



University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW)
Minutes of Meeting
May 8, 2026

I. Consent Calendar

1. Today's agenda items and their priority
2. UCFW Draft Minutes of April 10, 2026

ACTION: UCFW approved the consent calendar.

II. Chair's Announcements

- **Karen Bales, UCFW Chair**

UCAD Plus: The UCAD Plus Workgroup on Academic Personnel Evaluations discussed whether Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARO) principles should be formally incorporated into the Academic Personnel Manual. The final workgroup report reflects a split between representatives who think existing APM language provides sufficient flexibility to account for ARO considerations, and those who favor codifying ARO principles in the APM. UCFW has consistently supported adding ARO principles to the APM and will have an opportunity to comment on the issue during the systemwide review process.

Letters on RTAD and RASC Security: Academic Council endorsed two UCFW letters developed through the Task Force on Investment and Retirement (TFIR). [One](#) letter recommended creating centralized expertise or counseling resources to assist faculty navigating return-to-active-duty processes. The [second](#) recommended establishing a faculty and emeriti advisory committee to help address ongoing security issues related to RASC and UCPath.

Default Retirement Plan Choice: UC Human Resources declined UCFW's recommendation to change the default retirement enrollment option from Pension Choice to Savings Choice for new employees. TFIR had argued that Savings Choice may better serve employees who do not remain at UC for long careers.

Discussion highlights:

- UCFW members noted that formally incorporating ARO into the APM would provide clearer and more consistent guidance across campuses, particularly given the significant disruptions currently affecting faculty careers. Members noted that the current environment of financial uncertainty, publication challenges, and other circumstances supports stronger formal protections. Clearer APM language could help strengthen equitable evaluation practices and promote greater consistency across campuses.
- TFIR Chair Hollenbach and several members expressed frustration with the administration's response to the enrollment default recommendation, but suggested future efforts may be better spent on educating faculty about retirement options. It was noted that campuses are exploring local strategies such as distributing a [TFIR modeling tool](#) to new hires.

III. Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs & Systemwide Academic Personnel

- **Monica Varsanyi, Vice Provost, [Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs](#)**
- **Amy K. Lee, Deputy Provost, [Systemwide Academic Personnel](#)**

MOP Program Changes: Vice Provost Varsanyi reported that the Mortgage Origination Program (MOP) loan structure has been revised to a 7-1 adjustable-rate mortgage product. She noted that

the change is intended to improve the long-term financial sustainability of the program while maintaining current eligibility levels.

Early Career Awards: The inaugural [Early Career Faculty Research Excellence Awards program](#) awarded 54 grants of \$50,000 each to assistant professors across UC. The program is designed in part to support faculty facing research disruptions and funding challenges. Award distribution reflected the disciplinary composition of the applicant pool. UC will continue the program next year.

Joint Task Force Updates: The Performance of Undergraduate Degree Programs task force is finalizing its report, while the Task Force on Expressive Activities continues work on issues related to academic freedom and free expression.

APM Policies: Deputy Provost Lee reviewed several APM policies currently delayed due to competing priorities. These include revisions to APM 500 concerning misconduct disclosure requirements under California law and revisions to APM 360 addressing librarian titles. UC plans to issue both policies by fall 2026.

Immigration Policy: Proposed changes to F-1 and J-1 visa duration rules could affect graduate education and research appointments by limiting visa periods and making extensions more difficult. In addition, proposed H-1B policy changes could eliminate higher education exemptions from visa caps and impose much higher prevailing wage and lottery requirements, potentially affecting UC's ability to recruit international faculty and researchers.

Discussion highlights:

- UCFW members expressed concern that the revised MOP structure may be less advantageous for faculty borrowers. They also emphasized the importance of ensuring that communication about the revisions accurately describes benefits and risks.
- Members raised concerns about the potential impact of proposed visa changes on faculty recruitment, graduate education, and research. Several noted that eliminating higher education exemptions from H-1B rules and increasing visa costs could make international hiring financially infeasible. Members also discussed challenges around green card timelines and recruiting faculty without clearer pathways for contingent hiring.
- Members noted that formal inclusion of ARO principles in the APM would provide stronger systemwide guidance than relying on informal flexibility. Vice Provost Varsanyi and Deputy Provost Lee noted that previous workgroups have opined that existing APM language permits implementation of ARO principles, but they agreed to further explore the issue.

