



FEDERAL UPDATE

April 2016

The Report on Congressional & Administration Activities

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

March was a busy month in Washington, DC with numerous University of California (UC)-related advocacy efforts and events.

Congress held – and continues to hold – appropriations-related hearings as it works to pass funding legislation for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. UC Federal Governmental Relations (FGR) is actively engaged in appropriations advocacy efforts and in working with the California congressional delegation to support the University’s key priorities. More information can be found below.

There were also many advocacy events that FGR helped to coordinate and participate in, including: multiple student constituency visits, Fusion Energy Advocacy Day, Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Advocacy Day, Humanities Advocacy Day and a UC congressional briefing on the important role of the humanities. Details about each of these advocacy activities are below.

FISCAL YEAR 2017 APPROPRIATIONS

Appropriations Advocacy

Throughout March, many Dear Colleague letters circulated in Congress to encourage appropriators to designate specific funding levels for select departments and programs in FY 2017. In addition to the University’s [FY 2017 appropriations priorities](#) requests for education, research and health care programs that UC sent to the California delegation in February, FGR reached out to urge members to sign-on to letters supporting:

- Funding level of at least \$34.5 billion for the National Institutes of Health;
- At least \$8 billion for the National Science Foundation;
- Robust funding for the USDA-NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative;
- \$757 million for the Department of Education (ED) Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant program and \$1 billion for the Federal Work Study program; and,
- Funding level of \$728 million for the Institute of Education Sciences, the statistics, research and evaluation arm of ED.

UC FGR continues to advocate, in partnership with our campus and lab colleagues, to members of Congress and the House and Senate Appropriations Committees for the passage of final FY 2017 appropriations legislation with the highest possible funding levels for the program priorities of the University. For additional information, please contact Marjorie Duske at

Marjorie.Duske@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6306 or Carolyn Henrich at Carolyn.Henrich@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6308.

CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

House Select Investigative Panel Examination into Fetal Tissue Research

On March 2, the House Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives, chaired by Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), held its first hearing focused on bioethics and fetal tissue. The Panel called six panelists—five bioethicists and one researcher, UC San Diego professor and researcher, Dr. Lawrence Goldstein. Members of the panel were divided along party lines expressing concern about the need for the use of fetal tissue in research and focusing on the value and importance of fetal tissue research for medical breakthroughs. Dr. Goldstein testified that fetal tissue research is unique and necessary for researching potential cures for diseases such as Alzheimer's.

During the hearing, significant focus was placed on the numerous document requests the chair of the panel has made to research institutions and fetal tissue procurement agencies, which include requests for the names of researchers and other staff and personnel involved in handling or using fetal tissue. Others on the panel expressed concern over these requests specifically as it relates to the safety and security of these individuals. Dr. Goldstein called for the protection of this information for the safety of the staff and researchers involved in fetal tissue-related research following the release of the Center for Medical Progress videos about Planned Parenthood last summer. As of March 30, the House Select Investigative Panel had issued 12 subpoenas requesting un-redacted information from specific institutions, organizations and individuals on their use of fetal tissue and/or fetal tissue procurement. For additional information, please contact Jessica Pinckney at Jessica.Pinckney@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6302.

POLICY AND REGULATORY UPDATE

Department of Labor Proposed Rule on Overtime Pay

In July 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to update the current Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations on overtime pay by raising the salary threshold required for an exemption for overtime from \$23,660 to \$50,440 per year. The University supports the Administration's efforts to address significant wage inequalities that exist for workers across the nation and is committed to supporting its own workers and their families through UC's "Fair Wage/Fair Work Plan," which will raise the minimum wage for all UC employees who work at least 20 hours per week to \$15 per hour, over the next three years.

During the DoL's call for public comment, UC acknowledged support for a needed update in the wage scale and outlined the unique impact the rule change would have for postdoctoral scholars and research specialists. UC recommended there be an exemption for postdoctoral scholars and research specialists, or that there be a phase-in to allow universities to manage the potential changes.

Currently, the proposal is at the Office of Management and Budget awaiting review. Unless changes are made to the rule during this time period, the regulation will likely be released in final

form this summer, and the University will have 60 days to implement the changes. For additional information, please contact Carolyn Henrich at Carolyn.Henrich@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6308.

UC Medical Schools Join with Others in Addressing Opioid Epidemic through Training and Research

In late March, all six UC medical schools (UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCLA, UC Riverside, UC San Diego and UCSF), joined with 63 medical schools from across the country, and signed onto an [Association of American Medical College's \(AAMC\) statement](#) that expressed gratitude to the White House and Congress for focusing on the emerging opioid epidemic and bringing resources forward to combat it. The AAMC statement also acknowledges the unwavering commitment to provide complex instruction and training to meet this challenge.

On March 29, President Obama announced new policies to address heroin and opioid drug abuse. The initiative includes regulations adjusting patient limits on medication-assisted treatments, funding for expanded medication treatment services and rulemaking on increasing Medicaid access to mental health and substance abuse services. The initiative also includes a pledge, signed by more than 60 medical schools, which states that, beginning in fall 2016, they will require students to take some form of prescriber education as outlined in the recently released Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain, in order to graduate. UC Davis Medical School signed onto this White House pledge. For additional information, please contact Jessica Pinckney at Jessica.Pinckney@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6302.

ADVOCACY UPDATE

UC Congressional Briefing on the Humanities

As part of its ongoing series of Capitol Hill briefings, FGR hosted a congressional briefing titled "[UC and the Humanities: Making Sense of Our World](#)" on March 15.

