

**COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA EMERITI ASSOCIATIONS  
COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA RETIREE ASSOCIATIONS**

Joint Zoom Meeting

April 28, 2021

UC Los Angeles

**ATTENDEES**

UC Berkeley: Marian Gade, Amy Block Joy, Caroline Kane, Camille Koue, Patti Owen, Cary Sweeney, Louise Taylor

UC Davis: Jo Anne Boorkman, Michael Chandler, Juliane Crowley, Barry Klein, Robert May, John Meyer, Joseph Suad, Kyle Urban

UC Irvine: Craig Behrens, Jim Danzinger, Jeri Frederick, George Miller, Emil Nguyen, Bill Parker, Pat Price, Bernadette Strobel, Marianne Schnaubelt, Jessica Utts

UC Los Angeles: Sue Abeles, Sue Barnes, Rosina Becerra, Roelina Berst, Gene Block, Janet Carter, John Dahl, Dolores Dyer, Ayesha Dixon, Elaine Fox, Adrian Harris, Michael Levine, David Lopez, Maria Lubrano, Daniel Mitchell, Anna Pautler, Jane Permaul, Judith Tuch, Eric Wang, Dick Weiss

UC Merced: Henry Forman, Ali Kalmin, Tom Peterson

UC Riverside: Bob Daly, Darleen DeMason, Mary Johnson, Douglas Mitchell, Cristina Otegui

UC San Diego: Mae Brown, Richard Attiyeh, Suzan Cioffi, Joel Dimsdale, Phyllis Mirsky, Henry Powell

UC San Francisco: Louis Gutierrez, Gail Harden, Sandra Norberg, Lawrence Pitts, Eric Vermillion, William Wara

UC Santa Barbara: William Ashby, Sandra Camp, Michael Furlong, Loy Lytle, Robert Mann, Karen Rasmussen

UC Santa Cruz: Judith Aissen, Roger Anderson, Barry Bowman, Christy Dawley, Lee Duffus, Ilse Lopes, Bill Parro, Frank Trueba, G Williams, Todd Wipke

LANL:

LBNL: Nancy Brown, Janice Dairiki

LLNL: Jeff Garberson

PARRA: Jim Dolgonas, Bill Newton

UCOP: Stephanie Beechem, Michael Drake, Bernadette Green, Joe Lewis, Cheryl Lloyd, Rachel Nosowsky, Anne St George

**Call to Order, Welcome**

John Meyer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Henry Powell announced that CUCEA had been having standing monthly meetings with CUCRA. The two presidents met with President Michael Drake and Executive Vice President and Provost Michael Brown. In addition, CUCEA is represented at UCOP through the Academic Senate's UC Faculty Welfare Committee and its subcommittees: the Task Force on the future of Health Care Plans (HCTF) and the Task Force on Investments and Retirement (TIFR). The CUCEA Chair also sits on the UC Retirement System (UCRS) Advisory Board, along with the Chair of CUCRA. It has been a busy year but one where significant problems are being tackled.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Phyllis Mirsky presented the minutes of the October 28, 2020, Joint Meeting held via Zoom. She indicated that there were a couple of typos that need to be corrected and that she had received some feedback, all of which had been incorporated. The minutes were approved.

## **Joint Benefits Committee Report**

Roger Anderson, Chair, says that the JBC has been concentrating most of last year on RASC, although it has been an ongoing problem as evidenced by the last 5 meeting reports. Initially the concerns were with the Redwood system, but hiccups still continue. The Covid pandemic had an effect on the operations, and there is hope that the 2021 retirement cycle will not be a repeat of 2020. Judith Aissen, from Santa Cruz, interviewed retirees and wrote a report.

The JBC report was sent to UCOP several weeks before the meeting, and they received a response as reflected in the slides presented:

--This year, retirees can opt in to a program called "No Lapse in Pay." If application is received by May 10 and there are no complications, retirees will receive a guaranteed payment on August 1.

