

Statewide Senate Report

From Chand Viswanathan, Chair of the Statewide Senate,
University of California

Welcome to this year's first issue of Statewide Senate Report, a publication intended to keep those faculty currently or recently active in the Statewide Senate apprised of Senate issues. Information on subscribing to Statewide Senate Report, or on "unsubscribing" from it, can be found at the end of this e-mail.

This issue of Statewide Senate Report deals not only with questions facing the Senate, but with a planned survey of Statewide Senate committee members. Details on the survey are set forth below.

Issues Facing the Senate

Budget Situation Grows Worse; Why No Plans So Far for a VERIP?

In October, I sent all Senate faculty an electronic letter that reviewed the nature of our current budget predicament and some of the responses being considered to deal with it. (To see this message, go to <http://www.ucop.edu/senate/notice/chairoct01ltr.htm>.) The budget outlook for the state, and hence for the University, has deteriorated further since that letter was sent, with the result that there is now a hiring "freeze" — actually a slow-down — in effect at all state-supported agencies, including the University. Further, UC is one of the state-supported agencies that has now agreed to a set of current-year budget cuts requested by Governor Davis, the details of which are still being worked out.

In my October budget message, I encouraged faculty to write to me to express their views on how UC might deal with its growing budget problem. A fair number of faculty responded — enough, in fact, that I have included a summary of their comments in this issue of Statewide Senate Report. (Faculty who responded can expect individual replies from me.) In the ideas that were forwarded, one suggestion was voiced often enough that it deserves special mention. It was that UC ought to be offering another early-retirement or VERIP program as a means of reducing expenses.

No one can predict what will happen in the future, of course, but Office of the President administrators have thus far said that the University has no plans for a new VERIP. Why not? Three reasons have been cited by the President's senior management team. First, UC enrollments are expected to grow rapidly in the next nine years. Because UC will need to hire thousands of faculty to keep up with this enrollment growth, it makes no sense to simultaneously encourage large numbers of faculty to leave. Second, economists believe that California's current economic malaise is short-term in nature. Recall that in the early 1990s, the state was dealing not only with a business-cycle recession, but with the permanent loss of tens of thousands of defense-industry jobs. This time around, California's economy is expected to be more resilient. Third, any savings that would accrue from VERIP would be partially offset by two costs associated with hiring faculty:

start-up expenses and housing assistance. Putting these factors together with the others, UC administrators have thus far not regarded a new VERIP as an attractive component of a University budget reduction strategy.

The University's budget problems may end up affecting the Senate in a straightforward way in the current academic year. The Senate will be expected to bear its share of any mid-year reductions this year. Because the Senate's biggest single expense is the cost of holding meetings, we may have to look to reduce the number of meetings we convene or alter meeting arrangements in other ways. I will, of course, be in touch with all divisional and committee chairs in connection with this issue as more information becomes available.

On January 10, Governor Davis will unveil his state budget for 2002-2003. With this, UC will have a clearer picture of what the future will hold next year. The UC Regents will take up the budget issue when they meet on January 16 and 17 at UCLA, though they may not make any budgetary decisions at those meetings.

Cal State and the Ed.D.

UC and the California State University have agreed to establish a partnership under which they will jointly make decisions on doctoral programs leading to the Ed.D., an education doctorate. This partnership will include a joint UC/CSU board that will solicit, review, and fund proposals for joint UC/Cal State Ed.D. programs. Further, the two systems will jointly establish an assessment process aimed at ensuring that the educational leadership needs of K-12 and the Community Colleges are met in all regions of the state. The UC/CSU Ed.D. Board will include two Academic Senate representatives, initially myself and Clifford Brunk, the immediate past-chair of CCGA. Other UC members of the board will be UCOP Provost Judson King, UC Santa Cruz Executive Vice Chancellor John Simpson, UCOP Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives Julius Zelmanowitz, and UC Davis Education Dean Harold Levine. CSU board members will include CSU Executive Vice Chancellor David Spence and other members of the CSU faculty and administration.

How Should UC Deal with Its Budget Crisis?

Responses from UC Faculty

In October 2001, statewide Academic Senate Chair Chand Viswanathan sent, to all Senate faculty at UC, an e-mail message that reviewed the strategies UC is considering for dealing with the budget crisis it will face this academic year and next. In his message, Chair Viswanathan encouraged faculty to write to him with their ideas on what UC should do to deal with its coming budget reductions. Listed below is a summary of some of the responses received from faculty across the system.

