The first meeting of the assembly of the new academic year was called to order by Senate Chair, John Oakley at 10 a.m. on Oct. 11, 2006 at the Asian Cultural Center in Oakland. The substantive portion of the meeting began with comments by President Dynes. A full text of his report to the Assembly may be found at:

http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/assembly/oct2006/president.report.10.06.pdf

Pres. Dynes announced the appointment of Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources W.R. “Reg” Gomes was recently named to a two-year term as chair of the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources (BANR). The Board is a major program of the National Research Council of The National Academies. More on the BANR can be seen at http://dels.nas.edu/banr/index.shtml.

During his remarks, Pres. Dynes focused primarily on the future of UC and his plans for maintaining the University of California as the world's premier public university. First, he presented his thoughts on the future of the University of California:

The president feels we must be sure to identify ourselves as distinct from the private universities with whom we are competing for funding and students, and that this can be done by stressing our strength in terms of our size as a 10 campus University, and the diversity that size provides.

Currently, he is encouraging Chancellors and EVCs to identify and develop strengths on their specific campuses. The President’s position is that UC cannot afford to reproduce our campuses 10 times over. Rather, we must attempt a more integrated vision of the entire UC, giving us leadership in the UCs among our various programs. Also, argues Dynes, the faculty and students at any one campus have access to the wealth of programs at other campuses. This is what makes UC unique and must be maintained. The forces that are working to disassociate the campuses and disconnect them are destructive and must be resisted. For the UCs strength resides in the numbers. It is incumbent upon us to act as ONE university and make the most of UCs intellectual resources.

The president stressed RESEARCH: its development and delivery, and identified institutes of science and innovation as specifically important and noted some templates of such work, viz., QB3—Quantitative Biological Sciences Initiative, which combines the resources UCSF, Berkeley, and Santa Cruz on biological issues by bringing together research and innovation in a number of disciplines. Apparently, this initiative has had considerable success in drug development, clinical trials, etc. For Dynes, this is an example of harnessing the strength of several campuses, and frees UC from attempting to compete with private university development campus by campus. To paraphrase the president, we are not going to be able to raise billion dollars per campus. As a result, we will not be able to compete individually with endowments of the privates. Rather we must pull together intellectual strengths.

UC 2025: The president has constituted a “long-range guidance team” headed by Provost Hume and VP Darling to consider the future of the UC: this team composed of VPs, Regents, students, etc. When it is completed, Dynes will become traveling ambassador for this program which will advocate the following:
1. The Power of 10 (campuses).
2. Cal-Teach: UC’s commitment to deliver 1000 science and math teachers per year for k-12.
3. The development of a global strategy beyond single-campus global partners. In particular, the president has been developing working partnerships with universities and university systems in China, Canada, and Mexico, and is investigating connections to India and African nations.
   a. The President envisions a “10 + 10” strategy, developing connections between the UC campuses and the “top 10” campuses in China. He relates that the Chinese are emulating the UC masterplan and a transfer program as a national plan to create an innovative and creative economy. The UCs can expect 300 fellowships to come to UC from China (funded by Chinese government).
   b. Similar negotiations are in the beginning stages with India.
   c. At this point the Governor’s office is supportive of these efforts and that support is expected to continue.

During the question and answer period, President Dynes addressed a number of issues of particular importance to the UCR faculty. Among them were questions about competitiveness in faculty salary vis-à-vis the privates and in light of the increases in costs for benefits, retirement. What is the long-term plan for maintenance?

The president replied that pointing out that the retirement fund is still at more than 100% (i.e., above its obligations), but the curve is downward. If we don’t increase our contributions to the pensions, we will have difficulty maintaining it above 80%. In terms of minimizing the impact on take-home pay, he wishes to see to it that the state makes up most of the 15 to 16 percent input that will be necessary to maintain the fund. As for salaries, the goal is for them to increase throughout the process. It is impossible to know precisely what will be required in terms of individual contribution, since much is dependent on the market performance of the fund. The president’s model assumes a 7.5% yield, which give us “some breathing space.” Also, the president is counting on the governor’s guarantee of salary increases so that by 2010 or 2011 we will be competitive with our comparison eight.

