MEMO

Date    March 9, 2015
From    Lily Chen-Hafteck, Acting Chair, Faculty Executive Committee
         School of the Arts and Architecture
To      Neal Garrett, Secretary of the Division
RE:    College of Letters and Science Diversity Course

On behalf of the Faculty Executive Committee of the School of the Arts and Architecture, I write to express our support of the proposed College of Letters and Science undergraduate diversity course requirement, which amends Divisional Regulation A-458.

As we enter the new millennium, UCLA and our graduates face new challenges. These challenges cannot be met by technology alone. It is important that we understand we are entering into a new and rich global society. This new international arena has far-reaching challenges and great opportunities for the future. Our students and future leaders will be asked to contribute and interact in a new and emerging society in ways yet to be imagined.

Our students should have a clearer and better understanding of how to operate in this new milieu. Having a more informed and clearer understanding of issues that relate to diversity and inclusivity can only heighten our human relationships and facilitate open dialogue between different groups and peoples. Such exchanges foster mutual understanding and stronger collaboration—they are good for everyone and hurt no one. While the UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture has successfully implemented its own diversity requirement, it is indefensible that UCLA and UC Merced are the only UCs not to have a diversity requirement campus-wide. Integrating a diversity requirement in the UCLA College of Letters and Science will be a strong move towards aligning our academic priorities with those of other UCs.

After extensive review and deliberation, the diversity course requirement at the College level has received the approval and the support of students, faculty, and the administration. In 2014, UCLA’s College Faculty Executive Committee, Undergraduate Council, and the Legislative Assembly all voted unanimously in favor of the requirement. It was scheduled for implementation in Fall 2015 for incoming freshmen and in Fall 2017 for transfer students. We are concerned that by submitting the Diversity requirement to an Academic Senate-wide vote, the autonomy of the College of Letters and Science to determine its own curriculum has been undermined.

This unprecedented vote on the diversity requirement is now scheduled to be held from March 30th to April 10th, 2015.

We request that this letter be distributed to the Academic Senate membership and we urge the members to vote in favor of the undergraduate diversity requirement. We strongly believe that this course requirement is foundational to the future quality of our undergraduate curriculum.