

Our University

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESIDENT FOR THE UC COMMUNITY



July 2009: Printer-friendly version

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Responding to Budget Cuts

UC is responding to the challenge of providing access and opportunity for California in times of grim budget challenges with the launch of the Commission on the Future of UC.

UC Regents Chairman Russell Gould presented plans for the commission on July 16, the same day regents voted on a fiscal emergency plan to close a two-year \$813 million state funding gap. That plan includes furloughs that will affect 108,000 faculty and staff FTEs and at least \$300 million in campus cutbacks.

The fiscal emergency plan calls for sacrifices and hard choices to get through the coming months, Gould said, but just getting through isn't good enough for UC: It's time to chart a new direction.

"While there is no good news in this present financial crisis, I can assure you of our determination to forge a new path for the future of the university, one that addresses stubborn fiscal realities, but also advances the overall mission of serving California with a world-class public research university system while maintaining standards of excellence and access," Gould said.

The commission, which will include members from within and outside the UC system, will seek to answer five critical questions about the university's future:

- **How can UC best maintain access, quality and affordability in a time of diminishing resources?**
- **What educational delivery models are best suited for UC's future?**
- **What is the appropriate size and shape of the university going forward?**
- **Where should UC grow, or should it?**
- **How can traditional and alternative revenue streams be maximized in support of UC's mission?**

UC President Mark Yudof will co-chair the commission with Gould. Others who will serve on the commission are UC Regents Jesse Bernal, Sherry Lansing, Monica Lozano and Yolanda Nunn Gorman; Student Regent-Designate Jesse Cheng; UCLA Chancellor Gene Block; UC Irvine Chancellor Michael Drake; UC Santa Barbara Chancellor Henry Yang; UC Berkeley School of Law Dean Chris Edley; Academic Senate Chair Mary Croughan; Academic Senate Vice Chair Henry Powell; UC Regents Staff Advisor Edward Abeyta; Warren Hellman, an alumnus of UC Berkeley; California Chamber of Commerce President Allan Zaremberg; and Art Pulaski, executive secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. Ex-officio members from the UC Office of the President are Provost Larry Pitts, Executive Vice President Katie Lapp and Executive Vice President Peter Taylor.

The commission will tap experts from throughout the UC system and from outside to advise on strategies. It will provide recommendations in early 2010 with some recommendations possibly coming earlier. The commission's work carries an urgency magnified by the extent of the budget cuts the campuses must absorb.

The furlough program will fill about \$184.1 million, or 25 percent, of the \$813 million of the state budget cut. Already approved student fee increases will cover another 25 percent of the gap. More cost-cutting at the Office of the President and restructuring of debt will account for an additional 10 percent. But the bulk of UC's state general fund budget deficit – 40 percent – the campuses will need to absorb.

UC chancellors testified at the July 15 regents' meeting about the impact the budget cuts will have on their campuses. All expressed a fear of the "brain drain" they said is already happening as gifted faculty leave UC for universities that can offer better salaries and support for their research.

"When faculty are not hired or faculty leave, it's harder for students to get their classes, and it takes them longer to get their degrees," said Croughan, outgoing faculty representative to the UC Board of Regents and chair of the UC Academic Senate. "You decrease the number of graduate students and that affects research."

All 10 campuses are cutting back new faculty hiring and eliminating staff positions as well as on-campus student jobs and teaching assistant positions that graduate students rely on to support themselves and gain teaching experience. Campuses are cutting courses and programs. Student services like library hours and counseling will also suffer. The Commission on the Future of UC will explore innovative ways to minimize the decades-long decline in state support that has caused these cutbacks.

"We need to turn a focused eye on the way we deliver our services, on where we are and where we are going as a system," Yudof said when the commission was announced.

"We have delivered on our pledge to provide access, opportunity and affordability for 140 years. I refuse to renege on that pledge."

Campus Impacts

The 10 UC chancellors testified before the Board of Regents on July 15 about the impact the fiscal emergency plan will have on their campuses. Each described the drastic cuts they have already made and how they will each absorb their share of the \$813 million two-year state funding cut UC faces.

Read each chancellor's full testimony.

