

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY
Monday, December 14, 2020

Meeting Minutes

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

- ANR Task Force (*Karen Bales*)

UCORP Vice Chair Karen Bales serves as the UCORP liaison to the Academic Senate's ANR Task Force. UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) is state-funded, with an extensive presence in California. The ANR governance structure is complicated, but includes a relatively new Governing Council with Academic Senate representation. Three UC campuses – Berkeley, Davis, and Riverside -- have Agricultural Experiment Stations with faculty who are AES Specialists. Although AES Specialists are not Senate positions, many faculty in this category have shared appointments and are therefore included in the Academic Senate. While historic tensions persist between ANR and the Senate, there have been recent improvements. All parties are interested in facilitating relationships and using collaborative efforts to leverage grant funding. In the short term, the ANR Task Force aspires to increase partnerships between AES campuses and the other campuses. A group of Task Force members is developing a plan for collaboration-based seed grants to be presented to Senate leadership. Possibilities might include offering incentives to include ANR faculty in MRPI grants.

- Transparency in Animal Research Working Group (*Karen Bales*)

Along with a faculty researcher at UCLA, Karen Bales was invited to join UCOP's Transparency in Animal Research working group that UCORP learned about at the last meeting. Working Group members were invited to a national meeting sponsored by Johns Hopkins University that included animal researchers from across the United States.

Bales noted that other institutions have offices devoted solely to animal research support, and Bales would like to propose that UCOP dedicate more resources to support the work and the people, including a statement from the Provost or President and higher level coordination with staff from government relations, communication, legal, and research.

Bales will add to her draft letter that was circulated to UCORP before the last meeting, with the goal of UCORP finalizing and approving it at the next meeting.

- RIMS Working Group (*Michele Guindani*)

UCORP member Michele Guindani (UC Irvine) is serving as the UCORP liaison to the Research Information Management Systems (RIMS) Working Group. RIMS are used to collect data about research outcomes for analytic purposes. The working group is trying to understand how the tools have been used and are being used currently at the campuses, with a primary concern about their use in faculty evaluations. The group will distribute a survey to Vice Chancellors of Research in January, with the intent of targeting a small group who can then send the survey to others on their campus. Once the group knows who is using RIMS, it will send more questions. UCORP members suggested including a list of the names of RIMS products along with the survey.

- Openness in Research Policy Task Force

Marco Iacoboni (UCLA) expressed interest in participating in the proposed Openness in Research Policy Task Force.

Action: Meeting minutes from Nov. 9, 2020 were approved.

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

- *Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research and Innovation*

The VC-Rs continue to convene regularly to continue discussions of research start up. A Cybersecurity Working Group that was co-chaired by VP Maldonado has issued a preliminary report and recommendations. SVP for Ethics, Compliance and Audit Services Alex Bustamante is chairing a new work group on artificial intelligence research and ethics. The VC-Rs are also discussing with Bustamante and CIO Mark Cianca the internal “foreign influence” audit and how to develop an administrative structure to manage it and other data security issues. Federal agencies such as the DoD and DoE will likely issue new certification requirements for grants.

In reviewing UC’s multi-campus research activities during her first 8 months at UC, VP Maldonado is interested in how to provide shared governance, guidance, and advocacy for these programs and institutes.

VP Maldonado said that the VC-Rs want to do something big for climate change that includes an environmental justice component.

- *Multicampus Programs Review*

Emily Rader, Research Portfolio Manager

Kathleen Erwin, Director, UC Research Initiatives

Research Portfolio Manager Emily Rader provided background on UC’s systemwide research portfolio and the various types of programs. MRUs governed by Compendium.¹ The other types of programs are non-MRU systemwide programs, non-MRUs at the campus level, and Statewide Research Programs. Some are state programs that are administered at OP, others have varying levels of oversight.

