

The Faculty Associations are associations of UC Senate faculty on the campuses of the University of California. Each FA is dues supported and therefore completely independent.

A little over 35 years ago, a group of Academic Senate faculty at Berkeley concluded that the University by itself could not halt the alarming decline in faculty compensation caused by accelerating inflation and legislative inertia. They also foresaw the day when legislation would allow for public employee unions in higher education (Higher Education Employee Relations Act or HEERA). Therefore, UC faculty formed associations of Academic Senate faculty first at Berkeley, then at UCLA, and then on all the campuses of the University of California. The FAs helped draft legislation that would ensure that the academic quality of the University of California would never be compromised. When that legislation passed (AB 1091) in 1979, it became clear that the authority of the Academic Senate was restricted to academic matters and the Senate could not represent the economic or employment interests of its faculty before the University or the Legislature or the Regents. A group of Senate faculty--not acting as the Senate but as an independent association of faculty members--would take on that important responsibility.

The Faculty Associations pay no attention at all to the strictly academic issues that take up most of the time and attention of the Academic Senate, like curriculum and hiring and evaluating faculty, unless the Academic Senate asks for our help. We concentrate all of our attention on employer-employee issues like faculty salaries, medical, fringe, and retirement benefits, and other conditions of work like teaching load and outside employment policies. As a membership organization, we thus have the best of two worlds: better representation in employment matters, no loss of autonomy in academic matters.

The Faculty Associations monitor the state's contribution to UC and what portion of that contribution goes to UC faculty salaries and retirement. When there are cuts to be made, the FA protects faculty

interests. We also follow bills that affect faculty concerns and follow the activities of state government organizations that set salary formulas. Because it is state-funded, the Senate may not use its resources to lobby on behalf of faculty interests, either within UC (for example, to the UC Regents) or outside of UC (to the legislature). Without the Faculty Associations, faculty would have to rely on the goodwill of the University and the legislature to address economic issues affecting faculty, and while no one doubts that goodwill, it is always better to have someone asking questions, providing information, and keeping a close lookout. That is where the UC Faculty Associations come in: we are watchdogs, quiet most of the time, but ready to spring into action on both the campus and statewide levels when necessary.

Many local campus Faculty Associations join together loosely to form the Council of UC Faculty Associations, a systemwide organization (UCD, UCB, UCSC, UCSD, UCSF, and UCR). Campus FAs (except Santa Cruz) do not have specific labor rights, but the Council does by virtue of its agency status with the Santa Cruz FA, the legal bargaining agent for the faculty at UCSC. UCSC assigns its bargaining rights to the Council, which can, therefore, represent UC faculty systemwide.

The UCLA FA is independent but coordinates with the other FAs on occasion. The UCSB FA is also independent and sometimes coordinates with the UCLA FA on issues and newsletters.