--Communication with RASC by retirees is difficult. RASC is providing more self-service functionality, adding 20 more contract employees, and creating 3 new leadership roles

They want to improve speed of answers, and they are hiring retiree Richard Townsend to deal with complicated situations. Continuing issues are: absence of getting reliable information and absence of clear step by step guidelines for the retirement process. RASC wants to minimize the number of executive escalations, so they have created a new single point of contact. They are bringing in 2 senior level analysts; are expanding training opportunities; are creating more self-service in UCRoots; and are aligning RASC with other IT systems. They are also bringing in new tools to track and evaluate member experiences. By having delayed pension checks, there is a temporary loss of health insurance or fear that insurance would be lost.

There is an acknowledgement that RASC is addressing issues of the JBC.

Henry thanked Roger for his service as chair.

John Meyer noted that the process for sharing the JBC report was changed this spring. Instead of sending the report to UCOP after the meeting and waiting for a response that usually did not materialize, the report was sent to RASC before the meeting. Given the detailed response from RASC, this new process worked.

Caroline Kane asked what the Center Directors thought. Roger said that the JBC report went to Center Directors in mid to late March and that RASC and Rachel Nava have had the report for a month. There does not seem to be improvements so far, but most of the new processes are effective April 1. RASC is trying to fix things this year, and everyone is optimistic. John noted that there has been a high level of unanticipated phone calls to the centers, creating an extraordinary workload. Kyle Urban of Davis is cautiously optimistic that there will be some improvement with Bernadette Green at the helm. This summer will be the test. Davis has not had the capacity for last two summers because of RASC issues.

Amy Block Joy asked about password resets. Kyle noted that the functionality of password resets is in UCRoots and that they are trying to get personnel back on campus to help with the back end of RASC. Centers are not staffed appropriately, and the directors would like to bring retirement counselors back to the campuses.

Jo Anne Boorkman reiterated what Kyle said and CUCRA/CUCEA is trying to carry that message forward. Sandra Norberg asked if the information about the No Lapse in Pay program could go to Health Care Facilitators. Per Roger, there has been no movement to allow campus involvement and Health Care Facilitators (HCF) need UCRoots to function.

John noted that the new senior hires at UCOP may move in that direction. When UCOP responded to the Health Benefits Advisory Committee, they acknowledged the need for an increase in HCFs at the campuses.

Dan Mitchell asked if continuity of retiree health went along with the pension guarantee. Bill Parker noted the UCNet message said health coverage would continue with the pension guarantee.

Robert May responded that all pension dollars are internal and Social Security and health dollars are external.

Henry noted that Bernadette is working hard to correct the problems. With the systems redesign, the emphasis was on tech, and there was a loss of campus personnel, as well as a loss of communications to campus. It is hard to persuade UCOP to change.

### **Campus Welcome**

UCLA Emeriti Association President Richard Weiss welcomed everyone. He hoped that everyone had had a chance to watch the video. He then introduced Chancellor Eugene Block.

Chancellor Block noted that retirees play a major role on the UC campuses. He discussed the impact of COVID on the campus. The plus is that there is a national/international outreach with Zoom. Conferences had had huge attendance. He said that remote education is here, and there are now more tools to extend education. The dropping of the SAT has led to more and excellent applications. The pandemic has highlighted the need to understand science. We'll have more tools for remote learning and connecting to alumni. The workforce is effectively working from home, and there has been the opportunity to experiment and create work/life balances. He then introduced President Drake.

### **President Drake**

President Drake remarked that he is a retiree, too, and that he had to work through issues. The world is still dealing with COVID, and the medical effects are still there. The system is looking at the future of Fall. Decisions regarding dorms and classes are still unknown.

Drake cited the big issues going forward:

--Racial inequality. Covid has impacted and highlighted disproportionate economic differences. What can UC do as leaders in social justice, based on our past history?

--Climate Change and Climate Justice and their effect on the world, i.e., California wildfires, floods elsewhere. How can UC help to mitigate and balance them as we go forward?

