UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY
Monday, March 11, 2024

Meeting Minutes

I. Chair's Announcements and Committee Discussion

UCORP Chair Cyndi Schumann reviewed the agenda, including describing the format for the interview with interim UCHRI Director – an important part of the MRU five-year review process.

- **Academic Congress on Research**

The UC Congress on Research will be one of three planned congresses sponsored by Provost Katherine Newman to be held in the 2024-25 academic year. The other two will focus on Academic Freedom and Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Chair Schumann is helping to lead and plan the event, along with VP Theresa Maldonado.

Schumann is still focused on the overall goals and audience and finding an inspiring keynote speaker. Inward facing topics might include barriers that researchers face, infrastructure, resources, funding, and public relations. An outward-facing focus would include topics such as how to inform and educate the public. Regardless, the Congress will feature highlights of major UC research.

- *ACTION:* Meeting minutes from February 12, 2024, were approved.

II. UCHRI Review – Discussion with Director
Julia Lupton, Professor, UC Irvine, and UCHRI Interim Director

Liaisons from CCGA and UCPB – David Barner and Michael Emmerich respectively – joined the meeting for the discussion with interim Director Julia Lupton. Director Lupton provided thorough responses to UCORP's questions. The following summarizes Lupton's presentation and subsequent discussion:

Governance structure: The restructuring of UCHRI's governance was recommended by the President's Advisory Committee for Research in the Humanities (PACHR), which was reconstituted in 2021, and is chaired by UC Berkeley's Ralph Hexter. The Board of Governors was replaced by a Board of Advisors, consisting of UC faculty. A Grants Review Committee approves how funds are allocated. In addition, PACHR, which includes humanities deans or their delegates from all UC campuses, provides oversight of UCHRI and the campus humanities centers. In addition to revamping the governance structure, PACHR recommended that UCHRI increase its efforts around systemwide engagement and multicampus participation, which is has done.

Graduate students: The question of employment of humanities PhDs outside of academia has been a topic of UCHRI for many years. One current program in Philosophy explores how to enhance non-academic training. UCHRI is involved with several programs that work on communications training, including funding a summer institute in climate communications.

Budget: UCHRI tries to allocate one-third of its budget to operations, one-third to individual grants, and one-third to humanities centers. Lupton noted that some of the "operational" funds are for grantees to travel to events, such as in the underrepresented scholars program. The staff is being reduced from 10 FTE in 2021-22 to 6 in 2024-25. This means that the remaining staff are expected to do more, including increase the visibility of UCHRI.

Decrease in funding levels: Traditionally, much of UCHRI funding has come from the Mellon and Luce foundations. UCORP learned about the status of the Mellon Foundation challenge grant at its last meeting, but Lupton provided a summary and update. 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 that were raised by the UC campuses during the period of the challenge to constitute the match. Documentation has now been provided to the Mellon Foundation, and it looks like the total is over $200m during the period. Although the endowment will be smaller than envisioned, if Mellon agrees to the change in terms, the now $15 million endowment will still be enough to cover operating expenses and some programming. Once it is established, UCHRI will be eligible to apply for more project funding.

Lupton felt that the latest proposal to the Luce Foundation was declined due to having an interim director in place. Once UCHRI is on more stable ground it will be better positioned to successfully obtain additional large grant funding.

Underrepresented scholars program: The underrepresented scholars program pairs junior faculty with senior colleagues for workshops on tenure, publishing, and other topics. The group convenes remotely throughout the year and in Irvine for an in-person gathering. The funding comes from the MRPI award and the Advancing Faculty Diversity initiative.

In discussion, the group asked whether a staff of six would be sufficient going forward. The core group will mainly do finance and planning, and then the staff can grow as it is able through externally funded opportunities. Lupton's term is through July 1, 2025, and if the Mellon funding comes through, then PACHR will convene a search committee for a new director. Lupton mentioned that having an interim director is seen as an impediment in obtaining funding. Once the Mellon funding is in place, more projects will be ready to launch, and UCHRI is well-positioned to work as a connector between projects. Some that were mentioned are efforts that focus on underserved populations and untold stories. A new director would easily be able to take over that coordination work with projects that have PIs. For some grants, the director needs to be the PI.

Lupton mentioned that UCHRI contributes programming and professional development for the Scholars at Risk program for refugee scholars. Artificial Intelligence is also a hot topic, and many humanities centers are holding events about the language and communicative aspects of AI. UCHRI is hosting a 2-day UC-wide AI event for faculty.

The group briefly discussed the inevitable tension between what investigators want to do and what the funding agencies want to fund. UCHRI's regranting program is important in that it avoids some of this. Otherwise, proposals need to fit grant calls. Having diverse funding sources would allow a wider variety of subject matter.

Other topics touched upon included whether UCHRI provides seed-funding for projects, helps faculty seek additional, extramural support, and assists in pursuing larger, more complex, multi-campus grants. A suggestion was made for a grantsmanship program to help graduate students, postdocs, and younger faculty know how to structure, write, and submit grants. UCORP members also suggested that UCHRI use metrics for indicating success of graduate support, for example. Grant reports talk about the work and results, and often include what will come next, and grantees might be interviewed or write short pieces that are shared on social media, but metrics are not necessarily collected.

It was acknowledged that UCHRI is crucial for the humanities at UC in part because it is so challenging to get funding. UCHRI is able to get funding to faculty who couldn't otherwise attract it themselves.