UC Berkeley:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21551>

UC Davis:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21552>

UC Irvine:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21553>

UC Los Angeles:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21554>

UC Merced:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21556>

UC Riverside:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21557>

UC San Diego:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21558>

UC San Francisco:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21560>

UC Santa Barbara:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21561>

UC Santa Cruz:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21562>

Ask it!

Chances are there's something you've always wondered about, meant to look up or wished someone would explain. Now is your chance to satisfy that curiosity. E-mail your questions and we'll find the UC brainiac who can answer it. Science, health, culture, language - whatever your question, don't be shy. Just Ask it!

Q: Do genetically enhanced animals and/or foods lose or gain any nutritional value?

The answer to this question is not straight forward, or to put it another way "it depends." When we put a new gene in, or knock an existing gene out, we may change the composition of the protein in an animal. However, whether this affects the nutritional value of that food depends on a number of factors. First, is the gene, and therefore the protein, expressed in the part of the animal being consumed for food? The switches we use to control the expression of a transgene can be very specific as to what tissue or cell expresses the gene, how much of the product is made, when the product is made, and whether the product remains in the cell or is exported out of the cell, say into the milk.

Using our dairy goats as an example the gene is only expressed in the mammary gland epithelial cells during lactation, so if you are eating the meat then there is no effect at all that we have seen, even if the meat came from a lactating doe.

Second, the effect on the nutritional value would depend on the amino acid composition of the protein and the amount of the protein in relation to all the other proteins in the tissue you consume. Thus, even if we were to transfer in a protein that contained a large increase in an essential amino acid, if it was expressed at a low level there would probably be no significant increase in the dietary value of the food.

Third, it is possible that the gene produces a protein that in turn functions to change one or more components of the cell or tissue. Thus, when growth hormone was put in it resulted in increased growth or efficiency of feed utilization, but does not result in a change in the nutritional value of the animal when consumed by humans. However, when we put a gene in to change the composition of the fat in milk, we were able to show that we made a milk, which may be better for humans to consume with respect to cardiovascular disease.

So, going back to the beginning, whether the addition or removal of a gene causes a food to lose or gain nutritional value depends on the gene product itself and also on the pattern of expression. Thus the answer to this question really depends on which gene, as it must be answered on a case-by-case basis for each one.

James D. Murray is a professor in the UC Davis Department of Animal Science and the Department of Population health and Reproduction.

<http://animalscience.ucdavis.edu/faculty/murray/>

James Murray developed a herd of genetically modified goats at the UC Davis dairy goat barn.

http://www.ucdavis.edu/spotlight/0609/better_milk/index.html?homeflash=true

People

It's for the birds



Glenn Stewart, coordinator of the Predatory Bird Research Group, often travels with a peregrine falcon on his arm, especially when visiting schools. The UC Santa Cruz research group is best known for saving the feisty falcon from extinction. But the work is not over. More volunteers are signing up as bird babysitters. Maybe it's the Webcams.

By Harry Mok

An auditorium full of giddy 12-year-olds is a rowdy crowd, but when Glenn

Stewart walks in, the room falls silent. Having a peregrine falcon perched on your arm has that affect on people.

"I don't know many people who can keep 300 seventh graders quiet, Stewart said."I bring a falconThey're riveted by it.

Stewart estimated he's spoken to 60,000 students during the past 10 years through the education program of the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group, which is part of UC Santa Cruz's Institute of Marine Sciences.

"I had a student at UCSC last year, and she says she got interested in science 'when this guy came to my biology class when I was a (high school) freshman with a falcon,' " Stewart said."I told her, 'Well, that was me.' She didn't remember me, but she remembered the falcon."

The Predatory Bird Research Group formed in the early 1970s under the leadership of the late UC Santa Cruz Natural History Professor Emeritus Ken Norris, Santa Cruz veterinarian Jim Roush and Brian Walton, the group's first coordinator. The organization worked with eagles, falcons and hawks but is best

known for leading the effort to bring the peregrine falcon back from the brink of extinction.

Stewart graduated from UC Santa Cruz in 1973 with a degree in politics. He learned about the bird research group in a UC Santa Cruz alumni magazine article in 1976 and had an epiphany: "I need to go back to school and do this."

