

To: Michael S. Goldstein, Chair of the UCLA Academic Senate

June 30, 2009

Against the Universal Pay Cut

Dear Michael:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to across the board salary cuts or furloughs. Cuts are the worst option and across the board furloughs are the next worst. Either option will be devastating to research programs and researchers.

All of us recognize the necessity of working together to resolve this budget problem. Across the board solutions only make the problem worse by giving up substantial external grant revenue and the associated overhead.

1. All faculty should have the option of funding 8% of their 9 month salary on grants. This will not only mitigate the impact on faculty heavily involved in research, it will generate additional overhead for the university as faculty will be motivated to write additional grant proposals.
2. Soft money positions should not be cut. This will cost the university all of the overhead (54%). Soft money positions include 25% of the salaries of research active faculty (summer 1/9ths), 100% of the salaries of post doctoral researchers, 100% of the salaries of full time research faculty, and many staff that support soft money research programs.
3. Employees of self supporting programs should not receive cuts. This does not help the general fund and creates ill will among those employees. These programs are a revenue source.
4. The argument that grant money will be reassigned to other categories is viewed as an unethical grab at grant money. Grant activity is the result of extensive planning reflected in proposals in which the activity is spelled out in detail. Suggesting that grant money should be reassigned and thus the proposed work should be renegotiated to satisfy a "fairness" criterion for those without grants is unethical and possibly illegal. This places our researchers in a very difficult situation.

(I will personally be giving back some grant money, looking at cancelling an industrial grant that required use of my summer months at a negotiated rate and moving to a consulting arrangement with the company at the negotiated

rate wherein UCLA loses the overhead, and making it clear to other faculty and researchers that I believe an across the board approach to cuts that impedes our ability to perform research we have contractually agreed to perform at a contractually agreed to rate is not acceptable.

5. Attrition of our research leaders is a real risk. These are the individuals that bring in funding for entire centers and groups. If we lose them, it will be many years before our reputation recovers. The overhead on their grants is far greater than their salaries, making them cost free targets for other institutions to recruit.

Recommendation: Cut salaries only general fund supported salaries and allow those with other resources to make up the difference.

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