



University Committee on Research Policy

Monday, April 14, 2025

Meeting Minutes

I. Chair's announcements, approval of minutes

Action: UCORP's March 10th meeting minutes were approved.

- Academic Council and Assembly meeting debriefs

UCAD - The Academic Council is forming a task force for "UC Adaptations to Disruptions" with the goal of developing strategies for teaching, research, public service, including potentially restructuring and resizing. The task force, which is composed of chairs of systemwide committees and divisions, will meet weekly.

Council of Vice Chancellors for Research – The COVCR has been meeting three times per week to talk about federal orders and potential changes in funding. UCORP Chair Susanne Nicholas may attend some of the meetings and will report back to Academic Council Chair Steven Cheung and to UCORP.

UC Research Congress recap – The Congress kicked off with a keynote speech by Sudip Parikh, the Chief Executive Officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and Executive Publisher of the Science family of journals. One panel featured leaders of private foundations who talked about stepping in to provide more funding for research, although it would not be enough to make up for the loss of federal funding. UCORP members noted that there is not universal public confidence in institutes of higher education and that current actions against universities may be appealing to some constituencies in the US.

Systemwide Academic Calendar update – The draft report of the Academic Planning Council's Systemwide Academic Calendar Workgroup is out for systemwide review. UCORP members discussed the status of the systemwide calendar initiative later in the meeting with the Senate leadership.

MRU Reviews: Next Steps – MRU review group members are asked to send any further comments on the UCO or BIC by the end of the month.

Continued Oracle Financial System problems – UCSD faculty are requesting accountability for the financial system problems that were brought on by the transition to the Oracle system. UC Merced's Tao Ye drew a connection between account errors due to Oracle and the grant funding cancelations by the federal administration, noting that the latter was exacerbated by the former.

II. Systemwide Items Under Review

UCORP members were provided with summaries of current policies and other documents under review systemwide. UCORP provided input to the Academic Planning Council's Systemwide Academic Calendar Workgroup prior to the release of its draft report and will contribute to the current request for community input to the draft. UCORP members are asked to send comments on

the workgroup's report **by the end of the month**. While the report contains much discussion of calendar options and variations, it offers little consideration of research when assessing costs and benefits. UCORP could suggest greater consideration of research impacts. While the immediacy of making a change has waned, a change is likely to happen eventually.

III. Committee Discussion – Federal Actions

UCORP members discussed the terminations and reductions in federal grant funding and the implications locally and to the greater research and academic community. There is a feeling that universities and academic leaders have not stepped up as they should. This may be due to the amount of federal funding that could be at stake.

Faculty were outraged about UC ending the acceptance of DEI statements for academic positions. Some campuses have been told that behind-the-scenes diplomacy is more effective than public statements. It was noted that when funding is provided by an agency, the work is contractually obligated, and that political pressure should not be used to extort changes in policy or acquiescence by universities. UCORP members want to make voters and the general public more aware of the research at risk from the proposed or anticipated cuts. Resistance will need to come from the public, given the current climate.

Some campuses have signaled that support could be provided in cases of lost funding, especially for early career faculty and those who need bridge funding. Campuses are holding town halls to help get information out.

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

Deborah Motton, Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

Anna Ward, Director, UC Research Initiatives

Ellen Auriti, Senior Principal Counsel, UC Legal

Staff from the Office of Research Policy Analysis and Coordination (RPAC) provided information on terminated awards and grants. Appeals may be possible on a case-by-case basis. Researchers should work with their sponsored programs offices (SPO), or equivalent, or go straight to the Vice Chancellor for Research.

While some termination letters include a process for appealing, some do not even if an appeal is possible. Campus administrators are sharing information amongst themselves and working with campus counsel and outside counsel as needed. UCOP's Office of Federal Governmental Relations (FGR) is working with contacts and partners at federal agencies. Campus CORs that are interested in public communication about the impacts of the federal government's actions can reach out to campus communications offices to provide input. In most cases, a *campus* statement conveying narratives and stories will be more effective than a systemwide statement.

VP Theresa Maldonado provided support to one of the multi-state attorney general suits, documenting impacts of reductions in research funding.

There was a permanent injunction against the proposed NIH reduction in indirect cost rate, which means no change to rates in the immediate future. However, the Department of Energy just

announced its own 15% cap for institutions of higher education, which would not be applicable to the national labs. Lawsuits were immediately filed.

In discussion, UCORP members brought up efforts to restructure indirect costs and make them more transparent. The administrators reiterated that PIs should work with SPOs, including for any requests to submit information on diversity or other sensitive topics. They also emphasized that UC administration is not just concerned with budget ledgers, but the work and livelihoods that the funding supports.

V. Local Committee Reports (Round-Robin)

UCLA researchers are staggered by the extent of grant cancellations and concerned about the federal grants website (“grants.gov”) being non-operational. It is hoped that the campus can do more to make up for funding losses, especially by junior faculty.

UC Santa Barbara is focused on the student deportations as well as funding losses.

Merced: Merced’s DivCo met with the chancellor to discuss better communication around funding and concerns about international students. The chancellor has so far sent a few email messages, but the administration is hesitant to release information that could change at any time.

UCSF has had millions in grants cancelled already, with more expected. The focus is on terminations, but the magnitude goes much further. Faculty feel great uncertainty about whether to apply for grants, speak at conferences, and more. UCSF’s COR is developing a faculty survey to understand broader impacts and pressing for more communication, even with uncertainty.

UC San Diego’s COR has asked the VC-R for more communication. Faculty are concerned about students being deported or having visas revoked, and have been asked to report any grant terminations. UCSD is still having extreme problems with the Oracle financial system and is looking for accountability.

UC Irvine: The administration has not communicated widely about the federal funding situation. At a more local level, colleges and departments are starting to consider alternative sources of funding.

UC Santa Cruz: With the pre-existing structural deficit, the administration is looking at all options, including recharges of various types. One fear is that graduate education enrollment will be reduced.

VI. Academic Senate Leadership Update

Academic Council Chair Steven Cheung and Vice Chair Ahmet Palazoglu joined the meeting to provide update on the activities of the Senate.

- Susannah Scott was nominated to be the incoming Vice Chair of the Academic Council for 2025-2026.
- There will be a revision to the BOARS Bylaw prompted by increased legislative interest in UC admissions processes.
- The Academic Council approved a new [statement of defense of the university](#).
- The faculty discipline workgroup delivered its report to Provost. It will be an item on the May Regents meeting agenda.

- As of April 8th, nearly 100 students have had visas cancelled. UCEP and CCGA (the systemwide Senate committees on Educational Policy and Graduate Affairs) provided systemwide guidance for ways in which students who are outside the US can complete degrees via remote instruction.
- President Drake announced a hiring freeze as of March 31st. Offers made prior to that will be honored. Diversity statements will no longer be allowed for hiring.
- UCORP leadership has been invited to join the morning meetings of VCRs. It is important for faculty to hear from campus leaders and federal government advocates.
- There will be a new ad-hoc Universitywide Committee on Adaptations to Disruptions (UCAD) that will include systemwide and divisional chairs. See: <https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/committees/ucad.html>
- A UCSF memorial to include additional titles in the Academic Senate did not pass in campus-based voting. The Senate will continue to seek avenues for which the voices of health sciences clinical faculty can be heard, including potentially reviving a special committee for health science faculty.
- The total remuneration and benefits studies workgroups are moving forward. The benefits survey was just deployed.
- Regarding the possibility of a common academic calendar for UC, Chair Cheung noted that there was currently no implementation timeline and that it was not a priority right now. However, it is still important to discuss and think about how it might be implemented in the future. The report is quite comprehensive and it – and responses – will likely be referred to when the issue returns.
- UCORP members raised the notion of federal government actions of pulling grant funding being equivalent to extortion from universities.

Meeting adjourned: 12:30pm

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP analyst

Attest: Susanne B. Nicholas, UCORP Chair

Meeting participants:

Susanne Nicholas (Chair, UCLA), James Weatherall (Vice Chair, UC Irvine), Abby Dernburg (UC Berkeley), Nicolás Ulibarrí (UC Irvine), Dennis Lettenmaier (UCLA), Tao Ye (UC Merced), Rachel Wu (UC Riverside), Elina Zuniga (UC San Diego), Kartika Palar (alternate, UC San Francisco), Stephanie Hom (UC Santa Barbara), Nirvikar Singh (UC Santa Cruz), Steven Cheung (Academic Council Chair), Ahmet Palazoglu (Academic Council Vice Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Ellen Auriti (Senior Principal Counsel, UC Legal), Lourdes DeMattos (Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Agnes Balla (Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination)