

Executive Board

Post-Strike Concerns and Budget Cuts

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April 27, 2023

Legislative Assembly
Los Angeles Division

Re: Post-UAW Strike Concerns and Finances

Dear Members of the Legislative Assembly,

UCLA and the University of California are at a crossroads: PhD training models are transforming in real time, and as we address the funding and policy consequences of UAW academic worker contract settlements our core values and academic mission are at stake. The divisional Academic Senate Executive Board (EB) hereby conveys related letters from several Senate committees and invites the Legislative Assembly to endorse a statement found at the conclusion of this memorandum.

A letter from the Council on Planning and Budget (CPB) proposes a path forward as UCLA considers how to fund costs associated with the contract settlements: “CPB members expressed to [Interim Vice Chancellor Baird-James] their view that the campus should be pursuing targeted cuts to non-academic units in order to help fund the increased costs of graduate education.” Such targeted cuts, the Senate recognizes, require analysis, staff time, political prowess, and difficult decision-making, but our times call for prioritizing this effort alongside seeking increased public funding. The Academic Senate stands ready to support such efforts and appreciates the openness of the Interim Chief Financial Officer and the Office of Academic Planning and Budget to restoring the Academic Senate’s involvement in campus budgeting. As CPB put it, “The view of CPB is that it is only through a deeper and consistent involvement of faculty in campus budget processes that we will be able to influence resource allocation decisions for graduate student funding.”

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CODEI) “views the expected budgetary shortfalls as a threat to this university’s continuing support for the combination of excellence and inclusion that has been the hallmark of a UCLA education.” The committee “is concerned that passing the costs of these new contracts on to the already precarious finances of departments, research centers, and individual faculty stands to disproportionately impact URM graduate students and faculty. The Committee is also concerned about the threat posed to a central charge of the CODEI committee, which is to support the recruitment and retention of an increasingly diverse faculty.” CODEI described issues including undermining recent successes in diversifying UCLA’s PhD education, slowing the transition to Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status, increasing burdens on faculty just as UCLA is making progress in diversifying our faculty, and harming undergraduate education as we aim to educate a diverse undergraduate student body.

The Council of Faculty Chairs summed up the concerns of many Senate faculty: “The financial responsibility for reinvesting in graduate education and postdoctoral training in the wake of the related contract settlements must not be borne disproportionately by academic units and faculty PIs.” Toward that end, “Every budget must be on the table, including administrative budgets, as our campus and UC system address cost increases.” Like CODEI, “members expressed concern that labor and graduate education are changing at

a moment when UCLA has committed to graduate student and faculty diversity and becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).”

Faculty recognize that money does not grow on trees. However, it may be time to make hard decisions because, as these Academic Senate bodies have suggested, taking no major action leads to a default outcome of real cuts to academic units and research, cuts to our academic mission. Cutting non-academic programs may be painful, but there are real costs to choking the PhD pipeline, including to the lives of talented potential students. There are real costs to shrinking UCLA’s research profile, and there are real costs to losing faculty because of the ways that the faculty and the academic mission are being stretched and, it sometimes seems, sidelined. [Faculty Rebuilding and Renewal](#) is essential. For many colleagues, the experience of being a faculty member at UCLA has changed profoundly in recent times, as state funding per student has decreased, the student-to-faculty ratio increased, salaries lost ground, and, for many colleagues, demands grow and grow. As the Faculty Welfare Committee knows and a systemwide Academic Senate [survey](#) showed, burnout is real.

UCLA and the University of California face an existential challenge, one that requires a bold response that centers the academic mission and its core elements of research, teaching, and service.

The Executive Board asks the Legislative Assembly to endorse the following statement:

The Legislative Assembly of UCLA’s divisional Academic Senate calls on our campus and the University of California to center the academic mission in our responses to the budgetary and policy challenges arising in the wake of contract settlements with UAW academic workers. Academic units, PhD training, and faculty research must not be undermined, either by design or by default. The faculty stand ready to support efforts to increase public funding in support of our academic mission, and we urge the Administration to take bold approaches to meeting funding needs by making targeted cuts to administrative budgets and non-academic programs rather than from academic budgets. Nothing less than the future of education at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels, and higher education more generally, is at stake. Should we make the wrong choices now, there will be dire consequences in the future for the state’s social, intellectual, and economic vibrancy.

Sincerely,



Jessica Cattelino
Chair
UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Andrea Kasko, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate

Shane White, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Members of the Executive Board, UCLA Academic Senate

April 3, 2023

Jessica Cattelino, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Funding Contracts and Graduate Education

Dear Chair Cattelino,

At its meetings on February 27, 2023, and March 20, 2023, the Council on Planning and Budget (CPB) reviewed and discussed the Executive Board's request that the Council gather further information on the University's plan for funding the increased costs for ASEs, TAs, postdocs, and Graduate Education as a whole resulting from the UAW strike settlement.

