

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY**  
**Monday, November 9, 2020**

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Agenda Review, Chair's Announcements and Updates, Approval of Meeting Minutes**

*Richard Desjardins, UCORP Chair*

Chair Richard Desjardins reviewed the day's agenda and welcomed the committee's new graduate student representative, Katie Uhl, from UC Davis. Uhl studies food chemistry with a focus on California elderberries.

Chair Desjardins noted that UCORP now has several liaisons to other committees and workgroups who will be reporting back to the committee:

- ANR-Task Force – Karen Bales reported that the Task Force will meet next week.
- ACSCOLI – Javad Lavaei reported that ACSCOLI met and discussed the Lab Fees Research Program, which will start to consult on thematic topics for the next funding competition. The committee is also focused on joint appointments between the national labs (Los Alamos and Livermore) and UC, and how to facilitate the process. ACSCOLI's next meeting is in January.
- RIMS – Michele Guindani will represent UCORP on the Research Information Management Systems Working Group.

Topics for meetings this year will include:

- Discussion of how the campus CORs (or equivalent counterparts to UCORP) are dealing with research grants in the coming year. Members should look out for a brief questionnaire to respond to by the end of December.
- Strategizing about how to effectively communicate the research mission of the university, including connecting it with the notion of UC as a mechanism for social mobility. UCORP will find out more about the working group of the Knowledge Transfer Advisory Committee (KTAC) that is focusing on communicating the impact of UC's research mission.
- Reviewing the existing mechanisms to better foster multicampus research and whether these can be used more strategically.

**Action:** Meeting minutes from October 12, 2020 were approved.

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

*Bart Aoki, Executive Director, Research Grants Programs Office*

*Kathleen Erwin, Director, UC Research Initiatives*

*Janna Tom, Interim Co-Executive Director, RPAC*

*Lourdes DeMattos, Interim Co-Executive Director, RPAC*

*Dragana Nikolajevic, Research Policy Manager*

*Emily Rader, Research Portfolio Manager*

- **Updates from the Office of Research Policy Analysis and Coordination (RPAC)**

**Animal Research**

Vice Chair Bales introduced the topic by informing the committee that animal research protesters have amplified their tactics and seem to be targeting potentially more vulnerable individuals, such as women and men with foreign-sounding names. It is a huge burden on researchers and staff to respond. Given the high volume of PRA from activist organizations, there is interest within UCORP in putting together some sort of advocacy statement or declaration of support.

Dragana Nikolajevic from the Research Policy Office said that UC's interest has been on transparency and visibility. Other institutions are facing the same obstacles, and national organizations may be positioned to work together to promote the benefits of animal research in biomedical and other areas. The need for Covid-19 treatments and a vaccine may provide an optimal window for highlighting the benefits of research on animals. Prompted by a conversation with the Vice Chancellors for Research, Nikolajevic convened a working group with IACUC<sup>1</sup> directors from UCSF, UCLA, and UC Irvine, and Attending Veterinarians from UC Davis and UC Merced, all of whom are deeply involved in this type of work. They have met once and will continue to meet monthly. The group is starting with reviewing campus websites to see if references to animal research can be updated and improved. Moving forward, the group would like to offer draft language for a UC statement, and potentially employ a broader, more advocacy-focused approach that would involve the state (and federal) government relations offices, UC Legal, and communications.

Nikolajevic noted regulatory environment for animal research. UCORP members talked about the need to determine the target audience of any advocacy campaign, and what it would take to build institutional support for researchers. Getting specific funding information is tricky, although some campuses are able to provide the data. The number of public records act requests is tracked by the Office of General Counsel and is starting to be tracked by the Office of Research and Innovation. There were 26 requests in the last fiscal year and 13 so far this year. The majority of requests come from an anti-vivisectionist organization that offers a public database.

