UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

Minutes of Meeting
October 31, 2025

In attendance: Abe Stone (Chair, Santa Cruz), Déborah Blocker (Vice Chair, Berkeley), Jennifer LaFleur (Berkeley), John Roberts (Berkeley), Michael Foster (Davis), Nicola Ulibarri (Irvine), Alan Fiske (Los Angeles), Christopher Ojeda (Merced), Joseph Genereux (Riverside), Sebastian Salegh (San Diego), Michael Oldham (San Francisco), Teresa Shewry (Santa Barbara), Michael Hance (Santa Cruz), Alice Parra Rios (Undergraduate Student Representative), Ahmet Palazoglu (Chair, Academic Council), Susannah Scott (Vice Chair, Academic Council), Günter Waibel (Associate Vice Provost & Executive Director, California Digital Library (CDL)), Rich Schneider (San Francisco), Mark Hanna (past UCOLASC Chair, San Diego), Miranda Bennet (Director of Shared Collections, CDL), Mat Wilmott (Assistant Director of Shared Collections, CDL), Adrian Turner (Senior Product Manager, Archives, CDL), Bill Garrity (Chair, Council of University Librarians (CoUL), Davis), Erik Mitchell (University Librarian, San Diego), Heather Briston (LaUC, San Diego), Danielle Watters Westbrook, (Systemwide Library Planning Analyst), Stefani Leto (Analyst)

1. **Consent Calendar**

Action: UCOLASC approved the October 31 agenda

2. **Introductions, Committee Priorities**

Committee Chair Abraham (Abe) Stone noted that UCOLASC advises, rather than creating policy. The committee's purview covers both systemwide library issues, about which UCOLASC consults with the Council of University Librarians (CoUL), the California Digital Library (CDL), and the Librarians Association of the University of California (LaUC). In addition, UCOLASC supports the Project Transform negotiating team as they work on open access publishing and negotiating transformative agreements with publishers. UCOLASC supports the negotiating team by making public statements about their work.

3. **CDL Update**
Günter Waibel, Associate Vice Provost & Executive Director, CDL updated the committee on the digital library's budget. The CDL has a complex budget with multiple fund sources, including unrestricted and designated funds. In FY25/26, CDL received a $1M cut in unrestricted funds. This resulted in the loss of four staff positions. In addition, the CDL had to shift contracts on unrestricted funds to designated funds

Adrian Turner, Senior Product Manager for Archives at CDL, updated the committee on the Online

Archive of California (OAC) at https://oac.cdlib.org/, a service for aggregating collection descriptions of California's libraries, archives, historical societies, and museums, which was launched in 1995 at Berkeley and moved to the CDL in 1998. OAC was relaunched on a new platform in July of 2025. CDL continues to hope that eventually a national platform for finding aids can be established. The OAC relaunch has been publicized to all campuses and non-UC participating institutions across the state. For statewide collections that have been digitized, CDL's Calisphere platform is a complimentary service at: https://calisphere.org/.

➢ A committee member noted that Large Language Models (LLMs) reap training from UC output. AVP Waibel suggested that UCOLASC discuss possible responses at their next meeting.
➢ In response to a question about AWS fees compared to the total CDL budget, AVP Waibel noted annual increases, based on volume and usage, as well as measures to contain cost increases. CDL's is taking advantage of the UC system-wide AWS agreement to get the best possible up-front discounts.
➢ A member asked what quality control measures for the OAC have been put in place. Contributors are following national standards for archival descriptive practices.

4. **Consultation with Senate Leadership**

Ahmet Palazoglu, Chair, Academic Council, and Susannah Scott, Vice Chair, Academic Council updated UCOLASC on various events:

Council and Assembly: President Milliken has come to all meetings so far. Most of the discussion has centered on the UCLA grant suspensions (most of which have been recovered), and the DOJ threat letter to UCLA. The Regents have also met to discuss these issues; Senate leadership was there to discuss strategy and red lines to hold. An October 3 Council statement about UCLA and DOJ demands affirmed opposition to any agreement that will intrude on academic freedom or compromise efforts to fulfill the academic mission. The President has agreed with the statement and reaffirmed his and the Regents support of academic freedom and the academic mission.

The federal stance towards universities is changing from individual targets to the "compact" approach to many universities, but not the UC. Some universities have refused; it is an ongoing situation.

The President's second priority is the Berkeley incident releasing personally identifiable information to the Office of Civil Rights. President Milliken acknowledged gaps in communication and stressed future commitment balancing legal obligations and protecting faculty, staff, and students. Academic Council is working on a statement to weigh in on the past situation and future similar requests.

