Undergraduate Council

Undergraduate Education Funding Concerns

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UCLA Office of the Chancellor

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November 21, 2025

Dear Chair McEvoy,

Thank you for forwarding the Undergraduate Council's thoughtful letter regarding funding concerns for undergraduate education and for the Executive Board's endorsement of its recommendations. We deeply appreciate the Senate's commitment to preserving the excellence, accessibility, and integrity of UCLA's undergraduate experience during this challenging fiscal period.

We recognize the significant pressures that current budget constraints place on our instructional mission, particularly in relation to graduate student support and teaching assistant resources that are vital to undergraduate learning. We share the Council's concern about protecting course availability, maintaining time-to-degree, and sustaining the quality that defines a UCLA education.

As we develop our budget for AY 2026–27 and beyond, our goal is to ensure transparency, Senate consultation, and a shared understanding of priorities. We are working closely with the Office of Academic Planning and Budget to assess options that both uphold the University's educational mission and meet our state and systemwide commitments. As part of this process, we have invited members of the Council on Planning and Budget, along with relevant FEC chairs, to participate in the unit-level budget meetings to strengthen the Academic Senate's engagement and advisory role in budgetary planning.

We also affirm the Senate's role in guiding decisions around curriculum, pedagogy, and instructional modes. Any consideration of expanded online or hybrid offerings will continue to respect Senate policies and the principle that UCLA's residential, in-person education is central to the student experience.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the Academic Senate and the Undergraduate Council as we address these issues together. Thank you for your leadership and partnership as we navigate these shared challenges in support of UCLA's core academic mission.

Sincerely,

Julio Frenk
Chancellor, UCLA

Darnell Hunt
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, UCLA

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UCLA Academic Senate
Executive Board

May 28, 2025

Julio Frenk
UCLA Chancellor

Darnell Hunt
UCLA Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP)

Re: Undergraduate Education Funding Concerns

Dear Chancellor Frenk and EVCP Hunt,

At the May 22, 2025, meeting of the Executive Board, members voted in favor of a motion to endorse and transmit the attached letter from the Undergraduate Council about funding concerns for undergraduate education at UCLA. Several members emphasized the importance of maintaining teaching assistant support, respecting current Senate policies about online education, and Senate authority over undergraduate education.

The Executive Board respectfully requests a summary of proposed budgetary plans that may impact undergraduate education in AY 2026-27 and beyond by October 31, 2025, so that the relevant Senate committees may provide their consultation and advice to inform final campus decisions.

Sincerely,

Kathy Bawn
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Yolanda Gorman, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor and Chief of Staff
Andrea Kasko, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Jeff Maloy, Chair, Undergraduate Council
Megan McEvoy, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
Julia Nelsen, Principal Policy Analyst, Undergraduate Council
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP

UCLA Academic Senate
Undergraduate Council

3125 Murphy Hall
410 Charles E. Young Drive East
Los Angeles, California 90095

April 15, 2025

To: Kathy Bawn, Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

From: Jeff Maloy, Chair, Undergraduate Council

Re: Undergraduate Education Funding Concerns

I write on behalf of the Undergraduate Council to convey deep concerns about how current financial challenges stand to impact undergraduate education at UCLA.

We share the concerns raised in recent letters to Chancellor Frenk and EVCP Hunt from the Executive Board and Graduate Council Chair regarding funding for graduate education. Graduate funding is deeply interconnected with undergraduate education. Reductions in doctoral admissions and increasing costs for TA contracts will critically affect our ability to teach undergraduates and fulfill our academic mission. In addition, we are aware that the Office of Academic Planning and Budget has inquired how departments would absorb significant teaching budget cuts for the 2025-26 academic year. A reduction of this magnitude—on top of losses from federal grants and substantial cuts to the University in the California state budget—will be catastrophic for undergraduate education. Without adequate funding for instruction, some departments will not be able to offer large service courses. Others will be forced to cancel or consolidate lab and discussion sections, thus necessitating cuts to available seats in courses and negatively impacting students' time-to-degree. Decreasing undergraduate enrollment is not an option, as the University is expected to fulfill the terms of the multi-year compact with the Governor. With drastic reductions to graduate funding, and ever-increasing undergraduate enrollment, the quality of a UCLA education will suffer dramatically.

Our University is at an inflection point. While we acknowledge the dire realities of the campus budget situation, we echo the Academic Senate's call to campus administration to implement bold, urgent solutions in defense of the core educational mission. Preserving the breadth and excellence of our undergraduate degree programs may necessitate hard decisions, such as curtailing or discontinuing extracurricular programs and services. Non-academic units should not be shielded from budget cuts because they are revenue-generating; rather, revenue from such sources must contribute to the academic mission, which is the cornerstone of UCLA's world-class reputation.

We also urge careful consideration of any budgetary strategies that may require adjustments to our academic and research missions, as stated in Chancellor Frenk's letter to you dated March 17, 2025. One proposed approach to address enrollment challenges has been to expand online and hybrid courses. Though we recognize that distance education may afford opportunities for innovation and expand accessibility, we affirm that online learning should not replace the experience of an in-person, residential education at UCLA.

We thank the Executive Board for elevating the Undergraduate Council's concerns to campus administration, and remain eager to collaborate with Senate leadership as we tackle these extraordinary challenges together.

If you have any questions, please contact us via the Undergraduate Council analyst, Julia Nelsen (jnelsen@senate.ucla.edu).

Cc: April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Andrea Kasko, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Megan McEvoy, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
Julia Nelsen, Principal Policy Analyst, Undergraduate Council