He began volunteering for the group, re-enrolled at UC Santa Cruz in 1977 and earned a degree in environmental studies.

Over the years, Stewart has held various roles at the Predatory Bird Research Group and other environmental organizations. He was executive director of the Idaho Conservation League from 1990 through 1995 before returning to Santa Cruz to develop the bird research group's education program. He took charge of the group as coordinator in 2007 after Walton died.

In Idaho, Stewart tackled environmental issues such as mining, logging and over-grazing of public lands. He came to the conclusion that public education plays an important role in any conservation effort.

"It was almost regarded as a right (in Idaho) to take natural resources without any real regard to the future," Stewart said. "That was in the background when I came back to Santa Cruz and saw the opportunity to do more public education."

DDT, a pesticide widely used before being banned in the United States in 1972, is the culprit for the near extinction of peregrines and other predatory birds. DDT worked its way up the food chain to predators, and the toxin built up in the fatty tissues of falcons, eagles and hawks. DDT blocked the development of eggs, leading to thin shells that broke easily and the premature deaths of chicks. Populations of falcons, eagles and hawks collapsed.

"The status of the peregrine falcon says something about the health of the environment," Stewart said. "It's a top-of-the-food-chain bird. They reflect what's going on out in nature."

Peregrines were near extinction when the Predatory Bird Research Group began its work: There were just two known pairs of nesting peregrines in California. Today, it's estimated there are more than 250 pairs in the state. Peregrines were taken off the federal endangered species list in 1999, though DDT remains in the environment and still affects birds.

With the peregrines recovering, the focus of Predatory Bird Research Group is shifting to sustaining them, and public education is a big part of the effort. In the late 1980s, peregrine falcon nests started appearing on buildings in the San Francisco Bay Area. The group started making observations, and Web cams

were directed at nests on Oracle headquarters in Redwood Shores, the PG&E building in San Francisco and City Hall in San Jose.

Oracle, PG&E and the city of San Jose have partnered with the research group to maintain the Web cams. A network of volunteers watches over the nests during hatching and fledging season, when 6-week-old chicks attempt their first flights.

Young falcons take their initial flights from the building-top nests and sometimes land on the ground. They're not strong enough to lift off and will stay where they have landed, which is usually the street or sidewalk. Trained volunteers monitoring the nests will corral the falcon and box it up to be taken back to the nest.

The presence of urban falcons has aroused public interest in conservation and environmentalism. Hundreds have volunteered to be falcon monitors, and people from around the world view the Web cams.

For Ann Greiner, volunteering as a San Francisco nest monitor has made her realize how important it is for humans to share the planet with other species.

"It's given me an opportunity to help that happen in an urban environment," she said.

The peregrine falcon is an "amazing success story and there's something very compelling about that," said Greiner, who's been on fledge watch and moderates the San Francisco nest's Internet message group. "I like to see a success story. We don't seem to have many as human beings when it comes to conservation."

Tina Ferrigno, who moderates the San Jose nest's message group, said working with peregrines has given her an appreciation for how much individuals can achieve.

"If you get enough people together, you can effect some change. It starts with one," Ferrigno said. "You really can pull together an effective program and potentially help the birds or whatever it is you're trying to help."

Viewers from 38 U.S. states and 21 countries looked at the San Jose nest Web cam in 2008, and people have come to see the nests in person from across the country and Europe, according to Evet Loewen, who's helped coordinate the City Hall volunteer falcon watchers.

"This has gone far beyond anything I could have imagined," Loewen said. "I knew it would be a good thing locally. I didn't understand that it would expand far beyond that."

Stewart said that for years, it was only researchers who had an interest in doing things like observing bird nests.

"Now everyone gets a thrill out of it. Even a construction worker at San Jose City Hall whom Stewart heard say, "It doesn't get any better than this!"

"That just really tickles me, Stewart said.

