

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

Joint Zoom Meeting

April 26, 2023

UC Santa Barbara

**ATTENDEES**

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

UC Davis: Jo Anne Boorkman, Jim Chalfant, Juliane Crowley, Dianne Gregory, Suad Joseph, John Meyer, Pam Solano

UC Irvine: Craig Behrens, Cindy Fern, Jill Halvaks, George Miller, Emil Nguyen, Bill Parker, Pat Price, Marianne Schnaubelt

UC Los Angeles: Sue Abeles, Sue Barnes, John Dahl, Ayesha Dixon, Elaine Fox, Adrian Harris, Dan Mitchell, Jack Powazek, Judith Tuch

UC Merced:

UC Riverside: Bob Daly, Dan Hare, Andy Plumley, Cristina Otegui, Raymond Russell, Karim Zahedi

UC San Diego: Richard Attiyeh, Vania Bailon, Joel Dimsdale, Alan Mccutchan, Phyllis Mirsky

UC San Francisco: E. Eastman, Gail Harden, Charlene Harrington, Eric Vermillion, William Wara

UC Santa Barbara: William Ashby, Denise Bielby, Cynthia Brown, Mary Furner, John Gilbert, Judith Green, Loy Lytle, Robert Mann, Janelle Mirzaei, Ellen Pasternack, Henry Yang, Murial Zimmerman

UC Santa Cruz: Roger Anderson, Christy Dawley, Lee Duffus, Judith Mauche, Eli Silver, Frank Trueba

LANL:

LBNL: Nancy Brown

LLNL: Jeff Garberson

UCOP: Jim Dolgonas, Bernadette Green, Jay Henderson, Cheryl Lloyd, Jewel Smally

**Announcements, Agenda Overview and Q & A**

Jo Ann Borkman called the meeting to order at 8:07. She introduced the UCSB Planning Committee and the participants by campus.

**Minutes**

Phyllis Mirsky presented the minutes of the October 26, 2022, Joint Meeting held via Zoom. She indicated they reflected all comments and corrections received to date. She moved that they be approved. Aside from one request for clarification, there were no objections nor abstentions. The minutes were approved.

**Welcome and Introduction:**

After a short video of the campus, Bill Ashby, the President of the UCSB Emeriti Association welcomed everyone and thanked Ellen Pasternack for her support. He then introduced Chancellor Yang.

Chancellor Yang thanked the Santa Barbara planners and all retirees. He detailed how retirees contributed to the campus and their public service to the community. He noted that UCSB ranks in the

top 10 of public universities and then provided other rankings in various forums. UCSB has a 25% admit rate and 30% enrollment rate. There is a new building which seats 2,000.

The campus has several strategic initiatives: coastal science, quantum science, materials, humanities, fine arts, and social sciences. They have received a \$60 million gift for the Benioff Ocean Laboratory. A priority is the recruitment of faculty and staff. 540 units of housing will be available in 2025.

The campus has a task force to navigate the long-term impact of the recent strike of Postdocs and GSRA's. The campus provided one time budget augmentation for the new UAW contract. There is an effort to enhance time to degree. The grad program is essential to research. UC has overcome storms and become a better university. One of the best ways is through shared governance to address issues of housing, rising prices, and the strike agreement. He thanked faculty and staff and noted it takes a whole village.

### **A Conversation with UCOP Leadership**

John Meyer introduced the UCOP leadership: Cheryl Lloyd, Vice President of Human Resources; Jay Henderson, Associate Vice President of Total Rewards; and Bernadette Green, Executive Director of RASC.

Cheryl outlined the scope of service under her. Once fully staffed, there will be around 250 staff. When she joined HR in 2019, there were about 100 staff in HR, with another 100 dedicated to the retirement plan and benefits. When fully staffed, about half will be dedicated to retirement issues. She brought in Mercer to advise on an appropriate organization. As of April 1, they restructured and eliminated silos. She now only has 5 units reporting to her:

- 1) Retirement, Benefits and Compensation
- 2) Strategy and HR Plan Design
- 3) Labor and Employment Relations
- 4) RASC
- 5) Chief of Staff (handles finance, administration, etc.)

