To Linda Sarna, Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

From Mark A. Peterson, Chair, Luskin School of Public Affairs FEC

Concerning the Fall 2012 Rebenching Budget Committee Report

October 30, 2012

The Faculty Executive Committee of the Luskin School of Public Affairs has evaluated the available materials associated with the Fall 2012 report prepared by the University of California Rebenching Budget Committee. The issue of fair allocations of state resources to the University of California campuses achieved through an appropriate and transparent process is of obviously importance. It is imperative that UCOP get this one right, as hard as that objective is to achieve given the complexities of the issues and the enormous structural variations across the ten UC campuses.

Our perspective on this issue is not just as faculty within the Luskin School of Public Affairs. All of us have formal and informal relationships that span the campus, including the UCLA Medical Center and the health sciences overall. I, for example, hold appointments in Public Policy, Political Science, and Law; have formal affiliations with the Center for Health Policy Research, the Center for HIV Identification, Prevention, and Treatment Services, the Institute for Society & Genetics; have worked with colleagues in the Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities; have lectured in courses for the Department of Health Policy and Management in the Fielding School of Public Health; served on a committee for the Department of Community Health Sciences in the Fielding School; etc. I am also on the UC Academic Senate Health Care Task Force and served on the UCLA Faculty Welfare Committee. One in our ranks served as Vice Chancellor for Faculty Diversity. Another is among the faculty of the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, which joins the social sciences with health and physical sciences. Two other members of the FEC are affiliated with the California Center for Population Research, which has faculty from across the campus. In short, we are knowledgeable about and experienced with UCLA as a whole, linking north and south campus, and with colleagues in the UCLA Medical Center and health sciences. It is with that background—and our general professional and scholarly orientation in policy analysis, organizational dynamics, and planning—that we assess the rebenching plan and its fit with UCLA.

The report fully recognizes the unique character of the University of California, San Francisco, a campus dedicated to medicine and the health science for which normal per student financial calculations simply do not make sense in the context of the overall University of California. As a result, the rebenching plan would treat UCSF entirely separately from the other
campuses, with an appropriately different allocation formula. Having duly recognized the
unusual nature of medical centers and the health sciences, and established an independent
mechanism for determining financial allocations in accord with those unusual circumstances, it is
simply a mystery as to why the rebenching plan does not carry that logic over to the other
campuses that have a significant medical and health science presence. The failure to do so, in
our view, has an especially unreasonable and pernicious impact on UCLA. UCLA is also unique
among the ten campuses, in that it is the only one that combines an enormous medical center
with a comprehensive “academic” university. The finances of the medical center constitute close
to half of the campus’s expenditures. Indeed, for the purposes of this analysis UCLA is best
understood as the rough equivalent of merging UCSF with UC Berkeley. Given the fact that
UCOP is rightly developing a separate allocation formula for UCSF, and given the scope of the
medical complex at UCLA, the only sensible approach would be to treat UCLA like UCSF on
the medical and health sciences side and like Berkeley (and the other campuses) on the
conventional academic side. That would yield an allocation scheme that is both fair and
transparent, while also being sensitive to a particularly substantive element of difference across
the campuses.

We strongly encourage the UCLA Academic Senate to use every available means to
underscore this deficiency in the rebenching plan, make clear its illogical and harmful effects,
and advance alternatives that would permit the rebenching initiative to achieve its stated
objectives.