

Biobibliographic Survey of U.C. Emeriti/ae in Research, Teaching and Professional Service from July 2005 through June 2007

Introduction and Summary

Results of the biennial survey set forth in this report highlight a remarkable bonus and bargain for UC at a time when any upbeat news about resources is particularly worth noticing. In detailing emeriti counter-currents to the dismal ebbing of state support for higher education, the survey reveals that while some have contributed \$millions to the University over the years, such generosity hardly matches the contributions many hundreds make through their continuing university service, scholarship, teaching, and activities as leaders in their fields.

These contributions have put UC emeriti at the forefront of a national social and economic shift as they signal the obsolescence of retirement-age assumptions long petrified by the 65-year average lifespan Social Security assumed in 1935.

Nowadays, 65-year-olds can reasonably hope to thwart their heirs for 20 years. And although this increased longevity famously short-changes Social Security's security, it gives UC the low-cost bonus of a large pool of emeriti experience, talent, and prestige, while the University's retirement and health programs, in turn, sustain and even boost the professional vigor, habits, and services of these Type A souls.

Robert Frost observed that "the world is full of willing people; some willing to work, the rest willing to let them." Here is a remarkable cache of the former. What's more, their longer, often academically continuous lives are redefining the careers of many UC faculty. Broadly considered, these careers have commonly consisted of two 20-year segments:

(1) from ages 25 to 45, the building of one's career, through the completion of graduate studies to establishing professional prestige via rigor, academic distinction, and dispatch in ascending UC's promotion ladder; then

(2) from ages 45 to 65, the flourishing of one's reputation, in which the promotion ladder's slant and one's pace on it become less acutely meaningful until retirement calculations and farewells come into play.

But now more than ever for many there's another equally long segment:

(3) from ages 65 to 85 (or immortality) some take retirement at its word, but for others Freedom is academic. The ladder now is one's own, or Jacob's, on which many find it's better to wind up than down, and best for most, perhaps, to climb on and on on and on.

A sense of how fully many UC emeriti embody "on and on" may be gleaned from the biobib survey's 842 respondents. Amounting to 26.6% of 3,168 who received survey forms on eight campuses, the group's median retirement year (based on five-year intervals) was about 1995. Thus in terms of age, energy, and engagement their responses fairly well represent the potential contributions of the nearly twenty extra years emeriti now average.

During the survey's biennium these contributions emerged most graphically in 273 books, 2,487 articles, 379 book chapters, 345 abstracts, 252 book reviews, 185 professional reports, 385 consulting reports, 133 films and videos, 29 literary works, 251 art works, 30 exhibitions, 143 performances, and 936 lectures and conference papers.

Although freedom from the routine and demands of teaching may be one of the most attractive aspects of retirement, 241, or 29% of the respondents reported teaching on their campuses, with 123, or 15% also teaching across the country and around the globe from UCSC and Stanford to Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Michigan, Harvard, Columbia, Princeton, Dartmouth, Canada, Bristol, Spain, Aix-en-Provence, Graz, Copenhagen, Lithuania, Armenia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, China, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, and Japan. Much of this, as Berkeley's report mentions, was with modest or no pay.

While voluntary university service is traditional for faculty, the institutional memory and expertise of emeriti can be especially useful in augmenting it. The survey reveals this most importantly in emeriti dedication to doctoral programs. Exactly half of the respondents -421-reported service on doctoral committees, service amounting to just a portion of their non-paid mentoring and supervision of doctoral candidates, which called for most of the 1,035 letters of recommendation written by emeriti on five campuses.

Since other DC service, mostly committee work without even coffee or a cookie, tends to be the dullest, very least rewarded of the three criteria for faculty promotions, emeriti who take it on late in their days must be angling for sainthood. Lots did so, which accounts for halos among the 83 who served on Academic Senate committees, the 47 on advisory committees, 80 on administration committees, 117 on department committees, 100 on emeriti committees, 143 on "others," and, especially crucial nowadays, 33 on entities devoted to fund-raising.

Meanwhile, reflecting and augmenting UC's national and international renown, the survey's emeriti also served on 192 professional committees and held leadership positions on 62, while 233 held editorial appointments, supervising and joining in the review of 1,455 articles and more than 108 book manuscripts.

Given these activities, it's not surprising that respondents received 193 professional honors during that period, nor that they visited their campuses, on average, 2.7 days a week, and that most report working as much or more than they did before "retiring."

This, however, did not deter many from local, state, and national public service on 131 committees (from which 34 received honors)-apparently during intervals they could manage between the above activities and 476 works in progress, and retirement diversions, including such recreations as wind surfing, underwater video, and competing in multiple marathons.

In fact, the lively abundance documented by the survey resembles a marathon whose sum, in sum, helps summarize the special values and value of these respondents. Certainly their academic contributions are both their own reward and DC's as these instinctively altruistic persons have capitalized on longevity by adding a major final phase to their careers.

Charles Berst Survey
Editor