



REPRESENTING THE
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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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January 29, 2025

Dear President Drake and UC Chancellors,

This week's memorandum from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regarding the suspension of federal funding and grant programs has many UC-AFT members anxious and looking for answers. These cuts could prove devastating to the entire UC community, including the teaching faculty and librarians who work most directly with students. Campus budgets rely on the "soft money" of federal grants, and the suspension of federal funding and grants threatens our jobs. President Drake, your message yesterday acknowledges the unknowns, and indicates that UC leadership is taking steps to "evaluat[e] what actions we are able to take." While legalities and politics create chaos, we call on you to take clear and decisive action in the face of this dire situation.

The funding freeze comes at an already anxious time for our students, colleagues, and our union members. President Trump's threats of mass deportation and ending birthright citizenship are having devastating impacts on the campus community. Attacks on the rights of trans people have already created division and caused great harm. Given that this administration has declared war on DEI, international aid, and climate research and instruction—principles UC purports to uphold—we call on you to push back in defense of our university and stand up for academic freedom and a safe workplace.

The University of California is the third largest employer in the state and the engine of California's economy. Our research is vital to both private and public sector innovation, the basis for advancements in public health, biochemistry, transportation, communications, linguistics, and the humanities. As educators, we are responsible for training California's workforce and inspiring the young people who will build the future of our state. None of that is possible in the current environment of uncertainty. We need to hear from you now that the university will protect us as workers and as citizens.

We [have already asked you](#) to implement a strong and enforceable sanctuary policy for our campuses. We now call on you to do the same to address funding freezes. Specially we ask that you:

- Provide assurance that the UC will defend the academic freedom of workers and students and the integrity of the university's research mission from partisan attacks;
- Re-assert your commitment to the peer review processes and academic expertise;
- Reassure us that we will continue to be paid and that UC will not use the freezing of federal grants as a "budgetary emergency" to impose austerity measures such as cutting classes or slow lecturer reappointments.

It is more important now than ever that UC leadership fight back against attacks on our students, employees, and overall university integrity.

Signed,
UC-AFT's Executive Board