

November 14, 2005

TEXT AS SUBMITTED TO SF CHRONICLE

Dear Editor:

The Chronicle's coverage of compensation at the University of California highlights an increasingly important struggle for public universities across the country: how to recruit and retain the best people -- in our case, more than 150,000 faculty, staff and administrators at every level and in every field -- amid constrained state funding and stiff competition from private and other top public universities. At stake is not only the academic quality of the University, but the medical care provided by UC, the economic growth fueled by UC research, and the contributions of tens of thousands of UC alumni at work in communities across California.

Public trust and accountability are critical to us, and we take seriously our responsibilities to the public. We continually review our policies with an eye to improving them, and we will use this opportunity to re-examine what we do and address any shortcomings. Already we have worked to expand public disclosure and Regents' oversight of senior-level compensation.

Getting and keeping the best people for certain positions does require compensation packages that reflect today's fierce competitive realities in the higher education and medical marketplaces. Several points are worth noting in this regard.

First, these offers in some cases include one-time incentives that should not be confused with ongoing compensation. Second, faculty in the health sciences are paid differently than others, largely from the professional fees generated by their own clinical activity -- and health sciences faculty dominate the Chronicle's list of top earners at UC. Third, even as UC's workload has been increasing as measured by student enrollments, research activity and patient days in our hospitals, spending on administration as a proportion of our total budget has been declining.

We are a community of learners, and we will aim to learn from the Chronicle's stories. We also will continue working to remain competitive for the best people, at every level of the University, for it is our people who make possible the lasting contributions that UC makes to California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert C. Dynes", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert C. Dynes
President
University of California
Oakland