

The undersigned faculty of the University of California call upon all UC Chancellors to make a strong, very public, joint statement underlining the importance of the UC system to the economic recovery of the state, as well as to the individual cities and counties in which UC campuses are located. The twenty-first century economy will demand a more highly skilled workforce than could have been imagined in 1960 when former UC President Clark Kerr fashioned the ground-breaking Master Plan for Higher Education. Yet California appears to be choosing to divest from, rather than invest in, public higher education.

According to a study from the Public Policy Institute, California faces a looming "skills gap:" by 2025, 41 percent of the jobs in California will require at least a bachelor's degree, but only 35 percent of Californians will have one. The 8% salary reduction and threatened increases to course load for those faculty already teaching the greatest number of courses within the UC system will rapidly produce a "brain drain" of the system's best scholars. These measures will also lower the quality and availability of UC courses, betraying our state's children and their future, wrecking what was once the finest institution of public higher education in the nation, and setting Californians behind many other state populations with better education or more respected degrees. The story of the University of California needs to be redirected toward the future.

We ask our Chancellors to stand together, in a public statement addressed to the Regents and released to the press, to remind the state of exactly how much will be lost if the UC system becomes a target for devastating and ill-conceived cuts. We ask the Chancellors to invite President Yudof to work together with them to publicly itemize and articulate the importance of the UC system to the solving of the state's economic recovery. Chancellors, you represent our campuses as no one else does; your voices will carry more weight than those of individual faculty sending letters to Oakland or Sacramento; you are the public face of the UC system. Please make the vision and imagination long associated with the University of California heard in Oakland, in Sacramento, and across the nation. We eagerly await your joint-statement.