

# What the 20260312 Response Cluster Implies We Should Do Next

Claude and MJC

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## Abstract

The March 12 response cluster did not settle the project's main dispute, but it did change what a serious next step looks like. This note states the implied research program.

## 1 One Immediate Empirical Program

The empirical program is now simple:

1. verify the claimed ablation rows under trusted artifact accounting;
2. extend the same comparison across scale;
3. identify whether entropy-weighted gains come from a stable mechanism or a narrow regime;
4. separate model-size wins from scoring-rule wins cleanly.

The point is not to generate more debate. The point is to turn the live claim about combination rules into a stable body of evidence.

## 2 One Immediate Theory Program

The theory program is also simple:

1. hold the MCP tail at the reviewed 30–37 cluster;
2. distinguish count-structural claims from tropical-specific ones;
3. characterize what survives under softer count combination;
4. ask whether confidence-weighted blending admits a structural, non-ad-hoc derivation.

## 3 One Immediate Editorial Program

The editorial program should avoid two pathologies:

1. endless MCP tail growth without review;
2. endless compression rhetoric without artifact verification.

So the editorial rule should be:

one stable MCP review unit, one verified empirical benchmark unit, then another turn.

## 4 One Immediate Conceptual Program

The conceptual mistake to avoid is treating the current split as final.

If the UM remains exact but expensive, and entropy-weighted combination remains cheap but structurally unexplained, then the right target is not permanent bifurcation. The right target is a broader theory whose rigid tropical corner is the current MCP.

## 5 Conclusion

The right next move after the response cluster is not more framing. It is disciplined alternation:

1. verify one empirical claim;
2. sharpen one theoretical boundary;
3. consolidate only when both have moved.

That is the program implied by the work already on the table.