UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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

Academic Senate

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November 23, 2026

James B. Milliken
President, University of California

Rachael Nava
Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

Re: UCACC Comments on the Systemwide OpenAI Purchase Agreement

Dear President Milliken and COO Nava:

As a follow-up to the Academic Council's October 30, 2026 letter concerning the systemwide OpenAI purchase agreement and Senate consultation, I am forwarding the attached November 20 letter from the University Committee on Academic Computing and Communications (UCACC), which the Academic Council has endorsed for transmittal to the administration and Senate divisions.

UCACC's letter raises several concerns about the agreement, including its implications for teaching and learning, faculty authority over instruction, and the need for meaningful Senate consultation regarding implementation. These concerns reinforce the importance of the shared governance principles and expectations outlined in Council's previous correspondence.

We ask that the administration give full consideration to UCACC's comments as it moves forward with implementation of the agreement.

Sincerely,

Susannah L Scott

Susannah Scott
Chair, Academic Council

cc: Academic Council

Vice President and Chief of Staff Kao
VP and CIO Williams
AVP and Chief Procurement Officer Williams
Chair Brookwell, University Committee on Academic Computing & Communications (UCACC)
Senate Division Executive Directors
Senate Executive Director Lin

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UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC COMPUTING AND COMMUNICATIONS (UCACC)
Ilya Brookwell, Chair
Ilya.brookwell@ucr.edu

November 20th, 2026

Susannah Scott
Distinguished Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry
Academic Senate Chair

Dear Chair Scott,

I am writing to report feedback from UCACC following the ad hoc meeting with Van Williams on November 12th to discuss the OpenAI purchase agreement. This letter is also to offer preliminary feedback on the UC press-room statement: "UC expands collaboration with OpenAI, offering free access for students, faculty and staff."

The UCACC is concerned that the Open AI purchase was signed without wider consultation with a variety of relevant systemwide senate committees and without consultation at the divisional senate level. Several members of UCACC are divided on the merits and drawbacks of the purchase contract, especially with regards to impacts on faculty and staff labor and student learning outcomes. All UCACC members agree that Open AI tools will have significant effects, both positive and negative on teaching and research. Making OpenAI's tools widely available across the university constitutes an unprecedented intervention into the core mission and routine functioning of the university.

Several members of UCACC objected to the UCOP problem statement on AI (presented on November 12th). Several members also objected to a variety of claims made by UCOP in support of their purchase agreement with OpenAI. It is important to note that UCACC could not converge on a

unanimous position, and this was a consequence of limited time for consultation as well as constrained deliberation between members. The following is a list of concerns:

(1) Some members reject the claim that 23,500 paying UC email addresses constitutes a critical mass of Open AI users and that this justifies a need to serve the entire UC community with similar tiered Chat GPT accounts. Furthermore, it is difficult to qualify the significance of the 211,500 users who reportedly use ChatGPT with a UC email address. OpenAI has supplied no financial records and no usage records to support these data points.

(2) Some members reject the claim that the purchase agreement makes no mandate, no curriculum change, no additions to course or learning management systems and no exclusivity. ChatGPT is currently the only proposed universal AI system to serve all staff, students and faculty. It is reasonable to conclude that centrally procured licenses at universal scale sends the clear message that all staff, students and faculty should use OpenAI tools for curriculum and learning systems. UCOP's own press statement notes: "All UC campuses will also have **full use** of OpenAI Academy materials, which teach individuals about how language models work and the most effective ways to use them (emphasis added)." This constitutes a pedagogical and instructional design initiative at the express direction of OpenAI. It oversteps faculty authority over instruction. UCOP should make the OpenAI Academy materials available and subject to full systemwide senate review.

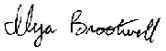
(3) UCOP claims that "availability is not endorsement." Members overwhelmingly reject this claim. The purchase of ChatGPT licenses cannot be considered as a case separate from ChatGPT uses. A universal purchase for ChatGPT licenses constitutes universal endorsement for widespread use.

(4) Some members reject the claim that "access isn't enough, but it comes first." Some members are not convinced that access to OpenAI's ChatGPT licenses constitutes a grave concern for equity and inclusion. Equal access does not necessarily lead to equitable outcomes. UCOP has offered anecdotal evidence justifying the license for OpenAI tools, and OpenAI has declined to release their presentation slides illustrating academic use cases for OpenAI tools. When UCACC requested limited access to OpenAI system details, the company withheld their presentation slides citing proprietary and confidentiality concerns.

(5) Members agree that UCOP should minimally seek deeper consultation with the Senate and other stakeholder groups related to the OpenAI

agreement. Ultimately, UCACC members agree that UCOP should have sought endorsement from the Senate and its local divisions for the OpenAI agreement. If guidance and policy for OpenAI use is to come from the Senate, then decisions on implementation and roll-out should also come from the Senate which holds formally delegated authority over the university's instructional mission (Regents Bylaw 40.1).

Sincerely,



Ilya Brookwell, Chair
University Committee on Academic Computing and Communications