Dear Neal Garrett, Secretary of the Academic Assembly

Please find my statement of support of the college diversity requirement below. I would appreciate it being posted to the Senate website.

Thank you,
Todd Presner

I am writing in support of the diversity requirement at UCLA and to urge my colleagues at UCLA to vote in favor of the requirement. As members of the faculty at one of the leading public universities in the world, we have an obligation to educate students to become responsible, globally-oriented citizens in the 21st century, who are able to think and act in ways that are historically informed, culturally competent, linguistically fluent, and socially aware. Diversity is the absolute core of the educational process precisely because it provides the knowledge of histories, cultures, languages, and societies -- knowledge, which, in turn, enables students to compare, relate, understand, and communicate with one another. If we believe in the possibilities of creating a better, more tolerant, and more democratic world, we must also believe in the value and centrality of diversity in that enterprise. At a time when the climate on college campuses nationwide has taken a disturbing turn toward intolerance and even hatred, we must redouble our investment in the educational process and exercise leadership to influence public discourse on all matters concerning diversity. Voting 'yes' on the diversity requirement is not just a matter of principle but also a matter of justice. It is an investment in building a future world that is more democratic, more tolerant, and more just. We must help our students build this world-to-come by educating them in diversity. Please join me in voting yes for the diversity requirement.

Todd Samuel Presner
Sady and Ludwig Kahn Director, Center for Jewish Studies
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