

January 14, 2000

**A Letter to the UC Faculty from Lawrence B. Coleman
Chair of the Universitywide Academic Senate, University of
California**

Dear Colleagues:

In keeping with the new year we have entered, I would like to welcome you to something new in UC faculty communications. This is the first letter in a series that will be coming to you twice a year from the Chair of the universitywide Academic Senate. I hold the Chair's position this year; my successor, Michael Cowan of UC Santa Cruz, will be communicating with you through this medium beginning next September.

This inaugural letter is in one sense a briefing, as all Chair's letters will be, but in another sense it marks a first attempt by the universitywide Academic Senate to broaden its channels of communication with the UC faculty. The Senate Chair's letters are part of a larger Senate communications effort agreed to by the Senate's executive committee, the Academic Council. Joining the Chair's letters will be two other forms of communication, one perhaps familiar, the other not.

The familiar communication is "Notice," published since 1976 and distributed most recently to faculty in December. Joining "Notice" and the Chair's letters will be an electronic publication meant for those faculty who are active, or simply interested, in universitywide Senate work. This will be an e-mail newsletter, written six times a year, again by the Chair of the Senate, and going to three groups of faculty: those who are currently participating in statewide Senate work, those who have recently participated, and those who ask to be put on the mailing list. This informal publication, the Statewide Senate Report, will provide updates on the various issues the Senate is dealing with and will give those faculty serving on Senate committees an opportunity to see the bigger picture of Senate work. How can you be put on the mailing list? Simply send an e-mail to subscribe@ucop.edu. No message, or even subject line, is required.

The final piece of the Senate's communication plan is an upgrading of our website at <http://www.ucop.edu/senate>. The new site, now under construction, will contain not only much more information, but also a way for Senate members to transmit their views to us. You do not need to wait for the new website to send us a message, however. The universitywide Senate is keen to hear from you now. To show you how serious I am about this, here is my e-mail address: lbcoleman@ucdavis.edu. Write me with questions or comments about any of the topics addressed in this letter.

Issues Before the Senate

Growth of the University

This is a time of institutional prosperity for UC. State budgets have been good for years, faculty salaries are once again competitive, and extramural support is high. A key question now before the University, however, is how to maintain its quality in the face of an enrollment surge that will confront us over the course of the next 12 years. California's Department of Finance has projected an increase of 60,000 undergraduate and graduate students at UC between now and the year 2010-11. Such a jump would equal UC's enrollment growth over the last 30 years and would result in a student body of about 210,000 students by 2010-11, as opposed to the 152,000 students we have now. The University has, of course, been planning on growth for some time, but California's recent economic boom has brought not only more migration to the state than was expected, but also higher levels of enrollment in the state's colleges and universities. The 60,000-student increase is some 24,000 students more than UC's campuses have been anticipating in their long-range development plans. Thus the problem: How is UC going to deal with all these additional students? The fledgling UC Merced will provide only limited help, as it is expected to enroll no more than 5,000 students by 2010.

Some of the problems stemming from this enrollment boom will be dealt with primarily by UC administrators and state political leaders. Among these is the question of funding, and then building, enough classrooms and labs and residence halls to accommodate not only additional students, but the additional faculty that will come with them. There is another challenge, however, that will have to be taken on primarily by the UC faculty: that of hiring a huge number of faculty colleagues over the next 12 years. A kind of pincers movement is exacerbating this issue. On the one hand there is the growth I have spoken of; on the other, there is the large number of faculty retirements that will take place in the next decade. Setting UC San Francisco aside, to simply accommodate enrollment growth, UC would have to increase its faculty numbers by 40 percent between now and 2010-11. When retirements and other "separations" are factored in, the upshot is that the University will have to hire more than 7,500 faculty in the next 12 years. This is more than the 6,400 faculty the University currently employs. Recruiting at this level will mean hiring an average of 628 faculty each year through 2010-11; by contrast, over the past three years we have hired about 324 faculty per year.

Lots of issues will accompany the faculty-hiring problem. One that I have been contemplating is how the University will find the money to fund start-up costs for new-hires. Relying on a professorial favorite -- the back-of-the-envelope calculation -- I estimated that UC will conservatively need \$50 million per year in start-up money alone over the next 12 years. This does not include the cost of building labs, offices, studios, and other research space.

