Executive Summary of Con Arguments (Opposing the Diversity Requirement)

1. The required courses would not necessarily expose students to the perspectives of others – most students could fulfill the DR by taking a course that focuses on their own identity group.

2. The research purportedly showing the benefits of a DR is unconvincing. The cited studies lack the controls required to demonstrate that mandatory diversity courses cause improvements in students’ attitudes about intergroup relations.

3. The general goal of the DR is to instill certain beliefs and values in students, so it is unsurprising that some of the DR courses reflect an ideological position. Many opponents of the DR believe that students should have the option to steer clear of politicized courses.

4. The implementation of the DR has not been carefully planned. It is still very doubtful whether enough enrollment slots in DR-approved courses will be available to meet demand starting this Fall.

5. Although, in principle, the DR could be fulfilled by courses that satisfy major or GE requirements, for most students the DR will in fact constitute an additional course requirement on top of all their other currently required courses.

6. The University’s budget is a zero-sum process. The projected requirement of teaching DR courses to 16,000 students every year will require substantial resources, and these will necessarily be drawn from other parts of UCLA.

7. We need to focus on the actual results of the DR, not its symbolism.
Con Ballot Argument
(Opposing the Diversity Requirement)

There has been inadequate planning to manage the major new burden the Diversity Requirement would impose on students already struggling to graduate. There is longstanding concern that the Diversity Requirement-approved courses will fail to provide enough capacity to meet the realistic projections of student demand (10,000 spaces in 2015-6; 16,000/year starting in 2017-8). This concern was heightened yesterday, when we finally learned which 57 courses were approved for the Diversity Requirement by the ad hoc Diversity Committee. These include 14 which are not stand-alone courses (since they have pre-requisites or are supposed to be taken within a multi-course series). Three-quarters of the 57 courses do not carry GE credit. This means that the great majority of students will not satisfy Diversity simultaneously with a GE requirement. For most students, the Diversity Requirement will require them to take an additional course (or courses) on top of all their GE and major Requirements, contrary to previous claims.

Since 39 of these Diversity Courses are in the Upper Division, few of their enrollment slots will be available to freshmen before their 3rd year. With only the currently approved Lower Division classes, the Diversity Deficit (the difference between the number of new undergraduates entering UCLA and the number of undergraduates completing their Diversity Requirement) will be about 2500 students in the first year.

That is a huge gap to fill. The proponents pin their hopes on the remaining 88 courses under consideration by the ad hoc Committee. But these also include courses with prerequisites, and 70% of them are Upper Division, while only 19 would also satisfy a GE requirement. Most of these were classified as “Category II” by the Implementation Committee (which included some members now on the ad hoc Committee), because they could not determine whether or not they would satisfy the Diversity Requirement. Indeed, based on the submitted syllabi, many of the large GE and Lower Division courses (e.g. “Introduction to Archaeology”; “Natural Disasters”) do not appear to satisfy the plain language of the Diversity Requirement criteria. But even if the Committee were to ignore its own rules and decide that almost ‘anything goes’, the total Lower Division capacity of all of these possible Diversity courses would still fall far short of the required 10,000 spaces per year. Thus the Diversity Deficit from 2015-6 will continue to mount in the second year. In 2017, the added problem will be for the 3000 arriving transfer students. They will have completed their distribution requirements except for Diversity, and will be heavily focused on completing their majors in a short time. The problem is particularly acute for students in the Sciences, who have room for very few electives after satisfying all their current requirements. Examination of transcripts of graduating transfer students in the Physical Sciences revealed that only 16% of them had taken any of the 145 possible Diversity courses. Full information on the

Spending a million dollars on Diversity courses will not sustain them permanently. The budget is a zero-sum process. What would instead be required is an **immediate and permanent faculty mobilization to transfer a substantial fraction of current teaching and Departmental resources** into Diversity, and **out of** non-Diversity courses.

In all the discussion, **we will not be hearing anything from the largest, most vulnerable group, those with the most at stake**; the future students who will enroll at UCLA are not here yet. Many of them would *voluntarily* take a Diversity course. However, **requiring students to do what they were going to choose freely on their own accomplishes nothing beyond symbolism.** In some ways it could even be counter-productive.

The debate is largely about our future students who might prefer to choose different electives. Without the new Requirement, they might wish, for example to study Economics, a foreign language, or the culture and history of a distant, or ancient civilization, even though such a course would not “substantially address conditions, experiences, perspectives, and/or representations of at least two groups”. Course selection is also a zero-sum process, and the Requirement advocates are not willing to permit these other (non-“Diversity”) choices. They are absolutely certain that they know better than these students. We claim that we may *not* know better.