There is another transformation of RASC. They held a town hall for RASC and the former Chair of the Regents Horowitz spoke. They have hired 34 new employees in the last year.

John M. asked what was the biggest shock when Cheryl took over in 2019. She noted she had to peel back layers and that she had to address multiple issues at one time; she felt like a fire fighter. She reviewed all medical and benefits at every level. At the time, RASC moved from a mainstream system to Redwood. At this time, she is encouraged about where we're going.

John M. turned to Jay Henderson and asked about his background. Jay has been in HR for 25 years, with positions at The Ohio State and South Florida. He started his UC career at Riverside where, for 14 years, he provided retirement counseling and moved to Berkeley before taking on his current position. It has been an eye opener at UCOP. There are a lot of committees, sub-committees, and councils. He gets lots of "suggestions" and offers of help. He noted that information doesn't travel and some campus staff are interfering in the processing of retirement forms, which slows down RASC.

John M. asked if there was any news regarding Navitus, Health Benefits, RASC, and HR

The Navitus debacle has affected both active and retired employees. The bifurcation of benefits was not smooth and President Drake is a proponent that the employer should deliver the benefits. As of July 1, UC Care will be under HR, along with other benefits and will report to the AVP of Total Rewards.

When Redwood was rolled out, it was not adequately staffed. Now there is a new insurance team in RASC. UC, as the employer, will manage all benefits, including self-insured.

John M. asked about the rebuild of RASC and the successes and challenges.

Cheryl noted that Redwood should ideally be self-service. She wants more engagement in making retirement decisions. They will bring back retirement counselors who will be trained at UCOP and deployed to campuses. RASC is having difficulty in hiring. They need 132 staff, but currently have 110. They are losing staff who only want to work remotely. They have contracted with Korn Ferry to help with recruitment.

When Redwood was launched, it didn't have all the necessary modules, e.g. disability, survivor benefits, etc. In the last year and a half, they have been rolling out new functionality. Regarding campus counselors, they envision mirroring the support and customer service model of Fidelity regarding campus assignments. They are working to have a similar registration portal to sign up for appointments. First, however, the counselors will need solid training before deploying.

Regarding Navitus, there is a contract through Fiscal Year 2024-2025. UCOP wants to look at all benefit offerings. They hope to deploy a survey to all active and retired employees by the end of the year. They'll want to know what is working; what is not working, what can be done better. Navitus was a miss. Anthem is currently on an extended contract. It is important to look at all the benefits. A question was raised as to possible consequences of moving UC Care. How will the move affect price, premiums, and coverage? Administratively, are we creating another Navitus problem?

Cheryl hopes to have a smooth delivery to clients. She doesn't anticipate premium increases because of a change in reporting lines, but costs could be impacted by the increased cost of the delivery of medicine. The survey's goal is to determine if we are in the right space and the finances behind the plans. People are dedicated to their health plans and most will remain the same. For a self-insured program, who should administer it? RFPs will need to be issued. John M. noted that with the proposed retirees advisory committee, there will be more input on the principles, what might be included in the packages, criteria for selection, etc.

In the last two years, UCOP hired a new chief procurement officer who is interested in procurement processes, and HR asked for someone with experience in the insurance area.

Bernadette addressed the survivor issues. The new intake site went live on March 1. It provides support to survivors and beneficiaries. There is a dedicated phone line available 24 hours. Current goal is to return voicemails within one business day. They are leveraging BENET to track cases and to help the team with follow-up inquiries and statuses. They are still experiencing challenges. Members can still report deaths through the general 1-800 number. RASC can answer 85% of the calls. Overall, they received 20,000 calls in January, but it is now down to 15,000. They launched the Unified HR partnership during Open Enrollment. They are using Unified HR to answer simple questions. Every month, they are expanding the types of questions they answer. Unified HR provides themes of types of questions to the RASC team. RASC is expanding the call center team, but they still need more staff and the new hires need training. They have added 25 new roles which are member facing, including retirement counselors. There are 5,000 retirements per year and there are currently 390,000 retirees. They all need support which accounts for the high number of calls. They receive 165 survivor requests per month. The model is a reach out and a follow up model, where staff keep a tickler file. They have gotten rid of most of the backlog. In addition to retirees and survivors, active employees also have questions for RASC.

