

UC Berkeley



Academic Senate Chair - Berkeley Division

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a whirlwind of a start to the Spring semester. The constant stream of Executive Orders is creating significant challenges for many members of our community. I want to encourage you to do whatever helps you stay grounded in turbulent times. If you haven't read them, please take a moment to read the [1/27/25](#) and [2/3/25](#) Cal Messages from Vice Chancellor for Research, Kathy Yelick, which include a website where you can find up to date information on the [Impacts of 2025 Federal Executive Orders and Directives](#). You may also find federal updates, including an Executive Order tracker and information on what UC is doing to take action against cuts to funding from the National Institutes of Health, on the [UC Office of the President website](#). Please also see [this website](#) to learn more about resources for undocumented students. The website includes the [University of California Reaffirms Statement of Principles in Support of Undocumented Members of the UC Community](#). Additionally, you may find a toolkit [here](#) with other helpful resources.



In Memoriam

As many of you know, we tragically lost renowned sociologist, activist, and beloved mentor, teacher, and friend, Michael Burawoy on February 3, 2025. You may read more about Michael on the [Letters and Sciences In Memoriam page](#) and through [Berkeley Sociology](#) where they have collated a beautiful collection of remembrances, tributes, and photos. I didn't know Michael personally, only by reputation, but was humbled by the many reflections shared, leaving me in awe and deep appreciation not only for his brilliance, commitment, and passion, but for his love for his students and the transformative role he played in the lives of so many students....and the red leather pants...PRICELESS!

News & Updates

There will be a Special Meeting of the Assembly of the Academic Senate on February 13, 2025 to discuss the three [agenda](#) items below. The meeting was called by special petition of Senate faculty across the UC system. The meeting is open to all Senate faculty members and invited guests. Anyone interested in attending must [register](#) in advance.

1. UC Information Security Investment Plans in Relation to Faculty Research, Teaching, and Academic Personnel Matters
2. Faculty Compensation and Cost-of-Living Adjustments
3. UC Health Plan Costs

The Berkeley Division currently has an **open call for nominations** for the Spring 2025 election of members to [Divisional Council](#) and to the [Committee on Committees](#). Now more than ever, we need as many diverse perspectives and faculty experiences as possible. As the future of higher education is evermore in the national spotlight, the faculty's role in University governance needs to continue; and grow in effectiveness. This will be best achieved with the participation of professors from all corners of our campus as we work to address the many challenges that we face now and are sure to face in the years to come. **Nominating petitions are due by next Tuesday, February 18th**. Petitions may be submitted online and are available on the [Academic Senate website](#).



On January 15th, the Senate presented two phenomenal leaders in higher education with the **Senate's annual Clark Kerr Award**. The Clark Kerr award is a tribute to the leadership and legacy of UC President Emeritus Clark Kerr and recognizes leaders who have made extraordinary and distinguished contributions to the advancement of higher education. Clark Kerr was a transformational leader. He is credited as giving birth to the state's tripartite structure of higher education—the UC, CSU, and California Community Colleges—through his work on the 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education. He is also responsible for the creation of university-wide and campus-level administrations giving more authority to individual campuses; and strengthening shared governance by creating the divisional model for the academic senate. These are just a few of his truly transformational accomplishments which laid important groundwork for the UC and for California higher education as we know today. We were honored to present this year's award to [two extraordinary and transformational leaders](#):

- Carol Christ
- Sue Desmond Hellman

The Academic Senate thanks the Faculty Awards Committee for the hard work they do each year to select the Clark Kerr Awardees. *And a special thank you to **Ben Handel**, Faculty Awards Committee Chair.*

The [Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Disability Accessibility & Planning](#) ('CACDAP') invites your attendance at a Town Hall on the Campus Disability Strategic Plan. The Town Hall will be held Tuesday, February 25th 9:30-11 am. Please [RSVP](#) for this event to receive the calendar invite with the *Zoom* link.

At the January 22nd meeting of the UC Regents, there was a [discussion](#) about the [faculty discipline process](#). The Regents are concerned that the faculty discipline process takes too long. A joint Senate-Administration workgroup has been convened under the leadership of Provost Newman and systemwide Academic Senate Chair Cheung to examine the current policy and make recommendations for policy and implementation procedures. The workgroup report is due in May and the Regents are expected to vote on any modifications to the policy in July. I am including this here because several faculty have expressed concerns about some of the [comments](#) made by the Regents during the meeting that threaten the value of shared governance.

Shared governance is a special feature of Berkeley's academic ethos, prized by faculty and the administration alike. Working in partnership in good times and in more challenging times, when we agree and when we disagree is a treasured characteristic of our campus. Shared governance embraces diverse perspectives, opinions and insights; and it thrives when it includes the full range of diverse perspectives of our campus community. The Senate voice on the Berkeley campus is strong. That doesn't mean that there is not room for improvement. We endeavor to continue to look for ways to strengthen our partnerships with administrative leaders across the campus. This is especially important now, given the national pushback against shared governance and academic senates; I hope the UC, and Berkeley in particular, can be a model of shared governance that demonstrates how much better we are when we work together.

Under Review

APM 036 – General University Policy Regarding Academic Appointees. Assembly Bill 1905 requires each CA public postsecondary education institution to adopt a written policy about Official Letters of Recommendation as a condition of receiving state funding. The new state law was effective January 1, 2025; the required changes have been incorporated, in draft form, into [APM 036](#). You may see President Drake's summary of the changes [here](#). The systemwide open comment period ends March 24, 2025.

On December 18th, Senate faculty at UCSF approved two proposed Memorials to the Regents (i.e., "a declaration or petition addressed to the President for transmission to The Regents, as provided for in Regents Bylaw 40.1") to expand Senate membership to include faculty with appointments greater than 50% in

the [Health Sciences Clinical Professor](#) series and the [Adjunct Professor](#) series. The procedures for Memorials are provided in [Senate Bylaw 90](#). Each Division (i.e., campus) must vote on the two memorials by March 18th. There are two phases. First, all divisions will vote on whether or not the resolutions will be approved to move forward. The vote will be to *approve*, to *disapprove*, or to *decline to act*. Consistent with established practice of the Berkeley Division on non-legislative systemwide matters, phase 1 will commence as a vote by Divisional Council.

If at least three divisions, representing at least 35% of the Systemwide Academic Senate membership, approve one or both of the resolutions, then phase 2 will commence. UCSF counts as one division and represents 12% of the systemwide Academic Senate. For phase 2, the systemwide parliamentarian will issue a systemwide ballot to vote the resolutions up or down. If the threshold for phase 1 is met, the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate will host one or more Town Halls so that everyone is fully informed about the Memorials, related arguments, and relevant data, and is prepared to make an informed vote.

You may find the 2 memorials and other related materials on the [Academic Senate website](#).

Personal Note

I was recently talking with my mother about the challenges we are facing in higher education, including here at Berkeley (e.g., the devastating wildfires of southern California, threats to our undocumented students and our undocumented community more broadly, declining state support for public postsecondary education). She sent me a poem that lifted my spirit, which I will now share with you, and which I shared at the Dean's and Chair's retreat last week:

We love Berkeley.

We honor her legacy.

We are privileged to contribute to her present.

It is our responsibility to nurture and insure her brilliant future.

Berkeley does not belong to us, it belongs to future generations of staff, faculty, students, laureates....

We have borrowed Berkeley from them, and that stellar future is counting, indeed depending, on us.

Fiat Lux!

Warmly,
Amani