In the past decade, there have been two reviews of the systemwide research portfolio. The first was the Portfolio Review Group in 2012-14 (based on the work of the Task Force on Universitywide Research Principles, Process, and Assessment – the “PPA Task Force”). The second was a partial review that was conducted as a result of a UCOP audit. There was Senate representation in both review processes. The PPA Task Force developed three principles and categorized programs according to their level of alignment with the principles. In 2014, the PRG recommended that review groups be convened every few years, but that has not happened (due to turnover, workload, etc.)

Rader posed some questions to UCORP for discussion, including potential criteria for reviews, level of administrative oversight, and how to go about disestablishing programs that are no longer of strategic importance in order to redirect funding.

Director Kathleen Erwin presented an updated list of systemwide multicampus programs, categorized by type. There are many varieties of programs, and UCORP members asked if UCOP is confident that there is sufficient oversight. Most of the programs have faculty directors and some sort of advisory board. VP Maldonado noted that there will be new director searches for UCO (UC Observatories) and NRS (Natural Reserve System) this year, and that these are raising questions and causing an examination of process and governance.

UCORP members are interested in which programs and funds are discretionary and which are not. For example, the Cal-ISIs were established 20 years ago and are funded by the State of California. Their funding and budgets do not flow through UCOP.

UCORP members asked about creating a compendium of university research assets of various types, including research centers, computing facilities, etc.

¹ The Universitywide Review Processes for Academic Programs, Academic Units, & Research Units:
https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/files/compendium_sept2014.pdf

- ***Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship – KTAC Working Group on Communication***

Victoria Slivkoff, Global Head of Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Slivkoff provided a quick review of the Knowledge Transfer Advisory Committee (KTAC) and her role in leading a working group charged with “telling our story.” Specifically, the group is charged to recommend a communications strategy roadmap that includes options for how the UC system can best communicate the results of UC research and entrepreneurial endeavors, taking into consideration the audience, the message, and the delivery. The group should also make recommendations on how UC should handle future annual reports to the Board of Regents.

UCORP members noted that entrepreneurship and commercial successes are not the whole story, and that other research endeavors should be included as well.

- ***Updates from UC Research Grants Program Office***

Director Kathleen Erwin provided a quick update on two UC Research Initiative programs: MRPI and LFRP.

- *The Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPI)* recently announced its 2021 Program Award recipients. A total of \$18.8 million went to 15 projects. The competition received 226 letters of intent, which was narrowed down to 94 full proposals. The Program Awards are intended to stimulate novel and compelling multicampus or systemwide research. Program awards may support new interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary collaborations, or established multicampus endeavors that make significant contributions to advancing the UC systemwide research mission. All proposals must include collaboration between at least three UC campuses, with additional partners encouraged.
- *The UC Laboratory Fees Research Program (LFRP)* recently completed its cycle for In-Residence Graduate Fellows, with 11 awards (out of 31 received). The UC Multicampus-National Lab Collaborative Research and Training award competition will be held this year. Proposals must include at least three campuses and a national lab (Los Alamos or Lawrence Livermore). The process for developing the thematic topics is starting now; the call for proposals will go out in late March, with LOIs due in June.

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

Lourdes DeMattos, Interim Co-Executive Director, RPAC

Director DeMattos provided a quick update on the status of the Openness in Research Policy Task Force. Other Academic Senate committees are finding faculty to participate, and it would be great if a UCORP member participated.

As reported last time, finalization of the UC policy around NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) is postponed due to a coming change in California law. With the change, the policy will need to be revised and likely sent out for systemwide review. NAGPRA committees are currently being formed on campuses and one systemwide, with input from the Native American Heritage Commission.

An update on “foreign influence” issues will be provided at the next UCORP meeting.

III. Academic Senate Leadership Update

Mary Gauvain, Academic Council Chair

Robert Horwitz, Academic Council Vice Chair

- The Academic Council responded to the President’s proposed curtailment plan, and there have been some changes made. Campuses have flexibility in how implementation will work.
- Items under systemwide review include a review of the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI) from 2018, with updates. There is also a report from the Academic Planning Council Faculty Salary Scales Task Force.
- A consulting company has been hired to assist with a re-organization of UCOP’s systemwide Human Resources department, which manages benefits and pensions. Although there are no Academic Senate members on the working group, Mary Gauvain and Robert Horwitz have been interviewed about the changes.

