

Executive Board

UCLA Athletics Department Deficit

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February 23, 2026

Julio Frenk  
UCLA Chancellor

Darnell Hunt  
UCLA Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP)

**Re: UCLA Intercollegiate Athletics Unit Deficit**

Dear Chancellor Frenk and EVCP Hunt,

At their meeting on February 19, 2026, the Executive Board (EB) reviewed the attached letter dated May 23, 2025, where EB expressed concerns about the ongoing deficit in the Intercollegiate Athletics campus unit. EB members voted unanimously in favor of endorsing the earlier letter and sending this one.

In the May 23, 2025, letter, EB made clear that it is enthusiastic about campus athletics teams and student-athletes, however it also advised against the use of central core funds to subsidize the Intercollegiate Athletics unit. EB requested details about how the unit would undergo austerity along with the rest of campus as well as immediate assurance that campus will no longer subsidize the Intercollegiate Athletics unit budget in any form (including providing or authorizing loans.) EB did not receive a response.

Since May 2025, and during a time of growing campus deficit, it appears the situation has grown more concerning as expenses continue to rise: Chancellor Frenk [approved a renewal](#) of the men's basketball coach with a raise to \$4.5M per season and a \$22.5M buyout if fired before the end of March 2026; Chancellor Frenk approved an additional subsidy of \$30M from central resources to cover the Intercollegiate Athletics unit's deficit and also "[paid the remaining deficit, bringing the balance to zero](#)" (the Athletics deficit had "[run to \\$241.1M over the past seven fiscal years](#)"); the City of Pasadena is [suing UCLA for breach of contract](#) regarding the Rose Bowl, which creates additional expenses to the campus; Chancellor Frenk [approved a five-year \\$33.75M contract](#) with a \$3.7M "hiring bonus" for a new football coach who has brought a significant number of new hires with him; and the campus [paid its first of three \\$10M "Calimony" payments](#) to UC Berkeley for its unexpected move to the Big 10. These additional expenses are what is known from public reporting because there has not been full transparency on this matter for many years.

EB reaffirms its advice that the campus should not direct any money to subsidize or underwrite the deficit created by the Intercollegiate Athletics unit, and that doing so contradicts the current campus economizing measures. At a time of austerity, EB advises spending core funds on academic units to protect teaching and research.

EB again requests information about your plans to a) enact austerity measures on the Intercollegiate Athletics unit similar to the latest 10% cut to all other administrative units, b) discontinue any subsidy to this unit, and c) publicly share information about the Intercollegiate Athletics unit's past, current, and proposed budgets.

EB strongly advises a full and transparent accounting of the budget situation with the Intercollegiate Athletics unit with the goal of restoring trust on this fiscal matter.

Sincerely,  
Megan McEvoy  
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: Kathy Bawn, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate  
April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate  
Tim Groeling, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate  
Samantha Luu, Executive Assistant to the EVCP, UCLA  
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP, UCLA  
Julie Sina, Chief of Staff to the Chancellor, UCLA

May 23, 2025

Julio Frenk  
UCLA Chancellor

Darnell Hunt  
UCLA Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP)

**Re: UCLA Athletics Department Deficit**

Dear Chancellor Frenk and EVCP Hunt,

On behalf of the Executive Board of the UCLA Academic Senate, I write to express profound concern about significant ongoing transfer of funds from the campus budget to UCLA Athletics at a time when the academic mission confronts damaging austerity.

UCLA Athletics has a long history of accomplishments. UCLA student athletes have won an impressive [124 NCAA championships](#) since our founding. Hundreds of UCLA student athletes have participated in the Olympics, and UCLA has been represented in every Olympics since its founding except for the 1924 Paris Olympics. The legacy of UCLA Athletics no doubt contributes to the global recognition of our university.

In the past several months, campus has repeatedly been told to expect substantial [budget cuts](#). Faculty feel these budget cuts acutely, from the hiring freeze in our departments, potential cuts to teaching assistants, and looming cuts to federal research support. We have been repeatedly told that campus will not backstop terminated federal grants. We have been told that financial sacrifices are necessary to ensure that there is a UCLA in the future.

How can austerity of this magnitude be imposed on the core academic mission while athletics spending goes unchecked? Athletics has run in the red for the past six years, accruing a staggering [\\$219 million deficit](#), even with [increasing supplements from campus](#). In 2024, Athletics generated roughly \$100 million in revenue while accruing expenses of \$180 million. In 2025, UCLA Athletics faces [an additional \\$22 million in expenditures](#) from [upcoming settlement of class action lawsuits](#) against the NCAA. The expected media rights revenue from the Big 10 ([\\$60-75 million](#)) cannot offset this overspending.

Despite these large deficits, Athletics continues to increase spending. Their \$80 million shortfall in 2024 was partially offset by a campus [subsidy of \\$30 million](#). Director Martin Jarmond has never operated UCLA Athletics with less than a [\\$20 million annual deficit](#), yet received an upgraded contract with [salary exceeding \\$1.5 million annually](#). Numerous news articles have documented costly decisions in Athletics, including [six years of underperformance](#) and [quiet quitting by Chip Kelly](#), whose poor decisions included [eyebrow raising expenditures on food for the team](#); hiring and departure of multiple coaches, which are tainted by [contract buyouts](#) and [investigations for recruiting violations](#).

Despite increasing annual deficits, Athletics continues to spend lavishly, recently hiring a deputy Athletic Director who plans [major investments in fan experience](#) with the dubious hope of increasing revenue. We also note the blanket exemption given to Athletics in the recently issued [Travel and Entertainment Restrictions to Reduce Discretionary Spending](#), and the absence of a blanket exemption for research. We also note the absence of any systematic evidence that increasing athletic spending benefits the academic mission, even indirectly, e.g. through increasing alumni support.

The money that campus administration is funneling into Athletics could instead be used to directly support the academic mission. To put the magnitude of the 2024 Athletics deficit in perspective, \$80 million would be sufficient to provide every ladder faculty member with roughly \$30K in additional research funds. It would alternatively cover nearly all in-state tuition for all doctoral students (\$16,667 per student). It could be used to support an additional 1200 teaching assistants (1 quarter at 50% appointment, level 1, including in-state tuition). All of these potential uses would directly support the academic mission in austere times. Yet the money is instead being directed to bail out a non-academic department that consistently demonstrates poor fiscal management.

We have been offered vague assurances that Athletics will undergo austerity along with the rest of campus, but no details have been given. We request immediate assurance that campus will no longer subsidize the Athletic budget in any form (including providing or authorizing loans.) We also request an explicit plan for Athletics to compensate campus for costs imposed on instructors in mitigating the adverse impact of Big 10 travel schedule on student athlete learning. Finally, we reiterate our previous requests (e.g. [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) for a set of concrete steps to restore meaningful Senate consultation on budget matters, including but not limited to, spending on athletics.

Sincerely,



Kathy Bawn  
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Cc: April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate  
Yolanda Gorman, Senior Advisor and Chief of Staff to the Chancellor  
Andrea Kasko, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate  
Megan McEvoy, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Academic Senate  
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP