

February 11, 2018

**TO: STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS  
FROM: THE BOARD OF THE BERKELEY FACULTY ASSOCIATION**

The Board of the BFA has discussed the campus initiative on developing a vision for the future of the campus. We applaud the openness with which the new administration has gone about consulting different groups on campus and, in particular, we appreciate your reaching out to the BFA. Our concerns around the strategic planning process revolve around three fundamental, inter-related issues.

**1. Shared Governance**

Berkeley has prided itself on a history of shared governance. But shared governance does not mean *joint* governance in which the Senate and Administration sit on the same committee, but rather that there be separate committees. We expect the Senate to enter into dialogue with the administration from a position of independence. Shared governance does not mean faculty input on a predefined set of challenges facing the university. It requires faculty involvement in determining what are those major challenges. So the first issue that concerns us is the very meaning and character of shared governance.

The Senate appears to have lost its autonomy. With privatization, the administration has become increasingly influential in the governance of the university. According to UCOP data going back to 1993, senior managers have increased 5-fold while the number of faculty has stagnated. The swelling of the administration has not only been a fiscal drain but has also led to the centralization of decision-making and the decentralization of fiscal accountability. The erosion of democratic accountability has brought in its train a succession of costly and avoidable policy and operational errors.

**2. Knowledge and Education**

The current structure of the strategic planning process doesn't have an explicit mandate to consider education and research, and we are concerned that it is losing sight of the university's core functions. The synergy between them defines the distinctiveness of Berkeley and other major universities. Under fiscal pressure there are ever more undergraduate students while the number of faculty has been frozen, and graduate student numbers are falling. Making up the shortage of Senate faculty, lecturers are among the most dedicated and effective instructors yet the most invisible. We have to think how we can recognize their contributions and include them in our community. More generally, we should examine and reflect upon the changing relation between instruction and scholarship as it affects different sectors and groups on campus.

**3. The Public University**

The strategic planning process is focused on fund-raising and revenue generation on the assumption that we have a brand to sell with little concern for continuing advocacy for public higher education. One way of supporting public education would be to put energy into [The \\$48 fix](#) – the organized legislative attempt to introduce a special tax that would eliminate tuition at all levels of higher education in California, and contribute significantly to reducing the costs of attendance. It is already supported by UC faculty associations, union organizations and allied groups, and it has been endorsed by the California Democratic Party. Advocating for the public university is especially important in the light of the following:

- Developing multiple sources of revenue – donor support, public-private ventures, new Masters' programs, expansion of summer instruction, increasing concurrent enrollment and so forth – redirects resources away from education and knowledge production. How does such revenue generation affect different regions of the campus departments, especially smaller departments and programs heading for bankruptcy?
- Traditionally, we have defined our public mission as combining access and excellence. Compared to other major universities we have accomplished much in providing greater access. We have performed less well in meeting the equally important challenge of *inclusion*. As the ratio between permanent faculty and undergraduates has fallen, along with undergraduates' access to appropriately sized discussion sections, our least privileged students are at an increasing disadvantage.
- At a time when support for the university as a public institution cannot be taken for granted, when its legitimacy has plummeted, we can no longer limit our goal to access but must make ourselves *accountable* to wider publics. While there are many endeavors in this direction, they do not form a coherent and appealing vision of what a public university could be, and how it contributes to the future of California.