



Notes from the Academic Senate Chair

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Dear colleagues,

In the fast waning days of my Academic Senate chairship, I want to take this opportunity to review some of the Senate's activities from the past year. As you know, 2007-08 has been a year of some tumult and much transition at the Office of the President. I direct your attention to my Open Letter to the President (see below) which reviews critical issues that faced UC in the past year and how well (or not) shared governance operated to address them. As challenging as the times have been, it has also been a year filled with many noteworthy Senate accomplishments. I am especially pleased to report that the divisions, committees, and subcommittees of the Senate continued to work effectively during this challenging time, which helped ensure the confidence of UCOP and The Regents, who knew they could count on the Senate to fulfill its mission thoughtfully and efficiently.

Chair's Annual Open Letter to the President on the State of Shared Governance

In August 2005, Academic Senate Chair George Blumenthal instituted a report to the president on the state of shared governance at the University of California. Highlights from that report were published in the [August 2005 issue](#) of *The Senate Source*. I am pleased to carry on Chair Blumenthal's tradition by offering my own assessment of the state of shared governance in 2008. These have been challenging times for shared governance...

[Click here to read this year's letter.](#)

University Leadership

The academic year began with a great deal of uncertainty about the governance of the University. You may recall that the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) took the unusual step of visiting UCOP in October 2007 to investigate accreditation issues implicated in the 2006 compensation audits. WASC's February 2008 [final report](#) acknowledged some of The Regents' efforts to build more transparency and accountability into executive compensation policies and practices, but concluded that UC needed to address governance issues – chiefly, the role of the President with respect to The Regents and the function of UCOP. It was clear that one of the most critical issues facing UC was restoring the confidence of The Regents and the rest of the University community in the president and UCOP.

The Senate's Academic Advisory Committee to The Regents' Presidential Selection Committee worked effectively through less than ideal circumstances to converge around a stellar choice for president. [Mark G. Yudof](#) arrived in mid-June with all the leadership qualities one could want – finely honed academic values, excellent communication skills, sharp political savvy, extraordinary experience and success as an academic manager, and a deep understanding of the contemporary issues facing higher education. I am confident that the president's plans to make accountability a priority and restructure UCOP to be more responsive and effective are consistent with the Senate's goals.

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A Conversation with Chancellor George Blumenthal



Chancellor Blumenthal

The *Senate Source* recently sat down with former Academic Senate Chair George Blumenthal to hear about his first year on the job as UC Santa Cruz chancellor, to see if life as a top administrator has changed his view of the Senate, and to get his impressions about the current state of shared governance, the future of UCSC, and the key challenges facing the University of California.

Chancellor Blumenthal was appointed UCSC chancellor on September 19, 2007, after serving 14 months in an acting capacity, following the death of Chancellor Denise Denton. He is the fourth former systemwide Academic Senate chair to serve as a UC chancellor. The others were [Francis A. Sooy](#), who served as Senate chair in 1969-70 and UCSF chancellor from 1972 to 1982; [Angus Taylor](#), who served as Senate chair in 1964-65, and UC Santa Cruz chancellor from 1976 to 1977; and Karl Pister, who was Senate chair in 1979-80 and UC Santa Cruz chancellor from 1991 to 1996.

Since Chancellor Blumenthal joined the Santa Cruz faculty in 1972 as a professor of theoretical astrophysics, he has shown a tireless dedication to the improvement of the University as an educator, faculty advocate, Senate leader, and now administrator, at both the divisional and systemwide levels. Despite his extensive systemwide service, he has remained very much a creature of UCSC, and is particularly upbeat about the future of his campus.

[Click here for the interview](#)



Chancellor Blumenthal and Chair Brown at the Chancellor's Inauguration, June 6, 2008

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We await the outcome of the present search process for the next provost – UC’s #2 academic leader – who will also be critical to the future. Over the past three years, Rory Hume has been an anchor of stability, serving UC with great distinction and honoring the principles of shared governance in all of his interactions with the Senate. Most recently, as Chief Operating Officer, he helped rebuild confidence and trust by recognizing the need for UCOP to be responsive to the campuses, particularly to the perspectives and concerns of the Senate. In June, the Academic Council honored Rory with a resolution of appreciation, applauding him for exemplary leadership during a particularly difficult time. He will be a tough act to follow.



Chair Brown presents Provost Hume with a resolution of appreciation at the July 23 Council meeting

One University

The challenges facing UC are great, and the president needs the help of the entire university community to reinvigorate the public confidence and support that will help UC maintain and enhance its global standing. As demonstrated in two recent Academic Council reports – 2007’s [“Futures Report”](#) and this year’s [Report on the Cuts Proposed by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger](#) (both drafted by the University Committee on Planning & Budget) – the continued excellence of UC academic programs is severely threatened by almost two decades of chronic under-funding. Faculty and staff compensation lags the market; graduate education lacks proper support; and UC’s information infrastructure and campus physical plants need modernization and refurbishment.

In the months and years ahead, the President and The Regents will need the wisdom of the faculty, who are intimately steeped in knowledge about our multiversity system, to help them understand the central values and instrumentalities shared by all campuses that have helped produce multiple centers of excellence at UC and made us a faculty-centric haven for the best and brightest: the California Master Plan for Higher Education; formerly sufficient state support; a single Academic Senate with a vital and respected role in governance and in the determination of systemwide standards; and the systemwide standards themselves – including, but not limited to, our academic personnel review system and freshman admissions policy. We depart from this “One University” model at our peril. I expect that President Yudof will “shake things up” at UCOP, and with good cause, but I believe he will see that these foundational features of UC will remain unshaken, for they are predicated on a simple bedrock idea: that all UC campuses aspire to a single

standard of excellence and must receive the support necessary to achieve that goal. Six UC campuses are members of the prestigious [Association of American Universities](#), and it is widely expected that UC will soon have a seventh, with more to follow.

Eligibility Reform

Of all the Senate’s accomplishments this year, I am perhaps most gratified by the [proposal to reform UC’s freshman eligibility policy](#), approved by the Academic Assembly in June. The proposed “Entitled to Review” admissions pathway was born out of a long-term, data-driven, comprehensive vetting and review process. It is consistent with UC’s highest admissions goals and philosophies; it will ensure academic excellence; and it will honor our public mission of broad accessibility by expanding the pool of applicants visible to UC, encouraging selection of the top students from that pool for admission, and increasing admission from under-represented minorities and economically-disadvantaged groups.

In developing and vetting this proposal, the faculty have thoroughly honored the trust placed in them by The Regents to formulate and recommend admissions policy. Under the inspired leadership of Chair Mark Rashid, the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools in particular carried out that trust with great care, rigor, and fidelity to UC’s highest academic values. The proposal is currently under review by the new President and The Regents, who want to take time to fully absorb its implications. I believe the President will ultimately recommend, and The Regents will adopt, the Senate’s proposal, perhaps with slight modifications. There are challenges in communicating such a comprehensive reform proposal effectively and accurately, but Senate Chair-Elect Mary Croughan and I have been assured that the President and his communications team will assist us in this task.

The Budget Crisis

We know that UC is the greatest research university system in the world, but we can’t forget that it is also a public institution. UC has been chronically under-funded by the state since the mid-1990s, and has been able to maintain its quality only through excellent financial stewardship. In that context, the systemic nature of the pains we are experiencing and their cumulative damage to UC, threatens to be far more severe than past short-term crises. During the past year, the Academic Council has also developed a deep concern over what UCSD Division Chair Jim Posakony terms “launch and starve” – a habit of starting new initiatives with great fanfare, only to leave them struggling for the resources necessary to achieve the originally envisioned excellence. The California Institutes for Science and Innovation are an example, but there are many others. I also worry that the budget crisis threatening UC and other public research universities reflects a deeper problem – an erosion of public confidence in higher education that endangers freedom of inquiry, faculty self-governance, and the ability of institutions like UC to provide opportunity and social mobility to the broadest possible spectrum of citizens. It will take an aggressive University-wide effort to solve these problems; short-term fixes will be insufficient. The strongest efforts of the Senate, administration, and The Regents will be required to keep UC’s academic environment as richly resourced and protected as possible so that it may continue to flourish.

Faculty Salaries and Benefits

The present budget crisis also threatens the implementation of the second year of UCOP’s [four-year plan to fix the UC salary scales](#). In [March](#) and [July](#), the Academic Council released statements in support of the plan, which affirm the critical importance of the systemwide salary scales and the urgency of bringing them into parity with those of comparable public and private institutions. The scales represent a baseline of support for faculty excellence throughout the UC system. They are critical to maintaining the vitality of a post-tenure review process that ties reviews to a meaningful reward system and to UC’s sense of itself as a single system of ten campuses.

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Without an appropriate faculty salary structure, we will be unable to ensure excellence in research and teaching, or attract world-class graduate students; we will be unable to power California's economic engine with cutting-edge research in the sciences, medicine, and the humanities and social sciences; and we will be unable to continue offering California citizens real hope for social and occupational mobility. Quite simply, we will not have the UC we currently enjoy. UC excellence begins with a consequential investment in faculty. All campuses – from our newest, UC Merced, to our first, UC Berkeley – should be provided with resources that will allow them to attain that single standard of excellence. To this end, the University should not view its faculty as just another budget line item.

The University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) has been a lion in support of our benefits and the UC retirement plan (UCRP). The UCRP surplus that has allowed a “contribution holiday” over the past 18 years has ebbed, and contributions must resume for the plan to remain solvent and for our benefits to remain secure. UCFW is working closely with UCOP to ensure that the resumption of contributions is implemented appropriately.

National Laboratories

I am proud of the stance taken by the Academic Assembly in its February “[Resolution on Limiting UC's Role in Manufacturing Nuclear Weapons](#),” which expressed serious concerns about UC's role in nuclear weapons production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The resolution was originally proposed by the Academic Council's Special Committee on Lab Issues, acting on knowledge that UC's present contract with the Department of Energy that allows the government to increase LANL's production of plutonium “pits,” the triggering mechanisms in both fusion and fission bombs, for purposes beyond any stewardship limits UC may have envisioned when it signed the new contract. The Senate's resolution notes that while UC has a responsibility to offer the best possible science to the nation in the service of national defense and peace, being a weapons *producer* is fundamentally inconsistent with UC's broader academic mission and responsibilities. The Senate asked the President to monitor and report on UC's role in pit production, and stated that if production begins to increase, UC, in consultation with the Senate, should reassess its participation in LANL management.

Graduate Student Support

Monitoring the implementation of a presidential directive to return non-resident tuition (NRT) to graduate student support funds on campuses was another of the Senate's top priorities this year. Graduate students are vital to UC's knowledge production enterprise, yet NRT taxes graduate education, handicaps research and teaching, and reduces the excellence and diversity of UC's graduate student profile. UC's current level of graduate student support is not sufficient for a world-class research institution. The outgoing president's directive was helpful, but we need a better funding model in the long-term. I regret that the current budget crisis makes such reform impossible right now, but we must help the state understand how critical graduate students are to UC's teaching and research missions. To that end, in March, Council called for the formation of a [joint Senate/Administrative Committee](#) to discuss a new funding model for graduate education. Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Steven Beckwith is now establishing that committee.

Diversity

I was honored to chair the Undergraduate Diversity Work Team of The Regents' Diversity Study Group, which made its final presentation to The Regents in May. I hope our [report](#) will form the basis of a comprehensive plan of action to advance access and affordability, which I believe begins with confronting the severe educational disparities in California K-12 education. Similarly, I expect the [other Study Group reports](#) to make recommendations for promoting diversity among graduate and professional students, faculty, staff, and for improving campus climate.

Our state leaders should not forget that an investment in UC is an investment in hope for economic opportunity and prosperity, social mobility, and self-fulfillment. As a public institution, UC's mission includes providing opportunity to California's citizens. Failing to honor that pledge, particularly in a state as ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse as California, brings into question UC's *raison d'être*. UC cannot admit everyone, but it should reflect in its students, faculty, staff, and leaders, the face of the state that it serves. Such parity, properly achieved, communicates very tangibly to the public that “UC is for me,” a belief that will enhance broad and deep support for this institution.

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UPDATES and EVENTS

- ▶ In June, Academic Council [endorsed recommendations](#) from the University Committee on Planning and Budget that address concerns about the UC Merced budget. Council also [conveyed concerns to EVP Lapp](#) about a proposal to outsource UC benefits administration, and endorsed a University Committee on Academic Personnel [Report on 'Non-Progressing' UC Faculty Members](#).
- ▶ In July, Council endorsed a set of [recommendations](#) about UCRP funding; sent comments about [proposed amendments to Section 5150 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code](#) to the Office of Student Affairs, and endorsed a [set of proposed amendments](#) to academic personnel policies.
- ▶ The Compendium Committees had a busy year, reviewing proposals for a School of Nursing and School of Public Health at UCD, and for a new School of Medicine and School of Public Policy at UCR.
- ▶ The systemwide Academic Senate [monitors state and federal legislation](#) of potential impact to faculty, students and the University's teaching, research and service missions. Updates are available on the [Legislative web page](#).



Chair Brown honors former Academic Senate Executive Director María Bertero-Barceló at the annual Council dinner on July 23

2008-09 Senate Leadership and Staff

Please join me in welcoming Academic Senate Chair-Elect Mary Croughan and Vice Chair-Elect Henry “Harry” Powell, two extraordinary people who have knowledge of shared governance and command of the issues needed to be effective leaders of the Senate and conduits of the faculty mind and heart. The challenges of maintaining the Senate as an effective and trusted source of wisdom, and of fairly but forcefully representing faculty views to the administration and The Regents, are significant, but Mary and Harry are more than up to the task. Mary and Harry will also be challenged to ensure that the UCOP restructuring proceeds in a way that does not adversely affect the work of the faculty, especially through the data and analytical support given to our systemwide committees.

Once again, I want to recognize María Bertero-Barceló, former executive director and chief of staff to the Academic Senate, who retired from UC in June after 35 years of extraordinary service – 15 years with the Senate and over 10 as the executive director in Oakland. It is also with great pleasure that I welcome Martha Winnacker to the position of executive director and chief of staff; she will be an exceptional agent of the Senate. I would also like to welcome new Senate analysts Clare Sheridan and Brenda Abrams to the Senate team, and extend a belated welcome to Eric Zárate, who joined the analyst cadre in March. Finally, I want to congratulate and thank our new Senate Associate Director Todd Giedt for his hard work and many sacrifices during the leadership transition.

Personal Reflections

My own UC journey would have seemed unimaginable to the young child of a sub-working class military father growing up in 1960s San Bernardino (Dad called himself a “fugitive from reform school”). One day, that child grew up and suddenly found himself a graduate of one of the world’s top universities, UC Irvine, where it had never occurred to him that he would, or even could, end up as a UC faculty member. But he did find himself a faculty member – in the greatest public research university system in the world – where he moved on to represent his campus (UCSB) as a member, and then as chair, of BOARS, and was granted the opportunity and high honor to serve as Academic Senate vice chair and then chair. I sometimes wonder where else can these kinds of things happen except at UC? I feel lucky to embody the opportunity and possibility that this University represents.

The heart of public service beats hard in the UC faculty. Over the years I have met some of the brightest, most community-committed individuals in the world through my Senate service. Even if nothing else ever happens to me, I consider myself a very blessed and fortunate man, particularly with respect to how UC has advanced me personally and professionally. I am privileged to have had this opportunity to represent my faculty colleagues, who I thank from the depths of my heart, especially those of you I have served with in the Academic Assembly and Academic Council over the years. It’s been a true pleasure and an honor that I will carry with me the rest of my days.

I do hope that those who placed confidence in me three years ago (!) and elected me to this post feel that your confidence was well-placed and that I ran my leg of the race well. I now pass the baton to Mary Croughan, to whom I say – run, with patience, the race that is set before you!

– *Fiat Lux*, Michael T. Brown

THE SENATE SOURCE

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Michael T. Brown, 2007-08 Academic Senate Chair

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ACADEMIC COUNCIL 2007-2008



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Under Senate Review

Click [here](#) for a comprehensive list of current and past review items. Check the [Tracking Log](#) for the progress of all issues under review. Unless otherwise noted, send comments to your [Divisional Chair](#) or relevant [Divisional Committee](#).