



University Committee on Research Policy
Monday, May 12, 2025

Meeting Minutes

I. Chair's announcements, approval of minutes

- Vice Chancellors of Research were in Washington DC last week meeting with federal agency leaders.
- With caps on the federal government spending on indirect costs (F&A), the university may be looking for ways to cut costs.
- There is a new executive order – relating to the “DURC/PEPP” policy that UCORP reviewed and the safety and security of biological research – which will mean that there will be no federal grants for research using toxic materials.
- The Council of Vice Chancellors for Research (COVCR) has been meeting almost every morning. The daily meetings focus on responses to crises as they are unfolding. With circumstances changing so fast, the VCRs are still working out the best way to communicate.
- UCAD, the recently convened “Academic Senate Task Force on UC Adaptation to Disruptions,” consulted with UC CFO Nathan Brostrom and Chief Compliance Officer Alexander Bustamante. The growth in UC Health has increased UC’s reliance on federal health funding, with implication for cuts to Medicare and Medicaid funding. UCAD has referenced the ARO (Achievement Relative to Opportunity) recommendations, which were adopted by most campuses, and which should continue to guide merit reviews. There are differing implementation strategies among campuses. It was noted that ARO primarily impacts those who have deficient files and does not come into play for anyone with average or above reviews.
- *Next steps for MRU Reviews:* UCORP members should send any last comments and be prepared to review draft reports for the MRUs next week.
- **Action:** UCORP’s April 14th meeting minutes were approved.

II. Academic Senate Leadership Update

Academic Council Chair Steven Cheung and Vice Chair Ahmet Palazoglu joined the meeting to provide an overview of current activities of the Senate.

- James (JB) Milliken was confirmed as the next President of the UC system. He was most recently the President of the University of Texas system, and the second lawyer to become UC President via that path. Milliken will assume the position no later than August 1st.
- Two chancellor searches (UCR and UCSB) are in the final phases.
- Dr. Monica Varsanyi will join UC as the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs in June. She comes from the City University of New York (CUNY).

- UCSB professor Susannah Scott was confirmed by the Assembly as incoming vice chair for the Academic Senate.
- The BOARS Bylaw was revised to include consultation with K-12 and the State Board of Education.
- A new admissions requirement for Ethnic Studies did not pass in a vote of the Assembly of the Academic Senate.
- With the Governor's "May revise" budget due next week, and cuts to UC's budget expected, UC's CFO has proposed a pause to the scheduled 0.5% employer increment to UCRP and cancellation of the transfer of funds from the short-term investment pool (STIP) to UCRP. These changes extend the time for UCRP to reach full funding.
- The Academic Council endorsed a proposal to create a committee for clinicians to help ensure a voice in shared governance. UC Health accounts for about 50% of UC's operating budget at this point. The new committee will align with corresponding campus health committees and will consult with UC Health and Academic Personnel administrators.
- The upcoming Regents meeting will include a report from the task force convened to review faculty discipline processes. There will be recommendations for systemwide guidelines for cases concerning expressive activities for consistency across campus. If approved, there will be a 30-day expedited systemwide review of the task force's report.
- The federal government cancelled student visas for over 150 UC students, all but two of which were subsequently restored. Records for these students are shared with offices for international students on the campuses.
- A proposal to sunset UCOPE (the University Committee on Preparatory Education) was rejected by the Academic Council and instead the committee will be restructured to align with current needs, including potentially greater engagement with CSU and Community College colleagues. The incoming chairs of BOARS and UCEP will be involved in formulating UCOPE's purview in the coming year.
- A total remuneration study is underway, along with a benefits survey that was sent out to all employees.

UCORP members asked about elevating UC's research mission to the Regents and the public. Chair Cheung noted that although the Board of Regents often seems focused on undergraduate education, Provost Newman has made an effort to bring research to their attention.

In terms of mounting cybersecurity concerns on the campuses, Chair Cheung advised faculty to work actively with their campus CIO and CISO, and the privacy and security committees that should be in place on each campus.

III. Consultation with the Office of the President – Office of Research and Innovation

Vice President for Research & Innovation Theresa Maldonado was unable to join the meeting. Office of Research Policy Analysis and Coordination (RPAC) Executive Director Deborah Motton led the discussion.

- The NSF announced it is capping its F&A rate at 15%.