The president was also queried about support for graduate education. If, as we presume, graduate education is the engine of economic development in the state, we face dire consequences if we do not have and adequate ratio of graduate to undergraduates on our campuses. It becomes increasingly difficult to compete. President Dynes replied that Non-resident tuition (for foreign students) is part of the problem. Currently those passed to candidacy allowed reduced fee. The rationale for this is 1. Partly to decrease costs for non-resident students. 2. Partly to motivate to move students to candidacy. The issue of completely doing away with Non-Resident Tuition is politically volatile. Further, according to Dynes money paid in NRT comes back to the campuses and that is at the campuses’ discretion as to how to spend it. According to Chris Newfield, Chair of system-wide Planning and Budget, this money is not coming back dollar for dollar to the campuses but rather is subject to a rather complicated formula for redistribution.

After President Dynes left, Chair Oakley outlined the primary goals and issues for the Assembly this year.

First, assembly must continue to impress upon the constituency of the UC that we are not a “holding company” but a University and need to be sure to present ourselves in that way (especially to the Regents):
1. The assembly would like to keep a chief operating officer as an academic. The Regents seem opposed to that. They are looking professional managers.

2. Current tenor amplifies the faculty role; Regents seem to believe in concept of shared governance and are unwilling to subvert that position, despite their somewhat tenuous support of OP.

Other issues:

3. Faculty salaries and compensation. A tricky situation given the current relationship with things like S.F. Chronicle. The Assembly leadership and OP are trying to address that issue now without drawing unwarranted criticism.

4. Must implement the existing consensus that we should not be affectively charging tuition to non-resident graduate students. This is a difficult political position. Costs—almost nothing in terms of the UC budget.

5. Faculty Welfare: Faculty Salaries are approximately 1 billion dollars per year. The overall UC payroll is 2 billion $. It would take 100 million for a 10% bump. Difficult issue is how to meet medical care costs (as well as salaries) by 2%, which is necessary.

6. Mercer scale on senior management group. Currently it means slotting: i.e., different salaries based on where ones works (e.g., the EVC at Merced makes less than say Berkeley). This seems to fly in the teeth of the 10 campus=1 university model. A rgental task force is in place to rethink the “slotting” program (partly was established using USN&WR prestige rankings).

7. National Labs (Los Alamos and Livermore) issue. Special concern has been to be able to guarantee research freedom even as the labs become limited liability companies held in conjunction with the UCs. Part of the issue is how will the external review be continued? A University task force on the national labs (ACSONL ) put forward a number of recommendations (and requests) to keep academics involved in lab oversight and administration. The U.C. Council unanimously supported Dynes’ attempts to maintain academic control over the labs.

The Assembly then turned to agenda items. The first was the relation of the University to tobacco industry supported research. The university had been asked by Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante to rethink its position regarding the acceptance of funds from the tobacco industry to subsidize research. In response the Academic Council passed the following resolution, subject to ratification by the Assembly:

"The Academic Council instructs the Chair of the Council to advise the President that grave issues of academic freedom would be raised if the Regents were to deviate from the principle that no unit of the University, whether by faculty vote or administrative decision, has the authority to prevent a faculty member from accepting external research funding based solely on the source of funds. Policies such as the faculty code of conduct are already in place on all campuses to uphold the highest standards and integrity of research. The Academic Council believes that the Regental intervention on the basis of
assumptions about the moral or political standing of the donor is
unwarranted.”

After extended debate, the Assembly passed the resolution by a vote of 27 in favor, 16 opposed. In an effort to further clarify the Assembly’s position on this issue, two further resolutions were passed by a strong majority (a show of hands):

"The Assembly declares its deep disapproval of funding arrangements in which an appearance of academic freedom belies an actual suppression of academic freedom."

and

"The Assembly asserts its conviction that past funding arrangements involving the tobacco industry have been shown to suppress academic freedom."

The assembly also took up the issue of Academic Senate interaction between UC faculty and the National Laboratories and voted unanimously to adopt ACSCONL’s proposal to ensure UC faculty expertise in the management of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. A full text of this statement may be found at
http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/assembly/oct2006/faculty.lab.relations10.06.pdf.

Submitted by
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Senior Assembly Representaive