



**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC COMPUTING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Friday, February 27, 2026

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Chair's announcements and committee discussion**

The agenda was revised due to the last-minute absence of administrators from the Digital Innovation & Technology unit.

In his announcements, Chair Ilya Brookwell conveyed information from the CIO Council meetings, which occur monthly. CIOs have discussed communication strategies for new security software rollouts, challenges with vendors and data privacy, strategies for complying with new IT accessibility requirements, and contracts for artificial intelligence tools. Chair Brookwell will keep pressing for more consultation and information sharing with faculty about the new cybersecurity software contract negotiations, anticipated rollout strategies, and communication with campus communities.

An effort to find a new digital risk training module has been cancelled after a failed search. Meanwhile IT is working on developing a simulator to instruct the community on how to avoid phishing-type attacks.

IT administrators are considering implementing a university-wide ID program for cybersecurity reasons that might also help with intercampus systems sharing and serve to decrease instances of fraud that have occurred lately. Members noted that it is also another way to have a central point of failure.

UCSF representative Duygu Tosun-Turgut briefly reported on the [UC AI Council](#), which focuses primarily on administrative concerns. The group has been discussing data storage, security, and energy consumption issues that accompany the increasing number of AI applications. The university is looking at local or cloud computing contracts and energy-saving solutions.

The Faculty AI Workgroup report is now posted on the Senate website. It includes recommendations for the university, but not all areas are covered. More information sharing between divisions will be helpful, although it is unclear what venue would be most appropriate. Concerns of faculty include energy use, unsupportable hardware, localized decision making that doesn't benefit most users, and issues around third-party licensing. The UC Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI) will have a report for the administration from the humanities and social sciences perspective.

**II. Consultation with UCOP's Digital Information & Technology**

The consultation with UCOP's Digital Information & Technology leaders did not occur.

### **III. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership**

Academic Council Chair Ahmet Palazoglu and Vice Chair Susannah Scott joined the meeting to provide updates on the current issues facing the Academic Senate.

*Budget:* The governor's preliminary January budget proposal provides \$5.2 billion for UC, an increase of about 7% in ongoing funding, which includes 2% in deferred funds from last year. The budget provided no one-time capital funds, as UC had requested. Capital improvements on the campuses is still a need. The revised budget will be released in May.

*Bonds:* Two general obligation bond proposals of interest to UC from the state legislature will be on the ballot in November. One is for housing and the other is Senator Scott Wiener's Science & Health research bill. UC's Office of State Governmental Relations is leading advocacy efforts.

*Lawsuits:* The US DOJ filed a new lawsuit against UCLA for violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act alleging that the university created a hostile work environment for Jewish and Israeli faculty and staff after the Gaza war protests broke out across campus.

*IT Accessibility:* UC's new IT Accessibility Policy was discussed at the January Academic Council meeting. Staff from UC Legal, Information Technology, and the Systemwide Office of Civil Rights joined the meeting. In addition to discussing guidance and compliance issues, a key takeaway was reassurance from UC Legal that UC, not individual faculty, bears responsibility for compliance and legal defense when faculty act within the scope of their duties. Chair Palazoglu noted that UCACC could continue to be involved by pressuring IT administrators to provide resources and work with other units on campus to assist faculty as appropriate.

*STEM Preparation:* Systemwide Provost Catherine Newman is organizing a systemwide Academic Senate Congress on mathematics preparation and STEM to be held virtually on March 9-10. A report on STEM preparation at UC<sup>1</sup> was recently issued from UCOP's Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP) unit.

The Senate will convene a new workgroup, reporting to BOARS, to discuss UC's comprehensive review admissions policies. The charge will be finalized and shared in next few weeks.

*Publisher licenses:* Because UC and the publisher American Chemical Society (ACS) could not agree to new contract terms around computational research such as text mining, UC is at risk of losing access to current and future content. UC owns perpetual rights to back content.

*Potential strike:* The union representing graduate students has voted to authorize a strike should one be deemed necessary. Provost Newman sends periodic messages to faculty with the latest updates. Senate leaders are working with UC Academic Affairs to prepare communications for faculty regarding how to get ready for a potential strike and will follow up with more guidance if a strike is called.

*Upcoming negotiations:* The Unit 18 Lecturers' contract ends in June. Former Senate Chair Robert May will serve as a member of the negotiating team.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/content-analysis/equity-diversity-inclusion/expanding-opportunity/>

#### **IV. Committee Discussion and Campus Reports** (*Round Robin*)

UCACC members reported on academic computing and communication topics from their divisional committees and campuses. Members were asked to briefly share whether and how their campus has disseminated information about resources for complying with new federal IT accessibility requirements.

*UC Davis:* The new CIO is conducting an overhaul of the campus cybersecurity oversight structure. The local committee invited Berkeley CIT chair John Kubiawicz (also UCACC Berkeley rep) to talk to its local Senate IT committee about UCB's oversight structure. The intent is to increase faculty involvement in policies, initiatives, and, more immediately, compliance with accessibility requirements. Faculty need a better understanding of the privacy and security balancing process when it comes to software mandates.

