

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY**  
**Monday, March 13, 2023**

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Announcements, Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes from February 13, 2023, were approved.

**II. Round-Robin**

UCORP members shared campus plans (where available) to help faculty with the increased cost of supporting graduate students.

**UCLA** released estimates of cost increases over the next three years that add up to over \$42m for research and \$96m total. For the coming year, the campus has set aside \$5m to support faculty members in cases where existing grants cannot cover GSR salary increases. PIs are asked to use grants and other funds to cover as much of the shortfall before applying for the bridge funding.

**UC Davis** has projected an estimated \$90m in additional costs for the next three years, with a little more than half allocated to TAs. The Provost is covering the difference in TA salaries for the spring quarter and for next year. For research, the campus has asked each PI to identify \$2,500 from their grants that will then be matched by their department, graduate unit, or elsewhere. Then the Provost will add a matching \$5,000. This plan covers those graduate students enrolled as of fall 2022. New students have to be covered by the accepting unit.

Additional support will be provided for faculty who cannot cover the \$2,500. UC Davis is forming a joint administration-faculty committee to strategize about the long term interests of the campus.

**UC Berkeley** has issued no formal financials so far, nor guidance regarding incoming graduate students.

**UC Santa Barbara** has no official statement yet, but the chancellor joined a recent Executive Council meeting to say that a plan will be coming from the administration that will look similar to the UC Davis plan – a share between PI and campus. Some are concerned about the amount of faculty overhead time. A task force has been convened to address the long term issues of graduate student funding.

**UC San Diego** has issued campus guidelines to address the sponsored research funding gap, which is estimated to be \$15-20m for currently funded awards through the contract agreement period. (See: <https://blink.ucsd.edu/research/research-continuity/uaw-protocol.html>) Like other campuses, UCSD is asking researchers to reallocate and use discretionary funds as much as possible. Grant relief funds may be available once other sources have been exhausted (via an application process). Although it may lead to inequities, much of the decision-making is with departments, which can make internal adjustments to effort levels and/or step levels.

**UC Irvine's** short-term plan as of February is to provide \$1.5m for TA salaries this quarter, and \$9.3m for 23/24 to try to keep TAs at current numbers. PIs are being encouraged to re-budget and find money; there is a fund of \$3m to help with costs.

**UC Merced** has a short-term plan that provides gap funding (April – June) for assistant professors who have GSRs. A long-term plan is in the works, but has not been announced yet.

**UCSF** administration is providing centralized support through 23/24 for all basic science graduate students (\$2,400 per) and up to three postdoctoral scholars (\$12,000 per) per lab. After August, 2024, the responsibility

for covering the increased salaries will return to the lab. UCSF is forming three new committees to address impacts of the strike, one of which will focus on sustaining and advancing faculty-learner relationships. The others will address long-term financial issues and strategies for external funder advocacy.

**UC Riverside** is also asking PIs to find discretionary funding. PIs can then ask deans, and then the Provost. Central campus will cover funding for first year. UCR anticipates matriculating the same number of graduate students as in the past for 23/24.

**UC Santa Cruz** also anticipates keeping the number of TA positions constant. \$1,000 was provided to PIs for the spring quarter. The VC-R is trying to make the additional funding available if needed without a need to apply. Other bridge funding may be available for longer term, but faculty are awaiting clarification.

After hearing the campus plans thus far, UCORP members noted that all seemed to be inadequate. The group speculated about consequences, including the possibility of GSRs being asked to work additional hours as TAs to fill in, and the potential delay in progress to degree. It was noted that the current agreements only cover the next three years, so it might be worthwhile to plan ahead for the next negotiations. A member mentioned that an unexpected outcome of the strike in the social sciences is that some graduate students will receive *less* pay due because of renegotiations of arrangements that are no longer allowed under the union contract. UCORP members also noted that the cost of housing in the areas where UC campuses are located is a large part of being unable to provide a “living wage.” UCORP’s undergraduate student representative asked the incisive question of why UCOP was able to make the agreement but is not footing the bill.

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

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

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

*Lourdes DeMattos, Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination*

*Agnes Balla, Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination*

*Rita Hao, Principal Counsel, UC Legal*

*Randi Jenkins, Principal Counsel, UC Legal*

#### **1. General updates from the Office of Research and Innovation**

Executive Director Deborah Motton led the discussion for the Office of Research and Innovation.

At its last meeting, the Council of Vice Chancellors for Research (COVCR) discussed how to incorporate payment escalations into grant budgets and what guidance to provide to campuses. A letter from UCOP has been drafted and is being reviewed internally to be sure that the advice is allowable under funder rules and also under UC policy. Faculty are eager for this guidance, both for existing grants and new proposals.

A systemwide Post-Strike Pay Advisory Workgroup was formed to gather input from across the UC system regarding salary questions arising from the recent strikes. The Workgroup determined there was a need for a consistent, objective methodology across UC for wage adjustment forecasting in contracts and grant proposals. The Workgroup and other stakeholders have recommended that a letter be issued by the UC President and posted on UC’s website so that individuals can reference it when negotiating with funding agencies regarding additional costs specific to UC. UCOP is also working on potentially negotiating with funders for increases as a system, rather than each campus negotiating on its own. Federal funding agencies have differing amounts of flexibility, and grants vary widely; UC’s Federal Government Relations team is involved and talking about changes with the agencies.

UCORP members asked whether there had been any faculty advisors to the UCOP team that negotiated with the union. Contract negotiations are bound by strict rules of participation, and faculty may have only been involved in an advisory capacity.

## **2. Review of draft new Patent Policy (currently under systemwide review)**

The revision of UC's Patent Policy is one of the many outcomes of a May 2021 report from the Regents Working Group on Innovation Transfer and Entrepreneurship.<sup>1</sup> Most aspects of the former UC Patent policy remain in effect: all employees sign a patent acknowledgement upon hire; intellectual property is assigned to the Regents at time of hire; and inventor share is still 35 percent. There are two main changes. One is an expanded definition of intellectual property (IP). The revised version of the policy expands the scope to encompass unpatentable innovations that would be of interest to extramural sponsors and licensees. The new policy also aligns with the Regents' request to shift authority of IP issues away from UCOP to the campuses by explicitly giving campuses authority over innovation transfer and intellectual property related decisions. In addition, previously the policy required 15 percent of royalties and fees be reinvested for research while the revision allows campuses to determine the percentage.

Members asked about the mention of trade secrets in the definition of Intellectual Property and about helping faculty with disbursements of royalties.

Guidance in the form of an FAQ will accompany the policy.

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

*Susan Cochran, Academic Council Chair*

*James Steintrager, Academic Council Vice Chair*

Academic Council Chair Susan Cochran and Vice Chair James Steintrager joined the meeting to provide an overview of current activities of the Senate, including post-strike updates and news.

At the upcoming Board of Regent's meeting, Chair Cochran will be part of the UC team presenting on transfer issues. UC is under pressure from the legislature to streamline the pathways for transfers to UC from community colleges, and to align with CSU requirements for transfer. The Regents will also be briefed on the Senate's recent regulation change to close a loophole that could have potentially allowed students to graduate without being on campus. Cochran noted that before the pandemic, 99 percent of courses were held in person. Since the pandemic, 8 percent of classes at UC are being offered online. Some Regents would like UC to offer online degrees. In addition to having to follow federal regulations that prohibit the provision of financial aid for "correspondence courses," the Senate does not want UC to offer courses where students can have no contact with an instructor. Faculty noted that many students do not show up to in-person classes where a recording is made available. There is a balance between accommodation and ensuring accessibility and providing a quality educational experience.

There is a faculty-administration workgroup on pandemic recovery that will include pathways to mitigate negative impacts on faculty.

Regarding post-strike news, Chair Cochran said that there are a few remaining salary issues in some of the contracts to be settled. She reiterated the guidance on effort reporting for PIs, including focusing on work getting done, not on hours, and honest reporting. UCPATH and the budget office are continuing to work on pay attestations for GSRs.

## **V. Next Steps for MRU Review Reports**

The ITS and UC MEXUS review groups will be asked to send in their final comments on the MRUs by April 7<sup>th</sup>, with the goal of having reports finished by April 14<sup>th</sup>. The final reports will be sent to the Academic Council on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Report: <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/may21/g1attach.pdf>

## **VI. Executive Session**

UCORP briefly discussed the topic of salary caps for NIH grants. UC Merced is trying to address it in systematic way and is trying to find out if other campuses have organized ways of addressing the cap. From comments by member and other information gathered by UC Merced, it seems that it is mostly ad-hoc. Medical schools have their own ways of finding funds. Some departments can merge FTE and grant funds. Some units or schools “tax” faculty to accumulate the additional funding.

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Attest: Cynthia Schumann, UCORP chair