

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY

Monday, October 12, 2020

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions

Members introduced themselves and UCORP Chair Richard Desjardins provided an overview of the committee. UCORP's purview includes a wide array of research-related policies and issues. At each meeting, members will be asked for input on items under discussion. Members are also asked to share information from their campuses, and to bring issues that might be relevant to other campuses.

Anticipated topics for this year include Covid-19 research-related issues, ramp-up of labs and other research, and impacts on productivity. Over the summer, UCORP joined UCAADE (the Academic Senate Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity) in writing letters to the Academic Senate leadership regarding Covid-19 impacts.¹ Concerns include the effect of the pandemic on productivity, with a focus on younger faculty, post-docs, graduate students, and women. Studies have shown there is a disproportionate burden on women due to childcare (with an acknowledgement that it's not only women).

Because UCORP will not be conducting an MRU review this year, there is an opportunity to gather more information on the broader portfolio of cross-campus initiatives, including the mission and effectiveness of UC's multicampus research efforts – primarily the MRPI (multicampus research programs and initiatives) competition.

An ongoing topic is how to more effectively communicate the research mission of the university to various constituents like the Regents and the legislature. This includes the crucial role of graduate students and importance of graduate education.

Vice Chair Karen Bales introduced another topic for the committee having to do with animal research and the enormous amount of time that the university has to spend to defend against requests for information that border on harassment. The campus leadership is now working together to discuss a unified response. But the development of Covid-19 therapies and vaccines using animal research may present an opportunity to demonstrate its benefits and even allow the university to express support.

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

Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research and Innovation

Bart Aoki, Executive Director, Research Grants Programs Office

Kathleen Erwin, Director, UC Research Initiatives

Victoria Slivkoff, Global Head of Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Janna Tom, Interim Co-Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

Lourdes DeMattos, Interim Co-Executive Director, RPAC

Emily Rader, Research Portfolio Manager

The Office of Research and Innovation was recently restructured (it was previously the Office of Research and Graduate Studies). The current configuration brings together all elements of research from basic research to implementation and deployment. One priority is to further develop resources for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Updates from Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

The Office of Research Policy Analysis and Coordination (RPAC) is in the final stages of appointing a new Executive Director, with Directors Janna Tom and Lourdes DeMattos serving as co-EDs in the interim.

¹ <https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/reports/kkb-division-chairs-covid-impacts.pdf>

Cal-ISIs – This year, UCOP plans to conduct a review of the four Cal-ISIs (California Institutes for Science and Innovation). These entities were established in 2000 at UC by the State of California and last reviewed together in 2012-13. In spring of 2019, Provost Brown asked for UCORP’s input into the process for reviewing the Institutes.² UCORP members at the time discussed how the committee might participate in a UC review of the Cal-ISIs, and agreed that UCORP should be involved although not as the primary reviewing body. UCORP could be a part of assessing the reviews and making recommendations. If there is a review committee formed, UCORP would like the option of nominating one or two of its members.

Foreign influence – “Foreign influence” is a bipartisan issue that has gained momentum over the past few years. Concerns from the federal government center around loss of intellectual property to foreign governments. At UC, as at other institutions, the focus is on disclosure. This includes various aspects of funding agreements, including disclosures on bio-sketches, current and pending support, and updates. It involves Contracts & Grants offices as well as Personnel offices. UCOP’s Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Audit Services conducted a systemwide audit of foreign influence last year, and has prepared recommendations that are currently under review by the Vice Chancellors for Research and the Office of General Counsel.

Openness in Research Policy proposal – The primary goal of the proposed “Openness in Research” policy is to coordinate and bring together all of the disparate statements on UC’s open academic environment that are currently found in campus-based manuals and documents. In addition, pulling these statements together is an opportunity to look at the current climate and status of research funding and whether there is interest in more flexibility around accepting research funding that comes with publication and/or citizenship restrictions. UC and other universities have been getting more pushback from federal agencies about restrictions, including the “fundamental research exception” that UC has traditionally relied upon.

UCORP members expressed interest in a more comprehensive framing of the issues, including more information about risks to UC research mission, opportunities surrendered, and bypassed funding. Members proposed that UCOP form a task force to gather more specific data and examples that could be provided along with the policy proposal. RPAC staff noted that they have some examples of when funding has been rejected, and stories from individual researchers, but not full information.

NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) update

An interim policy was signed in July by outgoing President Janet Napolitano. As dictated by law, the focus of the new policy is repatriation of cultural items with an attributable tribe. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and the governor asked for more time to receive input on the policy. The legislative deadline is the end of calendar year, so the policy should be finalized by then. The new California law also included requirements for a committee at each campus that holds Native American artifacts and a UC-wide committee. The nominations for these committees, which will review items and cases, come from the NAHC, although UC has provided names to NAHC.