John M. asked if Redwood will ever be stabilized and can campuses ever reset passwords and have authority to address other simple issues. There are three components: Redwood, the system of record; Roots, an interim portal for campus staff; and UCRays, the self service portal for members. They are expanding capacity in Roots to allow the campuses to unlock, reset and view more data. Redwood has 42 modules and Roots will have a subset which will give broader access at the campus level. It was noted that the expanded access has been beneficial and highly appreciated.

John M. asked for an update regarding the Retirement Advisory Committee. Cheryl wants to hear retiree voices, and the survey will help on how to deliver benefits and services going forward. She is committed to making RASC successful because it is the most public facing part of HR. When might the committee launch? It will be scripted out over the next quarter. She aims to have quarterly meetings.

The proposed survey will encompass everything—benefits and a total remuneration study (at the request of the Academic Senate.) It was last done in 2014. It will be similar to a recent CUCSA engagement survey. UCOP will need to go out for an RFP, and the survey should be distributed in the last quarter of the year. Employees want different benefits now: PTO, childcare, mental health coverage, portable plans, remote work, cafeteria style benefits. UCOP wants to get a pulse and respond to the needs of the workforce.

John asked Joel Dimsdale if there were further questions in the chat. Joel indicated that there was considerable campus interest in making sure RASC is successful. There was also huge support for and interest in the proposed retirees' advisory committee.

John thanked the UCOP leadership.

### **Joint Benefits Committee Report**

Roger Anderson introduced the JBC Report, which covered four basic topics: 1) RASC, 2) VIA Benefits, 3) Delta Dental, and 4) Retirees' advisory committee.

#### **1) RASC**

Because Redwood only has the last 4 years of data since its implementation, how does this impact decision making and future plans? Per Bernadette, it was decided not to move historical information, but there is access to it. In order to calculate the HAPC, it is necessary to look at the legacy data. We can count on its accuracy. Survivor benefits is still a problem. They need to "establish" a type of pay in the system. In the meantime, they can use BENET until they can access UCRAYS.

Roger asked whether data caused any Navitus issues. The late transfer of Navitus data caused issues. They continue to work with Navitus to ensure files are accurate and timely; they are still receiving calls about users not in Navitus.

Regarding Redwood, they are working with consultants to help understand the 132 files coming from the system. Internally, what are those files for and their owners. In phase 2, they are reviewing the gaps and fine tuning the data. Phase 1 concluded in December 2022 which involved security review of the files. Phase 2 will involve the functional side and the use of the data. There is no end date for this phase. UCPath will be the first vendor they are talking to regarding the data.

Roger quoted past JBC Reports regarding the RASC operations. He then relayed some compliments and concerns.

JBC appreciates the quarterly reports and hope they continue including the progress of hiring and the call wait times. He asked what types of calls contribute to the volume. Per Bernadette, RASC wasn't prepared for the volume and the steps RASC needed to take. She wasn't prepared for the bureaucracy and the difference between and private and public sectors, including RFPs and due diligence. Unified HR can answer password questions, but they are getting other questions and are getting trained. The survivors benefits team is handling new cases, but have also inherited the older ones.

They are now focusing on the insurance channel and continue to recruit. There is a new channel for retirement counseling, which will include both advisory and counseling. They had a candidate, but were not able to hire them. They will start with 8 retirement counselors.

Because of the new survivors call line, the call volume has been reduced by 11%. Roger asked what the connection will be between the retirement counselors and campus staff. RASC is working with DeLoitte Digital to develop a portal for RASC and the campuses. Bernadette stated that campuses need to guide retirees to RASC.

Roger asked how to improve communication. Bernadette noted that UCNet is not used by employees and retirees and that most use local sources. There will be a road show when the retirement counselors are deployed. There is uncertainty at this point how they will be deployed. RASC will reconnect with Fidelity and offer their own webinars and seminars in the future. We need to manage the lack of information flow, both up and down the organization.