It is worth noting that all campuses are struggling with the issue of how to fund the large and unanticipated costs associated with the UAW settlement. This has been a frequent topic for discussion at the University Committee on Planning and Budget (UCPB) meetings. It is fair to state that plans on all campuses are in development. Most chancellors appear to be using whatever discretionary funds are available to them in order to help cover these costs and enlisting the help of deans on their campuses to do the same. These plans remain provisional on most campuses because of the magnitude of the costs, and generally are in place only for the next 12-15 months. Based on discussions with UCPB colleagues, it is unclear how these costs will be borne on any campus after the coming academic year.

Members discussed with Interim Vice Chancellor Allison Baird-James and Interim Academic Planning and Budget Office Director Rebecca Lee-Garcia the UCLA campus plans for funding strike settlement costs. They indicated that the magnitude of the central support had been decided upon and announced in a Bruinpost to the campus, and that the final sources for this support had not yet been decided upon. The Chancellor has agreed to utilize central reserves for the first year, but discussions were ongoing with ancillary units and deans across the campus to utilize other funding reserves. IVC Baird-James indicated that funding plans beyond the first full year of the settlement had not yet been developed.

CPB members expressed to the IVC their view that the campus should be pursuing targeted cuts to non-academic units in order to help fund the increased costs of graduate education. The IVC stated that while the administration is open to any suggestions from the Senate for where and how cuts could be targeted, they have not undertaken such a review themselves as of yet and are not adequately staffed to do so at this time.

From the Council's perspective, the matter of funding the strike settlement costs highlight the fact that there is a need for meaningful faculty involvement at all levels in budget processes. The absence of a clear plan for graduate education funding, much less support for departments, their daily operations, and mid- to long-term planning, poses a serious threat to the quality and stability of academic programs across campus. Members agree that faculty involvement in resource allocation decisions is essential if UCLA is to excel as a research university, and exclusion of faculty places all our programs in a precarious position.

Members also have underscored the lack of transparency in administrative (non-academic) unit funding and performance assessment. Given the growth of these units, we believe that there are opportunities to identify areas where funding cuts can occur to help streamline their processes and improve operations. The goal is to have more efficient and effective campus units to help achieve goals and help the academic mission. However, given the lack of information, it is challenging to identify where to make cuts.

The view of CPB is that it is only through a deeper and consistent involvement of faculty in campus budget processes that we will be able to influence resource allocation decisions for graduate student funding. We currently lack the information necessary to target cuts and help prioritize programs. By participating in the assessment and review of administrative units as well as schools and divisions, there would be a path to eliminate costly inefficiencies. We therefore have strongly recommended to IVC Baird-James three key steps to further these goals:

- 1) FECs within each school and division should be part of the budget development process, and that no budget should be presented to EVC/P until the dean has documented faculty involvement in the budget process;
- 2) CPB should be directly involved in central review of the budgets of all units, and that the final campus budget should not be approved by the chancellor until CPB has had an opportunity to review and advise;
- 3) CPB should be involved in budget hearings starting with the current academic year. The IVC has agreed that as CPB Chair, I will be able to participate in budget hearings both for academic and administrative units. Given the large number of units, we will select a limited number for this year (the list of specific units for this year is in development). The full Council also will have an opportunity to review and comment on the final budget before presentation to the Chancellor.

CPB also strongly recommends that a system of regular reviews for administrative units with public dissemination of the findings of those reports. In particular, members suggested starting with pilot reviews of Campus Human Resources, the Division of Graduate Education, and the Registrar. Results of these reviews would need to be shared with the Academic Senate. In addition, clear data on campus spending on consulting firms such as Huron and Deloitte would need to be disclosed. Members also stressed the need for Academic Senate consultation and participation before the creation of new units or major administrative roles which are typically associated with increasing costs.

If you have any questions for us, please do not hesitate to contact me at afl@ucla.edu or via the Council's analyst, Elizabeth Feller, at efeller@senate.ucla.edu.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Leuchter', with a stylized, cursive script.

Andrew Leuchter, Chair
Council on Planning and Budget

cc: Andrea Kasko, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Academic Senate
Shane White, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Elizabeth Feller, Associate Director, Academic Senate
Members of the Council on Planning and Budget

April 3, 2023

Jessica Cattelino, Chair
UCLA Academic Senate

Re: Post-Strike DEI Concerns

Dear Chair Cattelino,

At the February 14, 2023 meeting of the Committee on Diversity Equity and Inclusion (CODEI), committee members expressed concern about the prospect of reduced support for graduate education resulting from the recently ratified UAW contracts. In particular, this committee is concerned that passing the costs of these new contracts on to the already precarious finances of departments, research centers, and individual faculty stands to disproportionately impact URM graduate students and faculty. The Committee is also concerned about the threat posed to a central charge of the CODEI committee, which is to support the recruitment and retention of an increasingly diverse faculty.

