



CHAIR, ACADEMIC SENATE
RIVERSIDE DIVISION
UNIVERSITY OFFICE BUILDING, RM 225

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Daniel Simmons
Professor of Law Chair,
UC Systemwide Academic Senate
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Dan:

Re: REQUEST FOR SYSTEMWIDE REVIEW OF COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION AND UCLA STATEMENT ON THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY

The above request was distributed to all standing committees of the Academic Senate on the UCR campus for review and the committee reports were discussed at two meetings of our Executive Council.

The UCR Division agrees with several points in the document, specifically that the current situation requires serious readjustment of priorities, the importance of maintaining the quality of the University, and budgetary decisions pertaining to retaining and recruiting faculty should be jointly made by administration and the Academic Senate. However, the Division takes issue with several of the recommendations, these are discussed below.

1. *Plan Specifics.* The document fails to provide a clear and strategic plan of action that insures the University will not only weather the current storm, but also be in a position to benefit from any future improvement in the economic climate of the State and the country. The faculty body might need to contract, but allowing this to happen without a strategic plan for the institution would be disastrous.
2. *Campus Differences.* Downsizing the university will have different consequences for larger and more established campuses relative to developing and smaller campuses. Given this variation it is important that each campus be allowed to make any such changes in ways that will enable it to meet its own goals. Therefore, we strongly recommend that objective criteria be adopted to govern the downsizing that do not by design favor one campus over another. Moreover, the process to select the criteria must be thoughtful and not expedient, and allow room for campuses to devise their own strategic approaches to downsizing.
3. *Programmatic Changes*
 - a. *New programs.* New programs should be approved only if they are academically sound and have identified revenue streams to support them.

- b. *Moribund programs.* Campuses must make strategic decisions for the future on their own, which may include shutting down unproductive programs and allowing for growth in other strategic areas. The status of tenured faculty in such circumstances needs to be clarified.
4. *Student Diversity*
 - a. Closing some programs with the aim of emphasizing campus strengths or having major area specializations on some campuses may have an adverse effect on student diversity. Low-income students, many of whom are the first in their family to attend college, often do not know what they want to study before they enter college. These students are served better when a full range of majors is offered on each campus.
 - b. Caution should be used with proposed tuition and fee increases as they impact affordability and access. The greatest negative effects will be on students from families at the lowest socio-economic levels.
5. *Future Enrollment Plans and Expectations.* Reducing faculty at a time when UC enrollment is rising dramatically would seriously undermine the quality of the institution. Resisting the impulse to downsize is particularly important at those campuses that have room to grow and that perform a special role in serving the public good. As a case in point, UCR and Merced are the only federally designated Hispanic Serving Institutions in the UC system.
6. *Allocation Formulas.* Several campuses have been disadvantaged by the formulas used at Systemwide to allocate funding. If major efforts are expended in downsizing the University, it is an appropriate time to examine these formulas so that any such disadvantages are reduced or eliminated.
7. *Contributions to the State.* The document lacks discussion of the benefits provided by the University to the State, and it needs a plan to insure that taxpayers are aware of these benefits and how they will be met if any changes are implemented. Any public outreach needs to emphasize both the economic and social benefits that the UC provides to the State.
8. *Public Perception.* Although the salary scales at the UC are not currently competitive with those at other comparable institutions, the manner in which this issue is presented in the document is insensitive. Even if the target audience of these documents is the UC faculty, we should not come across as petty or self-serving.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Gauvain
Professor of Psychology and Chair of the Riverside Division

CC: Martha Kendall Winnacker, Executive Director of the Academic Senate
Sellyna Ehlers, Director of UCR Academic Senate office