Despite such dilemmas, UC's coming enrollment surge provides a case-in-point for

the assertion that problems are first-cousins to opportunities. With the faculty hiring that will take place, an enormous opportunity has been presented to the UC faculty. Because of the length of faculty service, our decisions in selecting colleagues will shape the University for decades to come. This means, of course, that we have the opportunity to shape the University for good or ill, but I am confident that we can rise to the challenge. Our tasks include remaining highly selective in the face of pressing demand; making progress in hiring more women and minority faculty; choosing wisely in hiring across existing disciplines; and moving wisely into new disciplinary areas.

Year-Round Instruction

A year ago, California's Legislative Analyst proposed one means of dealing with UC's imminent enrollment increase. It was that the state's three segments of public higher education institute year-round instruction. The California Legislature subsequently requested that the University produce a report, by this April, that evaluates the feasibility of such a change. Longtime UC faculty may have a sense of *deja vu* about this, as it was tried once (in the late 1960s) and quickly abandoned. The Senate, the University as a whole, and the state now seem agreed that year-round instruction would not save the state money. What it can do, however, is increase the number of students the University can educate each year. At the moment, the Office of the President is regarding year-round instruction as one component among many that may play a role in addressing the enrollment issue. In March, President Atkinson will present a report to the UC Regents on the University's proposed responses to the enrollment growth issue.

Community Service Graduation Requirement

California Governor Gray Davis proposed last year that community service be made a graduation requirement at UC, Cal State, and the California Community Colleges. At UC, this clearly is a faculty issue, as it is faculty who have been given the authority to set the University's graduation requirements. Accordingly, the Senate has been requested by the UC Regents to be the lead player in analyzing the Governor's request. Early this year, I asked the Chairs of the campus Senates to consult with appropriate campus committees and administrators about the desirability -- and feasibility -- of such a requirement. As a matter of framing these campus discussions, I prepared a white-paper on community service, which can be viewed at <http://www.ucop.edu/senate/commserv.html>. Campus comments on the issue are now being received. Meanwhile, the universitywide Senate leadership continues to discuss the proposal with various parties inside and outside UC. I have met, for example, with the state's Assistant Secretary for Higher Education, Diana Fuentes-Michel, and with UC's Council of Student Affairs Vice Chancellors. I expect the Senate's deliberations on this issue will be completed this spring.

Collective Bargaining with Teaching Assistants

Relations between UC faculty and UC's teaching assistants were transformed last year when TAs on all eight general campuses voted to become represented by a

union (an affiliate of the United Auto Workers). For Senate faculty, this stands to be an issue of great practical importance; the labor contracts that will result from negotiations now underway stand to strongly condition the working relations we will have with TAs far into the future. Last May Aimee Dorr, then Chair of the Academic Council, wrote to President Atkinson to express the Council's view that "certain aspects of the academic enterprise ought not to be the subject of collective bargaining." The Council resolved that "As faculty, we are committed to working with the UC administration . . . to retain University prerogatives in all matters of academic judgment" This view, shared by the administration, has been a guiding principle for the University in the negotiations that have been carried out so far. Both sides agreed early on to develop a universitywide "master contract" that will serve as a template for the individual contracts that will be signed by each campus. Council Vice Chair Cowan and I both sit on groups that are providing advice to the University's negotiators. Both the union and the University had hoped to have master-contract negotiations completed in 1999, but this did not happen. It remains to be seen how long it will be before these talks are completed.

UC Merced

The University now speaks of its "tenth campus" in the present tense, as UC Merced has not only a location and a chancellor, but even a Committee on Academic Personnel. The Senate has been active in helping to set up the campus, which is scheduled to open its doors to 1,000 students in the fall of 2005. Our efforts have been spearheaded by a Senate Task Force on UC Merced, chaired by Fred Spiess of UC San Diego. In October, the Senate's Universitywide Assembly granted the Task Force authority to approve courses and curricula for UC Merced until such time as the campus has its own Senate division. More about the Task Force and its activities can be found at <http://www.ucop.edu/senate/ucmerced>.

UC Merced is, of course, a long-term issue for the University, as is the question of enrollment growth in coming years. In just a few months, however, we should know more about the outcome of collective bargaining, the prospects for year-round instruction, and the possibility of a community service graduation requirement. In June, you will receive a second letter from me that will summarize how the Senate and University have dealt with these and other questions during this academic year. I look forward to working on these issues on your behalf until then.

Sincerely,

Lawrence B. Coleman, Chair
Academic Council