

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES (Continued)

A. Academic Council (Continued)

3. Proposed UC Statement on Diversity (action)

- **John Oakley, Academic Council Chair**
- **Daniel Weiss, University Committee on Affirmative Action (UCAAD) Chair**

The University Committee on Affirmative Action and Diversity (UCAAD) asked Academic Council to endorse its proposed statement about the place of diversity in the mission of the University and its fundamental importance to the excellence of the University. UCAAD determined that this was an ideal moment for the Academic Senate to express its support for diversity, and noted that a Task Force on Faculty Diversity was conducting a comprehensive review of faculty diversity efforts at UC. Council resolved to act on the statement in time for it to be announced as a Statement of the Academic Senate at the President's Systemwide Summit on Faculty Diversity, which will meet on May 23 to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Task Force. The inclusion of the statement in the Summit's proceedings would underscore the Senate's commitment to diversity and equal opportunity.

Academic Council sent the draft statement to Senate divisions and Systemwide committees for review and comment, and entered into a dialogue with UCAAD about the final form and content of the statement. Based on responses, the following statement was endorsed at the April 19 meeting of the Academic Council.

PROPOSED UC ACADEMIC DIVERSITY STATEMENT (As amended and approved by the Academic Council on 04/19/06)

The diversity of the people of California has been the source of innovative ideas and creative accomplishments throughout the state's history into the present. Diversity – a defining feature of California's past, present and future – refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more.

Because the core mission of the University of California is to serve the interests of the State of California, it must seek to achieve diversity among its student bodies and among its employees. The State of California has a compelling interest in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups. The knowledge that the University of California is open to qualified students from all groups, and thus serves all parts of the community equitably, helps sustain the social fabric of the State.

Diversity should also be integral to the University's achievement of excellence. Diversity can enhance the ability of the University to accomplish its academic mission. Diversity aims to broaden and deepen both the educational experience and the scholarly environment, as students and faculty learn to interact effectively with each other, preparing them to participate in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society. Ideas, and practices based on those ideas, can be made richer by the process of being born and nurtured in a diverse community. The pluralistic university can model a process of proposing and testing ideas through respectful, civil communication. Educational excellence that truly incorporates

diversity thus can promote mutual respect and make possible the full, effective use of the talents and abilities of all to foster innovation and train future leadership.

Therefore, the University of California renews its commitment to the full realization of its historic promise to recognize and nurture merit, talent, and achievement by supporting diversity and equal opportunity in its education, services, and administration, as well as research and creative activity. The University particularly acknowledges the acute need to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented.

Action Requested: Endorse the Statement on Diversity and transmit it to the President present with the following requests that this statement: 1) is adopted as the policy of the University of California; and 2) is forwarded to the Task Force on Faculty Diversity in time for its May summit meeting.