



ACADEMIC SENATE

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Last year was a difficult one for the University of California. Massive State deficits have led to severe cuts in our budget, including reductions in important programs and lay-offs of valuable colleagues. The situation for fiscal year 2004-05, from a financial perspective is, unfortunately, no brighter. Yet it is precisely during times of stress and complexity that the character of an institution reveals itself in its resilience, innovation and collegiality. Adequate funding is important in our ability to transmit knowledge to our students and discover new knowledge in the interests of science and our patients. Yet our greatest resource is in the talent and commitment of our faculty and the energy and idealism of our students. During the past two years, as Vice Chair of the UCSF Academic Senate, I have had the opportunity to observe and work with many Academic Senate Committee chairs and members. I have been deeply impressed with their loyalty to UCSF and with their motivation to solve the many problems which we face and to embrace opportunities for future growth and innovation.

Over the past several years the Academic Senate has come to play a more central and vital role in the academic and clinical life of UCSF. We have become strategically involved in the dialogue concerning the yearly budget through our participation in the Chancellor's Executive Budget Committee and through dialogue between the School Faculty Councils, their Deans and our Academic Planning and Budget Committee. We have a place at the table and our opinions are given due weight in the emergence of a new budget. We also have a central role to play in planning for the Long Range Development and our clinical services and their relationship to teaching and research.

The Senate through its committees, officers and staff encompass the full range of issues that are critical to maintaining our academic quality and developing domains of national pre-eminence. New programs are emerging to strengthen our commitment to faculty diversity and support. We have initiated a new Ambassador Program, unique in the University to ensure that all search committees are able to reach out to qualified members of minority groups. We will be inaugurating an innovative Mentorship program to assist faculty in learning how to flourish and succeed in our complex system. The Senate is working to look at how to make courses more accessible to students across Schools and disciplines, and to continue to ensure the timely and fair review for advancement in rank. All these activities are only possible through the efforts of our faculty in collaboration with the University and Hospital Administrators. The Senate and Administration understand that our strength comes through the true implementation of the Regent's visions of shared governance.

Despite the current strains that we are all experiencing I believe that with our mutual efforts, this can be a year of renewal and creative growth. I look forward to working with all of you and hearing from you on the issues that are important to you personally, as well as those that are important to our campus and to the University.

Warm Regards,

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Professor and Chair
UCSF Academic Senate