Fall 2010

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Newsletter

faculty association UCSB

A Membership Organization of Faculty at UC Santa Barbara
PO Box 13930/ Santa Barbara, CA 93107

IN THIS ISSUE

Foreword

The University of California is struggling with decreasing state support, uncompetitive salaries, hiring freezes, staff lay-offs, rising student fees and tuition, reduced offerings, diminished funding for class expenses, proposed reductions in employee post-retirement benefits, excessive allocations to administrative rather than teaching and research activities, UCOP mandates that abrogate shared governance principles, accommodating new forms of instructional delivery (such as on-line instruction), excessive red tape, and numerous other challenges. Faculty Associations were formed at several UC campuses in 1979 to act as champions for faculty interests. Working closely with the Academic Senate, the UCSB Faculty Association addresses issues related to faculty salaries and benefits, academic excellence, shared governance and transparency, academic freedom, and many other topics. Because the Faculty Association is a voluntary, dues-supported organization, it is not ham strung by many of the laws and regulations that restrict the role of the Senate, so also can actively address such subjects as faculty employment rights, economic status, and political support for UC. More information on current faculty issues can be found at the UCSB FA Web site: http://ucsbfa.org/ If interested in supporting or participating in the UCSB Faculty Association, please fill out and submit the payroll deduction form that is inserted in this Newsletter or visit our web site at: **http://ucsbfa.org/join.html**.

UnShared Governance

Christopher Newfield, Professor of English. His blog on UC issues can be found at http://utotherescue.blogspot.com/)

Maintaining the faculty's voice in university governance is an active process that requires continuous diligence and effort. The primary embodiment of this voice is the Academic Senate, which functions through the extraordinary labor of individual faculty members and exerts significant influence over many administrative decisions. The Senate's influence, however, is much stronger over the curriculum, academic personnel advancement, and departmental matters than it is over other crucial areas, such as research policy, planning, institutional organization, and budgeting. How can faculty have a more direct impact on decisions in these critical areas?

Part of the answer involves strengthening the Academic Senate. The Senate itself re-established several important principles in a letter to President Mark Yudof (http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/HP2MGY_consultation_030210.pdf) on March 2, 2010, which signaled serious concerns about the UC Office of the President's failure to involve the Senate in major decisions at the right time. The first principle is that "ideas that affect the core academic mission or the future of the University should be thoroughly vetted by the Academic Senate *before* being formally recommended as policy positions" to the Regents or anyone else. A system that does not include all of the parties in a deliberation process not only produces inferior decisions, but undermines its legitimacy with its own stakeholders. This same letter offered three other fundamental shared governance principles: consultation needs to be formal and systematic rather than individual and *ad hoc*; it needs to treat the Senate as representative, respecting the Senate's need to involve its members on the campuses; and, finally, proposals need to be based on systematic evidence. These principles may seem obvious, but in practice they have been violated with regularity. The last of these principles is particularly sensitive: administrative decisions involving finance and budget are often based on information that is withheld from Senate agencies and from the faculty as a whole.

One symptom of this problem is that during academic year 2009-10, in the midst of UC's worst financial crisis in decades, the budget data provided to Senate members and to key Senate committees was at best incomplete. This meant that major budget cuts and reorganizations were taking place without consultation as defined above, and without the concrete information that would allow faculty to evaluate changes in a coherent way. An entire division's administrative staff could be reorganized without faculty (or staff) knowing the number of layoffs that would occur or the percentage of a division's base budget that would be recovered – to say nothing of participation in discussions about educational impacts.

The need for information to be provided to the faculty is no less urgent this year than last. For 2010-11, the UC President's Office (UCOP) asked the legislature for an additional $913 million to recover from the previous year's massive cut. UC, in fact, received a $200 million augmentation, plus a one-time $100 million supplement in stimulus funds. In spite of continuing shortfalls in campus operating funds, UCOP has shown little interest in protecting campus operations through measures such as revisiting the traditions whereby some programs cross-subsidize others, refocusing on core teaching and research missions, and achieving deep procedural streamlining. UCOP continues to prioritize large-scale construction projects and the retention of large cash reserves, in part to maintain the university's bond rating in order to facilitate both loan repayment and further borrowing. Although these are in themselves perfectly reasonable goals, they are now in direct competition with urgent educational priorities. And yet faculty, whose job it is to set educational goals, have not been provided with the detailed information that would allow them to rank university objectives and participate fully in policy debates. Faculty need to be involved directly, as UC campuses are now facing years of state funding levels *below* that of 2006-07, or even of 2000-01 when the university had 30% fewer students.

