

Council of University of California Emeriti Associations (CUCEA)
Council of University of California Retiree Associations (CUCRA)

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A Joint Update to Our Membership

from:

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We are pleased to provide this brief report on our activities since our last gathering. Most of the issues we address are of interest to both CUCEA and CUCRA. For this reason, we believed it was important to present a joint update of activities to underscore this important partnership.

Coordination between associations

In reflection of this partnership, we now conduct routine meetings with the leadership of each association. Such meetings (via Zoom) occur at least monthly and typically more often as issues arise. These meetings allow us to coordinate our activities and advocacy and ensure we understand who is responsible for follow-up on important matters. While the time required for these meetings can at times be significant, the benefits have been evident.

Relations with the Office of the President

One of our principal responsibilities is to communicate issues of interest with the Office of the President on behalf of our members. We are pleased to report several initiatives in this regard.

Meeting with President Drake. As Chairs, we had a meeting with UC President Drake in late February. Provost and Executive Vice President Michael Brown also joined. We found the meeting to be frank and productive. We had the impression that the new President understands the value and potential of emeriti and staff retirees. At this meeting, we were also able to confirm the President's participation in our spring conference.

Conversation with Provost Brown. Recently CUCEA hosted a second meeting with Provost and Executive Vice President Michael Brown. This type of conversation with UC leadership alerts us to emerging priorities and builds upon this important relationship.

Administrative Policy Support. Prior to becoming CUCRA Chair, John Meyer served as Chair of the UC Health Benefits Advisory Committee (HBAC). Among other findings, the committee report recommended increased funding for campus health care facilitators. Meyer is currently serving on the Recruitment Advisory Committee for the position of Vice President of Human Resources. In addition to overseeing benefits programs, this position also has responsibility for the Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC).

Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC). And speaking of the RASC, no area has generated more concern and complaints during the past year. Shortcomings in the conversion to a new software system have resulted in delayed processing for new retirees and extraordinary service and response delays for current retirees. Perhaps most concerning has been interruption in payments to survivors. In some cases, pension income was delayed for six months. At a time when someone may have lost their life partner, this added needless anxiety due to interruption in income and threat to health insurance coverage is unacceptable.

Several high-level personnel changes have occurred and UCOP has initiated a program to "rebuild" the RASC. Interim Vice President for Human Resources Cheryl Lloyd will provide an update on this project at our conference. Importantly, CUCEA and CUCRA have been consulted and are actively involved in this

project. We participate in regular project updates and have representatives serving on recruitment committees for new management positions within the RASC. This is an ongoing issue that will require continuous monitoring, but we are heartened by UCOP's acknowledgement that there are significant problems to be addressed and the resources they have mustered in pursuit of their resolution.

Special recognition goes to former CUCRA Vice Chair Joe Lewis for his continued engagement in this matter. In addition, the study by UCSC Professor Emerita Aissen provided helpful analysis of the decline of service performance. Subsequent follow-up by UCSC Professor Emeritus Todd Wipke also has been extraordinary.

Amendments to Joint Benefits Committee (JBC) process. This committee presents its report at each bi-annual conference. It has then been forwarded to UCOP for response. As these reports often cover many topical areas, there was often frustration that responses were often not received on all topics and were not coordinated. In addition, the responses we received were then reported to members at the following conference—six months after the JBC report was generated. We are now initiating a new process: the JBC report will be completed a month or so prior to each conference. It will then be sent to UCOP for response in time for the conference the following month. This should ensure that the information we receive is timely. In addition, UC Vice President Rachael Nava has agreed to ensure there is a “point person” assigned to coordinate a unified and timely UCOP response.

CUCRA Survey. The Retirees' Association has just published its periodic survey of members. Entitled “UC Retirees: Generous Talents, Enduring Community,” the report documents staff retiree activities from January 2017 through September 2020. To supplement the statistical data, the report includes many quotes from retirees sharing their contributions to UC and their communities. The report is very much a companion to CUCEA's “A Virtual Eleventh Campus” and may be found at [CUCRA.org/survey](https://cucra.org/survey)

Spring Conference. We very much look forward to our spring “conference.” While Zoom has now become part of our lives (and vocabulary...), we are very hopeful that we will be able to have a hybrid experience in Spring 2022—one that blends Zoom's ability to include those who may choose not to travel with an in-person experience for those who can.