

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY

Monday, May 11, 2020

Meeting Minutes

1. Chair's announcements, approval of minutes

UCORP Chair Andrew Baird shared a draft letter from multiple committee chairs to Academic Council Chair Kum-Kum Bhavnani that requests that the Academic Council follow-up on a Memorial to the Board of Regents last year regarding UC's investment in companies that hold substantial fossil fuel reserves. The letter calls for increased transparency of UC's holdings.

UC is considering expanding the breadth of systemwide software licenses, and UCORP has been asked for input. Any programs or services that would facilitate remote work for researchers and especially graduate students would be helpful. UCORP will send suggestions along with any related issues such as accessibility and ease of downloading.

Meeting minutes from April 13, 2020 were approved.

2. Academic Senate Leadership Update

Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Academic Council Chair

- UC's Budget: The state of California revenues are projected to be even lower than expected. Academic Council Chair Bhavnani has convened a group of Academic Senate leaders to talk to UC's CFO about UC's situation and predictions for the future. Campuses have been asked for budget scenarios. There is still a great deal of uncertainty. The Senate may set up a Covid-19 crisis budget committee to develop principles for dealing with cuts if a joint committee cannot be formed.
- UC Health is working on coordinating Covid-19 testing and contact tracing. Non-health campuses are becoming more involved in UC's response via their science labs and other research. UC Health EVP Carrie Byington and Research Vice President Theresa Maldonado are coordinating work within UC.
- The May Board of Regent's agenda includes Covid-18, budget, and recommendations for standardized testing.
- Faculty members should have received a survey on remote instruction. Parallel questions for students were included in the UCUES survey. Results of the faculty survey should be available soon.
- The Academic Council is convening a Climate Crisis Task Force, which is one of the outcomes of recommendations passed in November by the Academic Council. Divisions will be sending nominees for the Task Force, and suggestions are welcome.
- The Extending Faculty Diversity Task Force is developing proposals for faculty retention focusing on diversity.

- Campuses are working on guidance for returning to laboratory work, with some opening sooner than others. UCORP members are concerned about the extra costs related to re-opening labs, and where that money will come from.

3. Consultation with UC Office of the President – Office of Research and Innovation

- Update from UC Vice President for Research & Innovation

Theresa Maldonado, Office of Research & Innovation Vice President

VP Maldonado said that APLU and AAU universities are working together to develop strategies and guidance for returning to campuses. The UC Council of Vice Chancellors for Research meets twice per week, and has met with the Chancellors to identify principles for opening campuses. These include:

- Following local directives
- Protecting the health and safety of research workforce
- Protecting early stage researchers
- Putting the needs of undergraduates and graduate students first, researchers second. And awareness about not forcing people to come in.
- A transparent process for granting access
- Ensuring as rapid a return as local conditions permit
- Prioritizing support for finding cures for Covid-19

UC Health and the non-medical campuses have increased cooperation and the leaders have formed a task force, led by Dr. Carrie Byington, that is charged to explore tools for viral testing and contact tracing that can potentially lead to opening of the campuses. UC includes 600,000 faculty, staff, and students and there are many populations to consider. Those who cannot do their work at home will be prioritized. In addition to wet labs, there are dry labs and clinical research that involve groups and physical proximity.

UCORP members asked how to get UC to be the “go-to” institution for Covid-19 research. UC epidemiologists have talked to the VC-R group and there may be a systemwide town hall (if something that large is possible). Members also asked about whether there could be special considerations for those who are working in areas related to Covid-19, such as additional testing or more safety precautions to facilitate faster ramp-up.

The VC-Rs are discussing the consequences to research productivity of the shutdown, including a documented increased impact on women and especially mothers. Many early career faculty are feeling the impacts. Campuses are talking about stopping the tenure clock, and considerations such as “flipping the model” to make time-out the default. It will be a campus-based decision, but UCAP has offered guidance: <https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/files/reports/kkb-senate-divisions-ucap-guidelines-reviewing-agencies-covid-19.pdf>.