Roger addressed the No Lapse in Pay (NLP) program and whether it could be extended to the highly compensated and for those with complex calculations, i.e. with multiple sources. For the highly compensated, could the NLP be applied up to the IRS limit? And for those with multiple sources, could NLP be applied. to their UC HAPC? Per Bernadette, they have to manually calculate these instances because they don't yet have the functionality in Redwood. The 415 calculations need to be done with another team. However, they are bringing in staff with actuarial backgrounds so the calculations can be done in RASC. They are more comfortable with Redwood data now. Looking back at last year's data, 87% of the NLP cases were within a 0-15 dollar monthly variance and 80% were within a 0-5 dollar variance. For cases which fall into these ranges, they won't need NLP.

By April 24, there had been 863 retirement elections for July 1. 698 opted into NLP and 80% were eligible. 28% of July 1 retirements are in the payment confirmation stage. They hope to have the majority of the checks processed for August 1st payment and verifications completed for continuing health benefits. This will ultimately help RASC by reducing the call volumes, and they can become more dependent on the system. They will be able to identify complex cases with the counselors who can flag issues before hitting the calculation team.

Roger asked if there is more granular data based on type, e.g. reciprocity cases. Per Bernadette, they haven't reported in such ways.

Regarding Survivor Health Benefits, Roger asked if continuation can automatically be approved. Per Bernadette, they are taking a more proactive role with the Survivor Intake Team. All insurance benefits will be centralized going forward, but they need to ensure that they validate the death. They are looking at a pilot program on how they are transitioning to process survivor benefits. They are going to a process to payment methodology. For certain survivor types, they will be able to process within 7 days. They will need to modify Redwood slightly and are using a consultant. There is no completion date yet.

Roger asked if the JBC had lit a fire with their report. Bernadette noted it was a great follow-up. RASC is working through the backlog and saw issues/items which could be streamlined quickly and that's where they put their effort. Some benefit payments were overpaid which needed to be recovered and they consulted General Counsel about options. They advised that overpayment to the member could be

decoupled from the payment to the survivor, which is allowing RASC to move forward with the pilot program.

#### 2) VIA BENEFITS

Roger stated the reimbursement process is difficult. It seems that offering United Health Care would be easy. Via conducts its own satisfaction poll. It was suggested that UC should do something more complete. UC reviews the HRA balances which are not fully depleted. However, there must be more complete analysis as to why they are not depleted and to make fair comparisons. Jay Henderson responded that Via will be reviewed as part of the benefits survey and that it is on the list to address.

#### 3) DELTA DENTAL

Roger asked about the status and what actions are being taken to improve experiences. It seems that providers are leaving. What can we do to improve, rework, and reframe to increase the availability of dentists? What are the next steps?

Jay noted that Delta doesn't want UC to be involved in reaching out to providers. It was asked if there will be rebid on their contract. Jay responded that Delta is the best provider in the area.

Jay was asked about the cancellation of health insurance for deceased. They have identified this as an issue and are trying to address it. They need to get death notices earlier; UCOP usually learns of deaths through insurance providers and outside vendors.

#### 4) RETIREES' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Roger asked Jay what his expectations of the RAC. Jay hopes to learn about the issues and to collect ideas to resolve issues and concerns.

### **OVERVIEW OF TRAVEL PROGRAM**

Sue Barnes gave a brief history of the travel program which was started in 2004. It was restarted in earnest about a year ago. They now have five escorts who provide pre-trip coordination, free time activity planning, emergency help, communications, and post trip debrief. During 2022-23 there were 222 travelers. She explained how excess funds are distributed and the need to track travelers by campus. She has found that the participants are well traveled and adventurous. The escorts meet monthly for debriefs. She then outlined the 2024 trips.

She communicates about the program through a monthly newsletter, website, New Dimensions, Zoom Webinars, and Association/Retirement Center newsletters. John M. reminded CUCEA of the shared funding from the proceeds.

### **FALL MEETING AT DAVIS**

John M. announced that the October 25-26 meetings will be in a hybrid format (in person and Zoom.) The joint meeting will be in the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup> with a dinner following. Separate meetings will be the next day. Davis has a planning committee in place.

Jo Ann adjourned the meeting at 12:01.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patti Owen, CUCRA Secretary  
Approved October 25, 2023