We still have "normal" issues, but the above global issues overlay them. UC has a role to play in quality of life around the world. Retirees have a role. The work of CUCRA/CUCEA on a range of issues can facilitate the normal things we deal with.

Questions:

*Q: What has been the impact of COVID on faculty, especially young ones and those with children?*

Everyone's life has been disrupted. Faculty research can't be done (field, library, labs), and some have had to pause careers. The administration worries about children at home, especially with a working

single parent. Children are not getting the full, needed instructional support. Gaps are developing in this generation of young people and everyone needs to work together to recover from this.

*Q: UC is a transformational institution and people want to continue contributing to the University. There are barriers to the loyalty, including concerns about health care. How do we nurture the fondness and keep retirees engaged despite administrative problems?* I am disappointed with the challenges of RASC. We are fully committed to get the issues resolved. We want to ensure that complicated and challenging functions are done as smoothly and effectively as possible. Regarding the data breach, there are ongoing active efforts to get data. UC has thousands of hits per day, but it is a challenge for large institutions to maintain security. UC has hired a private organization to comb through what has been compromised and will contact individuals. This may take 90 days for individual notifications to go out. I urge the entire community to take advantage of Experian; 140,000 have taken advantage so far.

*Q. Will the SAT package be permanently dropped or returned to next year's application package?* The SAT will not return for the next few years, if it will return at all. If the tests are reimagined, they might return. Although test requirements were optional for applications this year, the admissions process didn't consider any test scores. We want a broad, fair, nurturing policy to give broad access. If tests work as a barrier to admission, we don't want to see this.

*Q: What would you look for from our organizations to support your leadership?*

- 1) Leadership appreciates the input and connections and wants to learn from the experiences of retirees. As we are looking at policy and going through the work of the University, retirees and emeriti are part of our thinking.
- 2) To the extent that retirees and emeriti can participate in events that exist or create events to bring retirees and emeriti to campuses, your experience, perspective and knowledge you contributed to in the past, enriches and strengthens the quality of life of the campuses.
- 3) In your role as civic leaders, it helps legislators to hear from real people. They hear a lot from special interest groups who want one thing or another. Tell them that this University made you a better person. They often overlook the contributions we have made to the State.

*Q: How do you approach leadership? How do you manage up—Board of Regents, State Legislature, Academic Senate, campuses, etc. How do you describe your goals to them?* There are different constituencies. I try to do the following:

- 1) Try hard to say the same things to all groups and try to be consistent
- 2) Focus on the core of education, research, employees, and contributions to our communities.
- 3) Have a values-based decision-making process and bring core values to the fore.

*Q: Can UC share budget surplus?* UC submitted its budget in November. It was a prudent one but we need to wait for May revise. UC is requesting range adjustments and a one-time request based on economic impacts. We are putting in a request for one time money for deferred maintenance that meets seismic obligations and which is done in a green agenda; for expansion of medical education for underserved populations; for more telemental health services for students; for more on-line education (make it more permanent and sustainable); for support of foster youth and formerly incarcerated students; and for the repatriation of Native American remains and artifacts.

*Q. Is the recall of Governor Newsome appropriate?* This year has been difficult and complicated—COVID/Racial reckoning/Climate change. Being governor is a mega-difficult job, and UC has worked well with the governor.

John gave a shout out to Ayesha for her work on this conference.

*Q: How do you explain the critical national need for a research university with the legislators? I have always believed the importance of working with them. They tend to focus on issues for political reasons. I had to change my approach from an academic, scientific one given the political construct of a conversation. One on one is best. We need to maximize time with them to reinforce the importance of issues. We share the research agenda with them repeatedly, and we have to work with the currency of the person you are dealing with.*

*Q: Do legislators discount the UC elite? Is it a roadblock? There are more UC alums now in the legislature than 10-20 years ago. A couple of legislators have been UC faculty members. There were 240,000 applications to UC this year, with about 100,000 admits. This does not make UC look good with the state.*

*Q: UC contributions in managing COVID have avoided the college town nightmares across the country. Is that being appreciated? The Big Ten had big outbreaks. The Chancellors have met weekly since August to share best practices, and we have kept infections down in the communities. UCSD and Davis had great NY Times coverage.*

John thanked Chancellor Block and President Drake for their time.