*UC Santa Barbara:* The administration has been sending communications about websites, workshops, and other resources for IT accessibility compliance. The campus is making a good faith effort, focusing on high volume websites first and trying to alleviate anxiety. There are tools within Canvas to help with finding and fixing problems. In other news, IT administrators are moving away from Google email security and introducing a new email scanning system. The local committee is reviewing it to address any issues before the system is released. The committee is also trying to be elevated to a level on par with other Divisional committees.

*UC Riverside:* The campus has a messaging campaign for implementation of the new accessibility policy that includes pointers to websites or training sessions for faculty. It is unclear whether help will be offered to individual units or departments. The campus has various automated tools for identifying issues, and 20 student interns have been hired to serve as an accessibility assistance team. The campus has formed a joint Senate-Admin AI Council that will meet for first time next month and will discuss issues across instruction, research, and institutional matters.

*UC Santa Cruz:* An ad-hoc AI Council that was composed of faculty interested in AI and administrators is now being reformulated with a more formal structure. The intention is for a member of this local AI committee to liaise with the systemwide group. Because AI issues touch areas of research, teaching, and admissions, existing committees have been asked to look through the Faculty AI Workgroup Report and identify what is in the purview of which committee *and* what those committees have the capacity to take on. Meanwhile the campus has enabled Google AI products for staff; student and faculty access are pending Senate consultation. Other issues for the local committee include ensuring data protection and security in internally licensed tools, trying out accessibility tools, and a research computing audit (after a multi-week outage). The accessibility compliance rollout will include a joint FAQ from the local committee and IT administration.

*UC Irvine:* UCI also has a team of student workers to help faculty with accessibility compliance. An email from vice provost in December shared the resources available, including training sessions and tools. There is an IT Accessibility Workgroup making department visits. Local messaging has been supportive. There have been some small AI initiatives at the school level.

*UC Berkeley:* The Berkeley divisional chair joined a recent CIT meeting to discuss AI and disruptive computing in general. The committee might receive a new charge to identify disruptive technology

in all forms. UC Berkeley has a website with information on accessibility compliance and required training. The attitude is to appreciate the good faith efforts of faculty who are trying to comply, although many are finding it challenging. Berkeley is negotiating licenses for AI tools, addressing challenges of data protection requirements. Other issues for the local committee include academic integrity, infrastructure changes to the network (network partitioning – reported on at past meetings), and obtaining sufficient data center space.

*UC San Francisco:* The campus is offering some tools for accessibility compliance along with limited training. There is a new identity and access management tool and in early February UCSF launched Align IT to standardize workflow and intake process for IT projects. There is skepticism about centralizing IT. Moving on from UCSF Versa, there is now a campus-wide version of ChatGPT that is accessible to everyone and co-pilot available to faculty and students through an enterprise agreement. Documentation, websites, and training are available. UCSF's high performance computing system ("Wynton") will be replaced as part of an effort to ramp up infrastructure.

*UC San Diego:* The Interim Chief Information Officer consulted with the local committee (CAIT) about tools for IT accessibility compliance, but there has been minimal official messaging to the campus community. CAIT is advocating for focused accessibility training for faculty, in addition to tools that can automate the work. The first priority for the campus is public-facing websites, then course materials. A new IT governance steering committee involved in budgetary decisions and resource allocation will include the CAIT chair. A formal vote to make AI part of CAIT's charge is forthcoming, and the group is talking to UCOC about expertise needs for members on the committee.

*UC Merced:* Preparing for accessibility compliance has included information conveyed in campus newsletters and outreach to department chairs. A campuswide webinar will introduce the community to support resources and tools within Canvas. IT is scanning university websites for accessibility issues and holding vendor-led training sessions and workshops.

*Undergraduate student rep (UCLA):* UCLA's CIO's Office distributes a newsletter with IT updates, including reminders about Duo multifactor authentication's move away from SMS and text. Adobe Cloud and Canva service licenses are greatly appreciated by students. Each campus should strive to provide professional level services of the software.

*[Graduate student rep (UCR) – (Had to leave early, update pasted in chat):* Increasing concerns about AI being used for cheating on exams, which seems to be happening more frequently. Given the number of incidents being discussed, clear and proactive policies need to be developed soon. Especially with emerging technologies (such as Meta glasses, mentioned earlier in the meeting) making it easier for students to bypass traditional safeguards. If explicit guidelines are not established now, it may become more difficult to address future incidents effectively.]

Overall, each campus has taken action to work towards compliance with new accessibility requirements through websites, tools, and targeted guidance opportunities.

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Meeting adjourned: 1:35pm

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCACC committee analyst

Attest: Ilya Brookwell, UCACC chair

***Meeting participants:***

Ilya Brookwell (Chair, UCR), Lisa Yeo (Vice Chair, UCM), John Kubiaticz (Berkeley), Jeremy Mason (Davis), Iftekhar Ahmed (Irvine), Yiwei Wang (Merced – afternoon), John Franchak (Riverside), Christopher Kuhl (San Diego alternate), Duygu Tosun-Turgut (San Francisco), Christopher Kruegel (Santa Barbara), Jerome Fiechter (Santa Cruz - morning), Zac Zimmer (Santa Cruz alternate – afternoon), Ahmet Palazoglu (Academic Council Chair), Susannah Scott (Academic Council Vice Chair), Katia Hatem (Graduate Student, UCR – morning), Aatmi Mehta (Undergraduate Student, UCLA)