

## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY

Monday, February 12, 2024

## Meeting Minutes

**I. Chair's Announcements and Committee Discussion**

- Announcements

UCORP Chair Cynthia Schumann asked if others had received a communication from the university regarding a misunderstanding around work percentages for graduate students. It was unclear if the message was meant solely for the Davis campus.

- Future of UC Doctoral Programs Workgroup – update

Chair Schumann's subgroup of the Academic Planning Council's Future of UC Doctoral Programs Workgroup is working on recommendations for preparing doctoral students for diverse career paths and is generating ideas for incorporating preparation for non-academic careers along with academic careers. As part of this, the group is working on developing a set of core competencies for graduates of doctoral programs. Programs could then be assessed on whether they were meeting the requirements. The group is also seeking input about what the campuses already offer in terms of skilled professional development. UCORP members were asked to find out from their divisional committees what type of formal or informal programs are offered. For example, UC Irvine has the "A2i/Accelerate to industry" program, UCSF has a re-orientation program for third year students, and UC Berkeley offers pedagogy seminars. Feedback from students on the workgroup was that career advice should be more field-specific so that there can be a shared understanding from the beginning.

UCORP members asked about assessments for the core competencies, whether there would be accountability, and who would be responsible. It was noted that not every graduate student gets experience teaching, and many do not need it. Communication skills, however, are key for any graduates going into academia or industry.

- Planning for UC Congress on Research

Chair Schumann explained that she and Vice President Theresa Maldonado had been selected by Provost Newman to co-chair a "Congress" on research in fall 2024. They are taking an optimistic approach in the spirit of discovery, looking broadly at potential topics, and want to include a global perspective and real-world problems. Barriers to research will also be addressed, with proposed ideas of including funding, public messaging, bureaucracy, and administrative burden. Schumann was asked to present to the Council of VCRs and the Council of Vice Chancellors on Wednesday.

The committee spent much time talking about potential themes, topics, and target audience throughout the meeting, both with and without the committee consultants.

**Action:** Meeting minutes from December 11, 2023, were approved.

**II. Academic Senate Leadership**

Academic Council Chair James Steintrager joined the meeting and joined in the discussion of generating ideas for the UC Congress on Research. He noted that he was still unsure of how the academic congress model interacted with the work of the Senate. Conceptually, the congresses are venues for big thinking that would then have practical follow-ups.

The group discussed ways that the conference could be more interactive, such as using breakout sessions and additional socializing time. Asked about who might be a good speaker to invite to talk about science communication, UCORP members suggested that guest speakers should be directly relevant to the work of UC. Chair Steintrager and the Irvine representative suggested UCI's Daniel Whiteson.

As ideas were discussed, the question of the target audience came up. It was acknowledged that not all topics or themes would be of interest to UC academics and faculty leaders. If a main focus is getting the word out more forcefully about the benefits of UC research, then a target audience might be UC communication staff, funders, and the legislature.

UC communicates its research to the public in many ways, and it might be worthwhile to collect a list of these. UCORP members were asked to submit the methods used by their campuses to disseminate information about research.

After the Research Congress planning discussion, Chair Steintrager provided a brief overview of the current activities of the Senate:

- Steintrager was recently in Sacramento to represent UC at a hearing on intersegmental relations. The hearing had participation from the three high education segments in California as well as independent colleges and universities. Legislators and the governor have been very focused on easing transfer for students from the community colleges to four-year institutions. Steintrager noted that California does an amazing job of offering transfer options, but there is still criticism that it could be better and clearer. UC's main concern is major preparation so that transfer students are caught up with their peers and can be successful when they arrive. Some of the directives from the government in recent years have made it harder for students to go into STEM fields when they transfer.
- The January Regents' meeting was disrupted several times due to controversial items on the agenda. On Thursday, the Regents voted to postpone for a year a new policy that would have opened the way for UC to hire undocumented students. Although UCLA law scholars had advocated for testing a US statute from the 1980s, second, third, and fourth opinions revealed it to be too risky for the university. Many students were on hand to oppose this decision. President Drake has pledged \$7m to support these students who are not able to be hired with fellowships and other resources.
- The Regents also discussed their proposed policy to ban political statements on administrative websites. Chair Steintrager asked that it first undergo a systemwide Senate review, and the Regents agreed. Comments are due back from the review in mid-March.
- Senate Regulation 630.E., the "campus experience" requirement was not discussed at the Regents' meeting because the meeting was shut down after protests about the undocumented student hiring decision. The updated regulation, passed by the Academic Council last year, requires a minimum number of units to be taken in person on a campus. The postponed discussion will happen instead on Weds, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>. Although widely seen as retroactive ban on fully online undergraduate degrees, the Senate disagrees. A new Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities will make recommendations in this area.
- Steintrager said that the Senate leadership is currently seeking input on topics and members for a Senate workgroup on artificial intelligence. The group will determine issues in AI that are relevant to faculty, then lay the groundwork for another group that would approach it systematically in an approach that connects the domains of the systemwide committees.

### **III. Consultation with the Office of the President – Office of Research and Innovation**

#### **- UC Congress on Research planning**

Discussion of the Research Congress continued with Vice President Theresa Maldonado and her team. Chair Schumann described some of the potential areas of focus, such as strategic communication and how funders make awards decisions.

