

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEMORIAL TO THE REGENTS

The University's current fiscal situation is dire as a result of drastic declines in state investment. Despite an increase of over 50% in student enrollment since 1990-91, state support has increased by only \$140 million, just over 5%, in non-inflation adjusted dollars. In adjusted dollars, state support per student has dropped from \$16,720 per student in 1990-91 to \$6,770 per student in 2011-12. UC's total expenditure per student has declined 19% over that same period from \$21,370 in 1990-91 to \$17,390 in 2011-12; fee increases have only partially offset the loss in state funding. At the same time, the student share of the cost has tripled: in 1990-91, students paid 13% of the cost of their education; in 2011-12, students paid 49% of the cost of their education.

To preserve access for low-income students in the face of rapidly rising fees, UC has dedicated a third of the tuition it receives to financial aid. In other words, one-third of the tuition revenue supports accessibility rather than providing instruction. Without a reliable revenue stream from the state, the University will necessarily come to rely increasingly on payments by those who can afford them, thereby reducing its ability to serve all academically qualified California students regardless of their financial resources.

The state's two-decade withdrawal of support from the University has been the result, above all, of a series of sharp declines in state revenue, accompanied by increased spending in other areas, notably prisons. Unless the state is able to project sustainable and consistent increases in revenues, and prioritize higher education in its funding decisions, it will not be able to provide the funding needed to maintain UC as the greatest public University system in the world. The political deadlock in the legislature makes it impossible to enact revenue enhancing measures through the normal legislative process and forces advocates for such measures to resort to ballot propositions.

By law and University policy, only the Regents may take a position on behalf of the University in support of a specific ballot measure. (Guidelines are posted at <http://www.ucop.edu/state/advocacy/ballotguidelines.html>.) Although faculty are free to campaign as individual citizens for any measure, their message will be enhanced and strengthened if they are able to point to a decision by the Regents that a specified ballot measure would benefit the University.

Moreover, by calling on the Regents to endorse measures to enhance state revenues and to prioritize higher education, the Senate will place itself on record in solidarity with current and future students as seeking solutions to California's and the University's budget crisis.

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The priority of the faculty is to meet the teaching, research and service missions of the University of California. Political advocacy may take time away from these endeavors to the detriment of our educational mission.

The memorial is vague as to what the expectations for faculty engagement will be, particularly with respect to time spent away from professorial responsibilities.

The political environment is in rapid flux, and it would be a mistake for the Regents to bind themselves to support one among several potentially competing revenue enhancement measures.

There is no guarantee that any measure placed on the ballot will be constructed in a way that benefits the University. Proposals reportedly under consideration do not appear to provide adequate guarantees of long-term funding for the University.

The constraints on University advocacy in support of a ballot measure laid out in the guidelines (<http://www.ucop.edu/state/advocacy/ballotguidelines.html>) are so severe that there is little to gain from Regental support of a ballot measure. It is inappropriate to use a Memorial, the Senate's highest form of expression, for this purpose.