguity surrounding the concept of “leveling up” to college-prep ethnic studies. There were also concerns that the criteria might impose a particular political agenda. Several members suggested that completing an ethnic studies course during high school be recommended rather than required for UC admission.
- Executive Director Lin noted that across all public high schools in recent years, fewer than 90 of the 2,500+ high school course lists lack the full A-G course pattern. Each of the existing A-G subject areas has been “leveled up” to meet college-prep expectations with course criteria developed by discipline faculty and/or college readiness standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

ACTION: A motion was made and seconded to advance the proposal to the Assembly for further consideration. The motion passed 12 to 7.

IV. Consultation with Senior Managers

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

Acknowledgment of the Chair: President Drake, Provost Newman, and CFO Brostrom each acknowledged Chair Steintrager’s final meeting as Council chair, expressing appreciation for his leadership and the Council’s collaboration during the 2023-24 academic year.

Campus Climate Initiative: President Drake noted that it has been a challenging year for UC campuses and communities. He emphasized that the freedom to express diverse viewpoints and engage in lawful protests is fundamental to the UC mission. UCOP is developing a campus climate initiative framework to enhance safety while protecting free speech rights. President Drake shared high level aspects of the plan, emphasizing that the initiative would clarify implementation of existing policies and be responsive to the statutory requirements established in SB 108, the Budget Act of 2024. UCOP aims to issue a communication by mid-August. President Drake invited Chair Steintrager to assemble a small group of Senate leaders to discuss further and provide feedback.

Budget: The final state budget signed by the governor provides UC with a net \$134 million increase. This includes a 5% (\$228 million) base budget adjustment consistent with the governor's compact with UC and \$31 million for the buydown of nonresidents at three campuses, offset by a \$125 million cut. The longer-term state budget plan includes a cut to UC in 2025-26, with opportunities for mitigation based on stronger than projected economic performance. CFO Brostrom noted that he is exploring alternative ways to fund capital renewal—UC's biggest financial challenge—including bond sales and shifting assets to increase working capital for the campuses. Following several recent hospital acquisitions, UC Health is now the largest source of revenues for UC.

Academic Affairs Restructuring: Provost Newman is convening a search committee to recruit a new vice provost for faculty affairs and academic programs following the retirement of Douglas Haynes, who will rejoin UCOP on recall for one year. The restructuring also includes the creation of a new position, deputy provost for systemwide academic personnel, to enhance connections to labor within the Division of Academic Affairs.

UC Center Sacramento (UCCS): UCCS is a vital presence for the University in the state capital, providing greater public visibility for UC research. A key component of UCCS is its academic program for undergraduates, which is currently facing challenges with under-enrollment. To address this issue, the provost has convened a group to develop strategies to increase enrollment to a sustainable level.

Academic Calendar Alignment: Academic Affairs is studying the possible transition of UC quarter campuses to the semester system. This transition would align UC campuses with other institutions, including the California Community Colleges, and enhance the transfer path. This possibility has been raised in the past, with a core faculty concern being the potential impact on research time.

Other Issues: Provost Newman mentioned that Academic Affairs is studying student dropouts, analyzing labor market data to inform deans' planning, and exploring opportunities around the new Global Start Program, which offers a study abroad experience to UC students during their first semester of enrollment. Additionally, three academic congresses are planned for 2024-25, focusing on Hispanic-Serving Institutions, research, and academic freedom.

During the discussion:

- Council members asked if UCOP had been directly involved in any negotiations between campuses and various encampments, and they encouraged the University to engage in dialogue with student protestors before taking a hard line on enforcement. Concerns were raised about the potential impacts on students if faculty are excluded from campuses for disruptive behaviors.
- Council members expressed a preference for a faculty member to administer the Academic Affairs unit that oversees faculty issues such as recruitment, retention, and stewardship of the Academic Personnel Manual.
- President Drake emphasized that engagement with students will be a critical part of the campus climate initiative. The University supports and encourages students to exercise their free speech rights in the countless ways that do not violate policy. President Drake noted that productive dialogue with students on campus is key to positive outcomes, and that the University uses a tiered response model wherein several steps are taken before police are involved. He added that UCOP was not directly involved in negotiations but that campuses sought guidance and clarity from UCOP.
- Provost Newman noted that academic personnel staff have the technical expertise needed to handle the work overseen by the new deputy provost, including policies within the APM.

