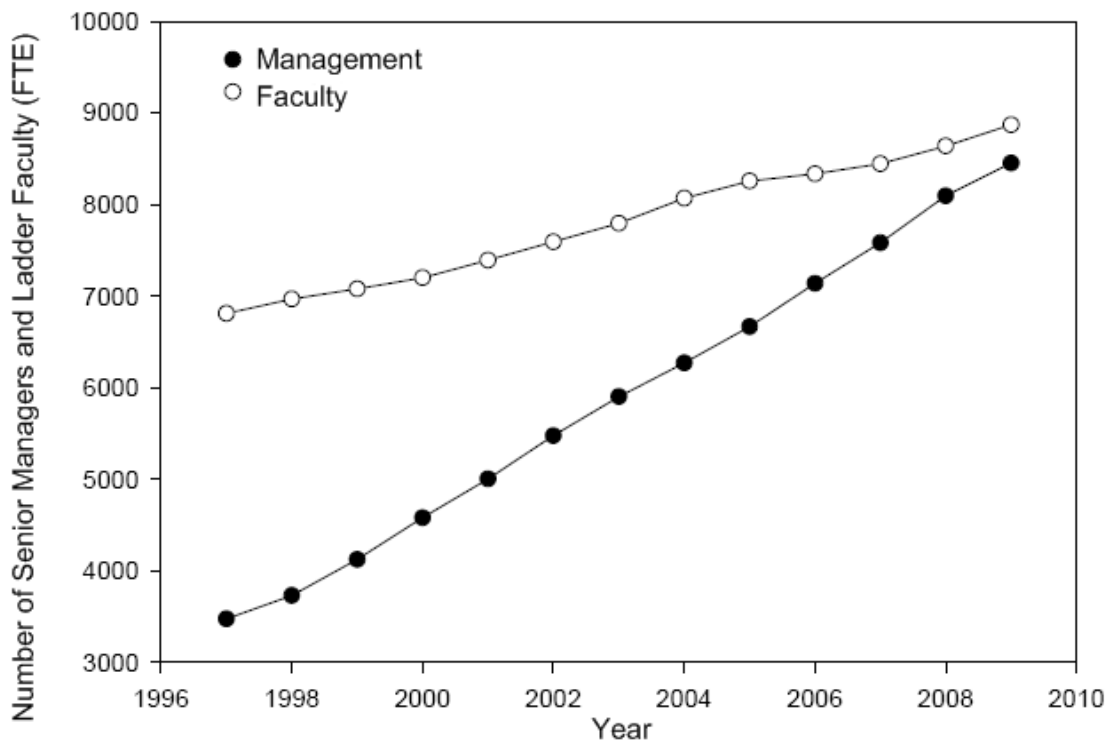


## Soon every faculty member will have a personal senior manager: Is this a good way to spend money?

by Richard Evans

In a letter to the UC Davis community, Chancellor Katehi and Provost Lavernia declared that we should work collectively "to address today's major budget cuts, which come as a consequence of the state's decade-long disinvestment in higher education." I think there is a more immediate target for constructive change that would balance the UC budget.

It's true that UC's share of the state's general fund has been declining (from 7.5 percent in 1967-68 to as low as 3 percent in recent years, according to the California Postsecondary Education Commission<sup>1</sup>), but that has been a steady trend. The more immediate reason for the current enormous increases in student fees, and for the sudden need for employee furloughs, is the startling recent growth of UC's senior management. Data available from the UC Office of the President shows that there were 2.5 faculty members for each senior manager in the UC system in 1993. Now there are as many senior managers as faculty.<sup>2</sup> Just think: Each professor could have his or her personal senior manager.



In the decade beginning in 1997, while faculty increased by 24 percent and student enrollment increased 39 percent, senior management grew by 118 percent. This past year, with the budget crisis in full swing, senior management has grown at twice the rate of

<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/completereports/2008reports/FiscalProfiles2008.asp>

<sup>2</sup> Source: <http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/uwnews/stat/>

faculty. That comes at a high price, because many managers are very well compensated for their work. A report on administrative growth by the UCLA Faculty Association<sup>3</sup> estimated that UC would have \$800 million more each year if senior management had grown at the same rate as the rest of the university since 1997, instead of four times faster.

What could we do with \$800 million? That is the total amount of the state funding cuts for 2008-09 and 2009-10, and four times the savings of the employee furloughs.<sup>4</sup> Consider this: UC revenue from student fees has tripled in the last eight years. The ratio of state general fund revenue to student fee revenue in 1997 was 3.6:1. Last year it was 1.9:1. If we used that \$800 million to reduce student fees, the ratio would go back to the 1997 value.<sup>5</sup> To put another way, it could pay the educational fees for about 100,000 resident undergraduates.

Of course the budget crisis is more complex than this. Of course we must try to convince the state government and the public of the wisdom of investment in our university system. But changing attitudes about public investment is a large task that involves far more than just UC. I'm not sure that those who are reluctant to increase UC support will be swayed by arguments presented by a UC president whose 2008 compensation was \$828,000. Or by a new UC Davis chancellor whose salary (27 percent greater than that of her predecessor) equals that of the US president.

Our effort to solve the budget problems has a greater chance for success if we first aim at something we have direct control over. UC has shared governance (in theory), and does its own hiring. I suggest that we -- administrators, faculty, staff and students -- review the justification, costs, and benefits related to the explosive growth in senior management. If we could reduce management costs by \$800 million, we could eliminate much of the financial hardship on students and staff. We could argue convincingly to the governor and state legislature that a well-run UC deserves full support. Perhaps most impressive, we could present a model for turning back a nationwide trend in university hiring.

---

<sup>3</sup> Source: [http://www.uclafaculty.org/FASite/Admin.\\_Growth.html](http://www.uclafaculty.org/FASite/Admin._Growth.html)

<sup>4</sup> Source: [http://www.dateline.ucdavis.edu/dl\\_detail.lasso?id=11822](http://www.dateline.ucdavis.edu/dl_detail.lasso?id=11822)

<sup>5</sup> Source: <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/FiscalData/FundingOptions.asp>