- ***Offering Another VERIP***

This idea was suggested more often than any other by faculty. One faculty member noted that "salary monies freed at the top level should be used to hire younger and less expensive faculty and temporary lecturers to enhance student contact hours . . ." Another noted that VERIP III had worked well for him in the

early 1990s, in that he had retired and yet remained at UC, taking on a full range of responsibilities including directing students and serving as a principal investigator on research grants.

- ***Cutting Faculty Salaries***

One faculty member noted the negative, long-term effects of the deferral of faculty merits that occurred in the early 1990s. Another noted the demoralizing effects, in the early 1990s, of cutting faculty salaries as a means of avoiding other budget-cutting options, including raising student fees or limiting enrollments.

- ***Limiting Enrollment***

Faculty were mixed on this idea. Some thought that UC has already seen a great deterioration in its student-faculty ratio and thus cannot once again admit students who are not fully funded by the state. Others thought that limiting student enrollments would backfire, resulting in even further budget reductions in Sacramento.

- ***Cutting Outreach***

One faculty member wrote to express the belief that one of the options being considered — reducing outlays on outreach — is short-sighted in that these expenditures can have transformative impacts not only on K-12 students and their teachers, but on UC campuses themselves.

- ***Raising Student Fees***

Faculty noted what a bargain UC is relative to other state-supported institutions. Many other states have much higher tuitions and yet manage to enroll a diverse group of students. One faculty member said that, given UC's low existing fee levels, raising fees 10 to 15 percent per year, while strengthening financial aid, would not make a UC education any less attractive.

The Oliver Johnson Award

Once every two years, the Senate honors one of its own by bestowing, on a deserving UC faculty member, the Oliver Johnson Award for Distinguished Leadership in the Academic Senate. Because the Johnson Award will be given at the end of this academic year, the Senate's Academic Council currently is seeking award nominees. Faculty on any of UC's campuses who wish to nominate a Senate member for the award should contact their divisional Committee on Committees.

The Johnson Award's first recipients were Elliot Brownlee of UC Santa Barbara and Carlton Bovell of UC Riverside who jointly received the honor in 1998. In 2000, UC San Diego's Fred Spiess became the award's third recipient. Oliver Johnson, who died in 2000, was a professor of philosophy and longtime Senate activist at UC Riverside. In 1996, he made a substantial gift to the systemwide Senate, the earnings from which are used to fund the award that bears his name. The Johnson Award provides a cash stipend to a faculty member who has demonstrated "outstanding and creative contributions to divisional and systemwide faculty governance." Any UC Senate member may be

nominated for the award, with the exception of faculty who have served during the last three years on the statewide Senate's Academic Council (which makes final decisions on award recipients.) Further information on award criteria and deadlines for nominations can be obtained by contacting any divisional Committee on Committees.

Revisions Approved to the Rules Governing Faculty Discipline

Faculty who are members of the Universitywide Assembly will recall that, in October, the Assembly approved a set of modifications to the rules that govern faculty discipline at UC. The Assembly endorsed a set of changes the administration had proposed to the Academic Personnel Manual's section 015, and it endorsed language in a new APM section, 016. In November, the Regents approved the changes as well. Thus, all parties have now signed off on the modifications, which were developed jointly by the Office of the President and the Senate's University Committee on Privilege & Tenure (UCP&T).

The last step in this long process has now been completed, as President Atkinson has officially issued the new regulations, with their effective date being January 1, 2002. The new APM language can be seen at <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/apm/apm-015.pdf>. Faculty may also go to <http://www.ucop.edu/senate/assembly/oct2001/oct2001viic.pdf> to view both the changes and a justification of them prepared by former UCP&T Chair George Blumenthal, who worked on behalf of the Senate for several years in bringing these changes to fruition.

Undergraduate Admissions: Standardized Testing Changes Under Review; Three Other Sets of Changes Approved

Perhaps no single issue has taken up more Senate time in the last few years than that of undergraduate admissions. Even faculty who are active in the Senate may have had a hard time keeping up with admissions modifications at the University, as four sets of changes have been proposed in recent years. One of these was implemented beginning this fall, one has been approved but is on hold, one was approved in November, and one is in a fairly early stage of consideration.

It is the last of these changes — a proposal to modify UC's use of standardized tests — that has now moved front and center in Senate consideration. Indeed, it is likely that the statewide Senate will be sponsoring two "town-hall" Senate meetings on this issue in late February and early March, with one of these meetings being held on a northern campus and one on a southern. The meetings are intended to allow faculty to learn about and discuss a range of questions connected to standardized testing and admissions. Before saying more about this issue, let me provide some context for it by reviewing the three admissions changes that have already received final approval at UC. They are:

Eligibility in a Local Context (ELC), which grants UC eligibility to the top 4 percent of students in each California public high school. ELC became effective for the first time with the students who entered UC this fall.