We would further highlight the following areas of impact that will inevitably be borne disproportionately by URM students and faculty in the event of diminished support for graduate education:

- Undermining or reversal of recent successes in diversifying UCLA's PhD education and, in turn, future ranks of academic professionals, particularly in those disciplines/departments that specifically focus on, and the graduate education of, under-represented Chican@s, Central Americans, African Americans, and American Indians;
- Potential interruption or reversal of UCLA's progress toward achieving status as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), at a time when the issue of what academic changes need be made to actually SERVE these students;
- Reversal of hard-won advances achieved by UCLA in its commitment to hiring and retaining faculty of color (e.g., through increased class sizes and faculty workload and/or reduced graduate student support for teaching and research);
- Committee members also stressed that these negative impacts will inevitably ripple through the educational experience of the entire undergraduate population, by increasing class sizes and decreasing TA support, posing a threat to hard-won diversification of UCLA's undergraduate student body.

In conclusion, the committee views the expected budgetary shortfalls as a threat to this university's continuing support for the combination of excellence and inclusion that has been the hallmark of a UCLA education. Creating the conditions for success for our increasingly diversified graduate and undergraduate student bodies, as well as the continuing recruitment and retention of faculty of color are central to both the mission of this committee and the values of our university.

We urge you to seek increased public funding for graduate education from the State of California and other sources outside the university as an alternative to asking individual departments, centers and

UCLA Academic Senate

Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

faculty members to absorb current and future increases to the cost of graduate education. We also hope for a transparent and inclusive process, including open communication with faculty, that continues to attend to issues of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as we work to solve these problems together.

Sincerely,



Reynaldo F. Macias
Chair, CODEI

cc: Steven Anderson, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
Shelleen Greene, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Christine Grella, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Theodore Hall, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Smadar Naoz, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Kyeyoung Park, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Margot Quinlan, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Michael A Rodriguez, Member, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Lilia Valdez, Senior Policy Analyst, Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

February 10, 2023

Gene Block
Chancellor, UCLA

Darnell Hunt
Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost, UCLA

Re: **Post-Strike Concerns**

Dear Chancellor Block and Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost Hunt,

At the January 30, 2023, meeting of the Council of Faculty Chairs, which is comprised of the chairs of the Faculty Executive Committees (FECs) of each school and division, members discussed concerns about the post-strike impacts on the academic mission of the university.

Members emphasized the following position:

- The **financial responsibility** for reinvesting in graduate education and postdoctoral training in the wake of the related contract settlements **must not be borne disproportionately by academic units and faculty PIs**. It is illogical and wrong-headed to expect that a reinvestment in long-underfunded graduate education and research, which are at the core of our academic mission, would slash academic budgets.
- **Every budget must be on the table, including administrative budgets**, as our campus and UC system address cost increases.
- The **faculty must be involved**, both at the level of the FECs and through the Council on Planning and Budget and other Senate bodies, in making these hard and likely painful budgeting decisions.

Moreover, members expressed **concern that labor and graduate education are changing at a moment when UCLA has committed to graduate student and faculty diversity and becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)**. Faculty worry that budgetary decisions that slash graduate student education and training may undermine our shared diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) values. There are at least three interrelated issues: 1) that dramatically shrinking PhD training at precisely the moment in history when the university has made some strides in diversifying UC graduate students would contract rather than expand access in ways that work against DEI values; 2) that at a time when the UC is promoting the idea of “Growing Our Own” as a way to diversify our faculty, we undermine those efforts to diversify the faculty by choking the PhD pipelines; and 3) while UCLA has expanded its commitment to hiring faculty of color, the university is at risk of further increasing faculty workloads (e.g., undergraduate courses

without adequate Teaching Assistants) and leaving faculty PIs burdened (e.g., by pushing the costs of the new contract onto their grants).

Lastly, members observed that **there are immediate, short-term needs for guidance and resources as departments, schools/divisions, and faculty make post-strike decisions about resources, graduate students, and research and teaching.** They urge Administration to make needed guidance and resources quickly and transparently available. The FEC chairs are prepared to engage about ideas for meeting these needs.

Members added that the **faculty stand ready to join in efforts to secure more public funding for graduate education from the State of California and federal research funding agencies.**

Sincerely,



Jessica Cattellino
Chair
UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Yolanda Gorman, Senior Advisor and Chief of Staff to the Chancellor
Andrea Kasko, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP
Shane White, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Members, Council of Faculty Chairs