

**UCLA Graduate Students Association
Office of External Affairs**

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Overall, there is a lot going on and even more in the coming months. We need your support to engage students in your department and make sure they know how this latest round of fee increases could hurt them.

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

The Governor released his budget on January 10, 2007. It includes **fee increases** for students at UC and CSU, **elimination of funding for academic preparation** programs (funded at \$19.3 million last year), and the UC Labor Centers. There were also extensive budget cuts to CalWorks and the TANF grant. According to the UCSA Legislative Affairs Director, competing with these welfare programs – a high priority for Democratic legislators – will be difficult, but is not unattainable.

In response to the budget, UCSA coordinated a statewide call-in day to the Governor's office. The call-in day was considered a success and our message ("the price is wrong") was well received and reported by the media.

UC REGENTS MEETING – JANUARY 17-18, UC SAN FRANCISCO

STUDENT FEES

There might be two fees increased in for 2007-08. These are the educational fee and the registration fee. The UC Office of the President recommends fee increases of **7% for graduates, undergraduates and most professional schools**. The proposed fee increase for UCLA and UC Berkeley **law and business school students is 10%**.

The **registration fee** may also be raised in consideration of the report released last September by the Student Mental Health Committee. The report raised attention to the fact that the registration fee has not been increased in 8 years and student services, such as mental health services, have suffered setbacks in recent years.

PROFESSIONAL FEES

Dean Perschbacher and Dean Edley from King Hall (Davis) and Boalt Hall (Berkeley), respectively, spoke about two different approaches to fees for law students. Dean Edley favors a high fee-high aid model primarily to remain competitive with other top law schools. Dean Perschbacher spoke about the mission of a public law school to educate attorneys who will serve underserved populations and governmental agencies. The Dean of the UCLA School of Medicine also presented a unified view from the deans of health science schools favoring lower fees. These presentations were well received and sparked discussion by the regents about diversity, affordability and the mission of the professional schools.

DIVERSITY STUDY GROUP

Other discussion at the Regents meeting included a short update on the **Diversity Study Groups**. We expect that the report on the impact of Proposition 209 ten years later will not be ready in May as originally intended.

OTHER TOPICS

This was Chairman Parsky's last meeting as chair of the regents. Richard **Blum** will be the chair at the next meeting in March. Speaker Fabian Nuñez presented a resolution in favor of naming the UC Labor Centers after **Miguel Contreras**, former head of the LA County Federation of Labor. Contreras died suddenly 2005. The resolution was supported by all Regents and spoken of favorably by Superintendent Jack O'Connell and Regent Monica Lozano. A proposed **restriction on research funding from tobacco** companies, proposed by Regent John Moores, was postponed until May after much discussion. The Regents would rather have the Academic Senate make a decision.

WHITELINER ROLE

As a whiteliner on both days, I addressed the Regents in public comment and spoke to them during breaks and lunch. In public comment, I spoke about the impact of high fees on access and future career decisions (e.g., public sector vs. private sector). I also had a chance to speak one-on-one with some regents to gauge

their opinions on fee increases and had lunch at the same table with the new Lieutenant Governor, John Garamendi. Monica Sanchez whitelined on Thursday.

UC OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT LUNCHEON, JANUARY 19, OAKLAND

Administrators and staff at the UC Office of the President met with UCSA board members and student body presidents. Both Monica and I attended to represent GSA. The meeting was chaired by UCSA Chair Louise Hendrickson (graduate student, UCR) and Judy Sakaki, the newly appointed Vice President for Student Affairs. The discussion centered mainly around Cal Grant B and proposals to increase the grant. We also discussed fees, academic preparation funding, and an increase to the registration fee in response to the report on student mental health. We met with members of the Budget and Finance office, Provost Rory Hume and staff in the governmental relations office. Unfortunately, we only had a few minutes to meet with President Robert Dynes and did not meet with the key decision makers.

UCSA JANUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JANUARY 19-21, UC SANTA CRUZ

A majority of the meeting consisted on updating the board about recent policy changes (e.g., the budget release) and devising responses and tactics to address this. In the next few weeks, we will focus on raising awareness about the proposed fee increases and building support among students. We will also have in-district visits with influential legislators and recruit students to the Student Lobby Conference.

UCSA CAMPAIGN UPDATES

Vote Project – DONE! It was also very successful and will help us as we lobby legislators and remind them that as students we registered 20,000 voters.

Diversity in Admissions – We secured additional student representatives on the Regents' study group. Na'Shaun Neal is our representative to the group studying diversity at the graduate and professional school level.

The Student Compact

Fees...see above. I'll also discuss more about this campaign and the next steps in my presentation.

Cal Grant B – our legislative affairs director, Courtney Weaver, has secured an author for a bill to increase the Cal Grant B, which covers costs not associated with tuition and has not been increased in many years. Assemblyman Curren Price will sponsor the bill and has prioritized increasing financial aid.

UPCOMING

UCSA Student Lobby Conference and Lobby Day (February 24-27, Sacramento)

We have begun recruiting our GSA delegation for the lobby conference! We expect to take about 8 students. We will cover travel, housing and registration for these students. If you would like to attend, please email Cindy or Oiyen. The registration deadline is February 2nd.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

I attended the December Alumni Association board of directors meeting. I will also attend a reception with the newly appointed chancellor, Gene Block, on Thursday January 25.

Respectfully,

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