Shared financial information is critical to making decisions that will be effective in part because faculty have participated enough in their creation to give them real support. But the Senate's position is limited by its status under Regental Standing Orders 105: compare its restricted roles as enumerated in 7 articles in 105.2 (http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/regents/bylaws/so1052.html) to the extraordinary scope of the UC president's powers as defined in Standing Order 100.4 (42 articles). Under this set of rules, UC administrators may regard financial information as proprietary, with disclosure occurring piecemeal and at their discretion. Individual Senate members who strive to obtain information and make a principle of transparency may find themselves frozen out by the administration and by Senate leadership. Many faculty members assume that the University as an institution considers the faculty to be its heart and soul, and that therefore faculty input will always be taken seriously when making major institutional decisions. Many recent events, however, discredit this belief, including the imposition of furloughs over widespread faculty opposition, the dictation of when furloughs could be taken, and the reduction of post-retirement and other benefits during an already traumatic year for the university.

A number of gradual changes have shifted the balance of power at UC. One is the underfunding of the faculty salary scale, which has tacitly divided the faculty between the majority of hardworking "loyalists," who have seen their real salaries fall behind their peers, and "high flyers," who can keep their salaries at market rates by seeking matches for outside offers. Another is the ever-growing size of UC's administrative operations which, as a UCOP study has shown, has reduced instructional staff to 26% of the total. A third is the Yudof Administration's distinction between UC "businesses," which it declares to be successes, and academic departments, which it describes as needy. A fourth is the faculty's own failure to advocate as strongly for high-quality undergraduate instruction as for quality research, which has weakened our ties to our largest constituency, the students, parents, and alumni.

In the face of these obstacles, what can the faculty do to improve shared governance? The only solution that I see is fortunately what we do best, namely, research and teaching. Faculty members need to be better informed about planning, budgeting, and operational details, building on such efforts as UCPB's Futures Report (http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/AC.Futures.Rpt.0107.pdf), this year's Choices Report (http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/ucpb.choices.pdf), and the budget web pages of the Office of the President, as well as others. The Faculty Association could play a key role in sponsoring studies and reports on pressing University issues, coordinating faculty efforts, and orchestrating work with the Academic Senate and the staff unions. Findings should be posted and debated:

one example is the Council of UC Faculty Associations report on "Restoring Quality and Access" (http://keepcaliforniaspromise.org/553/working-paper) that showed that a return of fees and state funding to 2000-01 levels would cost the median state taxpayer a total of 32 dollars per year. The implications of such findings need much wider discussion.

UC needs a *culture* of shared governance that sustains student-faculty discussion, peer transmission of information, and open faculty-administration communication. The outcome would be pervasive awareness, accurate detail, continuous information updates, greater student (and hence public) knowledge, and better institutional decisions. The current structure rests on practices of information compartmentalization that are no longer adequate to address the sophisticated collaborative decisions that need to be made. Faculty withdrawal from everyday organizational knowledge is, as the last two years have shown, no longer a viable option for UC.

Post-Employment Benefit Changes: How did we get into this mess?

Harry Nelson, Professor of Physics and Vice Chair of the Committee on Planning and Budget

The University of California `Post-Employment Benefits' or PEB system has deep financial problems, and proposals to cut benefits and increase employee contributions have recently been made. PEB is the acronym for pensions combined with retiree health benefits (RHB).

Background

At last evaluation, in July 2009, the University of California Retirement Plan (UCRP) trust fund was worth $32.3 billion. Its liabilities, consisting of payments contractually obligated to retirees and current employees, are $45.2 billion, a shortfall of $12.9 billion, and the shortfall is projected to worsen. There is no safety net: UC does not participate in the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC), which is to pensions what the FDIC is to bank accounts, and the State Legislature has disavowed responsibility. The Legislature accepts responsibility for CSU, Community College, and K-12 teacher pensions, but not UC's.

