

To: Dylan Rodriguez, Chair of the Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

From: Thomas Cogswell, UCR Assembly Representative to the UC Academic Senate

RE: Report of the Meeting of the UC Academic Senate Assembly, June 14, 2017

Chair Chalfont began by stressing the gravity of the situation currently facing the University. The challenges went beyond simply getting Riverside and Santa Cruz to meet the mandated formula of two first year students for each transfer student. [For more about this, see below.] With the State Legislature and the Governor wading deep into operational details, there were also plans afoot to prioritize the admission of California residents to graduate programs, to alter the State's basic funding arrangements for the University and to apply Activity Based Costing [ABC] model to the entire system. Faced with these serious and possibly calamitous changes, Chalfont warned the Senate and its various committees, especially Planning and Budget, to be ready for action.

Provost Dorr was equally concerned, and she reminded the Assembly that details mattered. The Budget Framework Agreement stipulated that in return for a steady increase in state funding, the University would make several changes. One of these, streamlining and updating the requirements for many undergraduate majors, has been proceeding quite well. Aside from predictable, and understandable, exceptions with some Engineering and Science degrees, the requirements for most other degrees will be changed so that they require only a year's worth of upper division course work in the major. Likewise, there was progress on a three-year pathway to the degree for some students, although there remained some disagreement about the best way to measure progress. The good news ended there.

The Governor, she explained, is taking a hardline attitude over the inability of Riverside and Santa Cruz to meet the 2:1 ration of first year students to transfer students. Here she praised Chancellors Wilcox and Blumenthal who have been tirelessly pointing out the serious damage that a quick fix would do to their campuses. At Riverside, it might produce a less diverse entering class with lower test scores. She piously hoped that the solons would be content if the two campuses could show a good faith effort to meet the ratio. However, she was not certain if it would be enough to stop the state for withholding \$50 million until the situation could be re-assessed in April 2018.

Another threat is one many here already know. Some in Sacramento, most notably the Governor and several leading legislators, are interested in applying ABC accounting methods to the University, and the new Regent, Maria Anguiano who advocated this system in her time at UC Riverside, will doubtless encourage this interest. In response to baleful noises about this development from several representatives, Chalfont and Dore admitted they had not pushed back hard enough against ABC, preferring to mutter quietly about the dire consequences. Nevertheless, they announced that the time had come for a more aggressive response.

Equally downbeat was CFO Brostrom who reported that the UC system was in the middle of a perfect political storm. The recent Audit report has left UCOP drifting, President Napolitano weakened and the Regents dismayed. Meanwhile the Governor and the legislators were intent on getting down into the administrative and fiscal weeds, proposing increasingly detailed ukases about how the University should be run. ABC, Brostrom admitted, was not ideally suited to the academy, and if recent efforts to link graduate

funding to California residents were successful, the results would be baleful. Worst still was a recent proposal to tie the entire state allocation for the University to certain functions – and not to others. This news produced many calls in the Assembly for more clarification, and some representatives predicted these changes could result in serious financial cuts. Brostrom promised to explain the new changes and their impact once the situation became clearer over the next few weeks.

Suitably sobered, the Assembly turned to the three major items on the agenda. Two passed unanimously after some discussion. The first approved changes to Bylaws 335 and 336; these were necessary in order to implement the University's new regulations about Sexual Harassment and Violence. The second amended Bylaw 182 and expanded the charge of the University Committee on International Education. More controversial was the motion to apply the Augmented Review to up to 15% of undergraduate applications to all campuses. Some argued that its key feature – the limited use of Letters of Recommendation – was burdensome to admission committees and students alike. Against that, others cited a wave of phone calls for high school teachers in less affluent school districts begging for this provision, which would allow students, especially from underrepresented groups, to augment their case for admission. Eventually the measure passed 28 to 10.

Finally, Chalfont added that a reporter from the LA Times has asked for, and received, a full list of all University pensions. While he was uncertain about how this information might be used, the Chair wanted all retired Senate members to be aware of this development.

At this troubling moment when UCOP was apparently drifting and the legislature increasingly active in University affairs, Chalfont reiterated the need for the Senate to remain united and vigilant. To be sure, he did not actually sound the tocsin at this meeting. Nevertheless, it was noticeable that this venerable alarm bell has been freshly cleaned and that Chalfont was practicing his swing with the hammer. While we should hope and pray for better news, we must also prepare worse.