

**Minutes of Teleconference
December 14, 2009**

I. Vice Chair's Announcements

Phokion Kolaitis, UCORP Vice Chair

Vice Chair Kolaitis referred members to documents circulated prior to the call by Chair Miller for the Academic Council update. Also of note is a recent AAU report on the status of research universities in an era of declining state support. Lastly, many campuses experienced student protests recently over continuing consternation regarding increasing fees.

II. ICR Update

Roland Henry, UCSF Representative

Update: Professor Henry reported that he had met with UC Commission on the Future Research Strategies Workgroup Co-Chair Croughan and UCSF VP for Finance Eric Vermillion on the topic. All parties seem to have similar concerns, such as the need for greater transparency and understanding and the inadequacy of the 26% cap on administration. Some buildings, depending on how they were financed, have variable interest rates and so cannot be incorporated into rate negotiations. All parties are also concerned about zero-sum funding tradeoffs that might result from increases in total ICR costs. The workgroup will continue to meet via teleconference and collate information culled from the campuses. Recommendations will follow.

III. Patent Acknowledgement Changes

Wendy Streitz, Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination, ORGS

Marty Simpson, Office of General Counsel

ISSUE: Director Streitz stressed that there are no potential changes to the patent policy itself, only to the acknowledgment form. Concerns still under investigation include how not to strain the relationships between researchers and funders and how to close any extant loopholes.

DISCUSSION: Members noted that the proposed language still does not cover already completed work, which could theoretically be assigned to another entity. Director Streitz indicated that such assignments are what the University is trying to avoid. Members also inquired whether signing a revised form could become a condition of employment. Counselor Simpson responded that enforcement had not yet been discussed. Members rejoined that such ambiguity underscores the need for a soft roll-out. Director Streitz agreed, but noted that researchers in certain fields may be asked to comply sooner rather than later. Indeed, the necessity of certain humanists, for example, signing a revised form would seem to be of little urgency.

ACTION: UCORP will continue to monitor this issue.

IV. UC Commission on the Future Update

Mary Croughan, Co-chair, Research Strategies Workgroup

UPDATE: The listening tour has ended, but feedback can still be sent directly or by inviting Professor Croughan to local COR meetings, either in person or telephonically. The themes to be considered more fully by the workgroup include: ICR, the student experience, faculty productivity, staff support, and commitment to graduate education. Further, the placement of research in priorities will also be stressed: instruction days and furloughs, for example.

DISCUSSION: Members reiterated some of their concerns with ICR (see above) and staff support in a time of diminishing resources. Members also suggested looking more closely at the discrepancies between disciplines in terms of cost and productivity so that some researchers are not made to feel less valuable than others due to the nature of their work. Regarding graduate students, members noted that fees must be part of the discussion, especially for non-resident graduate students. For the latter, statistics on residency maintenance, long-term UC commitment, and perhaps on UC's reputation might prove useful. Members then questioned the timing of issuing the recommendations, noting that inadequate study and haste may do more damage than benefit.

V. DANR Update

John Crawford, UCI Representative

UPDATE: So far, it has proven difficult to gather any additional information on the Division. DANR's web presence seems superficial, and the strategic vision includes no metrics to evaluate success. The administrative center in Oakland has not been justified, but neither has any of the campus centers; a service center model seems never to have been considered.

DISCUSSION: Vice Chair Kolaitis asked whether the workgroup had made contact with DANR officials yet, and Professor Crawford indicated no, as the workgroup wants first to be certain it has included all Senate concerns prior to initiating contact. The impact of the UC Commission on the Future on DANR is unclear, though some changes are to be expected. Members questioned the salary structure of DANR employees, as well as CE and AES employees: 12-month, 11-month, 9-month? Pay is determined by campus and specific assignment, but no supporting documentation has been uncovered to justify or oppose those assignments – educational goals and outcomes are not clear, successful outreach is not defined, etc. The group's next steps are to outline the key aspects of DANR's stated vision and then to identify metrics under each.

VI. Online and Remote Instruction Response

DISCUSSION: Vice Chair Kolaitis noted that instructional delivery is indeed an important topic also being considered by the UC Commission on the Future, but added that from a research perspective, online and remote instruction are not ideal. Members noted that a recently drafted UCEP report also underscores the importance of research in the undergraduate experience; the report might serve as another resource for UCORP's response. Other members cautioned against taking too strong a position, though, noting that several existing programs make effective use of remote instruction. Without naming specific exceptions, though, the committee will take a principled position that research is best served by face-to-face interactions.

ACTION: Analyst Feer will revise the letter and circulate it to the committee prior to final submission to the Academic Council.

VII. Furlough Impacts

ISSUE: Given the Academic Council's unfavorable response to UCORP's previous letter, the committee must decide whether to revise the letter or drop the issue.

DISCUSSION: Members felt that severing the call for COR funding restoration and the call for an ameliorative program would increase the chances of endorsement. Splitting the topics was supported by the majority of the committee since amelioration programs have already diverged widely at the campuses and it remains unclear to whom CORs should turn for additional guidance on the topic. Nonetheless, some felt that because the FEP is not available equally to all, some efforts should be made to help those left out. Local remediation efforts, though, will be informed by overall campus budget stability and whether cut funds are restored (or actually cut). Differing primary functions of campus CORs further complicates calls for uniform remediation.

ACTION: Analyst Feer will revise the letter to call only for the restoration of COR funds and circulate the edited draft to the committee prior to submission to the Academic Council.

VIII. New Business

1. Post-Doctoral Scholar Unionization

ISSUE: UC's post-doctoral scholars have reached an agreement with the United Auto Workers (UAW, who also represent UC's GSIs and TAs); they are negotiating particulars of their nascent contract. UCORP discusses how it can positively influence the proceedings by encouraging faculty consultation with UC's collective bargaining team.

DISCUSSION: Members noted that a single faculty voice is unlikely to present negotiators with comprehensive information given the diversity of academic fields. It was suggested that UCORP and the Senate offer their services, and it was wondered whether faculty could review the contracts under the auspices of Shared Governance. While direct involvement is unlikely, a list of topics for negotiators to be acutely aware of might prove useful. One such topic is the prevention of deleterious effects on graduate students due to changing work parameters of post-doctoral scholars.

Adjournment: 3:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Kenneth Feer, Senior Policy Analyst

Attest: Phokion Kolaitis, UCORP Vice Chair