The July 2009 value of the retiree health (RHB) trust fund was just $0.077 billion dollars, and the liability was $15.1 billion, a shortfall of $15 billion. The more dismal fiscal situation for RHB originates in the fact that it is a `promise' and not a `vested benefit,' as pensions are. At any given Regents' Meeting, retiree health benefits theoretically could be terminated. Pension liabilities are supposed to be unconditional, and so a trust fund holding assets to cover pension obligations is required. UC covers RHB on a `pay-as-you-go' basis, and the current yearly cost of $0.26 billion comes out of the UC annual budget. In contrast, the $1.7 billion or so in annual pension payments to retirees come from the trust fund. In principal, the pension trust fund accumulates regular deposits and grows gradually. In practice, however, UC and its employees stopped paying into the trust fund in 1991; employee contributions were still deducted from salary, but redirected into a `Defined Contribution Plan' or DCP. Without the changes in 1991, the pension trust fund would now have a $9 billion surplus. UC also increased pension fund liabilities since 1991 with 3 VERIP (early retirement) programs and other actions, costing several billion dollars, to remove employees from the operating budget. The actions UC has taken with respect to the UCRP were certainly not in response to collective bargaining pressure by the faculty; they were choices made freely and knowledgeably by the Regents.

The crisis in RHB originates from forces outside of UC's control. Health costs are projected to grow at 5-10% per year, much faster than inflation. Those high future costs must now appear as liabilities on UC's books, due to new accounting practices. UC would like to reduce this liability. To address the twin PEB crises, UC commissioned the `PEB Task Force', which reported its recommendations over the past summer. Predictably, the task force recommended substantial cuts in pension and retiree health care benefits, and increases in employee contributions constituting actual wage cuts, as detailed below.

Proposed UC Pension Changes

Two kinds of pension benefits are `vested' and excluded from any reductions: those of retirees and those of employees for their years of employment already performed. The existing system works approximately on the following formula, known as `2.5% at 60': when you are 60, you can receive 2.5%

(called the age factor) times your number of years of employment times the average of your three years of highest salary (known as the HAPC) as a pension, for the rest of your life. So, suppose you are 55 and have worked 25 years for UC. You have earned 25 times 2.5 = 62.5% of your HAPC as a lifetime pension, if you collect it at age 60 or later. Because the benefit is `vested' you could even leave UC for 5 years and then request your pension. If you retired immediately, you'd only get 45% of your HAPC: retirement prior to 60 gives lower factors for years of employment, from 1.1% at 50 to 1.8% at 55 to the maximum of 2.5% at 60. This penalty is built in to encourage workers in their prime years of productivity to stay with UC. So-called defined contribution plans, like 401(k)'s, don't have a similar incentive. Conversely, 401(k)'s tend to provide incentives for workers not to retire when they reach 70 and beyond, when UCRP benefits plateau.

UC cannot reduce your accrued pension entitlement and the pension fund covers these `vested' benefits. The $12.9 billion shortfall means there are 71 cents available in the pension fund for every $1 promised to retirees and vested employees. The pension payments aren't due today, however, and the only imaginable solution is for pension fund investments to achieve high rates of return in the future, so the money will materialize by the time payments need to be made. Even with UC's assumed 7.5% annual investment return rate in the future, though, regular annual payments at an unrealistic level of 30-40% of the total UC payroll, amounting to $2-$3 billion/year, would be needed for the pension fund to entirely cover all obligations. New proposals, then, require that both UC and its employees contribute much more to the pension program. At the same time, pension benefits for new employees (those starting after July 1, 2013) would be cut, creating a `New Tier' of pension benefits.

The PEB Task Force effort designed plans with reduced pension benefits and increased contribution rates. One thrust, resulting in New Tier Options A and B, was to reduce both pension contributions and pension benefits for those who earn less than about $60,000/year and replace UCRP pension payments with Social Security (SS) payments. However, the unseemliness of cutting benefits for low-wage workers as well as uncertainties over the SS system caused faculty and staff representatives on the PEB Task Force to oppose these options. One attractive option that does not seem to have been considered is exiting the SS system entirely. The pension benefits per contribution are much better in UCRP than in SS, and, already, California's police and teachers do not participate in SS.

Faculty and staff on the Task Force and Academic Senate leaders countered with New Tier Option C, in which the current retirement factors would simply be delayed by five years: you'd have to wait until age 65 to obtain the 2.5% age factor, so retiring at age 60 would bring a penalty, and the minimum retirement age would shift from 50 to 55. President Yudof accepted a version of Option C at the end of October, 2010 (see following article). The costs of the new pension plan, however, are noteworthy, with UC contributing 8.1% of its payroll to the UCRP. By comparison, UC contributed an average of 10.7% of payroll between 1976 and 1991, prior to UC's termination of its contributions between 1991 and 2009. Employees will contribute 7% of their salaries, which represents a substantial increase over the average 2.2% contribution between 1976 and 2009. The total contribution of 15.1% would cover the cost of new pension accrual (the `Normal' cost), assuming investment returns of 7.5% per year.

The New Tier and the contributions do not, however, reduce the existing debt in the pension fund. UC asserts it will try to restore the pension fund by increasing its contribution from 8.1% of salary by 2% per year after 2013, ultimately reaching 20%, as unlikely as that seems given the university's current budget shortfalls. Even then, creative financial devices, such as lengthening the pay back period from 15 to 30 years, and borrowing internally within UC, are necessary to retire the existing pension debt. These tricks could be avoided if the pension fund investments yield a substantially higher return than 7.5% per year.

Those who have vested benefits in the Old Tier, but who continue to work for UC, are in a curious position. UC will probably charge employees 9% of their salary or more to continue to accrue Old Tier benefits, and offer the lower 7% to employees who accept lower New Tier benefits for their future years of employment. The 55 year-old mentioned earlier, under a blend of Tiers would qualify for only 71.5% of her/his HAPC as pension at age 60, whereas the Old Tier would have provided 75%. Waiting to retire until age 65 would provide a pension payment of 87.5% of HAPC under both systems.

There are numerous details in the New Tier, including the cancellation of the lump-sum cash-out, handling of cost-of-living adjustments, and cancellation of automatic survivor benefits, which provide 25% of the full pension benefits of a UC employee who dies to that person's survivor.

Proposed Retiree Health Benefits Changes

Drastic changes are proposed for qualifying for retiree health care benefits. Currently, one qualifies for retiree health benefits at age 50, with the maximum UC contribution requiring 20 years of service. Under the new system, age 50 with 20 years of service would enable you to enroll in the UC health care system but you'd have to pay the full cost; the full UC contribution would only be earned if you retire at 65 with 20 or more years of service. A chart will be used in the new system to interpolate between these limits. Some existing employees would be `grandfathered in' under the current system in the new proposal: those with age + years of employment greater than 50 and a minimum of 5 years of employment. To someone who is 35 and has worked at UC for 14 years, this seems dreadfully unfair, particularly given the `implied subsidy': health care costs for, say, a 30-year-old are only ¼ of those of, say, an 84-year-old, although both pay the same premium. The 35-year-old worker will be denied some of the benefits they've subsidized for 14 years.

A substantial increase in the portion that retirees must pay for their health care is proposed. Currently, that portion averages 10%, or about $1000/year. The proposal is to increase that portion to at least 30%, typically $3000/year.

Summary

The principal cause of UC's current pension crisis was the absence of contributions to the pension trust fund for about 20 years. The crisis has catalyzed the PEB Task Force and President Yudof to define a new `Two Tier' pension system involving higher contribution rates and reduced benefits (mainly a 5-year delay in retirement) for new hires, but no reliable plan for retiring the pension fund debt. Severe changes in the age and length of service to qualify for retiree health benefits, as well as increases in the cost of those benefits to retirees, are proposed.

Post-Employment Benefit Changes: Where Do We Stand?

Henning Bohn, Professor of Economics and Divisional Chair of the Academic Senate

The President's Task Force on Post-Employment Benefits recently proposed far-reaching changes to UC's pension and retiree medical programs. The Task Force's recommendations included redesigned pension plans for new employees starting in 2013 (two options, both "integrated" with Social Security, labeled A & B), higher pension contributions from all employees, a reduction of UC contributions to retiree medical costs, and a financing plan for the employer share of pension contributions that involves borrowing from the UC Short Term Investment Pool (STIP).

The Task Force's Report was controversial and the timing unfortunate; the Report was released in late August, 2010, with a December, 2010, target for Regental approval. The Report is best interpreted as the view of UC administrators, who numerically dominated the Task Force and its workgroups. Faculty and staff on the workgroups signed a separate Dissenting Statement to the Report. The Dissent proposed a pension design for new employees similar to the current UC pension plan (labeled Option C) at the same cost as one of the Task Force's options (Option B). All options specify, for **new** employees starting after July 1, 2013, a higher minimum retirement age (shifting from 50 to 55) and a higher age for receiving the maximum benefit rate per year of service (65 instead of 60) than the current UC pension plan. The Dissent also emphasized the need for competitive total remuneration for faculty and staff. With salaries and total remuneration (salary + benefits) currently below our comparison institutions, proposed changes in pension and health benefits would make UC even less competitive. If instituted, these changes must be compensated by higher salaries to insure that UC is competitive with premier institutions throughout the world and, thereby, that UC's academic excellence is maintained.

The Report and Dissent triggered lively discussions in the Senate. These discussions focused on the implications of the proposed changes for the University as a whole, notably for our ability to attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff. At UCSB, the Task Force proposals were examined in detail by key Senate committees (CFIA, CPB, and CAP) and were the focus of a Faculty Forum on October 14. On October 27, the Academic Council adopted a resolution that largely supported the Dissenting Statement and explicitly rejected integration of UCRP with Social Security (Task Force options A and B). The proposed reduction of UC contributions to retiree medical costs was widely viewed as unstoppable because these contributions are not vested and currently more generous than at our Comparison-8 universities. The Academic Council supports the Task Force's plans to improve UCRP funding through borrowing from STIP and other financing measures.

Recent news has been remarkably positive. President Yudof decided to adopt the pension design recommended in the Dissenting Statement and supported by the Academic Council. One difference is that Yudof's version calls for new employees to contribute 7% of their salaries to UCRP, as compared to 6% in the Dissent's version. Despite this difference, the Academic Senate deeply appreciates the President's willingness to listen to faculty and staff! We are pleased that the pension plan for new employees starting after July 1, 2013, will be similar to the current UCRP, though with the retirement ages increased by five years, as outlined above, and with certain other changes detailed in the Task Force Report. One regrettable change is that survivor benefits for new employees will be priced at actuarial cost, whereas the current UCRP grants a 25% survivor benefit at no cost. An increase in the age at which maximum percentage benefits are received (65) seems reasonable given national pension trends and the rise in life expectancy. Increasing the age of "normal" retirement to 65 also will help to defend UCRP against political attacks as being "too generous". The more drastic plan changes originally recommended by the Task Force are now off the table.

One unresolved question is how the University can restore and maintain competitive faculty and staff compensation. The Task Force acknowledged that faculty salaries are about 10% below those for our Comparison-8 universities, or about $12,000 per faculty member. The administration has long argued that generous retirement and health benefits offer partial compensation for these salary shortfalls. With the proposed changes to pensions and to retiree health benefits, total UC benefits per faculty member would shift from about $2,000 *above* to at least $4,000 *below* our Comparison-8 universities. The shortfall in total remuneration would rise from $10,000 to over $16,000, or about 15% of average faculty salaries. According to UCOP statements, employees who stay in the current retirement plan would, over time, see an increase in their pension contributions to 8%, which would be a significant cut in take-home pay. The Academic Council recently initiated resolutions calling for the resumption of a Faculty Salary Plan that restores competitive total remuneration, including a range adjustment of no less than 2% in 2010-11 and further adjustments in future years. This is work in progress, still to be endorsed by the Academic Assembly, but a key Senate priority.

A final open question is how our Campus will pay for the employer share of UCRP contributions. The employer share is currently 4% of salaries and scheduled to rise to about 19% by 2020 under the proposed financing plan. Employer contributions are due on all UCRP-covered salaries, including both state-funded and grant-funded salaries. Overall, it is clear that we are facing significant challenges in our near term and long term futures, but recent developments indicate we are making progress.

Open Enrollment

This year's open enrollment period, from October 25 to November 23, is marked by numerous changes to UC health benefits packages.

Depending on the campus, employee contributions to ongoing health benefits plans have greatly increased, some ongoing health plans have altered their list of providers, and dependent provisions have been changed (e.g., the age to which children can be covered).

As a consequence, please check your health plans carefully. Announcements of presentations and expanded Web site information on changes can be found at the following UCSB Human Resources and UCOP URL's: http://hr.ucsb.edu/ and http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/open_enrollment.

With the Senate, campus Faculty Associations are examining the reasons for these drastic changes and their consequences for UC employees.

The UCSB Faculty Association Enters a New Era

Sarah Cline, Professor of History and Chair of the UCSB Faculty Association

Here is a quick overview of Faculty Association (FA) activities in 2009-10:

- July 2009: An energized FA membership met to respond to assaults on, and declining support for, the university
- December 2009: Plenary meeting on December 1 to set priorities and investigate rejoining the Council of UC Faculty Associations (CUCFA)
- February 2010: New SBFA website (http://ucsbfa.org/)
- March 2010: Resignation of the FA Executive Director
- April 2010: Plenary meeting of the FA membership with the President of CUCFA
- May 2010: The FA Board endorses rejoining CUCFA
- June 2010: Electronic vote of the membership overwhelmingly approves re- joining CUCFA

In 2009-10 the UCSB Faculty Association underwent major internal changes. With the crisis at UC we realized that we needed to organize more quickly and effectively to voice our opposition to assaults on public higher education in California, including attacks on principles of shared governance. Following the installment of the new FA board in September, we held a plenary meeting in December 2009, where members and prospective members provided input on FA's priorities for the rest of the academic year. One priority which was tabled was the possible re-affiliation of the UCSB FA with the Council of UC Faculty Associations (CUCFA), to contribute to and show solidarity with a systemwide organization devoted to protecting faculty interests and purviews. Concluding that such a decision needed to have the membership fully involved and informed, the Board organized a third plenary meeting of the FA membership as an informational session with CUCFA President **Robert Meister** on April 28, 2010. Publicity for that meeting was accomplished, in part, through the new UCSB Faculty Association website, a product of many hours of work by Board member and FA Webmaster **Cathy Nesci** (French and Italian), who was assisted by a paid consultant. The FA website (http://ucsbfa.org) has information on our activities and numerous UC issues, as well as activist blogs on UC and higher education.

The academic year culminated with an electronic vote of the FA membership on re- joining CUCFA. After the FA board overwhelmingly endorsed re-joining CUCFA, concluding that such a move would strengthen both our own Faculty Association and CUCFA, 92% of the voting members voted in favor of re-joining CUCFA. The election was certified on July 4, 2010 and members were notified of the results.

A major change in the organization of the Faculty Association stemmed from the resignation of Executive Director **Marguerite Bouraad-Nash** in March 2010. The FA Board thanks her for her long service to the FA.

The UCSB Faculty Association Co-Sponsors an IHC Faculty Forum Series on the Commission on the Future

The UCSB Faculty Association is pleased to co-sponsor the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center's 2010-11 Faculty Forum series on the UC Commission on the Future's recommendations. The first two presentations in this series occurred on October 28 and November 8, with the first consisting of a UCSB faculty panel discussion of "What students need to know?" and the second being a talk by Professor Stanley Katz, Princeton University on "What is the New Normal in Higher Education?". This series will continue through the winter and spring quarters, featuring such speakers as Professor Catherine Cole, UC Berkeley, and such topics as on-line instruction. For information on this series see IHC's Web site: http://www.ihc.ucsb.edu/series/faculty-forums/.

Events of Early Fall Quarter and Looking Further Ahead in 2010-2011

The new Faculty Association board met on September 1 to elect new officers and to plan for this year's activities.

Oct. 7 Day of Action for Higher Education.

Many campuses in California, including UCSB, hosted events supporting public higher education. An ad hoc student group organized a noontime rally on campus. Chair Cline represented the SBFA at the rally and a sound bite of her speech at the rally was shown on KEYT News, highlighting her statement that the allocations for higher education in the California budget just passed that day would not be nearly sufficient to make up for budgetary cuts over past years.

CUCFA.

The SBFA was an active participant in CUCFA discussions of the recommendations of the UC Post-Employment Benefits Task Force (PEB), and its consultation with the Academic Senate. The UCSB FA Board endorsed a letter from CUCFA to President Yudof supporting the Berkeley FA's analysis of the PEB' recommendations, rejecting the options delineated in the PEB report and calling for a new, consultative process including all stakeholders to fashion acceptable alternatives. The letter and associated information can be found on the UCSB FA Web site (http://ucsbfa.org/).

UCSB FA – Interdisciplinary Humanities Center Faculty Forum.

Board member Nancy Gallagher helped organize a series of presentations and panels at the IHC on the recommendations of the UC Commission on the Future, coordinating closely with IHC Director **Ann Bermingham** and Associate Director **Emily Zinn**.

The rest of this academic year we will pursue the following initiatives:

- Continue to be actively involved with CUCFA in defense of public higher education in California;
- Engage productively with the Academic Senate leadership on issues of campus and Systemwide importance, especially on the topics of shared governance and faculty compensation;
- Defend academic freedom and address faculty salaries, pensions, and health benefits;
- Increase SBFA membership and member involvement, perhaps via ad hoc committees of active members on issues of current concern. The Association is all the members—not just the Board;
- Organize events, such as the collaboration with the IHC and other organizations on informational forums;
- Inform members and prospective members of Association news via the SBFA Newsletter;
- Potentially revise the bylaws and table them for a membership vote;
- Create an elections committee to identify and recruit potential Board members to run for the Board in May elections.

Through these and other activities we hope to defend faculty interests, promote shared governance, and protect academic excellence.

Board of Directors

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Vice President & Newsletter Editor:
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