The Dual Admissions Program (DAP), which will allow high school students who attain a ranking between the top 4 and 12.5 percent of their graduating class to apply to UC as

high school seniors with the understanding that, as a condition of enrollment, they will first attend a community college for two years, meeting normal performance expectations and course requirements. After this, they will go on to enroll at the UC campus they were admitted to as high school seniors. DAP was approved by the Senate's Assembly in May 2001 and approved by the Regents in July. The intent was to implement the program for the class of students who will become college freshmen in 2003 — meaning the group that would transfer to UC in 2005. The state's budget difficulties have, however, put a hold on the program. President Atkinson and the Senate were always agreed that DAP should not go forward unless funding could be secured to pay for the network of counselors and other support staff that would facilitate DAP transfers. Last spring, UC asked the state for \$2.5 million in funding for the program's first year, but the Legislature put no DAP funding at all into the University's 2001-2002 budget. As a result, President Atkinson announced in September that implementation of the program would be delayed until such time as it can be adequately funded.

Comprehensive Admissions. Since the 1995 passage of the UC Regents' measure SP 1, UC has had a two-tiered admissions policy. One of these tiers is the 50-75 percent of each freshman class that is required to be admitted solely on the basis of academic criteria. The other is the 25-50 percent of each class that may be admitted on the basis of both academic criteria and "supplemental" criteria such as special talents, income level, and the location of a student's secondary school. Under comprehensive admissions — approved by the Regents in November — all students will be considered on the basis of a single comprehensive set of criteria. Comprehensive admissions was approved by the Assembly at its meeting of October 31. It will become effective for students who enter UC in fall 2002.

Each of these changes was proposed by President Atkinson, but each was shaped and initially approved by the Senate's Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS). Now BOARS is in the midst of reviewing the fourth proposal from the President — as stated by him, a proposal to eliminate the SAT I as a UC admissions requirement while expanding UC's use of SAT II exams in admissions.

BOARS has been holding numerous discussions on this issue throughout the year. After hearing from BOARS' Chair Dorothy Perry in November about the status of her committee's work, the Academic Council approved a potential time-line under which the Senate as a whole might make a decision on this subject. The Council agreed that, should BOARS propose modifying current standardized test requirements, the statewide Senate will begin working under a time-line that might result in a final proposal being submitted to the Assembly of the Senate in May. I say "might result" because it is not clear the Senate can adhere to this schedule. Many divisional Senate chairs believe that campus deliberations on standardized testing will take more than a couple of months — the amount of time that would be allotted if the proposal is to go to the Assembly in May. The Council was clear that deliberations on standardized admissions tests will not be rushed in order to bring closure to this issue this year. Rather, both campus divisions and the statewide Senate will take as much time as is necessary to debate this important issue.

At present, UC requires that students take the verbal and mathematics SAT I tests (or ACT counterparts) and three SAT II tests: writing, mathematics, and a third subject area test of the students' choosing. The SAT I and II exams are fundamentally different, in that the SAT I is intended to measure scholastic aptitude, while the SAT II measures student mastery of specific subjects.

The debate on the SAT I tests hinges in part on a question that ought to be answerable: can student performance at UC be predicted on the basis of how well students do on the SAT I? Or, to look at it another way, how good a predictor of performance is the SAT I relative to, or in tandem with, other standardized tests? In October, a technical paper was produced by the Office of the President that came to several clear-cut conclusions regarding these questions. In "UC and the SAT" Saul Geiser and Roger Studley looked at one measure of academic success — UC freshman GPA — and concluded that the SAT I has far less predictive power than the SAT II. Second, they concluded that the SAT II is a "fairer" test in that it is less sensitive to differences in family income and parental education than is the SAT I. Third, Geiser and Studley concluded that eliminating the SAT I would have little effect on the ethnic composition of UC's freshman classes — a potentially important finding, given suspicions that the administration has proposed eliminating the SAT I as a means of boosting minority enrollments.

The conclusions of Geiser and Studley are significant enough that I would encourage Senate faculty — particularly those versed in statistics — to take a look at them. "UC and the SAT" can be found at http://www.ucop.edu/sas/research/researchandplanning/pdf/sat_study.pdf.

I would be remiss in reviewing admissions without elaborating on the work of BOARS, which has ably taken on the enormous task of analyzing four major admissions proposals in the course of the past four years. The Senate is deeply indebted to BOARS' Chair Dorothy Perry of UC San Francisco, to the other BOARS members, and to members of campus admissions committees, who have expended much effort on admissions on our behalf.

Sincerely,
Chand Viswanathan
Chair, Academic Council