The **Knowledge Transfer Advisory Committee (KTAC)** was established last year to replace the Tech Transfer Advisory committee to provide advice and oversight, per UC intellectual property policy. With representation from all campuses and the Academic Senate, KTAC has convened workgroups in four topical areas: 1) policies, monetization, and equity management; 2) IP management and financial systems (including replacement of the current tracking system); 3) communicating the impact of UC research (“telling our story”); and 4) culture shift towards promoting tech transfer and innovation activities.

A known gap in support for inventions occurs before the point of investment. The Innovation & Entrepreneurship unit is focused on incubators and start-ups at launch but the very early transitional period to get to that point is challenging.

² See UCORP meeting minutes from February 11, 2019 and April 8, 2019.

Updates from UC Research Grants Program Office:

There are no five-year MRU reviews this year. The annual reports for all MRUs will be distributed to UCORP members before the November meeting. UCORP can choose to provide feedback on the annual reports, or simply acknowledge receipt. The MRPI (Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives) competition is underway; a second-tier review of proposals will occur in November and will include UCORP Chair Richard Desjardins and Academic Council Chair Mary Gauvain. In December, UCORP will have an opportunity to provide input into the targeted thematic areas for the Laboratory Fees Research Program (LFRP) a multicampus (plus labs) funding competition.

In the spring, the UC Research Grants Program Office provided funding to the campuses for Covid-related research. The idea was for researchers to leverage the funding from UC to obtain outside funds. Some of the UC funding will be extended.

UCORP informed the Research & Innovation staff that the committee would like to take the opportunity this year to look into the extent of cross-campus research funding mechanisms. Given the amount of limited funding available, it behooves the university to periodically examine the goals and achievements. Thought will be given to fostering specific types of research, such as climate crisis.

UCORP members also expressed concern about what the campus libraries are doing to provide access during physical closure. Most campuses are offering some sort of concierge or “curbside” services to provide physical books, but each location needs to abide by local and campus restrictions.

III. Research Information Management Systems (RIMS) Working Group

*Pramod Khargonekar, UC Irvine Vice Chancellor for Research and Working Group Co-Chair
Maryann Martone, UCSD Professor, former UCACC Chair, and Working Group Co-Chair*

The co-chairs of UC’s Research Information Management Systems (RIMS) Working Group joined the meeting to provide an update on the RIMS Working Group, which was convened by the Provost to conduct a “systemwide review of all RIMS currently being employed by Academic units and elsewhere across the UC.”

Research Information Management Systems are used to aggregate and generate metrics and statistics for universities and other institutions. They offer sophisticated evaluation tools, but also represent a concern as most are owned by third parties and use UC data. The Working Group is beginning its work by attempting to inventory all of the systems in use across UC. The next step is to develop a survey about use of the systems. The group has talked to UC administrators including Tom Trappier in systemwide Strategic Sourcing and IT Policy Director Robert Smith to get input. They’ve also talked to Executive Director of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) Heather Joseph, who has written about the issues. Many of the most-used RIMS systems are owned by big publishers, who already collect a lot of information about faculty, although “home-grown” and open source systems exist as well. Additional work for the Working Group will be to determine whether faculty are aware of the systems and to possibly recommend a standing committee that deals with data privacy and security.

IV. Academic Senate Leadership Update

*Mary Gauvain, Academic Council Chair
Robert Horwitz, Academic Council Vice Chair*

Academic Council Chair Mary Gauvain and Vice Chair Robert Horwitz joined the meeting to provide an update on the issues facing the Academic Senate.

- Highlights of the Board of Regents’ meeting in September
 - The Board of Regents meets every other month, six times per year. Their Committee on Health Services meets in the interim months.
 - Each meeting since March has included a discussion of Covid-19 with Dr. Carrie Byington, the Executive Vice President of UC Health.

- There was a presentation by the Office of the National Laboratories on the Lab Fees Research Program (LFRP) that highlighted involvement of graduate students.
- The Regents will be hearing more about plans to develop UC Health programs.
- The Regents will continue to discuss the UC budget and the planning and budgetary consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- A high-level strategic planning committee was formed recently by President Drake. In the morning of the meeting, a proposal was widely distributed that conveyed potential budget actions for 2020-21. The Senate has less than a month to solicit comments. The proposal will be discussed at the next Academic Council meeting on October 28.
- A Feasibility Study Work Group continues its investigation of a potential replacement for the SAT in undergraduate admissions. This is the outcome of the recent Board of Regents decision to remove the SAT requirement for admission to UC.
- The Academic Council will be focusing attention on the climate crisis and how the faculty can be further involved in thinking about solutions and mitigations. One basis for action is the Climate Crisis Task Force Report from UC San Diego's Academic Senate.
- Post-pandemic "return to campus" issues, including practical arts, performing arts, labs, libraries, etc. will continue to be at the forefront of discussions. Disciplines are having differential impacts from the pandemic, and CAPs will be heavily involved.

V. Systemwide Review Items

At its next meeting, UCORP will discuss the [Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force Report](#) and the recommendations' implications for undergraduate research opportunities.

VI. Round Robin of Reports from the Campuses

Committee members discussed the issues facing their local COR.

In addition to individual campus reports, UCORP members talked about grant extensions for intramural research grants that are distributed by the campus COR. Many campuses are being as lenient as possible regarding deferral requests. There are no systemwide policies or guidance in this area. UCORP could draft some principles that could be disseminated to the campuses via the Academic Council. **Members are asked to find out if additional guidance around grant funding is needed on their campus, and the primary concerns.** A message from UCORP about this could also be used to reiterate the importance of the funding.

UC Davis: COR discussions are focused on ramp-up plans, how to open labs, and keeping the community safe as students return to campus. Labs and workspaces are now at 33% occupancy, including undergraduates. There are concerns about career impacts on junior faculty, those with young children, and graduate students. Bridge funding is available for graduate students to allow them to finish their degrees. The campus is conducting rapid Covid-19 testing, starting with those living on campus.

UC Irvine: Topics at the last COR meeting included undergraduate research, intramural grants, and how to postpone deadlines for use of funds. The faculty housing next to campus has had connectivity issues. Some students will be on campus, but most classes are online.

UCLA: UCLA's COR has discussed the faculty grants program, library issues, and the Online Degree Task Force report. LA county still has strict mandates for gatherings, and only 8% of students are on campus. UCLA's Academic Senate is discussing whether to allocate leftover travel grant money to research grants. The library has just started "curbside" access.

UC Merced: UC Merced's COR is talking about funding for faculty research grants. Merced county recently moved from purple to red status. UC Merced is prioritizing research (over classes) for campus access. Lab classes will be permitted, with restrictions and plans in place. UC Merced's BSL-3 facility is finished and will be able to handle Covid-19 studies. The campus has a new ORU focused on community and labor.

UCSF: The Committee on Research has a good relationship with the Office of Research, and coordinated on the research shutdown efforts in spring. UCSF Labs are open at 50% capacity. San Francisco is in the yellow category for re-opening, and access to campus is regulated. A Task Force on equity in recovery was convened jointly with the administration. UCSF is concerned about all who are shouldering a higher burden, including women and URM, but not solely. The campus has implemented relief grants and subsidized childcare.

UC Santa Barbara: At UCSB, graduate students are tested every eight days. Undergraduate student housing is closed, but students are living in their own housing in Isla Vista. There is a huge budget shortfall from lack of student residence hall income. Research is about 40% open, with limitations on building occupancy. The campus is using an app to facilitate. Some library study areas are open.

UC Santa Cruz: The Santa Cruz campus remains mostly closed. All fall and winter courses are online. Laboratory opening depends on cleaning, PPE, and coordination of efforts. COR was able to fold travel funds into the general pool. In the past, a certain amount was earmarked for travel.

VII. Executive Session, New Business, Next Steps

An issue was raised about connecting UC's high social mobility ranking with the ability of students to do high-quality research while at UC. UCORP will add this to its topics for the year. UCSC representative Paul Roth will draft a paragraph for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 3:00

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP Analyst

Attest: Richard Desjardins, UCORP Chair

Meeting participants:

Committee Members: Richard Desjardins (Chair), Karen Bales (Vice Chair) Javad Lavaei (Berkeley), Cynthia Schumann (Davis), Michele Guindani (Irvine), Marco Iacoboni (Los Angeles), Kara McCloskey (Merced), Hai Che (Riverside), Tannishtha Reya (San Diego), Lea Grinberg (San Francisco), Forrest Brewer (Santa Barbara), Paul Roth (Santa Cruz), Mary Gouvain (Academic Council Chair), Robert Horwitz (Academic Council Vice Chair)

Consultants, Guests, and Staff: Theresa Maldonado (Vice President for Research & Innovation), Bart Aoki (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Kathleen Erwin (Director, UC Research Initiatives), Victoria Slivkoff (Global Head of Innovation & Entrepreneurship), Janna Tom (Interim Co-Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Lourdes DeMattos (Interim Co-Executive Director, Policy Analysis and Coordination), Emily Rader (Research Portfolio Manager), Pramod Khargonekar (UC Irvine Vice Chancellor for Research), Maryann Martone (UCSD Professor Emerita), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst)