



CUCEA survey shines a light on the outsized impact of UC emeriti

When many UC faculty retire, they don't quit working.

They continue to teach, research, be creative, receive honors, and serve their campuses and communities. That's the theme of the most recent survey by the University of California Emeriti Associations (CUCEA), which gauges emeriti activity every three years.

"For many years CUCEA has been surveying the activities of retired UC professors," said Joel Dimsdale, Chair of CUCEA, and emeritus professor of psychiatry at UC San Diego. "The surveys reveal a continuing vibrancy and dedication as if we constituted the faculty of a virtual 11th UC campus."

"The number of respondents to the survey, 1,403, exceeds the number of faculty at some campuses in the UC system. And the level of activities reported here would almost surely be competitive with those of any single campus in almost all categories that help fulfill the mission of the University," stated the survey report.

"The commitment of the UC emeriti to continuing their professional scholarship, mentoring, and other service, without being motivated by career advancement issues, is a gift to the citizens of California and to the University of California system," according to the report, which covered emeriti activity in 2021-24.

The survey is an inventory of the activities of the 1,403 emeriti who voluntarily responded (out of more than 6,000 who were contacted). "As such, it represents a lower bound of the actual levels of the activities of all emeriti," stated the study.

When viewed in aggregate, "the work of UC emeriti during this period is equivalent to that of a major university."

The following are some of the survey highlights:

Teaching and mentoring. Many emeriti continue to teach in retirement even when they do not receive university funding to do so. In 2021-2024, emeriti taught at least 1,810 courses, with 1,469 for UC and 341 for other institutions. Many also gave guest lectures and seminars, taught local classes for laypersons or participated in online learning. They also continue to play an important role in mentoring, including supervising graduate students and formally guiding junior faculty and undergraduate students.

Scholarship and publication. Almost 70 percent of respondents reported that they published at least one article, book chapter or book. Adding up all the categories, emeriti published 6,859 publications in 2021-24. "They continue to pursue their scholarship, go to their labs, go out in the field, and interact with students and colleagues for the excitement and fulfillment this work provides."

Creative activities in the arts. More than 1 in 4 respondents said that they had undertaken creative or artistic projects (1,467 total), including visual arts, literary, music/dance, theatrical, and exhibits/shows.

Participation, leadership in professional associations. More than 3 out of 4 (1,028) participate in professional associations,

including in leadership positions, editorial board service, reviewing proposals and manuscripts, and serving on committees.

Campus and community service. Thirty-six percent (508) contribute to the mission of the university through service to the Academic Senate, UC Office of the President, or their campus, school or department. Forty percent (558) reported doing pro bono work that relied on their expertise. Emeriti serve on boards of directors at museums, libraries, service agencies and non-profit organizations. They are involved in community activities at local, national and international levels, such as advocating environmental protection or working with immigrants. In health care, many were doing volunteer work in community programs and clinics.

Other professional work. More than 50 percent (764), worked outside of UC in a professional capacity, including entrepreneurial/business, consulting projects, and advisory boards.

Health sciences. Of 334 health sciences emeriti, 57 percent maintained their license during 2021-24, and about 28 percent did clinical work during all or part of the period.

Honors and recognition. About 28 percent of surveyed emeriti (392) received at least one professional award and 8 percent (111) received at least one community award. Altogether, emeriti received 670 awards and honors.

Emeriti giving. The survey did not ask about charitable giving to UC,

but the UC Office of the President provided data on gifts to UC from emeriti for each of the campuses during 2021-24. In that period, 14,988 unique gifts from emeriti totaled nearly \$136.5 million.

View the full survey report on the CUCEA website at: www.cucea.org

CUCEA is a consortium of emeriti associations of nine UC campuses. (Merced will join eventually as the numbers of emeriti grow and a campus association is formed.) On behalf of UC emeriti, it presses for the protection, improvement and extension of a broad spectrum of benefits, such as good and affordable health care options, appropriate cost-of-living adjustments and enhanced academic privileges.

CUCEA collaborates with the Council of UC Retiree Associations (CUCRA), a parallel organization, which advocates for UC retirees, represents the interests of the individual UC retiree associations, promotes mutually beneficial relationships between the University and its retirees, and supports the teaching, research and service missions of UC.

UC's retiree and emeriti associations and UC Retirement Centers use online communication to interact with retirees and emeriti about services and programs. Go to ucal.us/retireeconnect for a list of the associations and centers and contact information.