UC Budget: The proposed operating budget was presented to Regents in November. A proposed change to caps on and percentage of return to aid for the Tuition Stability Plan will be discussed. The UC will provide a 9.5 percent employer input to health benefit plans, but there is significant variability among subscribers, Kaiser members at lower UC pay bands will see significant increases.
International students: There is much uncertainty around these students. The numbers of enrollees are dropping, and students coming in face new laws dealing with immigration policies.

Campus International Student Services (ISS) offices are unprepared for these changes and cannot provide legal advice. The UC is asking the government to exempt higher education institution from new H1B regulations.

UCAD Plus: This is now a joint Senate and Administration workgroup, including EVCs from campuses with five workgroups.

> ➢ Committee members shared concerns that the UCAD report focused on online education, which will tax libraries' abilities. They requested that UCAD Plus engage in active consultation with libraries , especially with cross-campus uses.
> ➢ The Performance of Undergraduate Degree. Programs Task Force (PUDP), the successor to the 2023 -2024 Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities and UC Quality Education is of interest to the libraries. This task force predates and overlaps with UCAD Plus, and is charged with examining infrastructure needs and costs for online education, particularly online degree programs.

5. **CoUL Update**

William (Bill) Garrity, Chair, Council of University Librarians (CoUL); University Librarian at UC Davis noted that the libraries benefit from the CDL. The CoUL consists of the University Librarians of ten campuses plus the CDL director.

UC Libraries have released an update to their annual plans and priorities for 2025-26. The plan is anchored in goals to enhance library operation and service.
Library priorities are to enrich the system-wide library collection, maximize discovery of and access to that information, optimize and develop shared services for operational efficiency and great system-wide impact, expand engagement in scholarly communication, and strengthen and reflect community and belonging in our services, resources, and operations.

Systemwide, CoUL plans to continue to actively transform scholarly publishing and communication, launching the UC-wide Open Access Author Fund, initially focused on humanities and social sciences and early-career researchers, and explore new partnerships with presses to advance open monographs. Faculty participation and collaboration critical.

The UC Libraries plan to further pursue product, service, and work stream improvements this year for existing, expanded, and new UC Libraries shared services. Evaluation and adjusting long-term planning for collection management is ongoing. There is a shift from managing libraries regionally to systemwide approaches.

6. **Systemwide Collection Cuts**

AVP/ED Günter Waibel and Bill Garrity, University Librarian at UC Davis and chair of the Council of University Librarians (CoUL), noted that local campus budget cuts affect all members of the UC Libraries shared collections budget coalition. Current cuts have reached into the "meat" of library services and holdings; there is no more fat to trim. The UC Libraries funding coalition for systemwide collections supports $60M worth of content through over 400 multiyear publisher contracts. This effort maximizes negotiation clout, creates a baseline of core content across all

campuses, and avoids redundant staffing. All libraries pay, participate in decision making, and benefit. However, these efficiencies create interdependencies that mean that budget cuts ripple throughout the entire coalition. The most widely used cost sharing model is based on campus academic FTE to approximate value and ensure a fair distribution of costs. As a result of cost shares locked into a proportional model, the highest percentage budget cut on any campus becomes the percentage of purchasing power loss for the entire coalition. That means that a high percentage budget cut on a small campus results in a very large loss in purchasing power for a comparative small budget cut in absolute dollars. However, that also means that in the near term, relatively modest bridge funding can temporarily prevent a larger loss in purchasing power.

The current mitigation strategy is (1) a measured, portfolio-wide systemwide collections budget cut of three to four percent, and (2) one time bridge funding, for a maximum of three years. These steps buy time for concerted advocacy for the restoration of local campus library budget.

UL Garrity and AVP/ED Waibel requested that UCOLASC members talk to their local University Librarian about their specific situation and partner with them.

Lively discussion ensued, with suggestions that Large Learning Models (LLMs), trained on UC produced works, should pay for UC collection contracts; concern that the finite amount of bridge funding identified may not last for three years; and widespread apprehension that the unprecedented budget cuts could continue.

7. **PTWG Update**

The Project Transform Working Group (PTWG) provided a brief description of open access publishing and the role of transformative agreements in advancing the UC OA strategy. This effort has controlled cost for the university as a whole and provided more value by continuing reading access while also enabling OA publishing. The current effort began in 2019, but the UC began its open access policy in 2013. UCOLASC's Declaration of Rights and Principles to Transform Scholarly Publishing, released in 2017, is still used today. The current conflicts with publishers about AI access and use of UC publications rely directly on the document today.

Successful transformative agreements have been achieved with publishers representing approximately 55 percent of all UC articles. Most articles are published by large publishers, with a long tail of small publishers. Because of this Project Transform's agreements span publisher sizes and disciplines and the team is always examining how to expand OA publishing opportunities for UC authors.

In addition to focusing on the economic aspects of publishing agreements, PTWG works for noncommercial topics including author rights, retaining Artificial Intelligence / Text and Data mining rights and other topics. Project Transform believes that it is essential to preserve the ability for UC researchers to use computational methods for research using licensed content and we can find agreement with most publishers on this topic.

1. **Federal Funder and Publisher Policy Conflict**

Günter Waibel, Associate Vice Provost & Executive Director, CDL, Rich Schneider, past UCOLASC Chair, UC San Francisco, and Mark Hanna, past UCOLASC Chair, UC San Diego, presented an update to an ongoing conflict between publisher and federal funder policies. Publishers are maintaining that they have the right to hold authors to an embargo period up to 12 months, despite direction from federal funding agencies that these works must be deposited into an open access repository like PubMed Central and be made immediately available to the public.

Authors want to be compliant with funders' rules, but publishers have begun to create workflows preventing authors with federal funding from complying with the zero-embargo policy unless authors pay for open access. In other words, the publisher will not allow authors to publish a subscription article, which for some of the journals can be a charge of $9,000 to $12,000 for open access fees.

To ensure that UC authors are compliant with their funders, the negotiating team wants publishers to implement a workflow that defaults to open access publishing and enables authors to publish their article under the subscription model only if authors specifically request that option. These changes in federal policy help protect the rights of authors and are an important step towards making all research outputs freely available to the taxpayers who fund the research and the rest of the world. This contrasts with the motivation of many publishers who want to protect the subscription system so that they can continue to maintain exclusive control over the rights of authors and monetize as many aspects of publications as possible, including research uses.

The presenters requested that UCOLASC provide a letter of support to the negotiating team (which also includes the current Chair and past Chairs of UCOLASC as faculty representatives of the Senate) and the UC Libraries, not only specifically rejecting the recent response of publishers to federal mandates, but also emphasizing how the position of the negotiation team aligns directly with the principles outlined in the 2018 Declaration of Rights and Principles to Transform Scholarly Communication. Such a statement should call out actions by publishers and explicitly state how publishers continue to act in ways that are counter to these principles, which are strongly held by UCOLASC, the Academic Senate, and UC libraries. Solidarity in communication on this topic will prevent efforts by the publishers to pit libraries and authors against one another.

- A member asked how this affects situations when a UC author is not the corresponding author and the corresponding author's institution does not mandate open access publishing. If any author on a manuscript received federal funding, then they must abide by federal open access mandates for zero embargo.
- Members hoped a quick turnaround on the statement would enable its use in negotiations with Elsevier. The team will work to draft a letter.

Action: UCOLASC voted to sign a statement of support.

9. **Advancing OA Monographs for UC Authors**

Miranda Bennett, Director of Shared Collections, CDL, reported on the effort to support UC authors in making their monographs open access. Much of open access work has focused on journal articles, but this one supports a different type of scholarly publication. The initial phase of this project was funded from central OP monies, leading to three pilot projects. The first two are

with Duke University Press and UC Press, to whom the library pays an up front fee so authors can choose from the beginning to publish their monograph open access. Once this phase is well under way, the team will begin to explore backlist titles, to open them as well. This provides steady funding for publishers and the libraries steady expense levels. The third pilot program with Oxford University Press is fully focused on backlist titles, aiming for a total of 100 new open books this year.

The team is also involved with Big Ten Books, part of the Big Ten Academic Alliance, and UC libraries provided funding for 34 UC-authored books to be opened. These projects also set up workflows that can be replicated and make these works available with eScholarship. The program enhances the UC reputation as a force within open access publishing.

10. **Systemwide Review Items**

1. Committee members had many concerns about the University Committee on Adapting to Disruptions interim Report, primarily that no mention of libraries is made, but some suggested approaches for easing the burden on the UC during a time of crisis will increase use of library materials.

   The criteria for academic programs, "intrinsic value of scholarly fields," appears to encompass libraries. They did positively remark that faculty are asked to highlight if a proposed budget cut would inadvertently harm educational quality. In addition, since the report's distribution, federal action affecting the UC has changed. Members noted that while this kind of concerted government attack takes place, it is natural to want to respond quickly. However, they prize the traditional discussion and deliberation that characterizes Senate action and wanted to ensure that any UCAD suggestions are well-examined.

2. Interim Systemwide Guidelines on Faculty Discipline and Revisions to APM - 015 and 016 review led to discussion of academic freedom and disciplinary timelines. Members expressed concern that the proposed policy changes will overreach into faculty discipline issues. Members noted that attachment C extends the policy to librarians, affecting them under a clause about "participating or abetting disruption. . . disturbing the peace." They noted that librarians could potentially be disciplined for providing materials to students some people find objectionable.

   Action: The committee agreed to respond in writing to both proposals.

The committee adjourned at 4:11

Minutes prepared by Stefani Leto, Analyst
Attest: Abe Stone, UCOLASC Chair