IV. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership

- **Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Chair**
- **Susannah Scott, Academic Council Vice Chair**

Canvas Data Breach: UC is monitoring cybersecurity incidents involving the company that operates the Canvas learning management system. The incidents prompted UC to temporarily shut down Canvas access systemwide while security reviews and forensic investigations were underway. UCOP and campus IT leaders are working to restore access as quickly as possible.

Labor Updates: UCOP is developing training materials for campuses to support implementation of the new UAW contract for academic student employees. The agreement will have budget implications for campuses and research grants over the four-year contract period. Bargaining has

also begun for the Unit 18 lecturers' contract, with early proposals focused on artificial intelligence-related job protections and academic freedom protections for lecturers.

May Regents Meeting: Chair Palazoglu's [remarks](#) focused on California's 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education. There is growing interest among some legislators in revisiting the Master Plan's respective degree-granting roles of UC, CSU, and the California Community Colleges.

Academic Council: Council endorsed two UCFW letters regarding return-to-active-duty processes and RASC security concerns; appointed UCLA Professor Michael Ong for a second two-year term as Senate representative to the Regents Health Services Committee; and discussed the Yale University [report](#) on trust in higher education with President Milliken.

Discussion highlights

- UCFW members expressed concern about how the Canvas incident could affect final examinations, including the possibility that personal and course related information could be compromised. They emphasized the need for flexibility regarding grading and finals deadlines.
- Members discussed implementation challenges associated with the new ASE contract, particularly the financial impact on research grants and departmental budgeting as well as the need for training for grant administrators on the new salary structures.
- Members emphasized the importance of faculty involvement in discussions about the Master Plan.

V. Report from UCFW Task Force on Investment and Retirement

○ **Jill Hollenbach, TFIR Chair**

Chair Hollenbach reported on TFIR discussions concerning the UC employee benefits survey and meetings with UC investment leadership. TFIR is concerned that it was not consulted during the development and review of the UC employee benefits survey, despite the survey addressing issues in TFIR's purview. She noted that TFIR includes economists and faculty with expertise in survey methodology and data analysis who could have provided valuable input.

TFIR recently met with the UC Chief Investment Officer to discuss UC investment assumptions, pension funding, and long-term UCRP sustainability. Members raised questions about the assumed rate of return used in pension funding calculations, the rationale for maintaining current assumptions, and the potential implications for campus budgets, employer contribution rates, and employee retirement costs. The CIO declined TFIR's request for additional modeling and analysis of alternative assumptions and funding scenarios.

Discussion highlights:

- UCFW members expressed concerns that faculty expertise was not sufficiently incorporated into discussions about employee benefits and retirement policy. They noted that retirement and benefits issues affect both current and retired employees and therefore fall within TFIR's charge.
- Members discussed the broader budget and workforce implications of pension funding assumptions and investment strategy, including the effect on employer and employee contribution rates. They noted that decisions have significant impacts on campus finances and faculty compensation.
- Members noted the importance of clear communication and accurate representation of Senate perspectives in discussions with the Regents and other UC leadership bodies.

VI. Systemwide Review: Gold Book Revisions

UCFW members discussed their ongoing review of the proposed revisions to the UCPD “Gold Book” policies. They reported preliminary comments on assigned policy sections, including body-worn cameras, drone usage, jurisdiction, use of force, vehicle pursuits, military equipment, mutual aid and systemwide response teams, retiree firearms policies, arrest procedures, anti-bias training, and uniform and equipment standards. While members noted that some proposed revisions appeared reasonable or administrative in nature, discussion focused on opportunities for clearer definitions, stronger oversight mechanisms, and greater transparency and accountability.

