

October 29, 2009

The 2007-2009 Emeriti Biobibliographic Survey

Dear Emeriti Colleagues:

Welcome to the seventh round of our biennial biobibliographic survey. **This survey is of extraordinary importance.** It could be historically crucial to emeriti interests for many years because UC's retiree benefits are now endangered as never before.

Current concerns of four major entities may seriously compromise emeriti welfare: the federal government's costly healthcare challenges, the state government's budget crisis, the UC Regents' needs to keep UC afloat in these adverse economic times, and a large Post-Employment Benefits Task Force of the UC President's Office, charged (rather ominously) "to research options for sustainable retirement benefits."

Given the state's nearly one \$billion shortfall in its already anemic support of UC this year, forcing general salary cuts ("furloughs") for the first time in anyone's memory, as well as major tuition hikes and bleak future prospects, it's clear that retirement budgeting will be rigorously scrutinized.

While plans for resuming faculty and staff contributions to our Retirement System should gird current retirement stipends, other emeriti benefits the University has traditionally financed, but is not obliged to continue, could be deemed less "sustainable." Tempting targets include periodic supplements to our less-than cost-of-living adjustments, and UC's generous healthcare funding.

Also, the fact that UC's total benefits exceed those of most comparable universities while its faculty salaries are comparatively low, may, in these extremely tight times, persuasively argue for reducing or cutting benefits in favor of augmenting faculty salaries. Then too, if Congress decides that UC's generous healthcare provisions are of a "Cadillac" variety (i.e., a luxurious relic), substantial income taxes could be levied on a good portion of their value unless the University manages some adroit fiscal or political magic.

In short, emeriti funding, perks, and priorities are now, as never before, on many operating tables.

Most immediately pertinent to emeriti interests, of course, are decisions by UC entities, and for these an impressive biobibliographic survey could make a critical, perhaps tipping-point difference this year. As past surveys have graphically shown how greatly emeriti contribute to the University through their continuing services, research, teaching, experience, and repute, a strong updated version should freshly advance the case that emeriti benefits are indeed worth sustaining.

And this is where *you* come in. If you have been at all active in university or professional affairs, research, teaching, creative activities, or public service during the past two years, your input could help strengthen the survey's influence.

The [survey form](#) has been carefully crafted to gather your most essential data in just ten minutes, and allow for additional details and colors should you be inspired to provide some. You may either fill in this form and return it by regular mail (to your campus emeriti association), or submit its **handy online equivalent** at biosurvey.questionpro.com.

Your interests and those of all emeriti should be very well served by your participation.

With best regards,

Charles Berst

Emeriti Biobibliographic Survey Chair and Editor