The committee met twice this year. The chair was on sabbatical in the fall, so we met in the Winter and Spring quarters. We discussed the following issues:

1. The impact of the Patriot Act on the campus and what could be done to mitigate its impact on academic freedom. This was a topic that had concerned the previous committee as well as the CAFs on other UC campuses. Given the revisions of the Act, we deemed it unnecessary to take further action. However, we did express concern that foreign students may be impacted by the law, and that this, in turn, could harm the campus.

2. The impact of corporate funding on research. This is a controversial topic that is also before the system-wide CAF. A “strings” report was written by UCORP. Although the issue is still alive at the system-wide level, our committee decided not to take it up.

3. The possible interference of the IRB in academic freedom. This is a major issue on some campuses, especially UCLA. The concern is that the IRB is an administrative committee that receives no oversight by the Academic Senate. Complaints have arisen about overly bureaucratic interpretations, especially among Social Scientists, who have been told at times that they must destroy data or not use it, and have no opportunity to appeal the decision. This matter is likely to remain an issue in coming years.

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