Members emphasized the importance of prioritizing de-escalation principles within use-of-force policies and questioned whether certain policing tactics and equipment reflected the needs and character of UC campuses. Members discussed concerns about the acquisition of military-style equipment, particularly given the limited history of violent incidents on campuses. Some suggested that policies governing mutual aid and systemwide response teams should include broader oversight and more clearly defined eligibility standards for participating officers.

Members also raised questions about the scope of UCPD jurisdiction beyond campus, coordination with local agencies, and the relationship between policing policies and academic freedom protections. Additional comments addressed the need for greater clarity about firearm-related policies, and questions about the purpose and administration of policies authorizing retired officers to carry firearms. Finally, members noted that the summer review period may limit opportunities for broader campus and student input, and discussed whether to request an extension of the consultation timeline.

Chair Bales asked members to submit written comments on their assigned sections for incorporation into a draft UCFW response to the proposed policy revisions.

VII. UCODE Draft Report on Divisional ARO Implementation

UCFW discussed the draft University Committee on Diversity and Equity report on divisional implementation of ARO principles. The report notes that campuses continue to rely on ARO principles in faculty review processes but that implementation practices vary across UC. It recommends greater dissemination of information about ARO processes, improved tracking of implementation, clearer standardization, and incorporating ARO principles formally into the APM.

Discussion highlights:

- UCFW members emphasized the importance of ARO principles in ensuring that faculty evaluations appropriately consider circumstances beyond an individual’s control that may affect professional productivity or opportunity. They noted that recognition of ARO considerations is intended to provide appropriate context in faculty evaluations rather than lower academic standards.
- Members expressed support for formal incorporation of ARO principles into the APM to help promote greater consistency, transparency, and equity across campuses in review processes.
- Some noted concerns that reliance on ARO statements alone may not adequately address broader workload and resource challenges facing faculty and emphasized the importance of equitable and standardized implementation practices.
- Members also discussed the value of simplified and standardized approaches for documenting ARO impacts to improve consistency across campuses.

ACTION: UCFW will send a letter to UCODE summarizing these comments.

VIII. Systemwide Review of Tribal Lands Workgroup Report

UCFW reviewed the UC Tribal Lands Workgroup Report. Overall, the committee found the report to be largely outside UCFW's primary charge; however, members identified a couple of areas where clarification related to research access and use of campus facilities could be beneficial.

Discussion highlights:

- Members noted that the report could have implications for field research on lands that overlap with Tribal lands or areas that are subject to Tribal access or stewardship agreements. A member recalled that similar concerns were raised during discussions about the possible impacts of NAGPRA on anthropological research and access to materials for scholarly study. The report could more explicitly address the intersection of Tribal access and stewardship agreements with faculty field research.
- It was noted that some language regarding Tribal access to UC spaces and facilities could benefit from further clarification, particularly around research buildings, laboratories, and other secured academic spaces.

ACTION: UCFW will forward comments to Chair Palazoglu.

IX. Campus Faculty Welfare Committee Reports

Several representatives noted widespread concerns about the recent Canvas cybersecurity incident. Members also reported concerns about the new digital accessibility requirements, including unclear compliance expectations, limited campus guidance and support, and additional workload to bring materials into compliance.

UCD: Reported on discussions with UCD Health about faculty experiences accessing healthcare services and opportunities for improved communication and partnership with faculty.

UCI: Reported ongoing discussions regarding campus safety concerns related to e-bikes and e-scooters, and noted plans to separate academic freedom issues from the Council on Faculty Welfare, Diversity, and Academic Freedom by establishing a separate committee structure

UCR: Discussed salary compression concerns and inconsistencies in implementation of Active Service-Modified Duties (ASMD) policies across schools and departments.

UCM: Reported ongoing work with campus EDI leadership following completion of a study examining bias and anti-Blackness within Senate processes.

UCSC: Reported ongoing budget pressures, retirements, and unfilled positions as major concerns.

CUCEA: Reported that retirements across the UC system have increased substantially and noted concerns about staffing shortages at the RASC due to the hiring freeze, which may delay retirement counseling and processing services.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm

Minutes prepared by Michael LaBriola, Assistant Director

Attest: Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Chair