In discussion, UCORP members noted the importance of a coordinated response that includes the faculty voice. Other states may provide researcher exemptions to public records requests. Academic Freedom could be invoked. Some suggested that the nefarious tactics used by the animal rights activists be exposed. The current pandemic offers an opportunity to highlight the role of animals in helping to find cures for diseases. Apparently, PETA has requested an audit of UC animal research from the State Auditor, but any actual audit request would have to come from legislature. International Biomedical Awareness Day on April 15, 2021 offers a potential target date for an advocacy campaign.

### **Openness in Research**

UCORP suggested at the last meeting that the Research Policy team convene a task force to gather more background information to inform discussion about the proposed "Openness in Research" policy. Director DeMattos asked that UCORP select someone from the committee for the task force.

### **Classifications of Gifts and Sponsored Awards Policy**

Colloquially known as the "Gifts Grants Policy," a new policy will be distributed for systemwide review soon.

### **Data Ownership Policy**

A new UC Data Ownership policy that was discussed last year will also be distributed for systemwide review soon.

### **NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act)**

UC's revised policy was adopted as interim in July, but the policy is still open for comment until November 15th. A new state law, AB275, goes into effect in January and makes a number of changes to existing law. One big change is a requirement that UC defer to the decisions of the Native American Heritage Commission on questions of Native American identity.

### **• Updates from UC Research Grants Program Office (RGPO)**

#### **MRUs**

Annual Reports were received from six of the seven MRUs. The Bioengineering Institute of California (BIC), requested an extension. There is no formal Academic Senate review of these reports. RGPO does not make determinations about the effectiveness of the units, but tries to ensure that they are staying on track. Letters of acceptance will be sent to the MRU directors in January to acknowledge receipt.

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<sup>1</sup> Institutional Animal Care and Use

### **Systemwide funding programs**

*MRPI* (Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives) award is an open-call opportunity that is funded every two years. Proposals are being reviewed now, with outcomes in Dec. The funding varies, but is generally \$7.4 million per year (approximately \$15 million every two years). Next year there will likely be cuts.

*LFRP* (Laboratory Fees Research Program) is funded by the income UC receives for the management and oversight of Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories. The larger competition is offered every-other year, while the smaller, graduate fellowships competition is offered each year. This year will kick off the targeted call for proposals with stakeholder input into thematic categories. VP Maldonado, the UC Office of National Labs, and the national lab directors will generate ideas that are then refined by consultation with the Academic Senate and VC-Rs. UCORP will provide input early next year. The awards are budgeted at \$10 million/year, providing approximately \$20 million for the competition. The number of awards depends on the proposals.

### **III. Consultation with the Office of the President – Offices of General Counsel (UC Legal) and Ethics, Compliance, and Audit Services**

*Hoyt Sze, Managing Counsel*

*Ellen Auriti, Principal Counsel*

*Shanda Hunt, Systemwide Research Compliance Officer*

*Marci Copeland, Systemwide Export Control, Associate Director*

UC attorneys and compliance officers joined the meeting to provide an update on US government and UC concerns around “foreign influence,” which is shorthand for *improper* foreign influence, or improper foreign government influence. The key element is disclosure. NIH and other federal funding agencies are cracking down on improper disclosures, some of which are innocent oversight, while others are intentional. The FBI has been involved, and there have been researchers at UC who have been identified.

The main takeaway of the presentation was the importance of disclosure on all funding forms. It is better to over-disclose than not report something. If something is not clear, researchers should ask their campus counsel or Office of Research and Grants. Issues around “foreign influence” are associated with the upcoming Openness in Research Policy, to export control, and even to remote instruction for students in certain countries.

The UC Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Audit Services is working on a training module to help inform researchers about their disclosure responsibilities. Getting the word out about how to follow export control laws and other emerging regulatory issues is challenging in the dispersed UC environment. UCORP members noted that this information is not trickling down to campus faculty, many of whom are from other countries.

### **IV. Academic Senate Leadership Update**

*Mary Gauvain, Academic Council Chair*

*Robert Horwitz, Academic Council Vice Chair*

- President Drake has released a proposed curtailment plan to deal with budget shortfalls.
- A review of the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI) has just been distributed for comment.
- The Academic Council will likely convene a task force to look at changes to UC’s Entry Level Writing Requirement. There are issues with the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE), which is one way that incoming students can satisfy the requirement.

Chair Gauvain and Vice Chair Horwitz are now members of the UC Global Climate Leadership Council, which is staffed by the UCOP Sustainability office. The widely representative group was joined at the most recent meeting by President Michael Drake, who expressed support for work on the climate crisis. Since this will also be a priority for the new federal administration, UC may be in a position to get federal funding for interdisciplinary, multi-campus research.

UCORP's interest in animal research was briefly discussed, as well as the notion of fostering UC-ANR collaborations. The new UC VP for Research & Innovation, Theresa Maldonado, could convene a campus summit for Vice Chancellors of Research, the Office of the National Labs, and ANR. A mechanism is needed, and climate change could provide the basis.

## **V. Animal Research**

*Karen Bales, UCORP Vice Chair*

UCORP discussed whether the committee should send a letter expressing support for more advocacy around animal research at UC. Members suggested understanding who the audience for such a letter would be; who needs to better understand the benefits of animal research. UCORP members also suggested including more specific examples and connections to real life situations like developing Covid-19 treatments and vaccines.

Members thought that it would be helpful to get more information from UC, and to find out the stance of the NIH and NCI on animal research advocacy. In addition to the well-being of animal researchers, there are financial consequences, both from the funding received by UC to do animal research and the cost of defending legal suits and fulfilling public records requests.

UCORP will invite representatives from UC's Federal Government Relations to join the meeting in December, with the goal of having a letter ready to send to the Academic Council in January.

## **VI. Systemwide Review Items**

UCORP members discussed the report of the Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force and agreed to send comments regarding "Policy Option 3," which members felt should not be supported. The option would award a separate "online" degree, and members felt that having that option does not sufficiently recognize UC as a premier research university. "Policy Option 2" offers flexibility around online degrees, and while not ideal, may open opportunities for a small slice of disciplines.

**Action:** Chair Desjardins will circulate a draft letter to UCORP members for review.

## **VII. Consultation with the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources**

*Glenda Humiston, Vice President, ANR*

*Wendy Powers, Associate Vice President, ANR*

Vice President Humiston and Associate VP Powers presented an overview and update on the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR). ANR has educators and specialists at Cooperative Extension Centers in all 58 California counties. Cooperative Extension specialists can be found on six of the campuses. ANR comprises numerous statewide programs and institutes that work with federal, state, and local governments and community partners. The 2019 Annual Report shared with UCORP provides more information.

A key part of the new ANR strategic plan is to develop new partnerships within UC and beyond. UCORP and ANR leadership have talked in the past few years about increasing connections. One element of this is the "Adopt a county/Adopt a campus" program that was proposed to the Vice Chancellors of Research to better understand ANR's programs and their impact on local communities.

UCORP members suggested that the best way to engage in collaborative work on the campuses would be via the VC-R office, which could organize events, webinars, and put out calls for opportunities. Faculty members could be invited to ANR program teams and workgroups. Both ANR and the campuses feel UC has no additional money to offer, but even a small amount of funding, and possibly including the national labs, may lead to future opportunities to leverage outside funding. The national labs that are managed by UC may have federal funding. It was acknowledged that the UC system is so big that it can be hard for individuals to connect effectively.

## **VIII. Round Robin of Reports from the Campuses**

*UC Berkeley's* COR is discussing ORUs and how to develop new initiatives and review the existing ones. The campus now has over 60 ORUs. The campus has a pilot program for outdoor instruction that provided an opportunity for those who wished to teach outdoors from October until Thanksgiving.

*UC Davis's* COR meets every other week. The focus is on ramp-up plans and keeping students safe. The campus now allows 50% occupancy. Faculty are concerned about the looming curtailment/furlough/pay-cut, and there is confusion over how cuts will affect those on soft money. The campus has announced that it will shut down for the winter holidays, with staff required to take six days of vacation. COR members are discussing the disproportionate negative impact of the pandemic on female and younger faculty. Bridge funding has been made available. The city of Davis has partnered with the university to provide rapid testing, which will be rolling out to the larger Davis community in the next few weeks. The budget for faculty grants is not known yet. The Davis COR is strongly in support of animal research.

*UC Irvine's* COR is talking about allocation of research grants and repurposing travel grant funds. There is a controversial health sciences school proposal at UC Irvine that is currently being discussed campus-wide. Upcoming for the COR will be discussion of a new ORU.

*UCLA's* COR is looking at the proposal review process for faculty research grants, most of which get funded. The COR is also talking about how to handle travel funds that were dispersed. UCLA has reversed its stance and will now allow first year graduate students on campus and in labs (following all requirements and protocols). The passage of California Proposition 14 will provide money for stem cell research. Since campus space has been an issue for some time, some at UCLA are using this time to think creatively about structural changes for the longer term.

*UC Merced's* COR is discussing curtailment options. It has asked the campus graduate program to look into developing guidance around authorship and data sharing. The committee has been talking about the leave-related policies that are currently under review and include new paid family leave benefit. The budget for Senate grants is bigger than ever, now \$10,000 per PI, up from \$5,000. The COR is reviewing a pre-proposal for a school of management that is to be founded with funding provided by the Gallo family.

*UC Riverside's* COR's first meeting was last month. The committee is looking at reviewing the faculty grant process and whether there could be flexibility in repurposing travel grants. UC Riverside has announced that the campus will take a 5-day curtailment between Christmas and New Year. The COR will write memo asking for clarification. Apparently a mistake somewhere in the process has led to UC Riverside non receiving the national HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution) status that it anticipated, and this is having an impact on research grant applications.

*UC San Diego's* "Return to Learn" program brought 9,000 students back to campus, with more than that who come and go. The campus is doing a huge amount of Covid-19 testing, with students tested every 7-10 days. The COR is discussing a statement from the UCSD Black Student Union that includes an extensive list of demands.

*UCSF's* COR is discussing foreign influence and how curtailment/furlough would impact those on soft money.

*UC Santa Barbara* is facing a big budget deficit and the administration is talking about curtailment and other ways to cut spending. The COR is also talking about faculty grants and using travel grants to support virtual conference fees. The campus pays all open access publication fees up to \$2,000 using the savings from not paying for Elsevier content. Although there is limited campus access for students, undergraduates are still living in Isla Vista and seem to be spreading Covid-19. There is interest in resuming limited human subject research.

UC Santa Cruz is strictly limiting the number of people on the campus, with maybe six courses taught in person. COR's discussions so far have been about library access, and how the library closure is disproportionately impacting non-STEM fields. The committee is running a survey for faculty preferences and will develop empirical basis for opening the physical library. Open access publishing funds are not available at UCSC.

## **IX. Executive Session**

In executive session, the committee briefly discussed topics for future meetings:

- Multi-campus entities and the MRPI model: Whether improvements are possible, and how to incorporate strategic priorities.
- Cancer Research Coordinating Committee: Last year UCORP discussed a proposed change in the grants distributed by the CRCC. The CRCC is willing to make \$375K available for cross-campus programs with matched funding from the cancer centers.
- Graduate students: Funding and priority in the UC system.

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Meeting adjourned: 3:30pm

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP analyst

Attest: Richard Desjardins, UCORP Chair

## **Meeting participants:**

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**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), Katie Uhl (Graduate Student, UC Davis), Mary Gauvain (Academic Council Chair), Robert Horwitz (Academic Council Vice Chair)

**Consultants, Guests, and Staff:** Bart Aoki (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Kathleen Erwin (Director, UC Research Initiatives), 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), Dragana Nikolajevic (Research Policy Manager), Hoyt Sze (UC Legal, Managing Counsel), Ellen Auriti (UC Legal, Principal Counsel), Shanda Hunt (Systemwide Research Compliance Officer), Marci Copeland (Associate Director, Systemwide Export Control), Glenda Humiston (Vice President, ANR), Wendy Powers (Associate Vice President, ANR), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst)