We urge our colleagues to vote in favor of the diversity requirement for students in the College of Letters and Science. First, it is good for our students’ education and careers. We live in a globalizing world, a defining characteristic of which is that diverse populations encounter one another in increasingly unexpected ways: We see this in the changing nature of our student body. Our students’ ability to navigate society and prosper in their careers will depend on their capacity to negotiate this diversity. Second, as documented in the Moreno Report, UCLA has a poor track record in practicing diversity. The UCLA community remains plagued by discrimination: Some 4,000 of our members have personally experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and/or hostile conduct related to race, gender or sexual orientation, most recently, very publicly, with the anti-Jewish statements surrounding the recent election to the Undergraduate Students Association Council. California state officials are holding UCLA accountable for its failures in the area of diversity, and now the global readership of the front page of the New York Times are aware of our shortcomings in this regard. Third, almost two thirds of UCLA students want such a requirement—sensing its importance for their education and for the campus climate. Fourth, diversity works: In our own 35 years in the US academy, we have seen again and again how a more diverse student body is a wiser one, when people are willing to engage and learn across difference: Diversity does indeed breed excellence. Fifth, UCLA, a leader in so many ways, is an embarrassing laggard in diversity education, both in the UC system and nationwide. Finally, using an ancient, unrevised and arcane sentence in the university bylaws to potentially reverse the careful and deliberative due process of university governance in an unprecedented way sends the wrong message: That entrenched opponents of diversity are willing to go to any length to prevent it.

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