V. Office of Systemwide Academic Personnel

- **Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost**

Deputy Provost Lee provided the following updates:

Academic Personnel and Programs Reorganization: While much will remain unchanged, the reorganization aims to create a more agile unit with specialized expertise and to ensure more consistent adherence to academic personnel policies. The vice provost for faculty affairs and academic programs will continue to consult with the provost on all academic personnel policies.

APM 016: Academic Personnel (AP) is reviewing all comments received in response to the proposed revisions to APM 016, including those from the Senate and individual faculty. AP will collaborate with the Senate on the next steps. AP handles faculty petitions in a similar way to any comments received during a systemwide APM review, which provides an open opportunity for anyone to submit comments.

VI. UCEP Proposal: Statement on UC Quality

- **Melanie Cocco, UCEP Chair**

Council reviewed a statement presented by the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP), “Characteristics of Undergraduate Educational Quality at the University of California,” revised in response to comments from a systemwide Senate review. Chair Cocco noted that UCEP clarified the aspirational nature of the statement, and included many suggestions from the review, although several questions will require additional research. UCEP intends to perform

additional analyses on grade inflation and other issues, but in the meantime seeks Council's endorsement of the statement, which it hopes will serve as a guide for new undergraduate programs and a reference for the Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities.

ACTION: A motion was made and seconded to endorse the statement and advance it to the Assembly for further consideration and potential endorsement. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Report of the Academic Planning Council (APC) Workgroup on Faculty Work & Recovery Post-Pandemic

o Ahmet Palazoglu, UCD Division Chair and APC Workgroup Co-Chair

The workgroup was established in 2023 to identify more effective strategies for restoring a balanced faculty workload to support excellence. Its final report focuses on the problem of faculty "workload creep" and proposes five recommendations to support the faculty's activities in research, teaching, and service. These include: 1) reducing the burden of new systems and policies on faculty workloads; 2) enhancing networking and peer mentoring opportunities; 3) reassessing research support programs, including the incorporation of Achievement Relative to Opportunities principles in academic personnel reviews for equitable performance assessment; 4) maintaining benefits and family-focused retention efforts; and 5) increasing staff support for faculty and research activities. The report also emphasizes the importance of regular faculty workload assessments, continuous faculty consultation, equitable distribution of service responsibilities, and supportive campus programs to ensure well-being and productivity.

During the discussion:

- Council members observed that the recommendations have relevance to various Senate committees including [UCAP](#), [UCFW](#), and [UCAADE](#), which can play a crucial role in setting up metrics and ensuring accountability in executing these strategies.

ACTION: A motion was made and seconded to endorse the report and recommendations. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Academic Labor Relations Consultant Report

Council discussed a report from a UCOP consultant who conducted an organizational assessment of UC academic labor relations. The consultant's report recommended ways to improve organizational and communication structures, proposing various models for labor relations and HR structures at the campuses and UCOP.

During the discussion:

- Council members noted that report recommends increasing faculty engagement in academic labor relations strategy teams and bargaining teams, which will help improve the labor relations process. The Senate is the primary structure through which faculty should participate in academic labor relations.
- Council agreed that the role of the campus graduate divisions should be associated solely with the academic side of the enterprise, maintaining a clear separation from labor relations.

- Members noted that the report focuses on administrative structures and does not address impacts on budgets, faculty workloads, or the fundamental questions facing faculty regarding their relationship with the newly unionized academic employees.
- Council reiterated its view that a faculty member should administer the unit in the Division of Academic Affairs overseeing faculty issues. It was suggested that the provost establish a “dotted” reporting link between the deputy provost and the provost, with direct reporting to the faculty vice provost.

ACTION: Council will send a letter to Provost Newman summarizing the discussion.

IX. Senate Expectations and Role in Shared Governance

During an executive session, Council discussed expectations for the Senate’s role in shared governance consultation and decision-making around “time, place, and manner” policies, campus policing, and emergency responses. Council also reviewed a letter on policing prepared by the University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity (UCAADE) that expressed concern about inconsistent responses across campuses to protests.

ACTION: Council will send a summary of comments to President Drake. Chair Steintrager will also prepare a report to the president on the state of shared governance.

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