UCORP members mentioned the difficulty of supporting undergraduate research during the shutdown. Undergraduates need the credit, but it is difficult to be productive. VP Maldonado is sensitive to the problem, and also very concerned about postdocs. UC’s governmental relations office staff are meeting with the House science committee, NIH, NSF, and other federal agencies and always mention extending support for post-docs and graduate students. UCORP members pointed out that finding a way for graduate students and postdocs to stay on campuses for longer might be beneficial for all.

As with many things at UC, communication is hard. The best way to get information is to talk with the local VC-R. By end of the month, UC Health will have recommendations for testing and tracing. Meanwhile, UCSD is starting its “return to learn” initiative and other campuses are starting phased ramp-up processes.

- **Research Funding for COVID-19 – Update**

Bart Aoki, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office

Kathleen Erwin, Director, UC Research Initiatives

Executive Director Aoki reported that block grants of \$50,000 were distributed to each of the ten campuses. In addition, \$25,000 emergency/seed funding grants were provided to 85 (out of 357 received) Covid-19 related proposals from wide-ranging areas including diagnostics, vaccination, and behavioral and social sciences. The proposal review was expedited and it took about 8-days for decisions to be made. Proposals included

Additional opportunities from federal funding are anticipated in the coming months.

Regarding the MRU reviews, Director Kathleen Erwin said that she will be bringing VP Maldonado up to date on the process.

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

Janna Tom, Director, Office of Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

Lourdes Demattos, Associate Director

Agnes Balla, Research Policy Manager

Research Policy Manager Agnes Balla provided an update on UC’s Response to the EPA Supplemental Notice on Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science Proposed Rule. UCORP reviewed the draft letter prior to the meeting and did not have concerns.

4. Campus updates

UCD: UC Davis is in phase “1x” of its ramp-up process, a very limited program intended to see what problems arise and what adjustments might be needed. Phase 1 is critical research that has been allowed the whole time, while phase 2 will include activities like student-critical research and seasonal activities (e.g., growing season). Yolo County has loosened up restrictions to allow this. Campus units that want to participate in phase 1x must submit a plan with specifics about precautions. There is a density limit and only certain types of research are allowed, including students who are close to graduating and work on samples. Plans are generally put forward by a department in order to coordinate space. The guidelines were written by a group appointed by deans with input from the local committee on research. The COR is reviewing large grant proposal submissions and hoping to be able to fund more with the money from returned travel grants.

UCSC: The UC Santa Cruz VC-R is looking to restart research on the campus, although it’s not as far along as UCD. The campus is working within the general systemwide framework. Remaining issues are the supply chain for provision of hand sanitizer stations and centralized locations for masks, for example, and sufficient cleaning of buildings. There are different committees for research and facilities. Another issue is the understanding of requirements, or the ability to distinguish rules that

protect people versus rules for others around risk. For example, the campus seems to be exploring the possibility of prohibiting certain people from coming back to campus due to their perceived risk.

UC Irvine: The VC-R has circulated a document for the restart of non-critical research. It includes principles and safety requirements, such as the need for 500 square feet per person density. June 1st had been mentioned as an opening date. Meanwhile, the local COR has been asked to approve proposals for new schools of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences that would include additional integration with the Samueli Integrated Health Center. The proposal mentions “complementary and alternative medicine,” which was not well received by COR members. The Samuelis are large donors.

UC Riverside: Research ramp-up guidelines were circulated over a week ago at UC Riverside, but the start date is still TBD. Research ramp-up is school-based, and PIs can fill out a form for approval by a dean if they have Covid-related research. Some students and researchers can go back to labs to work following social distance guidelines, which are: two people, six feet apart, wearing masks and other PPE. The COR is reviewing faculty grant proposals and allowing travel grants to be repurposed for supplies or other support.

UC San Diego: UCSD’s VC-R, Sandy Brown, has released documents outlining a phased rollout with groupings and color-coding. Right now the color is red, but the campus is approaching orange. Regulations are for one person per bay. Protective equipment is required. Janitorial staff have been reoriented to focus on sanitization, and PIs are expected to ensure a sanitized workspace. Some researchers who are funded by charities have had cuts of 90%.

UC Merced: As Chair of the local COR, Michael Scheibner is on the campus group that is discussing reopening for research. One issue is whether it is possible to reopen for everyone so that there’s no need to prioritize. UC Merced has more space and fewer people than the other campuses. A survey on restrictions showed that they were well received and generated a lot of input. Members of the campus community had questions about janitorial work, sanitization, and supplies. There were questions about what to do if someone (for example, a student) doesn’t feel comfortable coming to campus. The local COR is putting the final touches its revision of the faculty grants program. It is contemplating a proposal for workforce development and alternate compensation for student researchers that may be a way of saving money

UCSF: UCSF’s return to research is characterized as “co-existence” rather than recovery. Aware that backtracking might be necessary, labs will start to open up. The administration has held town halls and has included the Academic Senate in planning. There are questions about clinical research and which labs will be the first allowed to return (if shut down). UCSF also holds Covid-19 research seminars every week, with additional programs from individual departments like epidemiology and data science. The Academic Senate is providing “rapid response” grants in tiers of \$5,000 and \$40,000; proposals are being reviewed. As an urban campus, most people rely on public transportation to get to campus, which is another issue to consider when reopening.

UCLA: UCLA is following the Los Angeles shelter at home orders, but the anticipated date for starting to reopen for research is May 18. Vice Chancellor for Research Roger Wakimoto talked to COR and has convened a task force to develop guidelines for opening up research that will be sent to COR for review. The implementation of the UCLA plan will be via schools and departments. In addition to labs and classes, there may be guidelines for elevators, staircases, bathrooms. Some are expecting that UC or UCLA will provide personal protective equipment.

UC Berkeley: Labs at Berkeley are working on Covid-19. A central BSL-3 laboratory is being set up that is meant to be made available to non-Berkeley researchers. The local COR discussed a new policy that increases faculty responsibility for reporting outside professional activities, even when not compensated. The local research committee is very concerned and sent comments to the Berkeley Divisional Senate Chair.

UC Santa Barbara: UCSB is starting to talk about opening up and keeping research safe, including the responsibilities for PIs. The Santa Barbara area saw a large increase in Covid-19 cases, and is up to 1,300 now locally. The COR is working on faculty grants. There were over 130 proposals, for a total of around \$1.5m. The available funding is a little over \$1m.

After the campus reports, UCORP members shared what they knew about campus best practices, including broadening the definition of Covid-19 related research to other viruses, inflammation, and other topics. There are concerns about forcing people to come in when they don't feel safe, operational safety concerns for working alone, and how to handle building-specific guidelines.

5. Issues Under Systemwide Review

- *Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Protection of Human Subjects in Research* (Comments due May 20, 2020)

Changes are non-controversial and UCORP has no comment.

- *Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Travel Regulations* (Comments due May 20, 2020)

Action: UCORP will draft a message about the sustainability portion of the revised policy. Some members felt that the proposed changes require too much documentation without rationale given.

- *Proposed Presidential Policy on Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation* (Comments due June 17, 2020)

UCORP member had no comment, but may revisit in June.

- *Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on UC Seismic Safety* (Comments due July 15, 2020)

UCORP has no comment.

6. Academic Senate ANR Task Force - Update

Eleanor Kaufman, TFANR Chair

The primary issue raised by TFANR Chair Eleanor Kaufman was around Senate status and tenure for Cooperative Extension Specialists. Most CES are at UC Berkeley, UC Davis, and UC Riverside, but a few are at other campuses (primarily UC Santa Barbara and UC Merced) or other locations. Some Specialists have joint appointments and are therefore members of the Academic Senate. California is an outlier among land grant schools in not granting tenure to Specialists, but there is a long history and interconnected issues of representation, graduate student advising, and more. Apparently, many Specialists feel like second-class citizens and most would like to have Senate status. Some are 50% hires relying on other sources to supplement their income. There can be disparity in salary increases compared to Senate faculty. With the introduction of the term "teaching professor" for LSOEs, UC Merced looked into "research professor" for Specialists. But this discussion has been going on for years, and it has implications for other series that are not Senate members.

After meeting with Specialists and hearing their concerns, ANR Task Force members are hesitant to wade into Senate membership issues and saw no clear path forward.

At a recent meeting with ANR VP Glenda Humiston, the ANR Task Force learned about the extensive work of ANR personnel, including efforts around mitigating the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic such as provision of internet access and other technology in remote counties and programs like Master Gardener and Food, Health & Wellness. The CropMobster software platform for ad-hoc exchange has proven useful, and ANR is also involved with contact tracing and general disaster preparation. ANR is concerned about what will happen with State funding for fires and homelessness, but optimistic that funding will continue.

Kaufman would like to see a continued active UCORP presence on the ANR Task Force. She is also looking for a Specialist who is also a Senate member to serve on Task Force. ANR VP Glenda Humiston will join the UCPB meeting on June 2.

7. Administrative Burden (input to UCFW Letter)

UCORP members

The Academic Senate Universitywide Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) is seeking input on a potential letter to the Academic Council about the increased administrative burden being placed on faculty, and especially on medical and research faculty. A draft document from UCFW lists some specific ideas for alleviating the burden, including increasing efficiency, reducing reimbursement requirements, and streamlining processes.

Suggestions include directing more overhead/indirect cost to direct faculty support. Berkeley faculty are now discussing this. Faculty who have been around for a while remember a time when more administrative help was available. UC Davis faculty have been told it's a non-starter. UC Irvine schools have flexibility with what they do with overhead funds, but it is very uneven. Biological science faculty get 20%, while physical science faculty get none.

Action: Chair Baird and Analyst Joanne Miller will work on a draft document to share with the committee.

8. MRU Review Reports

Andrew Baird, UCORP Chair

Richard Desjardins, UCORP Vice Chair

Bioengineering Institute of California (BIC) – Richard Desjardins will finalize the draft, analyst Joanne Miller will confirm with the UCPB and CCGA, and then the Report will be sent to Academic Council for approval.

UC Observatories – Chair Andrew Baird will make some final changes, committee analyst Joanne Miller will confirm with the UCPB and CCGA, and then the Report will be sent to Academic Council for approval.

UCORP also has a comment for ITS (the Institute for Transportation Studies) and increasing the participation of other campuses beyond Berkeley, Davis, Irvine and UCLA.

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP committee analyst
Attest: Andrew Baird, UCORP Chair

Meeting participants:

Members: Andrew Baird (Chair), Richard Desjardins (Vice Chair), Irina Conboy (Berkeley), Karen Bales (Davis), Lee Bardwell (Irvine), Kathrin Plath (Los Angeles), Michael Scheibner (Merced), Wenwan Zhong (Riverside alternate), Tannishtha Reya (San Diego), Stuart Gansky (San Francisco), Liming Zhang (Santa Barbara), Paul Roth (Santa Cruz), Jeanmarie Gonzalez (Graduate Student Representative, UCSF), Atreyi Mitra (Undergraduate Student Representative, UCSD), Kum-Kum Bhavnani (Academic Council Chair), Mary Gauvain (Academic Council Vice Chair).

Consultants, guests, and staff: Theresa Maldonado (Vice President, Office of Research & Innovation), Bart Aoki (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Kathleen Erwin (Director, UC Research Initiatives), Emily Rader (Research Strategy and Portfolio Manager), Janna Tom (Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Lourdes DeMattos (Associate Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Agnes Balla (Research Policy Manager), Emily Rader (Portfolio Manager), Ellen Auriti (Principal Counsel, Office of General Counsel), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst).