

## University Committee on Research Policy

### Annual Report 2021-22

#### **TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:**

The University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP), as specified in Senate Bylaw 200, is responsible for fostering research; formulating, coordinating, and revising general research policies and procedures; and advising the President on research. UCORP met seven times during the 2021-22 academic year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held via videoconference. This report summarizes the committee's activities during the year.

#### **MRU REVIEWS: INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL CONFLICT AND COOPERATION AND THE DICKENS PROJECT**

In 2021-22, UCORP led two five-year reviews for the Academic Senate. The committee split into two groups and, per the 2014 Compendium's "Guidelines for Five-Year Reviews of Multicampus Research Units," representatives from CCGA and UCPB joined the Review Groups to conduct reviews of the Institute for Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC) and The Dickens Project. In February, leaders from IGCC and The Dickens Project joined the UCORP meeting for discussion and follow-up questions. The two MRU Review Reports were completed in May and sent to the Academic Council for approval. The reports were approved at the June Academic Council meeting and transmitted to the Vice President for Research and Innovation.

The Review Group for the Institute for Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC) found that the MRU has brought together experts from across the UC system with researchers and thought leaders from other institutions to discuss issues of global importance at its hosted dialogs, conferences, and workshops. IGCC funds fellowships for graduate students on all ten UC campuses and makes good use of resources by supporting and training the next generation of leaders in this area. The Review Group recommended that IGCC adopt a more formal decision-making structure, including establishing an advisory board to provide oversight. The Review Group also recommended that IGCC expand engagement with other UC campuses in order to truly be a *multi-campus* research unit, and that it track participation of students and faculty from underrepresented groups.

The Review Group for The Dickens Project found the MRU to be a healthy and well-focused program that is impressively managed and collaboratively structured. There is a strong emphasis on graduate education and community outreach, and conscious efforts around diversity. The Review Group recommended that The Dickens Project start tracking diversity statistics, explore funding options including consortium fee increases and MRPI or UCHRI funding, and consciously reach out to other UC's in order to truly strengthen the multi-campus nature of the MRU. The Review Committee would also like to see UCOP provide a small level of financial support to re-engage the UC campuses that have suspended their involvement due to the expense, and to support other interested UC campuses.

## **MRU REVIEW TEMPLATES**

As part of an assessment of the templates used in the MRU five-year reviews, UCORP and all of the MRU directors were asked for input on the materials, which include a narrative section and appendixes of Excel spreadsheets. The spreadsheets are quite detailed, but designed to be filled out each year as part of the annual report and then rolled up into the five-year review. The MRUs reported difficulty in tracking grant details, especially when trying to obtain information from other campuses. UCORP members confirmed that all of the information collected in the tables is helpful, but noted that it can be challenging to tease out the most important pieces of information from the detailed tables. Looking at the big picture, some commented that the reviews constitute a lot of work for little benefit, and that the emphasis of the review might be shifted to focus on how the MRU enhances the UC mission.

## **OTHER TOPICS TOUCHED ON THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

*Animal Research* – UCOP convenes an animal research transparency workgroup, in which UCORP Chair Bales and undergraduate student representative Daniel Halpern-DeVries participate. The group is developing a white paper on animal research and coordinating with a larger group that is conducting surveys of animal researchers. The primary goal of these efforts is to support animal research and researchers in an environment in which many are actively harassed. In April, UC Davis announced that it prevailed in a lawsuit brought by the animal activists group PETA, which had been trying to obtain videos from the California National Primate Research Center housed at UC Davis. The court ruled that releasing the material did not serve the public interest and would undermine academic freedom and the scientific process while increasing the risk to researchers of harassment from activists. The court also said that the PETA demand that researchers separate videos for public disclosure imposed an unreasonable burden.

*Financial accounting system issues* – Troubles with the new Oracle financial system at UC Merced and UCSD adversely impacted researchers and the research enterprise throughout the year. UC Merced's administration responded with more staffing, but problems continued. UCSD faculty are concerned that they are losing funding due to system mistakes and miscommunication. Faculty want to make sure that other campuses planning to transition to a new financial system are aware of the issues. In October, UCORP Chair Karen Bales sent an informal memo to Academic Council Chair Robert Horwitz describing the problems encountered by researchers at UCM and UCSD, and the status of system implementation at the other campuses. The memo was used to inform Chair Horwitz' discussion with UC President Michael Drake and was also forwarded to the President along with a letter from CCGA in July, 2022.

*Impact of graduate student unionization on research programs* – At the request of Academic Senate Chair Robert Horwitz, UCORP discussed the potential impacts of graduate student unionization on UC's research enterprise, and specifically on Principal Investigators. Depending on the outcome of negotiations, PIs might see additional costs for employing graduate students. The fear is that if graduate student costs become too prohibitive, PIs will hire post-doctoral researchers or staff instead of graduate students.

Because many graduate programs depend on external grant funding for student support, this could lead to a decrease in graduate student enrollment and thus fewer opportunities for future graduate student education. UCORP wrote to the Academic Council in April and, in July, UCORP's letter was forwarded along with an accompanying letter from CCGA to UC President Michael Drake with an additional request for the formation of a joint workgroup to examine the model of graduate student funding more broadly.

### **OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION – UPDATES AND CONSULTATION**

As consultants to the committee, members of the Office of Research & Innovation joined UCORP each month to provide updates and solicit feedback. Vice President for Research & Innovation Theresa Maldonado provided regular updates on personnel searches and hires, new and ongoing working groups, and progress on reviving the UC “Council on Research.”

Topics discussed with the Office of Research & Innovation included updates on UC policies, requirements for disclosure of conflict of interest and conflict of commitment, progress on UC's knowledge transfer efforts, and anticipated State funding for climate crisis mitigation.

***Foreign Influence*** – Undue “foreign influence” continues to be a big topic nationally. New federal guidelines and security vetting processes have been imposed by the government for federally-funded programs. In response to an internal audit, UCOP's Office of Ethics, Compliance and Audit Services developed new training for UC researchers that was rolled out in 2021. Every campus has an escalation protocol for foreign influence concerns in which faculty are informed if a vendor or potential partner is considered high risk.

***UC Research Data Ownership Policy*** – Over the past two years, UCORP provided input to the development of the UC Research Data Ownership policy. The policy continued to be revised throughout this year, undergoing two systemwide reviews and eventually cleared to be issued in July, 2022. In addition to asserting and clarifying the university's intellectual property rights, the revised policy calls upon campus leadership and researchers to work in partnership to manage, retain, preserve, protect, access, and share data.

***NAGPRA Outcomes*** – The UC Presidential Policy on Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation was issued on January 1, 2022, although it will be updated as needed based on changes to the state and national laws. Prior approval from Native American tribes is now required for all research uses of identified or potential human remains. UC has been inventorying Native American items since 1990, and continues to add items as they are acquired and to search for items that may have been overlooked. In addition to a UC-wide Oversight Committee, NAGPRA Oversight Committees are in place at each campus that holds Native American artifacts. Each campus also has a designated Chancellor's representative and repatriation coordinator.

### **AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (ANR)**

In March, the chair of the Academic Senate's Task Force on Agriculture and Natural Resources (TF-ANR) joined the meeting to discuss the Task Force's request for a comprehensive external review of UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The recipient of over \$250 million annually from the State of California to support its many programs, the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) is UC's largest multi-

campus entity. Over the years, the Academic Senate has tried to increase engagement and/or oversight of ANR. The ANR Task Force was formed a few years ago using the UCFW task forces as models.

In May, Vice President for UCANR Glenda Humiston and Associate Vice President Wendy Powers-Shilling joined the meeting to talk about new cooperative extension specialist positions, anticipated federal funding for UC Agricultural Experiment Stations, a state-wide ANR “all hands” conference planned for next spring, and more. VP Humiston said that the Regents would hear a proposal for adding the AES designation to two more UC campuses – UC Merced and UC Santa Cruz – for a total of five. AVP Powers-Shilling, who is leaving UC in June, mentioned a national partnership with CDC on vaccination programs and with NSF on climate change, among others. In discussion, the ANR leaders talked briefly about the new Hub for Urban Living at the South Coast REC, which was presented to UCORP last year. Located close to UC Irvine, staff at the learning center staff will engage with UCI faculty. Another learning center is being developed in the nearby desert area and will focus on human-wildlife interaction.

### **SYSTEMWIDE SENATE ISSUES, CAMPUS REPORTS, LIAISON REPORTS**

UCORP devoted part of each regular meeting to discussing systemwide issues as reported by Academic Senate leadership and reports from members on campus COR issues. UCORP’s undergraduate student and liaisons to other committees and working groups also provided updates at each meeting.

### **SYSTEMWIDE REVIEW PARTICIPATION AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- Memo regarding Oracle financial accounting software problems on the campuses
- Input on changes to MRPI competition process (memo to Vice President Theresa Maldonado), January 3, 2022.
- Response to the Report of the Regents Working Group on Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship, January 11, 2022.
- Comments on Proposed Revisions to APM 759, Leaves of Absence/Other Leaves Without Pay, January 14, 2022.
- Comments on Proposed Revisions to APM 025 and APM 671, Conflict of Commitment and Outside Activities of Faculty Members, January 14, 2022.
- Letter in response to the Impact of Graduate Student Unionization on Research, March 17, 2022, revised July 19, 2022.
- Comments on Proposed Presidential Policy on UC Research Data – Second Systemwide Review, April 19, 2022.

### **UCORP REPRESENTATION**

As Chair of UCORP, Karen Bales served on the Assembly of the Academic Senate, Academic Council, and the Academic Planning Council. UC Santa Cruz member Jarmila Pittermann represented UCORP on the UCPB Task Force on Agriculture & Natural Resources (TFANR), while UC Berkeley member Javad Lavaei represented UCORP on the Academic Council Special Committee on Lab Issues (ACSCOLI).

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

UCORP is grateful to its regular consultants who have provided invaluable information and perspective to the committee:

- Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research & Innovation
- Bart Aoki, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office
- Kathleen Erwin, Director, UC Research Initiatives
- Janna Tom, Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination
- Lourdes DeMattos, Associate Director, Research Grants Program Office
- Glenda Humiston, ANR Vice President
- Wendy Powers, ANR Associate Vice President

UCORP also wishes to thank its invited guests for their participation and support throughout the year, as well as colleagues across the system who brought to the attention of the committee research-related issues of concern.

Respectfully submitted, UCORP 2021-22:

Karen Bales, Chair  
Tannishtha Reya, Vice Chair  
Javad Lavaei, UCB  
Cynthia Schumann, UCD  
Michele Guindani, UCI  
Susanne Nicholas, UCLA  
Jason Sexton, UCM  
Weixin Yao and alternates Danko Turcic (winter) and Kinnari Aitt (spring), UCR  
Stephanie Richards, UCSD  
Lea Grinberg, UCSF  
David Stuart, UCSB  
Jarmila Pittermann (fall) and Nicolas Davidenko (spring), UCSC  
Daniel Halpern-DeVries, Undergraduate Student Representative, UC Santa Cruz  
Robert Horwitz, Academic Senate Chair, *Ex Officio*  
Susan Cochran, Academic Senate Vice Chair, *Ex Officio*  
Joanne Miller, Committee Analyst