III. Consultation with the Office of the President – Office of Research and Innovation
Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office
Anna Ward, Director, UC Research Initiatives
Deborah Motton, Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination

- **Research Security**

Executive Director Motton described some federal regulatory regarding associations with "malign foreign talent recruitment programs." As outlined in the CHIPS Act, the DoD will not provide research funding for research proposals that include personnel participating in malign foreign talent recruitment programs or to institutions that do not have a policy that prohibits involvement with malign foreign talent programs. NSF is adopting similar restrictions. UCOP staff are working with campus Contracts and Grants offices about how this will be handled, including how to indicate, communicate, and define what might be considered a "malign" program. It is likely that PIs and proposal personnel will be asked to self-certify. Increased disclosure from PIs who are working with foreign entities is one of the goals.

The definition of malign foreign talent recruitment programs can currently be found here: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/OSTP-Foreign-Talent-Recruitment-Program-Guidelines.pdf

- **RPGO Funding Opportunities**

The Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPI) and Lab Fees Research Program (LFRP) Collaborative Research and Training award RFPs will be released later this month. The MRPI opportunity is meant to facilitate multicampus collaboration and requires participation from a minimum of three campuses. It is open to any field or subject. The two categories are the Pilot/Planning Awards, which are short-term, and the larger Program Awards, which provide funding for 2-4 years. Information on these awards be disseminated via multiple email channels, research development websites, and at: https://ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/

The thematic area of the first LFRP Collaborative Research and Training award will be "research advancing microelectronics." This was one of the areas proposed by the deputy directors at Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Labs and reviewed by UCORP and ACSCOLI (the Senate's Special Committee on Lab Issues) last year. Two workshops were held in the winter and will yield reports that will be posted on the website. Applicants are not required to have attended the workshops. More information at: https://ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/

IV. Systemwide Items Under Review

UCORP members discussed the "Revised Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-50: Controlled Substances Use In Research and Teaching." Local committees have already discussed and seemed to have only minor concerns. One campus suggested that including a summary of key points would be helpful.

Action: UCORP will collect comments and send a joint response regarding the revised policy.

V. Oracle Financial System Issues

UC Merced representative Tao Ye described the Oracle Enterprise financial system implementation at UC Merced and provided a detailed timeline and lessons learned. More than a year after the rollout, researchers continued to experience widespread problems that included inaccurate account balances, charges posted to wrong accounts, severe delays in award setup and closure, and delays and errors in payroll. In fall/winter 2023-24, the campus established a joint Administrative-Senate Task Force on Financial Management and Reporting. The Task Force now has three workgroups: Inflow (financial data entry, validation, and approval), Reporting (generation of financial reports), and Payroll. These groups are collaborating to try to solve the problems. The database chart string data entry is extremely problematic, and it is unclear what the solution might be. Addressing the issues that accompany the Oracle system must be a top institutional priority for months and possibly years to come.

Some suggestions for newly adopting campuses from campuses that adopted the system earlier include a slower rollout, training of staff before the implementation, and making allowances for additional resources as needed. At UCSD, some faculty were in a "hypercare" cohort that provided additional help.

ACTION: UCORP will write a memo with concrete suggestions for campuses starting to roll it out.

VI. Academic Senate Leadership Update

Academic Council Chair James Steintrager and Vice Chair Steven Cheung joined the meeting to provide an overview of current activities of the Senate.

Chair Steintrager said that he had just gotten off the phone with a reporter and relayed the topics that she was interested in:

- A BOARS (Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools) workgroup has made initial recommendations for changes to the mathematics admissions requirement for UC. Certain courses in Data Science will no longer "validate" (substitute for) algebra II. This has been reported in the press and is controversial in that some think it's helpful for under-resourced to get into math. But others say that exact population needs rigorous math in order to succeed in STEM and at UC. Some UC Regents and possibly legislators are interested in this.

- A new UC admissions requirement for Ethnic Studies has been through multiple reviews and seems less controversial at this point.

- The Board of Regent's proposed policy on political statements on administrative websites will be discussed at a special meeting of the Academic Council tomorrow morning. Chair Steintrager hopes that the Regents will recognize that creating such a policy is complicated in terms of principles and implementation. He noted that a great deal of thought has gone into UC's policies on academic freedom, and that this policy has none of that consideration.

- The Academic Council's attempt to reinstate a "campus experience requirement" for undergraduates was knocked down by the Board of Regents. This will help ease the way for the creation of online undergraduate degree programs. A Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities and UC Quality Undergraduate Degree Programs has been convened. The Senate wants to make sure that issues from the experiences of other institutions are seriously considered, including using third party vendors, properly informing students, and standards for admission. The Task Force is looking at profiles to inform guidance for online undergraduate programs. One is a student that wants to go to a specific campus for an impacted major and another is stop-out students. The Task Force will produce a progress report in May and full report in September.

Meeting adjourned: 12:45pm
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), Weixin Yao (Riverside) Elina Zuniga (San Diego), Bin Liu (San Francisco), Alan Murray (Santa Barbara), Michael Hance (Santa Cruz), Hanna Butler-Struben (Graduate Student, UC Davis), James Steintrager (Academic Council Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward (Director, UC Research Initiatives), Julia Lupton (Professor, UC Irvine, and UCHRI Interim Director).