The idea of including "community engagement" as a topic for the Congress was raised. AVP Scott Brandt noted that the community benefit plan was a key element of California's hydrogen hub proposal. The DOE

said that it was best community benefit plan they had seen. All agreed that community engagement was critical in research. VP Maldonado noted that UC Berkeley professor Emily Ozer (who served on UCORP last year) co-leads a grass-roots group (with Mhel Kavanaugh-Lynch at UCOP) that is discussing how to give faculty proper credit for community engagement.

VP Maldonado suggested other topics that could be about public-private partnerships, international collaborations, and issues around doing restricted research at UC. She reminded the committee that the CHIPS Act for semiconductor research included restricted funds and therefore may have impeded UC's direct interaction with the opportunity.

Suggestions were made for breakout sessions that would focus on the great things that UC has done, including in areas of climate, energy, and global or national politics. The topics could be used to then delve into issues of public benefit, community engagement, commercialization of research, etc.

There was further discussion of audience and whether the focus should be inward or outward facing (or both). Day and a half. UCORP members were asked for ideas to make the most from interactive time and the type of sessions they would join for. Contributions of additional ideas can be sent after the meeting.

#### **- UCHRI Review – Mellon Update**

UC is working with the Mellon Foundation to amend the previous endowment challenge agreement. In lieu of requiring UCHRI to raise \$20 million in new endowment gifts to match the \$10 million from Mellon, the Foundation has agreed to consider new endowment gifts in the humanities to any of the UC campuses since the challenge to constitute the match. This modified agreement would allow UCHRI to use the income from what has grown to a \$15 million corpus in the six years since the original grant. Based on prior discussions with the campuses, UCOP and UCHRI are confident that endowment gifts far in excess of the \$20 million can be documented for Mellon's consideration. Documentation of the campus endowment gifts is now being collected to provide to Mellon. Although the new agreement would provide UCHRI with only a \$15 million endowment (instead of the \$30 million originally envisioned), the hope is that together with ongoing fundraising efforts, this resolution will allow the Institute to continue to provide systemwide humanities research programming for UC.

#### **IV. Systemwide Items Under Review**

Those who spoke seemed to be supportive of the Proposed Regents Policy on Use of University Administrative Websites. The committee analyst will create a shared document for UCORP members to add their comments by Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Comments are due back to the Academic Council by March 8<sup>th</sup>.

UCORP will not comment on the revisions to APM 285, Lecturer with Security of Employment Series.

Committee members are asked to review the policy on controlled substances and determine whether there are any concerns.

Chair Schumann provided a brief update on the changes that the Senate's Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) is considering for Area C (Mathematics) and Area H (a new Ethnic Studies overlay requirement). These are controversial and might appear as news items in the coming weeks/months.

#### **V. Research Topics Committee Discussion**

*Committee members discuss the issues facing local Committees on Research and other research-related topics.*

*UCLA:* UCLA has purchased the Westside Pavilion, a former shopping mall, to be used for research institutes and innovation spaces. The campus has purchased several other pieces of real estate in the LA area recently.

As chair of the local COR, Professor Sampath will be involved in meetings to discuss implications for research spending based on the new space. COR is still working on getting the chair a seat on the Executive Council.

*UCSF:* The issue of expanding Senate membership to include Adjunct and Health Science Clinical professors is coming up again. Faculty in those series account for about 25% of all faculty at UCSF. Funding obtained by faculty in those series doubled between 2017 and 2023. It was noted that other UC campuses with clinical appointments will be interested in seeing how the effort to expand senate membership progresses at UCSF.

*UCI:* The campus is preparing for a new budget model that will be implemented next year and will impact academic units first.

*UCD:* The UC Davis provost has convened a Sustaining Teaching and Research Task Force (START) to review and assess the academic model (teaching, research, and service). There is discussion at the Executive Council about the process for the division's selection of its chair and vice chair. Davis uses CoC to appoint faculty to these roles, while it seems that other divisions use a direct vote.

*UCSD:* The local committee is involved in reviewing a research center and has been discussing syllabi for graduate students and the need for broad expectations.

*UCSC:* There have been mixed messages from the administration about the extent of the campus' budget deficit, but the Senate is making sure there are no draconian cuts. A new budget model was rolled out last year, along with a consolidation of authority under the Provost. Research was not included in the first wave of changes.

*UCB:* Some faculty are beginning to push back against administrative requirements for working with graduate students, such as approving timesheets and vacation accruals.

## **VI. Next steps**

- UCHRI Review – Summary of comments and questions for director

UCORP Vice Chair Susanne Nicholas thanked the committee members for sending their comments on the UCHRI report and reminded the group that UCHRI's Interim Director Julia Lupton would join the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting for a brief presentation and discussion. Questions that were submitted by the committee will be sent to Director Lupton in advance of the meeting.

Chair Schumann will follow up with questions about the Research Congress planning.

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Meeting adjourned: 12:30pm

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller, UCORP committee analyst

Attest: Cynthia Schumann, UCORP Chair

### ***Meeting participants:***

Cynthia Schumann (Chair), Susanne Nicholas (Vice Chair), Larry Karp (Berkeley), Paul Hastings (Davis), James Weatherall (Irvine), Alapakkam (Sam) Sampath (Los Angeles), Tao Ye (Merced), Elina Zuniga (San Diego), Bin Liu (San Francisco), Alan Murray (Santa Barbara), Michael Hance (Santa Cruz), Hanna Butler-Struben (Graduate Student, UC Davis), Adam Tfayli (Undergraduate Student, UCLA) James Steintrager (Academic Council Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Theresa Maldonado (Vice President for Research and Innovation), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward (Director, UC Research Initiatives)