



**University Committee on Research Policy  
Monday, October 14, 2024**

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

UCORP Chair Susanne Nicholas gave a brief orientation presentation to describe the work of UCORP and its place within the shared governance structure of the university. Members introduced themselves and spoke about their interest in serving on UCORP. Most want to make sure the faculty voice is heard and help to maintain UC's excellence in research.

Chair Nicholas went over the anticipated topics and activities for UCORP 2024-25, including:

- Graduate Student labor relations and the outcomes of a report on the Future of Doctoral Programs at UC.
- MRU Reviews of UC Observatories/Lick and Bioengineering Institute of California
- Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Commitment (potential changes to policies)

**II. Academic Senate Leadership Update**

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

*Regents:* The Board of Regents held a retreat in September that focused on UC Health and Artificial Intelligence (AI). UC Health has been growing as a proportion of the overall operating budget, and at \$27 billion is now at slightly over half. UC health is interested in expanding health systems to the inland empire and central valley. This brings tensions to systemwide budget negotiations, as assistance for UC Merced and UC Riverside expansions may mean general fund reductions for other locations.

At the regular Regents meeting in September, the board confirmed June Yu as Vice President of UC National Labs (Yu, previously Associate Vice President, had been serving in an interim capacity).

*Artificial Intelligence:* Former Academic Senate Chair Jim Steintrager will lead a faculty AI workgroup that will focus on topics of academic integrity, intellectual property, instruction, and opportunities to reduce faculty burden.

*Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS):* Chair Cheung is chairing ICAS this year (the position rotates among the three higher education sectors in California). The major focus continues to be on transfer and easing the process. UC updated and created new transfer pathways thanks to the work of a Special Academic Council Committee on Transfer Issues. ICAS will be reviewing revisions to Cal-GETC, the singular education requirements for CSU and UC. These can be a challenge for STEM fields, where

there are differences in expectations for major preparation versus breadth requirements. The Academic Senate will make a change Senate Regulation 479 to codify changes to Associate Degree to Transfer (ADT). UC has agreed to a systemwide commitment of one transfer student to every two freshman admissions, or 1/3 transfer students systemwide.

CSUs are exploring additional doctoral programs that are not duplicative of UC programs. A framework is in development.

A UCORP member asked about transfer student preparation, noting that expectations at UC may be more rigorous than at a CSU or community college. More robust orientation or other types of preparation for transfer students could help. Although campuses would generally have autonomy in these types of decisions, the Senate could make recommendations.

*Open administrative positions:*

Searches are – or soon will be – underway for a new UC President and new UC Riverside and UC Santa Barbara chancellors. The Regents have formed a special committee for the presidential search; an Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) will be chaired by Steven Cheung. The criteria for selection of a UC president has been reviewed and changes recommended. The first meeting of the AAC will be in early November.

In addition, the UCOP Division of Academic Personnel & Programs has been divided into two parts, with Associate VP Amy Lee leading Systemwide Academic Personnel and the new office of Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs led on an interim basis by Vice Provost Douglas Haynes until a permanent VP is found.

*Joint faculty-administrative task forces and workgroups:*

Last year, Chair Cheung co-chaired the Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities and UC Quality Undergraduate Degree Programs, which reported to the Regents earlier this year. The task force offered five foundational principles, aka “the five ones”: That UC should have one degree, one faculty, one set of admissions criteria, one commitment to students (the same commitment of resources for online students as in person), and one student experience (the rich additional environment above and beyond classes). A successor task force will convene to develop specific recommendations.

A workgroup to discuss whether UC should move to a systemwide academic calendar is being formed. The provost has asked the workgroup to consider a conversion of the quarter campuses to semesters. This would facilitate cross-campus enrollment and better align with CSUs and CCCs. Academic Council Vice Chair Ahmet Palazoglu will co-chair the workgroup.

Last year’s workgroup on the Future of Doctoral Education at UC is finishing its work and will issue a final report. The work is related to changes that UC anticipates now that graduate students are unionized. UCORP members asked about the salaries agreed upon for GSRs by labor negotiators and the seeming lack of understanding about research funding. A workgroup is now in place to provide more input from various constituents – including VC-Rs – to the labor relations team.

*UC Mortgage Origination Program (MOP):* The MOP benefit that is offered to faculty and some administrators is under financial pressure due to higher interest rates over the last few years. UCFW (the

Committee on Faculty Welfare) is working to get a better understanding of how allocations are done and will discuss modification to the program with UC Chief Financial Officer Nathan Brostrom.

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

*Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research & Innovation*

*Deborah Motton, Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination*

*Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office*

*Anna Ward, Director, UC Research Initiatives*

Vice President for Research and Innovation Theresa Maldonado provided an overview of the Office of Research and Innovation (R&I), which falls within Academic Affairs under the systemwide Provost. The office manages and provides expertise for statewide programs such as the Cancer Research Coordinating Committee, California Breast Cancer Research Program, California HIV/AIDS Research Program, and the Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program. It also manages peer-reviewed programs such as the MRPI (multicampus research programs and initiatives) award, LFRP (lab fees research program) award, and oversees seven MRUs (multicampus research units).

Looking forward, VP Maldonado would like to find more stable funding for systemwide entities like the statewide Natural Reserves System and UC Observatories. She is interested in research-informed emergency response, such as the actions taken by UC at the start of the Covid pandemic and in securing wildfire research funding from the state. R&I is exploring potential master agreements with industry to make collaborations and partnerships easier and was involved in securing \$1.2 billion from the US Department of Energy (DOE) for a regional California hydrogen hub.

Historically, patents held by UC have been managed centrally at UCOP, although not always in Academic Affairs. Given the recent revisions to UC's patent policy and a new patent tracking system, in early 2025 VP Maldonado will convene a committee of inventors to serve in an advisory capacity in this area.

- ***Research Policy Analysis and Coordination (RPAC) updates***

R&I's Research Policy Analysis and Coordination (RPAC) unit monitors state and federal bills to assess their impact on UC. The unit is also responsible for keeping research-related policies up to date.

"Restricted research" is becoming an issue and UCORP may be asked to contribute to the discussion this year. Restricted research does not necessarily mean classified. Rather, it's about citizenship and publication restrictions in funding awards. It also falls under "research security" in UC terminology. The federal government – especially the departments of energy and defense – has been incorporating more citizenship and publication restrictions in an attempt to ensure that research stays within the US. These restrictions conflict with UC's commitment to non-discrimination and openness in research. UC engages primarily in fundamental research and has not routinely entered into restricted areas, but the issue came up with the recent CHIPS Act, when some of the work would have been off limits to UC faculty. The next step will be to compile data and background to find out what changes UC might like to make.

- ***UC Research Initiatives***

This year, UCORP will conduct five-year reviews of two multicampus research units (MRUs): UC Observatories and the Bioengineering Institute of California

MRPI update – UCOP received 153 applications for this year’s multicampus research programs and initiatives (MRPI) award competition. The program encourages cross-campus collaborations (plus the national labs or other UC-managed entity). \$50-60 million (total) will be awarded to the top four or five proposals. The first tier of reviews assesses the merit of the proposal, while the second tier will narrow it down to the finalists. The final panel will convene on November 15<sup>th</sup> and will include three vice chancellors for research, the Academic Council Chair and Vice Chair, and subject experts. The awardees will be announced in December.

The anticipated success rate this year is 10%.

#### **IV. Local Committee Reports (Round-Robin)**

Committee members shared the top issues facing their local Committees on Research and other research-related campus news.

*UCLA:* The UCLA COR met and will have some carryover topics from last year, including drafting a statement of principles for the new Westside Pavilion research park by the end of the month. *[It was noted that UC Davis and UC Irvine might have similar situations and could provide input to the principles.]* In addition to the Westside Pavilion, UCLA is also expanding its physical footprint into the South Bay, at Rancho Palos Verdes and San Pedro, and downtown LA. The committee will conduct ORU reviews.

*UC Santa Barbara:* At UCSB, the Council on Research and Instructional Resources (CRIR) oversees the subcommittee on Research Policies and Procedures (CRPP). In addition to the search for a new chancellor, UCSB’s administration will have vacancies in the vice chancellor for research and university librarian positions. CRIR will look at potentially rearranging its committee structure and faculty research grants program. A focus group will discuss how to make the research grants more equitable. Travel grant funding has not increased in over a decade and the policy on travel has become so restrictive that requests for exceptions are common. The Council is also anticipating future negotiations with the graduate student union.

*UC Berkeley:* Topic carryovers from last year include impacts on research from the graduate student strike. Last year, with bureaucratic burden on faculty perceived as greater than ever, the committee discussed areas of improvement for research administration. Two major administrative reorganizations in past few years haven’t helped. Centralizing services was not effective, and the current middle ground of “regional services” is not working either. A task force on “Reducing Bureaucratic Burden” has made recommendations, but it’s hard to see progress. VC-R’s office has not asked COR to participate in ORU reviews.

*UC Merced:* In the last few years, UC Merced’s research administration centralized unit lost about 40% of staff in part due to the transition to the Oracle financial system. Most research admin staff work remotely, which disconnects them from faculty. UC Merced expects to become an R1 institution by next year and will need more funding to support research.

*UC Davis:* UC Davis will be making some changes to the large-grant portion (\$25,000) of its faculty research grant program to improve efficiency. UC Davis provides travel awards for anyone who applies, and small research grants of \$2,000 are awarded without review.

*UC San Francisco:* UCSF will be reviewing its incentive program for faculty who receive extramural funding. COR has invited the CFO to explain how indirect cost is used, and whether changes can be made.

Other local committees have not met yet and will report at subsequent meetings.

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Meeting adjourned: 12:25pm

Meeting notes 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), Dennis Lettenmaier (UCLA), Tao Ye (UC Merced), Rachel Wu (UC Riverside), Elina Zuniga (UC San Diego), Bin Liu (UC San Francisco), Stephanie Hom (UC Santa Barbara), Nirvikar Singh (UC Santa Cruz), Aldair Martinez (Undergraduate Student – UCLA), Steven Cheung (Ex Officio, Academic Council Chair), Ahmet Palazoglu (Academic Council Vice Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Theresa Maldonado (Vice President for Research and Innovation), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward (Director, UC Research Initiatives)