- The Academic Council is interested the pandemic's impact on faculty morale.
- Vice Chair Robert Horwitz reported on the November Regents meeting, which including items on transfer and admission of Native American and Alaska Native students, which falls below their representation in the state. There was also a report on supporting students with disabilities. The Regents approved the university budget for 2021-22. So far, the UC Retirement Plan is protected from any curtailment cuts.
- During the pandemic, faculty have stepped up to do remote teaching but research may be suffering. Academic Council Chair Gauvain is working on a proposal for additional sabbatical credit to make up for the interruption.
- The UCOP Office of Ethics, Compliance, and Audit Services is working to position UC as active participants the protecting the community from cybersecurity and unethical foreign influence threats. ECAS SVP Alex Bustamante is organizing a symposium in late January to further develop relationships. UCORP may be able to provide advice regarding the best way of getting information to PIs.

In discussion, UCORP talked about campus flexibility and autonomy and the committee's interest in how to communicate the value of UC research. Council Chair Mary Gauvain noted that budget cuts are probably feared by all, including funders. The National Labs have federal funds and are interested in cultivating new workers as there is a large cohort facing retirement. UCORP might want to invite the VP of UC's Office of the National Labs, Craig Leasure, to an upcoming meeting. Chair Gauvain also noted that there might be opportunity for UC to take advantage of climate change resources that are anticipated to come from the Biden administration.

A UCORP member suggested that private companies be engaged to help UC improve the way it research is perceived. There are many companies and organizations that reap the benefits of UC research, and they could be doing some of the promotional work. This happens in other parts of the country, such as around MIT, etc.

IV. Discussion of Multi-Campus Entities and Funding

Committee members thought that there was too much information in the MRU annual reports to be sufficiently thoroughly reviewed and, while acknowledging that the reports are a means of self-evaluation, proposed minimizing the submitted document to reporting only things that had changed since the previous year.

One member pointed out that the UC-ITS report did not sufficiently explain increases in budget and salaries.

In discussing the multicampus research efforts presented by the Office of Research & Innovation earlier in the meeting, members asked whether collaborative research efforts could be more strategic. One idea is to propose joint programming that includes ANR and the National Laboratories in more collaborations.

V. Brief UCORP Survey About Faculty Research Grant Changes Due to Covid-19

The committee analyst will send the survey about Covid-19 changes to grant funding and dispersal to Divisional analysts for response.

VI. Round Robin Campus Reports

UC Berkeley: 1) The campus is starting to look at its 60 ORUs and deciding how they should be reviewed in terms of review committees and criteria. 2) The office of academic personnel is helping junior faculty to get extension on the tenure clock. 3) The local COR discussed the Online Undergraduate Degree Task Force report and provided input.

UC Davis: The big issue is faculty welfare in the time of Covid-19, especially for researchers in labs. And for those who are overwhelmed with dependent care. If special grants are provided, the idea is to make them fair across fields. The local COR has not yet heard any news about the faculty grants budget. Research capacity is still at 50%. There is a "Campus Ready" Covid-19 dashboard. All who come to campus need to do saliva testing, and rates have been pretty low. There is also much testing in the broader Davis community. The Academic Senate is discussing budget cuts, which will be a tier-based cut for everyone. There are "soft money" issues and it's unclear whether UCPATH can handle the complexities. The UC Davis administrative offices will be closed over the holidays.

UC Irvine: With the county in the State's "purple tier," in-person gatherings are reduced and buildings closed. The on-campus infection rate seems to be okay, but off campus is not known, although some faculty have been infected. There is a plan for tracing and expanding testing to faculty. In terms of the curtailment, the UC Irvine Chancellor is trying to take care of the shortfall without pay-cuts to faculty. Staff have been asked to take 3 additional days of vacation over winter break. The local committee discussed the Undergraduate Online Degree Task Force Report and concluded that solely online degrees should not be allowed. Degrees should require at least one-third of all major units and also one-third of total units to be earned in non-remote courses. The local committee also unanimously endorsed the re-establishment of the Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory as an ORU.

UCLA: The VC-R joined the local committee to provide an update on Covid-19 testing on campus. LA County has had an explosion of cases recently, although the campus numbers have been low, with only a few cases linked to research. Some researchers are trying to make a case for higher vaccine priority. The faculty grant research program this year is primarily a bridge program offering smaller amounts that are more readily available, but here will also be competitive seed grants of \$30,000. The campus library is providing some services, and has a dashboard with recent activity. The shutdown is being used as an opportunity to strengthen electronic acquisitions. A new working group is being formed to focus on research data in light of Covid-19. With so much data generated, researchers want to do something with it, or save it for modeling in the future.

UC Merced: The campus is looking at the Indirect Cost Recovery process, with the administration starting to release more money to departments and possibly to ORUs. The local committee is reviewing policy around cost recovery, a participating in the approval for new school of management, and discussing whether grant funding can be used to support equipment purchases. A campus-wide survey about computing support yielded a lot of information and is now being evaluated for use in decision making.

UC San Diego: The research ramp-up continues, although it is now plateaued due to the county moving into the "purple tier." Faculty and students are tested once a week at no cost. The campus can absorb any cuts for this year without faculty curtailment. The new Notify CA app for Covid-19 exposure notification was first rolled out through UCSD.

UC Santa Barbara: In an attempt to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 on fields like drama and vocal music, the campus is trying to modify building ventilation so that facilities can be used. The research grant funds may be cut by 7%. Travel grants can now be used for virtual conferences, and that will probably continue. Also, funds not spent due to the pandemic are being let go. UCSB has a big structural deficit and there will likely be pay cuts next year. The library building opened as graduate facilities for TAs, although the library itself is officially closed. Offices on campus are beginning to open. There is weekly testing in Isla Vista where many in the UCSB community live, and on the campus.

UC Santa Cruz: The campus remains almost completely closed. All classes through the summer will be remote, with a few exceptions. The effect on arts and music programs has been devastating. COR has spent time trying to clarify whether computers can be funded by research support grants, especially if funds are not obtained elsewhere. Library access remains an issue. It is unclear what services and materials are available, and the local committee continues to pursue the issue, including how the library should organize its webpage so that faculty can understand what's available. The research grant budget seems intact, and it appears that any campus deficit will be handled out of reserved funds for this year.

Graduate student update: Graduate students are also feeling the impact of the pandemic differentially based on area of research and type of work. Those whose research is computer-based are fine, while those who work in the field or in labs are having difficulty or have stopped altogether. Graduate students are strategizing about how to make their funding last longer. More are taking work as teaching assistants, when possible, which adds an unanticipated additional workload.

Undergraduate student update: Undergraduate students are also involved in research, and some see it as critical. An issue moving forward might be providing more undergraduates with research experience, and making sure they know that it is possible. Fluidity of research opportunities between campuses is one way to expand options and reach more students.

VII. Systemwide Review Items (<http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/under-review>)

UCORP will review the systemwide review items at 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), Forrest Brewer (Santa Barbara), Paul Roth (Santa Cruz), Katie Uhl (Graduate Student, UC Davis), Daniel Halpern-DeVries (Undergraduate Student, UC Santa Cruz), Mary Gauvain (Academic Council Chair), Robert Horwitz (Academic Council Vice Chair)

Consultants, Guests, and Staff: Theresa Maldonado (Vice President for Research and Innovation), 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), Victoria Slivkoff (Global Head of Innovation & Entrepreneurship), Emily Rader (Research Portfolio Manager), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst)