UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Susannah Scott
Chair, Assembly of the
Academic Senate
Faculty Representative,
UC Board of Regents

Academic Senate

Office of the President
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Oakland, CA 94607

senate.universityofcalifornia.edu

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November 20, 2026

James B. Milliken
President, University of California

Re: Decision on Systemwide OpenAI Purchase Agreement

Dear President Milliken,

On behalf of the Academic Council, I write to express deep concern about the decision to proceed with the systemwide OpenAI purchase agreement, and the manner in which it was reached and communicated.

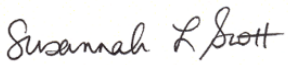
In our October 30, 2026 letter, Council raised significant concerns about the lack of meaningful Senate consultation prior to a purchasing decision that has direct implications for teaching, learning, assessment, and other matters within the faculty's authority. We requested that finalization of the agreement be deferred to permit Senate consultation and recommendations on next steps, and that the Senate input play a substantive role in any subsequent AI license deployment as well as negotiation of any future AI enterprise agreements. In our view, these concerns and requests were left unaddressed in your November 19 response.

Council is particularly troubled that we learned of the final decision approximately one hour before the administration's public announcement. This approach is inconsistent with the longstanding norm of "no surprises" between the Academic Senate and the administration. It also falls short of our expectations regarding shared governance.

Council recognizes that faculty hold differing views about the merits of the agreement itself. However, we are united in our concern about the decision-making process. Although the purchasing deal has been finalized, critical questions about campus deployments remain. We expect consultation with the systemwide and divisional Senates before any campus deployment begins and on the academic parameters governing use. We reiterate our call for a substantive consultative role in future AI acquisitions and contract renewals affecting UC's academic mission.

We urge the administration to partner with the Senate so that future decisions of this magnitude follow a genuinely collaborative and consultative process.

Sincerely,



Susannah Scott
Chair, Academic Council

cc: Academic Council
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President Hexter
Chief Operating Officer Nava
Vice President and Chief of Staff Kao
Vice President Williams
Senate Division Executive Directors
Senate Executive Director Lin

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President James B. Milliken

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November 19, 2026

Academic Council Chair Scott

Dear Chair Scott:

Thank you for your October 30 letter regarding the systemwide procurement of OpenAI licenses.

As you know, leadership in the AI era is one of the highest priorities of the Board of Regents. No institution is in a better position to provide leadership in the ethical, principled use of AI. To be in a position to lead, we believe it is essential to have affordable, equitable, secure use of advanced AI tools.

We appreciate the Academic Council's recognition of the benefits of coordinated purchasing at UC, including lower costs, stronger security and data protections, and broader access. In negotiating systemwide purchases, UCOP strives to be a good steward of public resources while procuring goods and services that support the important diverse activities of the UC community.

Vice President Williams has discussed the OpenAI purchase with you, Vice Chair Nuru-Jeter, UCACC Chair Ilya Brookwell, the Academic Council, and other faculty leaders over the past month. These discussions provided an important opportunity to understand and respond to the concerns raised about the purchasing process, communications with faculty governance, contract terms, data protection, and more.

The tools provided through the OpenAI purchase are already very widely used by UC students and faculty, often through personal accounts which are not covered by UC-negotiated terms for privacy, data retention, or student records. This purchase will help ensure equitable access to these widely-used tools while providing stronger data protections and lower costs. Providing our campuses with access to these tools in no way mandates their use by students or faculty, nor does it establish academic policy. UC faculty retain authority to determine whether and how ChatGPT Edu and any other AI tools made available by UC campuses—including Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, TritonGPT, ZotGPT, Anthropic, and VersaChat—may be used in classrooms and labs.

After consideration of the points raised in your letter, I have decided that given the cost, access, and security and data protection benefits to UC community members, this purchase should move forward. This decision has the full support of all UC Chancellors.

This purchase is a systemwide software procurement that will make ChatGPT and Codex licenses available to all campuses. Each UC campus will be responsible for managing deployment locally, consistent with campus policies and practices.

Thank you again for your letter. There will be many opportunities for us to continue discussion of the use of AI at UC in the future and how we work together to ensure that UC leads in the ethical and principled use of AI.

Sincerely,



James B. Milliken
President

cc: Chancellors