UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY
Monday, April 8, 2024

Meeting Minutes

I. Chair's Announcements and Committee Discussion

- UCORP Chair Cynthia Schumann noted that the Interim Report of the Future of UC Doctoral Programs Workgroup was issued last fall and a final report will be released this spring. The workgroup is part of the Academic Planning Council, a joint faculty-administrative group led by the Provost at the systemwide level. There are workgroups on each campus that are also working on rethinking doctoral education.

  Future of UC Doctoral Programs Workgroup is taking feedback and will revise the report accordingly. The group has been encouraged to think broadly and to incorporate new and bold ideas. Chair Schumann is chairing a sub-group that is working on recommendations for preparing graduate students for diverse career paths. The group will have suggestions for considering transferable skills (e.g., interpersonal communication, project management training) and fostering more interactions between departments. UCORP members were asked if there are any programs that foster business or *non-field specific* skills this on their campuses. It was noted that some disciplines are so specific that targeted skill-building is a key element.

- UCORP Vice Chair Susanne Nicholas reminded members to send in their updated comments on the UCHRI Review

- UCSF representative Bin Liu updated UCORP on the latest news from Research Data Backup Steering Committee. UCOP received responses to its first RFP, which asked for a good faith cost estimate. Suppliers could bid on three backup levels: endpoint, mid-range, and large scale. UC received 12 responses, which were narrowed down to one for the endpoint supplier and three for the mid/large scale. The group planned to have a second RFP for more detailed responses, but the initial proposed pricing estimates are so far off of UC's budget that the second round may be postponed. For now, UC determined that CrashPlan, a product currently by UCI and UCSF, is the optimal endpoint solution and will initiate obtaining a systemwide license. For larger scale needs, UC is asking for counter-offer responses from three suppliers to determine what they can provide at various pricing levels, with a potential tiered structure to contain cost.

Action taken: UCORP meeting minutes from March 11, 2024, were approved.

II. Academic Senate Leadership Update

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

The Regents meeting on March 20-21st was disrupted by protests – mostly around Israel and Gaza – after the public comment period, which altered the schedule for the rest of the meeting. Chair Steintrager's remarks to the Board focused on shared governance and what can be improved.

The Regents' proposed policy on restricting discretionary content on university websites was revised and is now out for a second systemwide review. Chair Steintrager hopes that the Regents understand in the future the importance of having a systemwide faculty review for any policies that directly impact faculty. The new version incorporates aspects of prior Senate guidelines and a new policy proposed at UCLA that has been undergoing campus review.

The Regents meeting included a presentation and discussion about changes within the university's mathematics admissions requirement ("Area C" in the A-G framework). There are concerns about Data Science courses that were approved as substitutes for Algebra 2, but which may be less rigorous and put students at a disadvantage. While admissions requirements are the purview of the Senate, there is interest from legislature and Governor's office in this issue.

California legislators have proposed a new law that would impact academic personnel, including the "retreat rights" that allow faculty to go back to faculty positions after temporarily taking on administrative roles.

Regarding graduate students, Chair Steintrager noted that the incomplete grade grievances have been resolved. He said that UCOP's Academic Personnel unit will form a pre-negotiation advisory committee composed of faculty members to help plan for the next round of negotiations. It also looks like there will be a faculty member on the negotiations team – likely a someone on recall – who can report to the Senate.

Steintrager reported that after a recent systemwide review, the Negotiated Salary Program will no longer be on "trial" status but officially part of the APM. Since its inception, the Senate has continuously voiced concerns about equity and lack of data about the impacts of the program. The Senate will now focus on minimizing inequitable outcomes.

Although there are concerns about UC's budget due to State deficits, the plan for a 4.2% base salary increase remains in effect. Off-scale salary is controlled by chancellors.

The next UC Congress, which will be on online education, will take place on May 1st.

UC Merced representative Tao Ye shared with the Senate leaders the on ongoing Oracle financial system work at UC Merced. There is a task force as well as individual workgroups focusing on three specific problems: inflow (data entry, chart strings), reporting, and payroll. There are problems connecting UCPath data with the Oracle financial system. A third of faculty did not get summer pay on time, and a large portion of student payments have had problems as well. Ye said that the issues are bigger than just the Oracle system – it's now about trust in the administration.

Are there areas or processes where it would be helpful for campuses to collaborate and establish best practices?

Action: Members are asked to work with their local committees to draft a brief memo on the status of the Oracle financial system implementation at their campus.

III. Consultation with the Office of the President – Office of Research and Innovation
Coreen Harada, Executive Director and Special Assistant to the Vice President
Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office
Anna Ward, Director, UC Research Initiatives
Deborah Motton, Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

Vice President for Research and Innovation Theresa Maldonado was unable to join the meeting. UC Research Initiatives Director Anna Ward provided an update on UC's research funding opportunities. The Lab Fees Research Program's (LFRP) Collaborative Research and Training awards (CRT) and Graduate Residence Fellowship awards are now in progress, along with the Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPI) competition. Informational webinars for the LFRP award will be held during the application period.

Asked about budgets, the R&I staff said that there had been no changes to their budgets yet, but the expectation is that budgets will likely be flat in the coming year for the university in general.

The group briefly discussed planning for the UC Congress on Research. Chair Schumann asked for suggestions for potential panelists from funding agencies. UCM rep Tao Ye suggested Asmeret Berhe, who served as Director of the Office of Science at the US Department of Energy from 2022 to 2024 while on leave from UC Merced. Schumann will also talk to the VC-Rs when she joins the COVCR meeting later this month. The COVCR meeting will include a session on labor negotiations and the ability for there to be input from the

research enterprise. RPAC Executive Director Deb Motton noted that UCOP is continuing to work on policies for compliance with new federal policy changes regarding "malign foreign talent" programs.

RGPO Executive Director Erwin said that Vice President Maldonado is continuing to look at collaboration opportunities with state partners. For example, a pilot with the Office of Planning and Research within the governor's office that would help match OPR needs with UC faculty. The group then briefly discussed the barriers to contracting with the State when there are calls for researchers or research expertise. Some of the issues include overhead and administrative burden and whether the funding is enough for the amount of effort. These types of interactions often work better when the State has specific, targeted needs, such as to inform policy, and can reach out to specific researchers. UC Davis rep David Rocke said that he had done work for multiple State agencies (ARB, water resources board, and the AG's office) when contacted directly. Usually these agencies want a specific task done and are not looking for general research assistance – it is more akin to a contract than a research award.

IV. Systemwide Items Under Review

Action: UCORP members are asked to read the Proposed Academic Senate Statement on UC Quality and determine whether UCORP will comment. Comments are due May 14, 2024.

V. Research Topics Committee Discussion

Committee members contributed to an online form prior to the meeting to report the topics of interest on their campuses. Various common issues were discussed, including whether the vice chancellor for research joins the COR meetings. It appears that the VCR joins the meetings of all local committees (on at least a semi-regular basis) except for Riverside. The VCRs are generally ex-officio members of local committees and should be joining the meetings. They should be asked to provide updates and address specific issues. If committees encounter resistance, one suggestion was to ask the VCRs to join the meeting to describe what they do. Committee members started inquiring about local practices for faculty grants and agreed that a compilation of this information would be useful.

UC Irvine: A major topic is the new budget model framework and CORCL is working on determining the new model's likely impacts on research. CORCL worries that UCI administration's response, which includes some actions that are not explicitly mentioned in the memo, will interfere with research activities. The biggest issues are a proposed mandate to use only approved operating systems and the endpoint monitoring software that apparently will be required for all devices.

UC Davis administrators are also responding to the President's cybersecurity memo. There will be more restrictions on communications, for example limiting the email systems allowed on phones. Outlook email will no longer be forwarded to other systems. The faculty are trying to advocate for a risk-based approach.

UCLA: With the purchase of the former Westside Pavilion mall, UCLA is working on planning the new research space. Some of it is already defined, but about half is open. COR is working with the planning and budget committee on developing guidelines for administering the space and is looking for examples of other entities with biotech facilities or similar spaces.[1] The UCLA Senate made changes to its grants program by switching to giving everyone who applies a stipend of $5,000. In the past, many large-grant recipients were not using all the funds and the change to a non-competitive award greatly simplified the process.

UC Santa Cruz: The committee is starting adjudication of its "large grants" ($12k awards) now. A survey has gone out to directors of research centers about their experiences and challenges on the Santa Cruz campus, and responses are now being gathered. The campus's structural budget deficit is the hot topic, with cuts at the level

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[1] Davis is currently developing "Aggie Square," a Sacramento-based innovation hub for research programs, private industry partners, classrooms and student housing.

of 10-20% this year and possible additional cuts next year. One cliff that is looming is the implementation of quotas in Google Workspace, which UCSC plans to implement in June. This will heavily impact some research areas on campus. [Other UCORP members noted that their campuses are experiencing similar situations.[2]]

UC Merced: Other than Oracle, the big issue is core research facilities. As a new campus it is still developing its spaces, and the administration and faculty are interested in potential financial models.

UC San Diego: The local committee reviewed the Center for Circadian Biology and recommended continuation. The interim report of the Future of UC Doctoral Programs workgroup was discussed, and the committee will provide feedback. There was pushback on the syllabi requirement due to concerns about excessive bureaucracy. It was noted that the recommendation for having syllabi for each quarter was meant to set expectation, avoid conflict, and were to protect of the faculty member.

UC San Francisco *[Added after the meeting]:* The local committee invited University officials to discuss Advancement and Compensation (Brian Alldredge, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs; Catherine Waters, Interim Dean, School of Nursing; Sunita Mutha, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, School of Dentistry; Robin Corelli, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, School of Pharmacy; Christina Mangurian, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, School of Medicine). A COR sub-committee will be formed to discuss further. Also invited Tung Nguyen, Associate Vice Chancellor of Research to discuss Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) in UCSF Research.

VI. Wrap up and next steps
- *UC Congress on Research*: UCORP members are asked to query their local committees about useful topics for the congress. They are also asked to think about whether an inward-facing (maintaining and rewarding excellence) or outward-facing (communication with public and government) format would be most useful. Schumann hopes to foster a positive, inspiring tone, is interactive, and focuses on translational research.

Meeting adjourned: 12:35pm
Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP Committee Analyst
Attest: Cynthia Schumann, UCORP Chair

Meeting participants:
Cynthia Schumann (Chair), Susanne Nicholas (Vice Chair), David Rocke (Davis), James Weatherall (Irvine), Alapakkam (Sam) Sampath (Los Angeles), Tao Ye (Merced), Weixin Yao (Riverside) Elina Zuniga (San Diego), Bin Liu (San Francisco), Alan Murray (Santa Barbara), Michael Hance (Santa Cruz), James Steintrager (Academic Council Chair), Steven Cheung (Academic Council Vice Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward (Director, UC Research Initiatives), Coreen Harada (Executive Director and Special Assistant to the Vice President for Research and Innovation).

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[2] At UC Irvine, after pressure from the Senate, the provost allocated more funds to pay Google for additional storage and has implemented a tiered system. The base level is therefore now twenty-five gigabytes (rather than the default five gigabytes), and faculty who were already using large amounts of data (e.g., terabytes) were contacted to make special arrangements. For any new storage, faculty need to contribute financially for additional storage.