

UC Regents' Committee on Compliance and Audit

Talking Points 10/28/2009

Good afternoon Mr. Chair, committee members. My name is Derrick Wortes and I'm here representing AFSCME 3299.

AFSCME is joining the Faculty Associations in requesting that this committee initiate an audit on the use of student fees.

I've read the reports prepared by Prof. Meister and he's pulled together a very compelling framework that, we believe, warrants further detailed investigation.

This is an issue that raises alarm, particularly among UC's students as awareness on the issue spreads and as we head towards November 19th, when many of you will be voting on whether or not to increase student fees by an additional third. Students absolutely have a right to know where their money is going, and this needs to be addressed before any additional fee increases are entertained.

And, I'll tell you why AFSCME workers are concerned here:

1. We want to see the University do well. AFSCME members don't just work for a paycheck, we work to help build this institution. And frankly, we don't want to see another weeping sore on UC like the compensation issue of '05/'06. We want to see the University handle its business in the best and most straightforward way possible.
2. AFSCME members have children that attend UC schools. Many others want their children to attend a UC. For them, any raise in fees that proves unnecessary is not only troubling on ethical grounds, in essence it amounts to another reduction, another way UC is reaching into their pockets and taking money out.

So, once again I request that you adopt the recommendations of CUCFA as expressed by Prof. Meister. Order an audit on the use of student fees, straighten the issue out, and vote down the proposed student fee increases until you and UC's constituents are able to review the information that comes out of such an audit. This is one of a number of steps necessary towards achieving the level of transparency needed to cultivate greater public support of the University.

Finally, I want to remind the Regents present that AFSCME is continuing to reach out to this administration to discuss transparency and budget issues, and if you haven't had the opportunity to respond to our meeting requests, please consider replying in the very near future as the request has been outstanding for three months, and we're looking forward to sitting down with you for a productive discussion.

Thank you