

CUCEA Chair's report

CUCEA Meeting 4/27/2011 UCLA Faculty Club

Before starting on my Chair's report, let me thank all the CUCEA Officers without whose support, encouragement and advice I could not function. Charley Hess willingly shares his wealth of experience whenever I have a question on policy, appointments, or precedence and has generously agreed to serve as interim secretary for this Spring meeting. Louise Taylor, also, has always been available with all sorts of information and promptly forwards news items to other Officers and campus EA Presidents and delegates. Lyman Porter, our Treasurer, pays the bills efficiently and has provided us with the data on campus membership over the past several years, which we will be discussing later at this meeting. Charles Berst has performed yeoman's work in publishing the Biennial Bio-bibliography Survey, that has been extremely useful in convincing the President of UC and Chancellors that emeriti play an invaluable role in university service and continue to bring renown to the university. Finally and by no means least, let me again thank Marjorie Caserio, our website manager who has edited the first edition of the CUCEA Newsletter, for her splendid work.

Those of us who served on the faculty of UC during the 1980s and 90s have known the best of times. Unfortunately the current faculty is experiencing the worst of times in terms of morale, financial support, recruitment, teaching load and future retirement benefits. When I assumed the Chairmanship of CUCEA in the middle of last year, faculty and staff had been forced to accept salary cuts euphemistically mislabeled as "furloughs" by the Schwarzenegger administration in Sacramento. However towards the end of last year some monies became available and UCFW committee spent considerable time debating how best to distribute such funds in salary increases. UCFW committee concluded that the most equitable way was to offer it to all faculty whereas the University Office of the President (UCOP) was adamant that any faculty salary increase be awarded only to those who had received promotions or merit increase during the previous year, omitting most faculty who only come up for review on two or three year cycles. UCOP claimed, without any substantiating data, that the "public would never stand for it," whereas in truth the public ire was at the exorbitant salaries and other compensations that had been provided to some few in administration and which had been made public in the newspapers. All of this debate turned out to be irrelevant when Governor Brown was elected and revealed his plans for balancing the state budget that included a cut of \$500 million in state support for UC. I have discussed the impact of such a severe cut on the University in the April 2011 CUCEA Newsletter that I hope you have all had a chance to read. UCOP administration's contingency plans to deal with these diminishing resources are draconian. You have doubtlessly read of the tuition fee increases that have already been implemented and that will continue at about 8% rate per year eventually reaching an annual fee of about \$25,000 per in-state student. The proportion of out-of-state students and foreign students at UC has increased. These students pay considerably higher tuition than in-state students. At some point the university will reach a tuition level when it will no longer be competitive with private institutions of learning, so there is a limit as to how much tuition can make up for decreased state financing. Since federal research grants are unlikely to increase and possibly will decrease such sources are not a viable alternative income. One campus, UCSF, derives 94% of its financing from grants, clinic income, and endowments with

only 6% coming from the state of California, which raises the question at what point do we cease to be a state supported university?

UCOP administration is of course looking for ways to diminish costs but reducing the number of enrolled students will make little difference. Probably fewer faculty will have to teach the same number of students, more lecturers will be hired, and there is pilot project for on-line teaching. Severe cuts in travel support are anticipated; some campuses have cut off hot water in bathrooms; library closing and/or consolidation are under consideration. Even more importantly is faculty recruitment and retention. Claims that 75% of recruitments are 1st choice are totally artificial; the implication that there is no recruitment problem is a dishonest misrepresentation. In actual fact many candidates at interview reject the financial offers made by UC campuses so no actual employment offer is made, even though that person may be the best candidate. The reality is that we hire quality faculty, but not the best available. In the long run this will influence how "good" UC is, we may no longer be the "best" public university. This is a common concern on the campuses; we are no longer the elite university that we were, the best in the world. UC's premier reputation may be the last to go, by which time it will be too late.

How does all of this affect the emeriti? Certainly we must be concerned at the prospect of UC losing its sterling reputation as the top public university system. More directly will it also affect our retirement income? We like to think that legally our pensions are secure and that may be so, but our own health benefits are gradually being reduced. There is serious concern that some ways must be found to either limit escalating medical, hospital and dental fees, reduce eligible benefits, or to increase patient co-payments for current UC employees. Will this eventually lead to renegotiation of emeriti contributions? Our Treasurer, Lyman Porter, has advised me that the annual support in the amount of \$1,500 for CUCEA from the Academic Council has been eliminated. Inevitably this will spill over into reduced or no support from the Chancellors for campus emeriti and retiree activities. I hate to be the prophet of doom and gloom but from my perspective I must call it as I see it. I had much rather present you with an image of a rosy future, but alas I think we will need to tighten our belts and reduce our expenditures as well. I hope you will all co-operate in such contingencies.

Ernest Newbrun
Chair CUCEA
Council of University of California Emeriti Associations