

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH POLICY**  
**Monday, May 13, 2024**

**Meeting Minutes**

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

*Cynthia Schumann, UCORP Chair*

*Susanne Nicholas, UCORP Vice Chair*

Chair Schumann discussed the planning for the UC Academic Congress on Research with the Council of VC-Rs at their retreat last week. She will continue to do more planning with Vice President Theresa Maldonado. Schumann asked committee members to think of 3-5 questions related to UC research that the congress could address that would inspire them to participate in such an event. She described the importance of including an evening social component to allow for more casual connections. The congress is now scheduled for mid-February at UCLA's Luskin Center.

Schumann thanked UCORP members (and their local committee analysts) for filling in information about each campus COR on a [shared spreadsheet](#). Divisions shared information on committee composition and faculty grant processes, which may be useful to compare.

Committee members submitted information on the status of the Oracle financial system at their campus and it was interesting to see that some campuses are either not planning on making the transition or are putting it off for several more years.

***ACTIONS:***

- Approved UCHRI Review Report to send to Academic Council
- Approved the UCORP meeting minutes from April 8, 2024

**II. Academic Senate Leadership Update**

*James Steintrager, Academic Council Chair*

*Steven Cheung, Academic Council Vice Chair*

Chair Steintrager said that the Senate would issue guidance for faculty in the event of a UAW strike authorization. The guidance would include information on the responsibilities of faculty as instructors of record. The precipitating motivation for calling for a strike is the protests and subsequent arrests at UCLA and UC San Diego.

At its next meeting, the Board of Regents will determine whether to enact a policy regarding discretionary statements on departmental websites. The revised policy adopts many of the guidelines previously recommended by the Academic Senate, but by and large the faculty would prefer guidelines over Regental policy.

UCORP members asked about different responses to the encampments at the campuses. All campuses have policies prohibiting the structures (tents), so the variation is mainly in the enforcement. Some noted that the decision to close a campus is an administrative decision, while decisions around courses are faculty matters.

Chair Steintrager asked about whether UCORP had new information to share about the implementation of the Oracle financial system. Members noted that part of the problem is that it is a core system that impacts everything.

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

*Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research and Innovation*

*Rodolfo Torres, Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, UC Riverside*

*Kathleen Erwin, Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office*

*Anna Ward, Director, UC Research Initiatives*

#### ***Proposed Changes to Alianza MX Leadership Structure***

UC Riverside Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development Rodolfo Torres joined the meeting to describe a proposal for new leadership for Alianza MX. Alianza is based at UC Riverside and in Mexico City and provides funding and logistical support for collaborations and engagement between UC and Mexico. It was established several years ago as an umbrella organization to bring together the UC MEXUS MRU, the UC Mexico Initiative, and Casa de California. UC MEXUS was reviewed by UCORP in 2021. After the departure of the previous director last June, VC Torres has overseen the staff and is about to launch a search for a new director.

Due to the scope of Alianza, which incorporates research in areas of Latino, Hispanic, or Chicano studies, collaborations with partner institutions in Mexico, management of the Casa de California facility in Mexico City, and governmental partnerships with Mexico, VC Torres and VP Theresa Maldonado are proposing to divide the leadership of the unit into two parts. The *operational director* would be an administrative position that would require an advanced degree in a relevant field, but not necessarily a tenured faculty appointment at UC (as required by standard MRU policy). This position would report to VC Torres, who, as a tenured faculty member, would serve in the capacity of *faculty director* and provide academic oversight of the program.

UCORP members were supportive of the proposal, noting that it seems to be in the best interest of UC and Alianza, but also noting that changes like this can make review of MRUs more challenging when the Senate is asked to evaluate them based on established criteria. Asked about whether the MRU designation was the best mechanism to support the program, VP Torres said that it can be beneficial in securing external funding.

#### ***Lab Fees Research Program***

Director Anna Ward said that the Lab Fees Research Program had held successful workshops on microelectronics as part of the latest award competition. The next topic focus will be community-engaged research in clean energy, which will be led by UCI. Ward wanted to let UCORP know that a new workshop topic has been proposed by the directors at Los Alamos and Livermore Labs on Artificial Intelligence. As part of the stakeholder input process, Ward has asked UCORP and the Senate's committee on the national labs to provide feedback on the topic as a thematic area. Ward will send additional information in writing detailing the changes in the process and program.

### **IV. Consultation with the Office of the President – Academic Personnel and Programs (*Executive Session*)**

Amy Lee, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Programs, joined the meeting for an executive session on labor-related topics. No minutes are recorded during executive session.

-----  
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), David Rocke (Davis), James Weatherall (Irvine), Alapakam (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), James Steintrager (Academic Council Chair), Steven Cheung (Academic Council Vice Chair), Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst), Theresa Maldonado (Vice President for Research and Innovation), Deborah Motton (Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination), Kathleen Erwin (Executive Director, Research Grants Program Office), Anna Ward (Director, UC Research Initiatives), Coreen Harada (Executive Director and Special Assistant to the Vice President for Research and Innovation), Rodolfo Torres (Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, UC Riverside)