

University Committee on Research Policy

Annual Report 2022-23

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 nine times during the 2022-23 academic year. All meetings were held via videoconference. This report summarizes the committee's activities during the year.

MRU REVIEWS: INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION STUDIES AND UC MEXUS

In 2022-23, UCORP led two five-year reviews for the Academic Senate. The committee was 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 with UCORP to conduct reviews of the Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) and UC MEXUS. Directors and staff from ITS and UC MEXUS joined the UCORP meeting in February for two sessions of presentations and discussions. UCORP's MRU review reports were completed in May and approved by the Academic Council. The reports were then transmitted to the Vice President for Research and Innovation. This year, the review reports were structured as a more streamlined and concise summary documents, with sections divided into bullet points to highlight each MRU's strengths and weaknesses.

The ITS review found that the Institute of Transportation Studies provides a distinct and important service to UC in leveraging resources for transportation research and supporting graduate education. It also provides a valuable service to the state. The review concluded that ITS' continuance as an MRU is well justified, along with recommendations that ITS undertake additional efforts to extend its resources beyond its four primary campuses, which would help broaden UC-wide participation and expand the impact of research programs. ITS has begun to expand the diversity of its leadership and staff and is cognizant of the need to continue on that path. ITS has made efforts toward diversity in its programs, including formation of the UC ITS Transportation Equity Committee, comprising leading equity scholars across the ITS branches.

The UC MEXUS review found that the unit provides important services to UC, but most are not directly related to the conduct of research. Some aspects of the UC MEXUS review were complicated by the subsuming of the MRU under the umbrella of Alianza MX. In addition, the Mexican government stopped providing matching funds that had sustained several UC MEXUS programs. A presentation to UCORP in February from Alianza MX Director Isabel Studer and her staff was helpful in providing clarity around the current status of the systemwide initiatives and the efforts to maintain and advance the MRU. Due to the changes in focus and funding sources in the past few years, UC MEXUS reviewers felt that either Alianza MX should undertake additional efforts to strengthen the MRU aspects of its programs or the MRU designation should be dropped. A follow-up review within the next two- to three years was recommended.

GRADUATE STUDENT STRIKE AND AFTERMATH

Many discussions this year, including those with the Academic Council chair and vice chair, focused on the impacts of the graduate student and postdoc strike and its aftermath. When the strike began in November, faculty asked for guidance around communication protocols and how to handle pay for striking workers, especially those funded by grants. Primary concerns included: how to cope with higher salaries for graduate students, where additional funding might come from, distinctions between work, academic work, stipends and wages, and long-term repercussions to the research enterprise and graduate student training environment. UCORP spent time in meetings sharing campus plans to help faculty with the increased cost of supporting graduate students as these became available. In post-strike discussions with Senate leadership and UC administrators, UCORP members provided input for moving forward within the new wage structures, including that accounting and payroll details be handled by administrative staff rather than PIs in order to protect the PI-GSR relationship. UCORP members also noted that tuition for graduate students who have advanced to candidacy is commonly reduced or waived at comparable institutions, but not in the UC system. Members suggested revisiting this practice in light of the increased labor costs under the new contracts.

A joint workgroup of the Provost's Academic Planning Council was formed to examine the model of graduate student funding more broadly. UCORP Chair Schumann is a member of the workgroup and part of a subcommittee that is looking at distinguishing paid labor from non-paid work in the education and training of graduate students.

RESEARCH TOPICS

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 and her staff provided regular updates on research-related topics from the administration.

Animal Research – UCORP reviewed a draft white paper from the UC Animal Research Transparency (ART) Working Group that was convened last year. Former UCORP Chair Karen Bales is a faculty representative on the group. The white paper included recommendations for the university, such as a statement of support from President Drake, the establishment of a taskforce of subject matter experts on each campus that would develop systems of support for animal researchers, a public awareness campaign, and engagement with state and federal policymakers.

Climate action funding – UCORP was regularly updated on the UC Climate Action state funded initiative. UC received \$185 million from the state of California for climate research and is responsible for its distribution. Six review panels will read 30-40 proposals in multiple disciplines to determine the awardees. A subset of selected awards will receive a small supplemental amount for community engagement/impact.

DOE Hydrogen Hub funding – UC is leading a coalition of partners within the state to prepare a proposal for \$2.5-3b of DOE funding for hydrogen energy projects that will include environmental justice and workforce development components. The consortium will have several projects focused on ports and transportation.

Financial accounting system issues – Troubles with the Oracle financial system at UC Merced and UCSD continued to adversely impact researchers at those campuses this year. Faculty want to make sure that other campuses planning to transition to a new financial system are aware of the issues.

HELIOS – UCORP learned briefly about the Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Scholarship (HELIOS), a member-based organization of more than 60 U.S. colleges and universities working to advance open scholarship. The UCOP HELIOS cohort is developing a high-level consolidated list of activities and services that UC offers to support open scholarship.

NIH salary cap – The issue of salary caps in NIH grants was brought to UCORP by UC Merced. Some units struggle to find funding to cover the gap, and the concern is that it creates a disincentive to apply for NIH awards. This is an issue faced by other campuses and is generally dealt with at the school or department level on an ad-hoc basis. Some units do not cover the gap and faculty end up with less than their full salary; others find a way to cover it.

Patent Policy – UCORP provided input to the development of the new Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Innovation Transfer. The revision to the 25-year-old UC patent policy narrows its focus to UC's legal responsibilities while giving more autonomy to the campuses. Policy procedures will be separate from the policy, per current UC protocol.

Public Access to the Results of NIH-Supported Research – UCORP was briefed on UC's response to the National Institute of Health's RFI on its Plan to Enhance Public Access to the Results of NIH-Supported Research. Members were invited to share the information and submit comments.

NAGPRA – UCOP will be issuing a policy clarification statement regarding its NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) policy. The document will note that policy research restrictions do not apply to collections that are not under UC control and that use restrictions apply to the materials themselves and not what is written about them.

UC Natural Reserve System – In May, the Executive Director of the UC Natural Reserve System joined UCORP to talk about the history, mission, challenges, and current status of the statewide resource. Each of the 47 reserve sites offers a "living laboratory" to be used by UC researchers, students, non-profit organizations, other California college constituents, and K-12 programs. The system serves over 100,000 users per year. Although the NRS received \$1 million from the state as part of the climate resilience funding, more funding is needed to maintain the facilities.

UC Research Initiatives – UCORP was updated on the multicampus research programs and initiatives (MRPI), which distributes two- and four-year awards every other year, and the lab fees research program (LFRP), which disburses income from UC's management of the Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore national labs. VP Maldonado remains interested in evaluating the oversight of systemwide research efforts, although circumstances this year pushed that effort to the back burner. Maldonado expressed concern about the lack of a mechanism for systemwide fundraising, which impacts units like the UC Observatories and Natural Reserve System, but also other systemwide initiatives.

SYSTEMWIDE SENATE ISSUES, CAMPUS REPORTS, LIAISON REPORTS

UCORP devoted part of each regular meeting to updates from Academic Senate leadership and reports from members on campus COR issues. UCORP's undergraduate student, graduate student, and liaisons to other committees and working groups also provided updates at each meeting.

SYSTEMWIDE REVIEW PARTICIPATION AND CORRESPONDENCE

- Comments on Proposed Amendment to Senate Regulation 630, November 14, 2022.
- Comments on Proposed Presidential Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Innovation Transfer, May 17, 2023.

UCORP REPRESENTATION

As Chair of UCORP, Cynthia Schumann served on the Assembly of the Academic Senate, Academic Council, and the Academic Planning Council. Chair Schumann also served as a Senate representative on the Research Data Backup Plan Steering Committee and the APC Workgroup on the Future of UC Doctoral Programs. UC San Diego member Gert Cauwenberghs 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:

- Agnes Balla, Director, Research Grants Program Office
- Scott Brandt, Associate Vice President for Research & Innovation
- Lourdes DeMattos, Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination
- Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office
- Felice Lu, Research Policy Manager, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination
- Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research & Innovation
- Deborah Motton Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination
- Anna Ward, Program Officer, Research Grants Program Office

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 2022-23:

Cynthia Schumann, UCD, **Chair**

Susanne Nicholas, UCLA, **Vice Chair**

Emily Ozer (fall) and Susanna Elm (spring), UCB

Paul Hastings, UCD

Matthew Harding, UCI

P. Jeffrey Brantingham, UCLA

Jason Sexton, UCM

Weixin Yao, Danko Turcic, Heidi Brayman, and Kinnari Atit, UCR

Gert Cauwenberghs, UCSD
Mary Helen Barcellos-Hoff, UCSF
David Stuart, UCSB
Michael Hance, UCSC
Daniel Halpern-DeVries, Undergraduate Student Representative, UCSC
Hanna Butler-Struben, Graduate Student Representative, UCD
Susan Cochran, Academic Senate Chair, *Ex Officio*
James Steintrager, Academic Senate Vice Chair, *Ex Officio*
Joanne Miller, Committee Analyst