Featured Campus: Berkeley



Growing young scientists in Tahiti

Grad student Brad Balukjian went to Tahiti to work on the Moorea Biocode Project, which is inventorying the island's ecosystem. Balukjian worked on his thesis and ended up teaching a 5th grade science class. The kids collected specimens for the biocode project and learned that science isn't just for foreigners.

http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2009/07/06_moorea.shtml

Systemwide News

Follow the latest UC budget news

Get updates on how California's budget affects higher education. [Find answers to questions](#) about the employee furlough plan that goes into effect Sept. 1 to help fill a \$813 million state funding gap.



Read the UC budget news

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/budget/>

UC Graduation rates on the rise

UC is showing progress in an important student success measurement – the time it takes undergraduates to earn a degree. What's behind the rise in graduation rates?

By Donna Hemmila

UC is making strides in one of the key areas of student success – graduation rates, which are steadily improving thanks in part to campus efforts to help students navigate their academic careers.



Six-year graduation rates, the standard universities use to measure the time it takes to earn a degree, rose from 76 percent in 1992 to 82 percent in 2002, according to the Student Success report presented to UC Regents at their July meeting.

Student success is one of 15 topics found in the 2009 Accountability Report, also introduced in July. This systemwide collection of quality measurements tracks the progress UC is making in key areas such as campus diversity, faculty compensation and sustainability. The report, updated and published annually, allows the public to gauge how well UC is performing and gives university administrators and UC Regents valuable insights into where the university needs to improve. Sub-reports like the one on student success are presented at each regents meeting.

In the current environment of severe budget cutbacks, having a baseline of indicators will help UC track the real impacts of the cuts.

"The most important metric of student success is graduation rates," said Anne Machung, director of accountability in the academic planning department at the UC Office of the President. "The standard is the six-year measurement, and ours has been going up over time. More importantly, four-year graduation rates have gone up even faster. So we're graduating students more quickly."

Among freshmen who enrolled at UC campuses in 1992, 36 percent had graduated in four years. For those entering in 2004, the percentage that graduated systemwide in four years rose to 59 percent. By comparison, among the freshman who, in 1999, entered U.S. public universities who are members of

the Association of American Universities, 46 percent graduated in four years and 74 percent in six years.

The UC graduation rates for transfer students are also rising: Fifty-two percent of community college transfers graduate in two years and 86 percent in four years. Two-year graduation rates have increased from 39 percent for transfer students entering in 1997 to 52 percent for students in 2006.

Several factors contribute to UC's rising graduation rates.

"Academic preparation," said Dan Greenstein, vice provost of academic planning. "People are better prepared, and we're more selective. Fees are going up and no one wants to stay longer than they need to. And campuses have all been incredibly responsive to putting together a whole bunch of support mechanisms to help students succeed."

At the same time, the student graduation statistics show that some groups are lagging behind. For example, African American and Latino men have lower graduation rates. Those statistics point out the need for more support services for those students.

The effects of budget cuts on graduation rates may take a few years to show up in the data, Greenstein said. But fewer faculty will likely mean it will take longer for students to get the classes they need to graduate.

"How this is all going to balance out in the future is unknown," Greenstein said. "You could envision a scenario where students get through more quickly but with less of an education."

The student success element of the Accountability Report also includes retention rates, student body demographics, degrees awarded by discipline and post-graduation plans. It contains both systemwide and individual campus data and comparisons with other public and private universities.

In looking ahead to improve on the student success data, the academic planning department hopes to do a fall survey of UC graduates to determine what kind of work they do and where they go when they leave UC.

"As we begin to know more about that, we'll be better able to document the contributions UC makes to the state and the nation," Greenstein said. "I suspect their contributions are very high, but we need to prove it."

Campus programs target success

Each UC campus has student success programs with advising, tutoring and support services aimed at helping students get the most benefit from their university years.

At UCLA, the Program Leading to Undergraduate Success was designed to do just that. PLUS, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, serves low-income, disabled and first-generation college students. Part of the campus's Academic Advancement Program, PLUS accepts 200 freshmen each fall with a goal of helping them get through a rigorous four years at UCLA and to go on to graduate schools and professions.

"That first year is so critical, especially for first-generation students," said Kehaulani Vaughn, acting PLUS coordinator.

A first-generation student herself, Vaughn understands the pressures students face in adjusting to university life. If they are the first in their families to go to a university, they don't have a support system at home to guide them through the academic world.