The event was organized to coincide with National Humanities Advocacy Day, an annual event sponsored by the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) because UC had many humanities experts participating in the NHA event.

To showcase UC's work in the humanities, and how the humanities impact every aspect of our lives, as well as to make a convincing case for why Congress needs to invest more in the humanities at all levels, the following speakers highlighted their interesting, timely and relevant work:

- Georges Van Den Abbeele, dean, School of Humanities, UC Irvine, moderated the panel and provided an overview of system-wide humanities research efforts, as well as selected programs and projects across the UC campuses.
- Rachel Teagle, founding director, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art, UC Davis, spoke about the museum, which is opening in November 2016, and demonstrated how museums connect the humanities to people, offer public access to art and expose communities to information they might not otherwise be able to see.
- Milagros "Millie" Peña, dean, College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, UC Riverside, highlighted a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) project that looks at the role of "narratives" in illness and healing, and how the humanities can help improve

our lives and well-being, including in health care and physical and mental wellness. A corresponding UC News article titled "[Where Medicine and the Humanities Meet](#)" highlighted this project further.

- Salim Yaqub, associate professor, department of history, UC Santa Barbara, spoke about his work, which centers on U.S. Relations with the Middle East, focusing on the postwar era and highlights the integration of official diplomacy with the influence of popular culture.

The congressional briefing allowed UC to provide the staff of the California congressional delegation with a new awareness about the broad reach of the humanities and the value in strong and sustained funding for the NEH. The event showcased examples of vibrant and relevant projects that celebrate art, beauty and technology, which merit federal support. For additional information, please contact Carolyn Henrich at Carolyn.Henrich@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6308.

Humanities Advocacy Day

The NHA held its annual meeting and "Humanities Advocacy Day" on March 14 and 15. UC was well represented with 16 participants from seven campuses, including UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCLA, UC Merced, UC Riverside, UC Santa Barbara and UC Santa Cruz. The UC group met with nearly two dozen California congressional delegation offices, including both the offices of Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein. UC delegates shared information on the work they are doing on their campuses with the support of the NEH, and urged members to increase funding for this and other crucial humanities programs. UC delegates urged support for a FY 2017 funding level of \$148 million for the NEH. The NEH is the primary source of federal support for humanities research and its competitive grants leverage significant additional funding from state, foundation and philanthropic sources. For additional information, please contact Carolyn Henrich at Carolyn.Henrich@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6308.

UC Student Advocacy

UC Student Association

Leaders from the UC Student Association (UCSA) were in Washington, DC from Feb. 29 to March 3. The delegation advocated on student issues related to access and affordability, and also focused on their current advocacy campaigns:

- "UConsent," which was developed in response to national public health concerns of sexual violence and sexual assault; and,
- "#HowAreYou," which calls for increased access to mental health counseling on campuses, more staff diversity among student mental health counselors to reflect the experiences of the student body and enhanced outreach about the availability of services for student well-being.

National Association of Graduate and Professional Students

The National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (NAGPS) convened its Legislative Action Days in Washington, DC from March 11 to March 15. The delegation included UC students from the Davis and San Diego campuses. NAGPS focused its congressional advocacy on:

- Graduate student loan debt and ways to make graduate loans more affordable;
- Ensuring “open access” to research that has been funded with taxpayer dollars;
- Federal funding for graduate student aid and graduate student research; and,
- Student visa reforms to help international students who come to the U.S. to study.

US Student Association

The US Student Association (USSA), the country’s oldest and largest student-led organization, held its annual national legislative conference (LegCon) from March 18 to March 21 in Washington, DC. USSA leaders announced that LegCon will now be known as the “National Student Power Summit” to more accurately reflect the recent resurgence of students organizing around the country, and to better describe the event, which, in addition to advocacy, includes workshops on student issues and organizing skill-building.

Nearly half of USSA’s Board of Directors are UC students. At the USSA awards dinner, which is part of the conference, UC Santa Barbara’s affiliate won the award for “USSA Chapter of the Year,” and several other UC students were recognized for their advocacy and organizing efforts.

For additional information about any of the UC student advocacy activities, please contact Carolyn Henrich at Carolyn.Henrich@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6308.

Fusion Energy Advocacy Day

On March 3, UC researchers and California companies’ representatives joined 50 colleagues from around the country for the annual Fusion Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill. Representatives from research teams at UC Irvine, the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory visited two dozen California congressional offices to discuss fusion energy research and plasma science, as well as fusion technology’s role in national security and its many spinoff applications. California interests were well-represented among the 17 academic institutions, national laboratories and industrial partners that took part in the advocacy day; aerospace and defense contractor General Atomics and the engineering firm Tri Alpha Energy joined UC researchers, demonstrating the leading role California plays in fusion energy research and related engineering and manufacturing fields. For additional information, please contact Chris Carter at Chris.Carter@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6310.

Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Advocacy Day and Congressional Briefing

In early March, a large contingent of UC agricultural research, extension and education experts, along with California industry representatives, met with nearly three dozen California congressional offices to communicate the importance of federal agricultural research programs to UC and the California economy. The meetings were conducted in conjunction with the annual Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Advocacy Day (CARET) conference. The UC delegation included UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) division leaders and research and extension personnel, the UC Berkeley and UC Riverside agricultural deans and CARET industry representatives from the cattle, timber, wine, cut flower and asparagus industries in California. On the final day, UC also held a “UC ANR 101” congressional briefing for staff during which talks were given by several members of the UC CARET delegation. For additional information, please contact Marjorie Duske at Marjorie.Duske@ucdc.edu or 202-974-6306.

Federal Update

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