BREAK

#### **FALL MEETING**

UCSF Emeriti Association President Bill Wara provided information about the Fall meeting. It was initially planned as an in-person meeting, but it will now be held via Zoom. The dates are October 27-28. Chancellor Sam Hawgood has been confirmed. Gail Harden announced that there will be virtual tours of the Mission Bay and Parnassus campuses, as well as podcasts.

There was a discussion whether or not future meetings should be held via Zoom or in person. John suggested working with UCI, the hosts in Spring 2022, about a hybrid.

#### **RETIREMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Cheryl Lloyd, the Interim VP Systemwide Human Resources, introduced herself and her current assignment. Before talking about RASC, she brought in Rachel Nosowsky, the point person from General Counsel on the data breach which was announced at the end of March.

#### **DATA BREACH**

Rachel explained that Accellion which experienced the breach is a file transfer appliance. The hackers, believed to be an international criminal group, exploited a weakness which hit multiple companies, universities and other entities. A national committee, along with the FBI, is looking into the breach. UC immediately decommissioned the Accellion software and is looking for a long-term solution.

All users were offered one year of coverage by Experion. Each adult in the system, including beneficiaries, need to sign up. Rachel emphasized the need to be vigilant for efforts to get to your information. She suggested using multi-factor authorization where possible.

UC has hired a third party to review the records to try to identify which data has been breached. The investigation is expected to take 90 days. Once completed, affected individuals will get a letter about the specifics of the information exposed. They believe the data included Full name, Address, Phone number(s), Social Security Number, Driver's License, Passport Number, Banking, Health insurance, and Birthdate. At this point, UC is not aware of any breaches.

Rachel suggested changing passwords and possibly use a password manager, such as 1Password or LastPass. Individuals should report any Phishing to the bank or vendor. Those living abroad or those undocumented can't be covered by Experion, and UC is looking for a global service. They don't know if UCRAYS was impacted. Healthnet was also impacted, so it was highly recommended to sign up for Experion if insured with Healthnet. Experion will have a dedicated UC helpline.

## **EVERYTHING RASC**

Cheryl outlined her current assignment as Interim VP of Systemwide HR. She has 9 direct reports, some of which are vacant. One of the recommendations she made to COO Rachel Nava was to review the entire systemwide HR unit to determine if it is appropriately staffed and structured. They hired Mercer which worked with a team headed up by CFO Nathan Brostrom, campus representatives, Susan Carlson from Academic Personnel and others. One of the findings is that RASC is a really important part of the organization and should be elevated and report directly to the VP Systemwide HR. This constituency is extremely important and needs a much higher touch and a customer-centric model than provided previously. The Redwood software was rolled out to be self-service. Feedback has indicated a need to provide counselors or perhaps a hybrid counseling model.

They are now taking a look at the different touch points in the retirement cycle to see what they can do to make it better. Health Science retirees want to meet and educate Cheryl and Bernadette about Health Science pensions. In addition, Todd Wipke developed a software tool, Benet, that can be used for survivor benefits. It is currently being reviewed by legal. They continue to roll out new functionality of Redwood, and it will continue through this calendar year.

They are currently changing the RASC Management structure; training staff on a new way of working; and holding people accountable. They advised staff that they couldn't repeat the last 2 retirement seasons.

Bernadette Green, the interim Director of RASC, presented a series of slides outlining changes: They developed new operating model based on feedback from retiree partners, key stakeholders, peers at campuses and feedback directly from members.

The goal is to be customer centric/proactive and transparent/accountable.