- The NIH will no longer allow foreign subs on grants and awards. There will be no more prior approval for foreign components. The office is working on guidance for contracts and grants offices on the campuses and other leaders. The new restrictions only apply to future awards and requests for continuation. Any requests for exceptions will need justification and proof of security.
- An executive order issued last week directs the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to revise or replace the 2024 U.S. Government DURC-PEPP Policy to increase oversight into research. Researchers will likely receive notification to halt activities that include infectious agents or toxins that meet one of eight criteria, and the University will have to certify that it is not engaging in such research.
- A big issue right now is certification requirements that are coming from various agencies. The University is accountable to the false claims act; violations could result in damages of three times the amount of the award, and there is both institutional and individual liability. Any researcher confronted with a certification requirement should go through local Contracts & Grants or Sponsored Projects Offices. UCOP will provide guidance about measures campuses can take to mitigate risk, but campuses make the determination.
- The NIH Public Access policy has been moved up to an effective date of July 1, 2025. All articles based on NIH-funded research will need to be deposited into PubMed central.
- UCORP members should convey to colleagues that anyone receiving any notification from a federal agency should immediately contact their C&G office, VCR or associate VCR. Anyone receiving requests from the press should coordinate with their campus communications office.

IV. Systemwide Items Under Review

UCORP will send additional comments on the Academic Planning Council's Systemwide Academic Calendar Workgroup Draft Report. Comments are due May 20, 2025, and members should send any additional comments this week.

UCORP will also comment on the Proposed New Presidential Policy on High-Containment Research. Initial comment was whether the policy directives apply to each "UC Location" or just those with the high containment facilities.

UCORP will not comment on the other items under review (Revisions to Academic Personnel APM Sections 360 (Librarians) or 500 (Recruitment)).

V. Local Committee Reports (Round-Robin)

UC Berkeley: Law professors from a Berkeley Law clinic joined the recent COR meeting to talk about a class action lawsuit that they are building along with outside counsel to sue the federal government for financial harm due to grant terminations. The Berkeley faculty association has been working with colleagues through CUCFA on another legal strategy with the institution as plaintiff. There is some financial support from the unions for this. UC Berkeley's FGR team seems to be waiting to share information, which has been frustrating for faculty. UC Berkeley is establishing an emergency fund for those with grant cancellations and is trying to develop a larger contingency fund.

UC Irvine: There is a feeling of lack of communication from the administration. No information on funding available for those who lost grants. UCI is focused on the new cybersecurity requirements.

UC Santa Barbara: Also a lack of communication, but due to lobbying of the VCR's office, there has been some improvement. The administration sent a message about steps to take after your grant has been terminated. Faculty also have feelings about the perception of the university capitulating to federal demands. The local council is holding off revamping its faculty research program in light of all the federal cuts. The council, which currently combines "research and instructional resources" will be restructured and renamed "Council on Research and Information Resources." This restructuring will better align the council with the duties and scope of its sister research councils across the system, allowing it to focus on optimizing the research environment at UCSB.

UC San Diego: The chancellor has issued statements called a campus-wide meeting. There are regular federal government updates. The Senate is holding town hall meetings and passing resolutions on support for foreign students and faculty shared governance over instruction, etc. The campus has set up a "tiger team" to advise faculty receiving notifications. Graduate student fellowship offers seem to be lower across the board. The endpoint detection (cybersecurity) software program is being addressed in a systematic way and the campus is at almost 80% compliance now. The IT administrators hold regular meetings, consult with stakeholders, and have produced a dashboard.

UC Riverside: There has been pushback for funding of GSRs.

UC Santa Cruz: The campus' structural deficit is constraining graduate student admissions. Faculty research grants will be cut next year. The Senate is struggling to get faculty to serve on committees. There is a proposal to combine the research with a development and fundraising committee.

UCSF: COR drafted a survey to assess how faculty have been impacted by Federal Executive Orders. The Vice Provost joined the COR meeting to discuss advancement and compensation for researchers. There was a recommendation from the Faculty Climate Task Force to identify central funds for covering salaries over the cap, but no progress has been made. The financial model for UCSF is largely decentralized. There is reluctance to adopt a centralized model.

UC Merced: The VCR is still working on communications about federal actions. Regarding the Oracle financial system, research administrators have made some progress and are now able to generate automated reports.

UCLA: COR is reviewing its guidelines for rotation of members and term length to potentially make the size of the committee more flexible (e.g., no fewer than 8, no more than 12).

Meeting adjourned: 12:30pm

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP analyst

Attest: Susanne B. Nicholas, UCORP Chair

Meeting participants:

Susanne Nicholas (Chair, UCLA), James Weatherall (Vice Chair, UC Irvine), Abby Dernburg (UC Berkeley), David Rocke (UC Davis), Nícola Ulibarrí (UC Irvine), Dennis Lettenmaier (UCLA), Tao Ye

(UC Merced), Rachel Wu (UC Riverside), Ramesh Rao (alternate, UC San Diego), Bin Liu (UC San Francisco), Stephanie Malia Hom (UC Santa Barbara), Nirvikar Singh (UC Santa Cruz), Steven Cheung (Academic Council Chair), Ahmet Palazoglu (Academic Council Vice Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Ellen Auriti (Senior Principal Counsel, UC Legal), Lourdes DeMattos (Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Agnes Balla (Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward (Director, UC Research Initiatives).