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UCSA Responds to Governor Brown's May Revision State Budget
*Governor Provides Two Years of Tuition Relief for In-State Undergraduates
If UC Adopts Pension Reforms*

SACRAMENTO, CA - Today, Governor Brown released his May Revision to the proposed 2015-16 California State Budget and reiterated his fiscal vision for the state and the University of California (UC). Brown is moving forward with the Multi-Year Stable Funding Plan while increasing the University of California base budget by an additional 4%, or \$119M over the 2014-15 Budget with an agreement that tuition remain flat. In-state undergraduates will see no increase in their tuition until 2017-18.

This freeze is contingent upon the UC Regents capping its pension ceiling at \$117,020 (down from \$265,000) for certain new employees and adopting changes passed under the Public Employees Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), in exchange for \$436M over 3 years to pay down the UC's considerable pension debt. The Regents must take action to reverse their tuition plan and adopt changes passed under the PEPRA. Out of state and graduate students will see no reprieve from the UC's tuition increase plan, and under an agreement reached with President Napolitano, the Governor's budget does not challenge the annual 5% increase in student service fees for all students.

Financial aid proposals also saw adjustments in the Governor's May Revision, including a reduction of \$18M to the Middle Class Scholarship Act (MCSA). UC students have continually advocated for an increased implementation of the MCSA to provide immediate relief to students who do not qualify for traditional financial aid packages. In addition, students have long sought significant increases in the Cal Grant Programs and support the modest \$1.9M increase to the Cal Grant B Access Award Supplement.

In January 2015, the UC President and Governor launched the Select Advisory Committee on the Cost Structure of the University, better known as the Committee of Two, charged to "...develop and evaluate proposals to reduce the university's cost structure, while improving access, quality, and outcomes." In response, UC students have united under the banner of the Committee of 240,000, and repeatedly called for a more democratic, transparent, and inclusive process from the University. Students provided testimony in Sacramento and feedback to the Governor's Office on a number of proposals, all of which focus on more fiscal accountability from the UC and a genuine reinvestment in higher education by the State. Students are pleased that progress for an increased budget allocation, but there are significant issues that remain regarding long-term solutions to keep the UC affordable and accessible for all students.

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“Today’s announcement contains promising news for California UC undergraduates,” said UCSA President Jefferson Kuoch-Seng. “However, students will continue our direct advocacy in Sacramento and build broad support across California within and beyond our campuses. We expect that tuition will continue to be volatile with varying policies for different students, and future increases tied to inflation when this freeze expires. We call on the University to commit to inclusion of students in the consultative process as outlined in AB 970. We also ask that the Legislature look for a predictable, long-term funding solution for higher education that will directly benefit all UC students.”

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About the University of California Student Association

The University of California Student Association is the official voice of over 240,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from the eleven UC campuses. It is our mission to advocate on behalf of current and future students for the accessibility, affordability, and quality of the University of California system.

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