



**University Committee on Research Policy
Monday, February 9, 2026**

Meeting Minutes

I. Academic Senate Leadership Update

Academic Council Chair Ahmet Palazoglu and Vice Chair Susannah Scott

The Governor's January budget provides an increase for UC, but the final budget won't be out until May. Unfortunately there is no one-time funding for capital projects. A couple of bond measures could benefit UC, however. Assemblymembers Buffy Wicks and Senator Christopher Cabaldon have proposed a housing bond and Senator Scott Wiener has re-introduced a bill to establish the California Foundation for Science and Health Research. UC's Office of State Governmental Relations is working with campuses to coordinate showcasing UC's research enterprise to help promote the science bill.

Meanwhile, UC's undergraduate population and overall enrollment are at all-time highs, demonstrating that UC is meeting its expectations of the compact with the governor.

The Regents approved changes to sections 015 and 016 of the Academic Personnel Manual (APM), that address faculty discipline. An assessment of these sections began in 2024 when passage of California's budget act required a review of some UC policies. The Regents then added their own requests for faculty discipline timelines. An interim policy was issued while the revisions underwent systemwide review. A robust process of evaluation by UCPT and UCAF was undertaken before final recommendations were submitted to the Academic Council. The Assembly of the Academic Senate approved the changes, as did the Regents. The collaborative work was a testament to shared governance. Now a new work group is being convened to create guidelines for P&T committees. Draft recommendations are expected in April and will be distributed for systemwide review.

Provost Katherine Newman has announced a systemwide Academic Congress on Math Preparation and STEM to be held virtually on March 9th and 10th. She is interested in exploring alternative funding models for research, including reaching out to colleagues in Europe and the UK.

The union representing graduate students is holding a strike authorization vote. There has been a contract extension through February, so a strike is not expected before then. Provost Newman has been sending regular letters to campus leaders. Guidance will be issued in the event of a strike.

Administrators from UC's Information Technology, UC Legal, and Disability Rights units joined the January meeting of the Academic Council to talk about the new UC IT Accessibility Policy. Council members pressed for tools and assistance for faculty in complying with the policy. The UC Legal attorney was clear that the university would defend faculty in any related legal actions within the scope of their employment.

II. Chair's Announcements and Updates

- **UCAD Plus Research Workgroup updates**

The UCAD Plus workgroup co-chaired by UCORP Chair Jim Weatherall and UCSC interim EVC/P Paul Koch is continuing its work. The group is looking into different kinds of scenario planning for funding disruptions: those to a single discipline, a single federal agency, a single campus, and to the entire system.

There will likely be recommendations for improving cross-campus collaboration for research facilities, for example, or for high-performance computing centers. The overall motivation is for resiliency in the short-term and efficiency in the long-term. Updates on UCAD Plus can be found on the group's [website](#).

- **Research Security Task Force**

Chair Weatherall serves on an administrative workgroup discussing research security, which is the new term for what used to be referred to as "foreign influence." The focus is on protections for US data, which is becoming more common as a condition for federal grant funding. The group is also looking into conflicts of interest disclosure.

Action taken: UCORP meeting minutes from December 8, 2025 were approved.

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

Timothy Miller, Policy Manager, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

- **Federal funding landscape**

Federal appropriations seem to be flat through Sept. 30th, which is the end of the fiscal year. The future budget situation will depend a great deal on the November elections. Regarding changes to the federal indirect cost rates, all recent appropriations bills have blocking language such that agencies cannot change the rates. And it seems unlikely that changes will be included in upcoming uniform guidance provisions. UC's Federal Government Relations personnel would know more about budget projections and the likelihood of the government transitioning to the FAIR model.

UCORP members discussed whether there was a slowdown in grant award decisions at federal agencies. Executive Director Motton noted that UC is waiting for award data to be gathered from campuses before making assessments about trends in research funding, noting that it will take at least three quarters before changes resulting from President Trump's executive orders will be evident.

The group noted the potential closure of the Oregon Primate Research Center and impact on animal researchers. HHS Secretary Robert Kennedy Jr has voiced his desire to eliminate animal research. This will have trickle-down impacts in other domains and UC may need to take a stand. This topic will be added to an upcoming UCORP meeting agenda.

- **Research Misconduct Policy update**

Systemwide review of the revised Research Misconduct Policy yielded input from the Senate and other groups. The policy has been revised to address Senate feedback by narrowing the scope to focus on falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism; clarify definitions and roles; strengthen due process; and remove political references.

The duties of Research Integrity Officer – responsible for compliance and implementation – will be assigned to an existing FTE.

- **UC Research Initiatives**

This year, UC Research Initiatives is offering its Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPI) Pilot Awards. These awards support new multicampus or systemwide collaborations to launch pioneering research in multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary areas. A big response is expected. Other recent RFPs have yielded more proposals than in past years. The program intends to be able to fund more projects with smaller awards.

Several of the UC Research Initiatives programs offered bridge funding last summer and fall for those researchers whose funds had been cancelled, but there was very little uptake. Some researchers had portions of their grants cut or delayed payments, but almost no one was eligible for the funding. An assessment by the breast cancer program showed the need for training grants and pipeline support for graduate students and postdocs, and several cancer programs have now put out calls for that type of award.

IV. Research Security and Conflict of Interest / OATS Compliance

Deborah Motton, Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

Gale Sheean-Remotto, Senior Strategic Advisor, Strategy and Program Management Office (SPMO)

Executive Director Deborah Motton and Strategic Advisor Gale Sheean-Remotto provided background on research disclosure compliance and their efforts to collect faculty feedback. Federal requirements demand disclosure of all financial and non-financial relationships with foreign entities, with no minimum threshold. This is a bi-partisan concern, not related to any conservative or liberal ideology. Although agencies have not harmonized their policies, they are relatively similar. These requirements intersect with UC requirements for conflict of interest and conflict of commitment reporting. UCORP members emphasized the burden of duplicate disclosures across different systems and the need for better integration, and noted that conflicts could also occur when faculty work with private funders or even create their own start-ups. Members suggested that a centralized reporting form or system would be helpful, as would training for faculty and researcher administrators.

Relatedly, the University is working on research security compliance, which includes certifications around digital security, travel, training, and more, particularly for foreign interactions. Federal guidance was anticipated but has not appeared.

V. Re-Envisioning of UC's Lab Fees Research Program (LFRP)

James Weatherall, UCORP Chair

Ramesh Rao, ACSCOLI Liaison

UC seeks Senate input into re-envisioning the [Lab Fees Research Program](#) (LFRP). Vice President for the UC National Laboratories June Yu has drafted some desired attributes and asked for input from ACSCOLI (the Academic Council Special Committee on Lab Issues). A portion of the fees that UC earns for managing the two NNSA labs (Los Alamos and Livermore) are designated to be used to promote research collaborations of strategic importance to UC and the national labs.

Ongoing questions about the program concern what the money is meant to achieve and whether it is being used to optimal effect. UC researchers are interested in fostering opportunities for forging relationships with the labs, but it can be hard to get started. Some have felt that a 3-year funding cycle for grant projects is too long. With recent discussions about optimizing shared facilities, the labs may provide a resource.

A suggestion was made to look into the Laboratory Directed Research and Development (LDRD) program, which may offer a parallel opportunity.

The Vice Chancellors for Research have expressed support for a revised program with a more streamlined process.

Next step: Members are asked to inform divisional councils and request input, especially from anyone with experience with the LFRP or the labs. UCORP's input will be used to inform ACSCOLI's response to VP Yu. A draft document will be circulated to members for input prior to sending.

VI. Follow-up Discussion on Funding Disclosure and Transparency

James Weatherall, UCORP Chair

UCORP members are asked to share the [UCSD Senate Resolution](#) and [International Science Council Statement](#) with their local CORs for discussion and to generate ideas about ways to educate faculty about research transparency. CORs may want to invite Craig Callender present at a divisional meeting.

VII. Local Committee Reports (Round-Robin)

UCI: The UC Irvine Office of Research (OR) responded to a request from the Senate regarding requirements for department chairs and vice chairs as approvers of external research funding proposals. In a win for reducing administrative burden, the OR updated the certification language in the proposal development system, clarifying which certifications apply to principal investigators only, and which apply to the department chair or vice chair, director, dean, or approved designee.

UCSC: The Committee on Research is forming a subcommittee to focus on AI. COR was asked to comment on ORU review of the Genomics Institute, which is by far the biggest center on the Santa Cruz campus in terms of funding.

UCM: A portion of UC Merced's donation from Mackenzie Scott will be used to fund the Senate's grant awards. The process will be different from past years, with some funding to be used now and some put into an endowment. Funding was also provided to the Office of Research and Development to be used in consultation with COR.

UCD: With ongoing research administration issues due to the new financial system, the UC Davis faculty have continued to pressure the administration, including gathering data to illustrate the problems accurately. An external consulting firm was hired to serve as intermediary and progress is being made.

UCSD: Some of UC San Diego's ORUs have pulled out of the traditional structure and report directly to the EVC. COR discussed the revisions to the Policy on Anatomical Donation Program and Anatomical Materials. To start complying with the new IT accessibility requirements, UCSD is prioritizing public-facing websites. Students can already ask for accommodation for resources they need for their education.

UCLA: There is concern about website accessibility compliance; many campus websites are not compliant with new accessibility standards that go into effect in April. Faculty would like the administration to explore technological solutions and provide hands-on assistance.

VIII. Wrap up and Next Steps

- The revised Research Misconduct Policy draft will be shared with UCORP members.
- Animal research will be added to a future agenda.
- Follow-up information on the LFRP request will be sent to UCORP members.

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), Ramesh Rao (San Diego), Kartika Palar (San Francisco), Dave Valentine (Santa Barbara), Nirvikar Singh (Santa Cruz), Manar Ahmed (Undergraduate Student, UC Merced), Ahmet Palazoglu (Ex-Officio, Academic Council Chair), Susannah Scott (Ex Officio, Academic Council Vice Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Lourdes DeMattos (Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Timothy Miller (Research Policy Manager, RPAC), Gale Sheean-Remotto (Strategy and Program Advisor, SPMO)