

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY

Minutes of Meeting
April 9, 2012**I. Chair's Announcements**

1. The Academic Council met on March 21, and discussed:
 - The University of California Observatories (UCO) review: The Academic Council also heard from Santa Cruz Chancellor Blumenthal and Executive Vice President for Business Operations Nathan Brostrom on the matter. The UCORP letter was endorsed, and the Council letter is still being drafted. Planning for the thirty-meter telescope (TMT) is now under higher scrutiny. Whether to split business planning from academic planning at UCO is still under discussion.
Discussion: Members reported significant local concerns about the details and the nature of the conversations regarding UCO; some feel that factual errors were made and that tone of documents that will comprise the historical record is not representative of the broader UC academic community. Chair Crawford noted that the Council considered perspectives from many stakeholders, and their collective evaluation found neither factual errors nor political errors. He encouraged members to address further concerns through divisional mechanisms.
 - The San Francisco campus has proposed to re-interpret its local Senate membership guidelines and extend Senate membership to new populations.
Discussion: Members noted that expanded Senate membership would further strain local COR budgets. Members were unclear how the move would impact other Senate membership discussions in other venues.
2. The Academic Council Special Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources (ACSCANR) met and discussed issues relating to shared governance. While the Senate may now name representatives to the program council, the time commitment involved may be an obstacle. Legacy issues surrounding funding lines remain.
3. The Academic Council Special Committee on Lab Issues (ACSCOLI) met with Regent Pattiz. Two new lab directors face significant budget challenges. The lab fee program's substantial over-subscription rate bodes well for that research pipeline. An on-going concern involves balancing security protocols and academic freedom; some see this as exacerbating latent morale issues.

II. Review of the Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society (CITRIS)

Action: The committee collectively revised the draft response.

III. ORGS

Steve Beckwith, Vice President

1. Portfolio Review:
Issue: Vice President Beckwith presented a chart outlining the vast scope of UC research programs. He proposes to use funding competitions as validation of research value. However, some state-funded programs are beyond UC's ability to sunset.
Discussion: Members asked how central funding allocation decisions would be made going forward, specifically inquiring after the UC Observatories budget. Vice President Beckwith noted that the Keck contract runs through 2018, with a 4% escalator; it will be renegotiated at the proper time. Of the portion of the UCO budget that UC can control, roughly 1/3 is dedicated to faculty salaries, 1/3 to staff salaries, and 1/3 to administration and operation of the

Lick observatory; it is unclear where savings can be realized given current structures.

2. Institutional Review Boards:

With Jeff Hall, Director, Research Policy Development

Update: A question arose during the climate survey vetting process: does this type of survey require IRB approval? The IRB directors determined that this did not constitute human subjects research, so IRB approval was not originally sought. However, without IRB approval, the ability of researchers to subsequently access the data might be limited as being beyond the original scope or intent. Further discussion revealed that past UC IRB processes were over-inclusive, a fact also suggested by recent “efficiency” cuts. New policies that specify that quality improvement surveys and such are by definition pre-exempt will be drafted and promulgated. It will be for later researchers who wish to use the data to undergo IRB approval.

3. Conflict of Interest – Researcher, National Institutes of Health, PH&S training requirements:

With Jeff Hall, Director, Research Policy Development

Issue: Last summer, proposed new rules were opened for comment, and they are now to go into effect this August. The changes involve specific training for PH&S-funded research to reflect NSF's specific standards. The changes include a lower threshold for reporting conflicts and the addition of service and committee work in reports. The new training module will need to be completed before new awards are released. Communications and the new module are being drafted by a joint committee and should be ready by July.

Discussion: Members asked if the Senate would have a chance to review the new drafts; Analyst Feer will investigate. Members also inquired what punitive steps would be recommended in the policy, and Director Hall indicated the question would be referred to Academic Personnel units. Members voiced concerns over researcher safety given the public nature of these reports.

IV. Task Force on Principles, Processes, and Assessment of UC Systemwide Research Investments (PPA)

Jenny Gautier, Deputy to Vice President, ORGS

Issue: The committee debated questions regarding the minimum number of campuses for a project to be considered multi-campus, and the role each campus must play in such efforts. The committee similarly discussed questions about industry partnerships and time-limited projects.

Action: This month's alternates will be invited to this month's PPA videoconference.

V. Systemwide Review Items

1. Proposed Technical Changes to APMs 035 (Affirmative Action) and 190 (Whistleblowers):

Note: Item deferred.

2. APMs 010, 015, and 016 (Shared Governance and Academic Freedom):

Note: Item deferred.

VI. Proposed Compendium Revisions

Note: Item deferred.

VII. Campus Updates

Only two campuses had new information to share:

Davis: There are concerns about the cessation of ARRA funding and its impact to local research efforts.

Los Angeles: The process of revising ORU funding and administration has re-opened the issue of worthwhile research that cannot survive in a competitive funding market.

VIII. New Business

None.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30. Minutes prepared by Kenneth Feer, Senior Policy Analyst.

Attest: John Crawford, UCORP Chair