"I think it's overwhelming coming to such a prestigious institution as UCLA and such a huge institution," Vaughn said.

PLUS students sign a contract to participate in academic skills workshops and tutoring. They are matched with a full-time counselor and a peer counselor who keep contact with them and offer support if students are facing problems.

Vaughn believes that having a structured program like PLUS contributes to UCLA having a one of the highest four-year graduation rates in the UC system at 67 percent. In the fall, she said, UCLA is extending PLUS to a four-year program.

Peer advising programs are an important part of these campus retention efforts.

"Not all students know how to graduate," said Comron Roodsari, a UC Irvine senior. Roodsari has been both a peer advising customer and adviser. Now he is the student coordinator of the Peer Academic Advising Program at UC Irvine.

Last year, he said, the program provided 157,625 advising sessions, helping students figure out what classes to take, how to meet major requirements and referring them to student services. Peer advisers hold office hours and meet with students in the dorms, which Roodsari believes is a more comfortable setting for students reluctant to ask for help.

"I've personally felt that feeling, that looming idea that I have to go to a counselor," he said. "This peer-to-peer level really helps."

At UC Berkeley, which has the highest graduation rates in the UC system (69 percent graduate in four years), there are many ways counselors make themselves available, said Robert Holtermann, a counselor in the Letters and Science Undergraduate Advising Department. The Finding Your Way program is

geared toward helping freshmen and first-semester transfer students in the College of Letters and Science adjust to their new environment.

"The idea is if you have a good start, you'll have a better finish," Holtermann said.

Advising efforts at UC Berkeley target diverse populations, Holtermann said, such as student athletes and disabled students who can take advantage of programs geared to their circumstances.

"There are so many ways to get advice on this campus," he said.

Student regents work on access, affordability



UC Santa Barbara graduate student Jesse Bernal and UC Irvine junior Jesse Cheng bring the student perspective to university policymaking. Both took on their new roles at the July regents meeting. Read about the two student regents.

By Harry Mok

Though University of California Student Regent D'Artagnan Scorza's term on the Board of Rents has ended, he can be assured that his successors will keep working on the issues he focused on: access, affordability and diversity.

Jesse Bernal took over from Scorza and Jesse Cheng was installed as student-regent designate for 2010-11 at July's UC Board of Regents meeting. Both share Scorza's priorities for their terms as regents.

Scorza, who's pursuing a doctorate in education at UCLA, enjoyed his time as a regent and believes student input is valuable.

"There is so much change at the university," Scorza said. "It's so critical to have the voice and perspective of students on the board. It's how regents get to know the impact of their policies."

His advice for the new student regents:

"Understand that their voice is valuable, what to say and when to say it," Scorza said. "The opportunity to interject and to lead conversations is a critical component of being student regent. We're there and bring a perspective that informs decision-making at the highest policy level of the university."

Scorza is finishing his second year in the education doctoral program at UCLA and received his bachelor's degree in religion studies from UCLA in 2007. After the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Scorza left UCLA and joined the U.S.

Navy and served in Iraq, where he was responsible for personnel, records and communications management activities. He returned to UCLA in April 2006.

Now that he's not a regent, Scorza plans to focus on school and the two nonprofit organizations he works with in Los Angeles, the Social Justice Learning Institute, which works with schools to reform classroom practices and assist students, and Novo Worldwide, which raises awareness around issues related to genocide in Africa and education in developing nations.

Bernal and Cheng join the Board of Regents amid UC budget cuts due to an estimated \$813 million decrease in support from the state general fund over the next two years. Bernal realizes the challenges ahead, and said he's ready for them.

"The unfortunate thing is that with the budget situation, any sort of lofty or costly goals are limited," said Bernal, a UC Santa Barbara doctoral student in education. "But I'm looking forward to continuing the work of the previous student regents."

Bernal wants to spend his time on the board working to ensure affordability for all students and access to UC for underrepresented groups.

"Affordability is big one even though I think UC is a bargain," he said.

Other areas of interest for Bernal are student retention and support services.

"UC is well intended in its efforts, but when the state cuts the budget, it's usually these services that are the first to go," he said. "I want to work on ensuring that they're protected."

Bernal is a first-generation college student and received his bachelor's degree from Westmont College in Santa Barbara. He is currently special programs manager in the UC Santa Barbara summer sessions office, where he coordinates academic arrangements for the Early Start Program, a high school outreach program, and the Freshman Summer Start Program, a bridge program for incoming UC Santa Barbara first-year students.

His areas of emphasis for his doctoral studies are underrepresented students in higher education, first-year student experience, student development and retention. He has served as university affairs chair and board member of the UC Student Association and external vice president for statewide affairs for the UC Santa Barbara Graduate Students Association.

Bernal is scheduled to finish his degree next year and wants to pursue a career in K-12 education administration.

"College decisions are made earlier and earlier now," Bernal said. "Being able to influence that process at the beginning is where I want to put my efforts."

As the student regent-designate, Cheng will participate in all deliberations, but not vote until July 2010, when his one-year term would begin. Affordability and access are his priorities as a regent.

"I want to make sure the California public knows that (a UC education) is the best vehicle for your family and your children to attain the American dream," Cheng said. "I want to make sure the California public really fully realizes that and protects that and invests in that for the future."

Cheng is a third-year Asian American studies major at UC Irvine, where he has served as external chair for the Asian Pacific Student Association and executive vice president-elect for the Associated Students of UC Irvine. He also has served as Academic Senate representative for the Council on Educational Policy and as the chair of the Student Fee Advisory Committee.

Cheng said he chose Asian American studies because it is a major closely associated with public service.

"You become Asian American studies major because you're passionate about giving back to the community that raised you," Cheng said. "For me, I feel like I'm giving back to people who made me what I am."

He plans a career in politics after graduating. As for what office he'd run for, he hasn't quite thought that far ahead. "I'm still trying to grapple with this student regent thing," he said.

More News

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Russell Gould leads UC Regents

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21449>

Juliann Martinez appointed staff advisor-designate

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21470>

WWII internees to receive honorary degrees

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/21513>

UC San Francisco graduates first global health students

<http://globalhealthsciences.ucsf.edu/news/first-graduates-of-masters-in-global-health.aspx>

UC helps boost minority participation in sciences
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/youruniversity/story7.html>

Read more UC news
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/index.php>

Inside UCOP: Stories for and about Office of the President staff



Advocates protect UC quality and access

Given the magnitude of California's economic troubles, protecting the value of UC is not an easy task. But the voices of advocates are being heard: The Cal Grants program, which provides financial help to 118,000 public higher education students, is no longer on the budget chopping block.

"The joint efforts to voice concern about the elimination of Cal Grants is a great example of what can be done when a diverse group of constituents come together to make real change," said Dan Dooley, senior vice president of External Relations at the UC Office of the President. "Activities such as these are only going to become more important as UC works to protect access and quality while the state confronts the massive budget shortfall. We're going to intensify our efforts for next year's budget, and we're starting now – the stakes are enormous."

Cal Grants provide 35 percent of all grant money available to UC students. The loss of the program would have affected every UC student receiving a grant or scholarship on campus since all financial aid packages would need to be reallocated if the program went unfunded.

Through the strong network of supporters and grassroots efforts, the UC community actively advocated to preserve the funding. Testifying before a legislative committee, President Yudof told lawmakers that phasing out Cal Grants would be devastating to low- and middle-income students attending UC as well as the state universities and community colleges. In addition, each state lawmaker received a document outlining how many students in each legislative district the proposed cuts would impact.

People across the UC community have been working urgently to save Cal Grants and to convey the value of a public higher education to state leaders and the wider public.

“Each day it becomes more and more crucial that UC communities and constituents – from students and staff to alumni and business leaders – work together to raise awareness about the importance of higher education in California,” Dooley said. “It is important for elected leaders to hear from their constituents about the role UC plays in their lives and in the state’s economic future.”

UC’s growing advocacy network includes faculty, staff, students, alumni, business leaders and other friends of the university. UC also partners with California State University and California Community Colleges on advocacy for shared goals. All three institutions are undergoing significant budget cuts and can make a strong case for the dividends that support will bring to California’s economy.

Mobilization efforts have helped build a dynamic network of grassroots supporters. Through social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, UC has been able to access a broader audience of constituents. Mass e-mail campaigns have sent millions of messages to friends of the UC community encouraging them to act. Hundreds of advocates, including representatives from the Academic Senate, Staff Advisors to the Board of Regents, the UC Students Association, business leaders, UC President’s Board on Science and Innovation, as well as high school and community college students, have met with legislators to ask for support of higher education.

Shortly after legislators began taking up the governor’s latest round of budget proposals in early June, UC supporters sent state lawmakers more than 7,000 e-mails urging that UC cuts be minimized.

To find out how you can take action to support UC, visit <http://www.ucforcalifornia.org/uc4ca/home/>

Follow UC on Twitter. <http://twitter.com/ucforca>

View UC on Facebook. <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6756592601>

Making the Case: Supporting UC

Throughout the 2009-2010 budget process, thousands of people have been working to convey the importance of UC to government and the public. Here is an overview of initiatives.

President Yudof has recently launched Facebook and Twitter pages to extend the UC message.

Through the campus networks, 130,000 e-advocates – alumni and friends of UC – receive informational updates about UC policy priorities and are provided the opportunity to e-mail elected representatives in Sacramento about those issues. Regents Richard Blum, Russell Gould, and Sherry Lansing and President Yudof, have sent an e-mail to 1 million UC alumni encouraging them to become more active in building legislative and financial support for UC.

President Yudof has issued a series of videos to employees to keep them apprised of budget developments.

The Office of the President re-engineered its budget news Web site to provide timely information to employees, friends and advocates. All campuses have developed similar sites.

More than 300 alumni and friends visited Sacramento at this year's UC Day, pitching for strong funding of public higher education.

President Yudof, several chancellors and Regents, the Academic Senate leaders for UC, CSU and the community colleges have met with legislators and staff to advocate for funding of public higher education.

UC supporters have made trips to Sacramento and held lobby days of their own to make the case for UC funding. These include: UC President's Board on Sciences and Innovation, Los Angeles corporate leaders, the chair and vice chair of the Academic Senate, Staff Advisors to the Board of Regents, Student Regent Jesse Bernal, UC Students Association and high school and community college students supporting academic prep programs.

New Staff Assembly members elected

Five UC Office of the President employees have been elected to serve on the Staff Assembly Steering Committee for a two-year term that runs from July 1 through June 30, 2011.

The new committee members are Andrea Gerstenberger, Karren Jamaca, Charleen Mininfield, Nancy Scott-Noennig and Christopher M. Rivers.

Current members include Ravinder Singh, Ken Feer, Trish Hare, Doris Parham, Mike Tomasello and Eric Zarate.

The OP Staff Assembly (previously known as UCOPA) will continue to encourage communication with the administration regarding the interests and welfare of staff.

Meetings are open to all employees and held the second Wednesday of the month. Contact OP Staff Assembly Chair Ravinder Singh for meeting time and location. Ravinder.Singh@ucop.edu

Check it out: Backing up your computer files
<http://www.ucop.edu/irc/services/backupfaq.html>

How do you exercise your brain?

It's no secret the brain slows down as we age. Researchers at UC San Francisco and UC Berkeley are exploring strategies for mitigating the effects of this age-related process through mental training exercises.

<http://news.ucsf.edu/releases/age-related-memory-loss-tied-to-slip-in-filtering-information-quickly/>

With that in mind, Our University asked UCOP employees what they do to exercise their brains.

"I exercise my right brain and left brain differently. I read science journals. I'm a scientist by training. For my more creative side, I do pottery."

Ginny Cox
Office of Research and Graduate Studies

"I like word puzzles. I like to read a lot – mysteries."

Jerina Labat-Wells
Office of Technology Transfer

"For fun, I exercise my brain with crafts. I do miniature room boxes and beading."

Karen Tomajan
Business Resource Center

“There’s a fun game on Nintendo called Brain Age. It exercises the brain by looking at shapes and colors ... And listening to music. I think that really helps with concentration.”

Brad Niess

Business Resource Center

“I do Soduku – when I’m not at work. It’s a challenge and fun to do. And I also like working with numbers.”

Roong Uabhaibool

IR&C