



**University Committee on Research Policy**  
**Monday, April 13, 2026**

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Chair's Announcements and Updates**

• ***UCAD Plus Workgroup on Research Activities and Infrastructure***

The UCAD Plus workgroup co-chaired by UCORP Chair James Weatherall will submit its draft recommendations on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The co-chairs from the five workgroups met with the parallel “administrative transformation workgroup,” convened by systemwide CFO Nathan Brostrom and COO Rachael Nava and composed of campus CFOs and vice chancellors for administration. An in-person meeting of the groups will be held in Irvine in early May.

***Academic Council and Assembly meeting updates***

- There is an emerging issue from the state legislature around the California “master plan” for higher education and role of UC as the primary research-focused public institution. The original master plan differentiated between UCs, Cal State Universities, and the California Community Colleges. The bills under consideration in the legislature seek to expand access to more students but may erode UC's distinctive mission.
- The latest UAW contract for graduate students and other academic workers was ratified and guidance from systemwide labor relations is being prepared. New benefits for graduate students include childcare and salary increases. The new contract may help with long-term financial stability for PIs, although the cost impact will vary significantly by campus and by field.
- UC is sponsoring Senate Bill 895, a bipartisan effort that would put a \$23 billion bond to fund scientific research in California on the November 2026 ballot. Initial analysis of federal grant cancellations showed that \$2 billion cancelled and \$1.6 billion restored. However, some of the \$0.4 billion was likely already encumbered. Regardless, UC anticipates reductions and delays in federal funding.
- UC Berkeley professor Amani Nuru-Jeter was selected as the systemwide Academic Senate Vice Chair-elect. She will be an effective advocate for UC's research mission and other faculty concerns.

***ACTION:*** Meeting Minutes from 03/09/2026 were approved.

**II. Funding Disclosure and Transparency Follow-up**

The committee discussed a draft memo on research funding disclosure from Chair Weatherall. The memo raises issues of research integrity and transparency, and asks the Academic Council to discuss a systemwide resolution based on a 2024 UCSD resolution and to consider the creation of a systemwide task force. In discussion, Weatherall and committee members noted that some details connecting funders and PIs that had been available publicly was removed due to harassment concerns. Most academic journals have expectations for disclosure, although compliance is not always high. Any mandate for public disclosure of funding sources will have to

consider a balance of transparency with protection of faculty privacy and safety. In addition, disclosure of funding sources should not be another compliance burden on faculty.

It was noted that as the federal government is increasing its disclosure requirements from universities, preemptive information gathering would be helpful.

*Next steps:*

- Chair Weatherall will consult with UCFW chair Karen Bales to get the faculty welfare perspective.
- The draft letter will be revised and circulated to UCORP members before transmittal to Academic Council Chair Ahmet Palazoglu. The intention is to discuss the recommendations at the April or May Academic Council meeting and recommend a systemwide task force to review potential practices and barriers, and make recommendations.

### **III. The Changing Landscape of Animal Research**

UC Davis representative Eliza Bliss-Moreau presented to the committee on federal threats to animal research in the US. She noted that while animal research specifically is being targeted, there are larger consequences for other areas of science as well. Bliss-Moreau introduced the term “NAM,” which previously meant “new” or “novel approach methodologies,” but is now widely understood as “non-animal” methodologies. There have been real and insinuated threats to UC’s animal research capabilities, and UC needs to be prepared for potential funding disruption. Bliss-Moreau provided some ideas for how UC might position itself and maintain its resources.

UC Merced representative Ramen Saha shared a survey conducted at UC Merced about faculty awareness and uptake of NAM, and a summary of the results of the survey, which revealed general support for considering NAMs but also identified barriers. Researchers see NAMs as a way of reducing unnecessary animal use and are interested in finding ways to responsibly integrate NAMs and hybrid approaches into their work. They see the need for more training and workforce development.

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

Discussion about research funding transparency continued with Vice President for Research and Innovation Theresa Maldonado and Ellen Auriti from UC Legal, who provided context for UC’s current research transparency efforts and the legal and ethical considerations. There are many sources of funding information available, but they don’t necessarily accomplish the transparency that those involved in this area would like to see. Funding disclosure norms are generally driven by field. Universal disclosure would avoid a patchwork of requirements, but may invite negative exposure, invasion of privacy, and administrative burden.

VP Maldonado announced that the UC Natural Reserve System, which manages over 40 reserves throughout California, recently celebrated 60 years and has been renamed “UC Nature.” UC administrators, regents, and leaders of statewide agencies joined the anniversary celebration in Sacramento.

Director of UC Research Initiatives Anna Ward said that new digital accessibility requirements had prompted a review of all MRU review materials, including the Excel templates used to report data.

Chair Weatherall noted that shared facilities had been discussed in the UCAD Plus Research Activities and Infrastructure workgroup and asked if prior MRPI applications were available to

review for potential collaborative infrastructure ideas. The Research Grants Program Office (RGPO) maintains a publicly available database<sup>1</sup> that includes PI names, project titles, funding information, and abstracts.

The group briefly discussed the importance of protecting researchers while maintaining public transparency. It was noted that UC's strong legal support for researchers has helped prevent them from becoming easy targets. Eliza Bliss-Moreau was invited to follow up directly with VP Maldonado about sharing her animal research presentation with other groups.

## **V. Systemwide Review Items**

UCORP members briefly discussed the Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. The importance of handling an existential issue at the systemwide level was noted, while concerns were raised about committee proliferation and the relationship of the proposed new committee with existing climate initiatives and UC groups. A draft comment letter will be circulated for committee member review before being submitted by April 21<sup>st</sup> deadline.

The other items under systemwide review are not directly related to UCORP's remit, but members were asked to let Chair Weatherall know if any of these policies are discussed at their divisions and should be brought to UCORP.

## **VI. Local Committee Reports (Round-Robin)**

UC Santa Cruz: The UCSC Senate is discussing the impacts on teaching and learning of AI and ensuring faculty input for any decisions. Even amongst COR members, there are differences of opinion about the impacts of AI on research. The committee is working on a letter that will address ethical concerns and tools related to research practice.

UC Irvine: CORCL will discuss the Academic Senate's AI Workgroup Report at the next meeting.

UCLA: A recent report on AI created recommended temporary guidelines, while a campus task force will continue to grapple with the issues. UCLA's divisional UCAD (committee on adaptation to disruptions) has almost finished its report, which will include recommendations for Senate inclusion in decision-making. A fundraising initiative provided additional funding for the faculty grants program. Compliance with the IT accessibility mandate has focused on educational materials with little information available for research-related websites.

UC Merced: The Senate is reviewing the merger of an ORU with a campus climate institute established with state funds and which will now consist of three new centers. The campus is challenged with convening ORU review committees, members of which come from outside of COR and are not compensated. The VCR is contributing additional funds to the Senate faculty awards and applications have increased. There were 57 this year, up from the typical 35-40. UC Merced is looking at how to enhance undergraduate research opportunities for its students who are primarily first generation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rgpogrants.ucop.edu/files/1614305/f480589/index.html>

UC Davis: Surprisingly, the number of applications for the faculty large grants decreased this year. Funding also decreased. After a push from faculty, a joint faculty and administration task force has been formed to address research administration issues following implementation of the new financial system. There seems to be progress in involving faculty in decision-making.

UC San Diego: A joint administration-faculty group on AI is being formed that will be broadly charged with raising issues related to both education and research. Another joint group is focusing on research security and compliance with federal agency requirements for data protection, etc. As the number of ORUs is decreasing, the process for ORU reviews is evolving to place the full responsibility for the review on COR, rather than on an ad hoc committee appointed by CoC. UCSD's rep asked if there is a list of capital projects in UC's budget request, and whether any of those might have an impact on research.

UC San Francisco: COR joined the committees on budget and equal opportunity on a letter seeking increased transparency regarding financial support for researchers. A former joint research advisory board, which would have provided this type of information, was disbanded. The library committee is involved in a research metadata standardization effort that could be used by other campuses too. With a reduced staff, the Office of Sponsored Research continues to experience workload issues.

UC Santa Barbara: There is some ORU shuffling, primarily among smaller units. The amounts requested in faculty grant applications increased significantly. While budget cuts are the biggest issue, the Senate is also concerned with data security. And in other news, UCSB is switching athletic conferences; it will leave the Big West Conference to join the West Coast Conference in 2027.

UC Berkeley: COR is discussing how the new union contract will impact research and teaching. Faculty are reducing the number of GSRs, and in some departments it is hard to find GSIs. The current policies under review will be discussed at the upcoming COR meeting.

UC Riverside: Faculty research grants remain funded. COR's remit is mostly related to grant administration, but may be expanding to address broader research concerns. The UCR rep noted that it was useful to learn about the other divisional CORs.

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Meeting adjourned: 12:30pm

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP Analyst

Attest: James Weatherall, UCORP Chair

**Meeting participants:**

James Weatherall (Chair, UCI), Elina Zuniga (Vice Chair), Ana Arias (Berkeley), Eliza Bliss-Moreau (Davis), Michael Fortun (Irvine), Dimitri Shlyahtenko (Los Angeles), Ramendra "Ramen" Saha (Merced), Padma Rangarajan (Riverside), Ramesh Rao (San Diego), Kartika Palar (San Francisco), Dave Valentine (Santa Barbara), Nirvikar Singh (Santa Cruz), Manar Ahmed (Undergraduate Student, UC Merced), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Theresa Maldonado (Vice President for Research and Innovation), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward, Director, UC Research Initiatives