

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY

<https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/committees/ucorp/>

Monday, November 14, 2022

Meeting Minutes

I. Announcements, approval of meeting minutes*Cynthia Schumann, UCORP Chair**Susanne Nicholas, UCORP Vice Chair*

Chair Cyndi Schumann gave a brief report on the October Academic Council meeting, which was held in person. She appreciated the opportunity to have individual and small group conversations with colleagues from around the system. The Academic Council learned about a new systemwide task force co-chaired by last year's Academic Council Chair Robert Horwitz. The "Pathways to a Fossil Free UC Task Force" will work on ways to decarbonize UC locations.

UCORP's undergraduate student representative Daniel Halpern-DeVries (from UCSC) joined the meeting; this will be his third year serving as a student rep to UCORP. UCORP's new graduate student representative did not join, possibly because it was the first day of a systemwide graduate student strike.

UCSD representative Gert Cauwenberghs reported on the ACSCOLI meeting that he joined last month as UCORP liaison.

UCI representative Matthew Harding volunteered to serve on the UC Research Data Backup Steering Committee in place of UCORP Chair Schumann. He will bring the faculty voice to the initial conversations.

Committee members briefly talked about a question regarding the NIH salary cap posed by UC Merced rep Jason Sexton. The issue was brought to the local COR's attention by a director of a UCM center who asked whether there was a policy. Every year UCM has to scramble 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 do find a way to cover it.

- **Action taken:** The committee **approved** a letter providing feedback on the "Proposed Amendment to Senate Regulation 630," to clarify the residency prerequisite for an undergraduate Bachelor's degree.
- **Action:** The committee **approved** the meeting minutes from October 10th.

II. Consultation with the Office of the President – Office of Research and Innovation*Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research and Innovation**Scott Brandt, Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation**Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office**Deborah Motton Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination**Lourdes DeMattos, Assistant Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination**Felice Lu, Research Policy Manager, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination***DOE Hydrogen Hub Funding**

Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation Scott Brandt provided details about the DOE hydrogen hub funding opportunity, which UC has been preparing for over the past year. The funding, which will be

distributed regionally, encompasses all aspects of hydrogen production, consumption, transportation and storage, with the intention of encouraging domestic, fossil-free fuel. UC is leading a state-wide coalition of 120 partners from the public and private sector. It recently submitted a 20-page concept paper highlighting proposed projects that focus on ports, highways and major power plants in California. The funding of \$2-4 billion is expected to be used as start-up funds that will be leveraged for more. Environmental justice is a large part of the program, in alignment with the federal government's "Justice40" initiative. Many environmental justice groups are distrustful of energy projects, and part of the initial work was trying to build partnerships and allay fears. The DOE has expectations about how much of the funding will go toward community support.

Although the DOE initially said that ten percent of the funding could be spent on research, UC was disappointed that the final RFP said none. However, ancillary programs will enable funding that can be spent on research.

In discussion, AVP Brandt noted that fears about hydrogen include its combustibility – hydrogen can explode – so there needs to be safe ways to store it and make sure it doesn't leak. There are three ways to make hydrogen, which is produced by electricity, so any way of producing electricity can produce hydrogen, including nuclear, solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal heat, among others. California is looking at renewable sources for its proposal. Other regional coalitions are looking at other sources.

California Climate Resiliency Funding

Vice President Theresa Maldonado reported that UC would have its RFP for the state climate resiliency funding on December 1st. The [website](#) has been updated with new FAQs and more.

Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship

VP Maldonado and her team continue to work on implementing the recommendations of the Regents' Special Committee on Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship. VP Maldonado has been meeting with individual faculty members to learn about their challenges, and is looking for way to formalize faculty input. The next meeting of the Special Committee will be on December 15th, and the agenda will include discussion of roles and responsibilities around the patent tracking system. Initially, when the report was released, the thought was that almost all responsibility – other than policy review and reporting – would be at the campuses, but that may not be the case in the end. The current patent system, which evolved from a simple database into a complex management system, is out of date and not supporting current processes. The Regents have recommended that it be replaced with a system that can support royalty tracking, licensing, and equity management. Upon questioning, Maldonado noted that there are not currently enough resources to successfully implement this change.

Draft Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Innovation Transfer

Executive Director Deborah Motton noted that the Draft Policy on Inventions, Patents, and Innovation Transfer is still in the informal review stage. There will be a formal 90-day review at the beginning of the year. UCORP members thought that some of the language in the draft policy was vague, but anticipated that accompanying guidance would help clarify. It was mentioned that the UCLA Technology Development Group is currently undergoing a strategic review.

UC Research Initiatives

The UC Research Initiatives staff has completed the latest MRPI proposal review and will be making selections. The LFRP (lab fees research program) in-residence graduate fellowship program review is also completed and awardees will be notified in December. Planning for the 2024 LFRP Collaborative Research and Training awards has begun. The process for developing the thematic areas for the \$4m in awards starts with Labs; the themes are then circulated to the Academic Senate and UCOP administration.

III. MRU Reviews

UCORP and the two CCGA liaisons spent a few minutes talking about the process for reviewing the two MRUs before pivoting to a discussion about the strike by graduate students and postdocs, which started that morning. Chair Schumann wanted to gather UCORP's concerns to share with Academic Council Chair Susan Cochran when she joined the meeting.

IV. Academic Senate Leadership Update: Discussion about the Current Strike

Before the Academic Council Chair and Vice Chair joined the meeting, UCORP members spent some time talking about concerns about the graduate student strike related to the research enterprise. These were then discussed with the Council Chair and Vice Chair. Researchers are asking for guidance around communication protocols and how to handle pay for striking workers, especially those paid out of grants. It was noted that the mentoring aspect of the PI-GSR relationship should be protected, e.g., with accounting and payroll adjustments better handled by administrative staff than by PIs.

Academic Council Chair Susan Cochran pointed to strike guidance provided by the systemwide Senate. Individual campuses have guidance as well, and more will come from the Provost.

V. Round Robin of Reports from the Campuses

Committee members discuss the issues facing their local Committee on Research and other research-related campus news. Chair Schumann asked members to mention if their Senate uses any sort of management system to facilitate requests for comment (RFCs) on policies or other documents.

UCB: Berkeley's COR is focusing on issues of research bureaucracy and administrative burdens on faculty. Berkeley welcomes any suggestions for best practices for streamlining administrative processes, especially around partnering with community groups. The COR is learning more about indirect costs and how they are negotiated at the federal and state levels. The Associate VC-R sits with the committee as an ex-officio member. There is interest in learning about how shared governance works at this level on other campuses.

UCD: The UC Davis grants program totals just under \$1m and is awarded in three categories: travel, small grants, and large grants (of \$10-25k). Travel grants will be discussed this week. There is much concern about the graduate student strike impacts and whether the Oracle financial system will be implemented.

UCI: UCI's \$1m for faculty grants is divided between schools, which have their own mechanisms for distribution. CORCL is discussing if this is still the best way. UC Irvine is facing a budget crisis, so the total amount will probably be less than years' past. There are about a dozen ORUs undergoing reviews this year.

UCLA: The COR has reviewed the call for two faculty grant programs, which will go out in December. Funds must be spent the year awarded and past grants that were given extensions need to be spent this year. There are only two ORU reviews this year, which will enable the committee to explore other topics. When polled, members expressed interest in learning more about the Office of Contracts and Grants, and the reasons for delays or lack of communication. The Vice Chancellor for Research Administration was invited to brief the COR.

UCM: The Senate research grant program has a total of \$275k to disperse. Most of the funding opportunities are for \$7,500. The COR is partnering with the committee on sustainability to offer additional funding. RFC items are handled by Senate staff. UCM received \$18m of the state climate money and \$15m will be available for faculty. The administration is proposing a framework for the funding that involves three centers: social justice, fire science, and green energy. The VC-R is an ex officio member of COR. COR is involved in the development of a campus policy on creating new centers. There is an instrumentation grant call of \$300k which will provide two or three awards.

UCR: UC's faculty research awards are just under \$1m total and the COR is discussing restrictions and guidelines for evaluation and how strictly to stick to them. The campus also had internal funding of \$1.7m for

DEI, which was awarded in seven grants of \$250k and several smaller ones. UCR researchers are concerned about the impacts of the strike. One response has been to move discussion sections online.

UCSD: A task force is looking at the graduate funding ecosystem. The COR offers fellowships for programs and diversity initiatives, and is reviewing a proposal for a new department.

UCSB: Review of proposals in the faculty grants program is part of the COR's responsibilities. It has an annual budget of approximately \$1m. At UCSB, the analysts manage the RFC documents internally using a content management system, and links for documents under review are provided to committee members by the analysts. The CIO came to the recent COR meeting and discussed the plan for transitioning to Oracle financial software, which the campus will likely delay until 2024. The committee is looking into Contracts and Grant support, which varies between units in terms of expertise, attention, and speed.

UCSC: UCSC's faculty grants – with a total of a little over \$1m – are now offered as an allowance of \$2,000 that anyone can receive if they apply. 66% of faculty took it up. The remainder will be used for a \$10k competitive grant. UCSC received \$20m in climate funding directly from the state, and used it to set up an organization that will be providing seed funding on the campus. COR is providing representation to a new campus strategic planning exercise to plan for the next 10 years.

VI. Systemwide Review Items

UCORP will not comment this month on any of the current policies currently under review.

Meeting minutes drafted by Joanne Miller
Attest: Cynthia Schumann, UCORP Chair