



## An Open Letter to UC Faculty From the AAUP

We support the faculty's collective assertion of their central role in shaping the future of the University of California, and we support the calls for collective action (most recently of a walkout) by UC faculty members to publicly voice their concerns. The UC system's historic strength was embedded in substantial public financial support and a strong faculty voice in governance. Both have deteriorated to unacceptable levels. The rejection of the faculty's unanimous voice about implementing furloughs, through a vote of the Academic Council on July 29, 2009, is at best unwise and at worst dismissive of a cornerstone of the UC system's strength, its faculty.

The principles of the American Association of University Professors hold that the managerial assertion of financial emergency powers does not justify failing to incorporate the full and meaningful participation of faculty in shared governance. Moreover, despite the current challenges higher education faces and as a recent resolution of the AAUP's Collective Bargaining Congress Executive Committee asserts, it is time to turn around decades-long patterns of decreased funding to and within the academy:

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/newsroom/2009PRS/prnogivebacks.htm>

The real challenge is to reverse long standing trends of:

- defunding public universities;
- shifting shares of institutional expenditures from education to administration;
- raising tuition and fees; and
- decreasing the proportion of tenure-track faculty.

For too many years university presidents have accepted and preached the pattern of public disinvestment as inevitable, advanced the privatization of public universities, and suggested that we can do more and more with less and less. By their actions, university presidents have advanced a model of academic capitalism that has compromised educational quality, and now that model is collapsing financially.

It is well worth faculty considering taking some furlough time on instructional days. That sends a clear message that disinvestment in colleges and universities reduces the quality of education and does harm to students, faculty, and the public interest.

It is time to acknowledge the obvious: this emperor has no clothes.

Less public support does not translate into more educational opportunity. Escalating tuition does not increase educational access and success for qualified students. Increasing class size does not increase faculty-student engagement. Increasing virtual education does not increase actual educational quality.

We support the lead taken by University of California faculty, the faculty associations, and faculty groups mobilizing independently in their fight to change the long term course of the UC system. Their collective votes and actions serve the best long-term interests of students, faculty, the universities and society. The faculty's voice is central to the quality and future of our educational institutions.

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*The AAUP Online* is an electronic newsletter of the American Association of University Professors. Learn [more](#) about the AAUP.