They developed a mission statement to be successful

- Be collaborative, working as one team across the RASC
- Measure performance against actual results
- Look to continuously improve and become more efficient
- Challenge selves to be best in class
- Provide exceptional service
- Have satisfied customers

In the next 3-5 years, they will be focused on the following:

- Member and customer service satisfaction
- Quality, ensuring accurate and timely delivery
- Technology (center of their focus)

--Relationships

--Execution—want to drive high performance

The new RASC leadership structure includes an Executive Director, Call Center Manager, Client Relationship Manager, and a Disbursements Manager. They want to be collaborative and have established two teams for the recruitment process: one for the first round which interviews candidates to be referred to Cheryl and to a retiree team. An offer is ready to be made to the Call Center Manager. They are in the final recruitment stage for the Disbursements Manager and have identified 3 candidates. Interviews are ongoing for the Client Relationship Manager. It is hoped these three candidates will be on board by early June.

There have been 1469 requests for July 1 retirements. Bernadette outlined the No Lapse in Pay Option which would allow the retiree to receive a provisional pension check and health benefit continuance on August 1. Bernadette outlined the eligibility requirements and listed those cases which are ineligible, for example, those requesting a lump sum cash out, those coordinated with PERS, those with multiple UCRP tiers, etc. They are still working on system functionality. The program not only allows staff additional time to do final calculations, but it frees them up to do the more complicated calculations. The election form must be Faxed at this time. An Opt-in requirement was selected because not everyone would want this benefit. A question was asked about how to communicate this option with potential retirees. Ayesha sent notice to those who have taken the pre-retirement program at UCLA, and Bernadette indicated notices were sent to all those who had already contacted RASC regarding a July 1 retirement.

Bernadette outlined the RASC Operating Model. The challenge is tracking to all of the key pillars. They have implemented a project plan which has a dashboard at the front end and are tracking operational excellence; talent management; change and communication; technology enablement; process management; and performance management.

The New Operating Model includes: member services, fulfillment operations, and client relationship and continuous improvement group. They are currently partnering with the UCPath Center looking for opportunities to leverage joint tools, reporting, etc. UC Locations/Service Center interacts with the benefits information systems, benefit plan accounting, the retirement policy groups and the actuarial services group. The Member Services piece transitioned April 1. Core responsibilities will grow over time. There are two teams—Call Team and Correspondence Team.

They are conducting call service and secure message surveys for member satisfaction and feedback. At the end of April, they will have the call services results and at the end of May, will have the secure messages results. They have developed a performance scorecard, measuring selves against targets. Several slides showed the scorecards and measurements. There is currently a lot of red, but they expect improvement over time. They are using the scorecard for resource allocations based on volume in various areas in order to deliver quality service.

A question was raised about the Lapse in Pay Option. What happens if someone has already started the process? RASC will reach out to individuals. Dan Mitchell asked why the Lapse in Pay Option required an “opt in” if they are eligible. RASC checked with legal and discussed it amongst themselves and thought it most prudent to require an opt in. Barry Bowman asked what were the roadblocks in processing applications. The system itself is one, although they are much more confident in it this year. In the past years, they would process applications through the system and then conduct a manual calculation to ensure accuracy. They lost a lot of their knowledgeable staff, have new team members, and have a

growing volume. They acknowledged that change management was missing when they initially rolled out the software. A lot of time has been dedicated in the past year to retraining staff and to have staff trust the tool. The Redwood tool was built as self-service product, but midway through, they decided it would be a hybrid system. Some users will want to use UCRAYS and others will want the personal contact. John commented on the candor of current team and their commitment to improve. Cheryl noted that she came in with a different lens and was able to identify the problems. Other teams are looking at data coming out of Redwood to help analyze the accuracy of calculations. Cheryl keeps President Drake updated about RASC, as well as, the Regents. He has provided his full support.

John thanked Cheryl and Bernadette for their candor.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patti Owen, CUCRA Secretary

Approved October 27, 2021