



Web Chat with President Dynes

In his first week in office, UC President Robert C. Dynes held an hour-long web chat with UC alumni from around the state. The following is a transcript of questions and answers from this October 8th chat. President Dynes will be answering questions from faculty, staff and students during two other chat sessions. The faculty/staff chat will take place at 10 a.m. on Oct. 14, and the chat with students is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Oct. 15.

For more information about UC alumni events, programs and services, please visit the UC “alumni and friends” web page at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/alumni/welcome.html> and the Alumni Associations of the University of California at <http://www.ucalumni.net/>. You can also contact James Stofan, alumni affairs director at the UC Office of the President, at james.stofan@ucop.edu with questions and comments about alumni issues.

For more information about President Dynes and future events, please visit the president’s web page at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/president/welcome.html>.

Alumni Chat **October 8, 2003 4:30-5:30 pm**

Moderator Welcome! UC President Robert C. Dynes will be answering questions from alumni today. He will be joining us at 4:30 p.m., and he will answer as many questions as possible during the scheduled hour. We hope you enjoy the session.

BOB DYNES President Dynes has just joined us – thank you for spending an hour with us today...

<Q> It’s my pleasure. It’s a terrific way to approach the end of the day.

<Q> What impact will the election of our new governor have on UC in the coming months?

BOB DYNES That’s a question on everybody’s mind, including mine. I have just signed off on a letter of congratulations to the governor-elect, offering the resources of the University to aid him in this transition. I look forward to meeting with him. Governor Davis has been a terrific friend of the University, and I look forward to a similarly constructive relationship with Gov. Schwarzenegger.

<Q> What do you see as the university’s role in creating new jobs and new business opportunities for California?

BOB DYNES The University has been the engine that has created the high-tech and world-competitive economy in California. I see an even more accelerated relationship with the established and new economies that California can create. We’ll do this by generating new ideas, new products, and the

workforce to deliver those.

<Q> How best can alumni help with UC advocacy efforts in these trying budget times?

BOB DYNES I have been in conversation with alumni regents and the leaders of the alumni associations, and they have assured me that the alumni are ready and willing to help the University and the state in these difficult times. Alumni are among the most trusted communicators about UC's contributions to California – and the most passionate. At some point, I will need your help, and I will ask for that through the alumni associations. Stay tuned.

<Q> First of all, Congratulations President Dynes

BOB DYNES Thank you. It's been a busy week! But I'm excited to be here.

<Q> How do you feel the new governor will influence your goals for the University?

BOB DYNES My goals haven't changed: To preserve and improve the quality of the University and meet our commitment to create new knowledge, transmit that through education to the people of California, and be the university of choice for students of all backgrounds in California. In his press conference today, the governor-elect reiterated his commitment to fixing California's economy, and I believe the University of California can play a crucial role in helping him do that.

<Q> What do you see as UC's major contributions to improving health care in California? Will UC be able to keep up its medical centers and health research in the wake of the state's budget crisis?

BOB DYNES The University of California has the ability to translate inventions from the bench to the quality of health care at the bedside. We can focus on accelerating the transition from new discoveries to serving the health needs of the people of California.

<Q> Hi President Dynes... just wondering if you're ready to run the 5K at the end of the month at UCSD?

BOB DYNES I ran four miles this morning in the Berkeley hills, and I am tapering my training, aiming for October 24th. I'm as ready as I'll ever be. Are YOU ready?

<Q> Thank you for agreeing to be our new president and first of what we hope will be many meetings with alumni.

BOB DYNES Thank you, and thank you for your leadership of the alumni associations. I can guarantee this will not be the last, but rather the first of many conversations with alumni.

<Q> Will UC Merced actually open in 2005?

BOB DYNES We have hired and are continuing to hire faculty, and there are students attending the local community colleges who will then transfer to UC Merced, so in some sense we already are serving students. I look forward to continued support from the Legislature so that UC Merced can grow to meet the future of the Valley and the state.

<Q> President Dynes, How can UC utilize alumni in ways other than as a fund-raising source? How can we motivate alums to support the University and participate in various programs?

BOB DYNES Thanks for the question. It is my belief that the citizens of California do not all recognize the broad contributions that UC makes to the quality of life in California. I hope over the next few years that you will help me educate the state of California – tell your friends and family about UC, participate in alumni programs in your area, contact your legislators to tell them how important it is to invest in the future of California via the University of California.

<Q> I was the first person in my family to attend and graduate from a 4-year university (UCSD, 1986, Applied Math.). I barely made it financially. Having recently returned to San Diego I reviewed the costs and see that they have risen dramatically. Were I a student now, I would not be able to attend. Are you taking any steps to reduce the costs of the education so that lower working class students can pursue an education without taking out loans or groping for scholarships? It seems that a UC education has been limited to the children of the wealthy and that the working class "stiff" has been left out.

BOB DYNES First, congratulations – it’s good to hear from UCSD alumni. Let me say that the University of California has the best financial aid program of any public university in the country, and that has been very important as fees have increased. For example, low-income students (from families making less than \$60,000 a year) were not impacted by the recent fee increase. We fully intend to continue protecting the ability for everybody to attend.

<Q> President Dynes: I am a Berkeley graduate living in San Diego and am active in the local UC Berkeley Alumni Society Chapter and the UC Berkeley Engineering Alumni Society Chapter. Our groups have been helping freshman applicants to UC and orienting some applicants who have been accepted. There are a number of issues that are troubling applicants and their parents. One major concern is the “rumors” that some UC and [California] State University System campuses will not accept any freshmen next fall. So far, these rumors are directed at UCSB [UC Santa Barbara] and SDSU [San Diego State University]. This would be a terrible blow to many Southern California freshmen if true, which is very hard to believe. Almost everyone expects that the number of freshmen admitted next fall will reduce. We have recently seen previously accepted students turned away from local community colleges. Given the rapid approach of the application deadline, we could use some guidance on what will be happening next fall.

BOB DYNES We intend to do everything we can to meet the [California] Master Plan [for Higher Education] commitments. Our budget discussions with the new governor will influence that, but I am very hopeful that we can continue to offer UC admission to the top 12.5 percent of the high school graduating class.

<Q> Is Bakersfield on your travel agenda?

BOB DYNES Absolutely. I'll be there in the next few months. Stay tuned for more details

as to when, but the southern Valley is very important to us.

<Q> Do you anticipate more budget cuts in the upcoming months?

BOB DYNES We're going to do our best to avoid further cuts. We will do our best to educate people about the value of investing in the University and the young people of the state of California. Let's hope I can make that case. If cuts do come, we will try to absorb them in ways that minimize the impact on the accessibility and quality of the educational program.

<Q> President Dynes, what's the best thing about being president so far?

BOB DYNES I've really enjoyed meeting some remarkable people throughout the state. This is a great platform from which I can view the incredible impact that UC has had on the state and the nation.

<Q> What do you plan to do to ensure that the UC maintains its managerial role in the national laboratories?

BOB DYNES Thanks for the question. We are very active in a variety of ways, but most importantly, our focus is on improving our business practices as we maintain and enhance the quality of our science and technology. We also are close to identifying a vice president for lab management who will work on the relationship between the laboratories, UC and the DOE [Department of Energy]. We are proceeding assuming that we will compete the contract for LANL [Los Alamos National Laboratory], and we are talking with potential partners who will help strengthen our operations. The decision for competition will not be made, of course, until the DOE releases the conditions of the contract, which should be late fall 2004.

<Q> Will you and your wife continue research and/or teaching in the physics department...?

BOB DYNES Frances (my wife) lectured at UCSD today and is probably right now in her lab. Less than an hour ago, I had an email exchange with my graduate students in my laboratory, and I will be working with them this Saturday in my laboratory in San Diego. I must say this job is very consuming, but I will never stop being a physicist.

<Q> President Dynes, once you get settled in, what do you expect will be the top few things that will occupy most of your day-to-day time?

BOB DYNES Over the next several months I plan to be traveling around the state and listening to people in the UC community and, more broadly, people in California's communities. The issues most on people's minds are the economy and access to our university, and I will be focusing on those issues.

<Q> I'm concerned that your new admissions policy will reduce UC quality and cheapen the value of my degree.

BOB DYNES If you're referring to comprehensive review – the process by which we evaluate students' whole records in addition to their grades – the evidence to date suggests that the quality of students admitted to UC campuses is rising. Your degree is actually increasing in value! But this is a serious question – we do continue to monitor our admissions processes, and we will make adjustments as necessary.

<Q> President Dynes, the budget issues of the last year or so, there seems to have

been a lot of contention among California's institutions of higher education. How can UC, CSU [California State University], and the Community Colleges work together more effectively to lobby for a total higher ed budget commitment that makes sense for all?

BOB DYNES One of the first things I did on my first day in office was to call CSU Chancellor Charlie Reed and Community Colleges Chancellor Tom Nussbaum. Intersegmental cooperation is critical as we move forward, especially in these difficult times, and hopefully the economy will be a vehicle for more creative ideas as to how we interact. On December 1st, we are sponsoring a public forum on the budget at UCLA, and both of these colleagues will attend. That is just one of many collaborations I am anticipating.

<Q> I am a UC alum from a UC campus that doesn't have a football team. What are your goals for increasing the academic reputations of the UC campuses that aren't as well known?

BOB DYNES I might disagree with the premise of your question, because I believe the academic reputations of all our campuses are well established. For example, six of the campuses are AAU universities – that is six out of 61 in the U.S. and Canada! No other state public university has more than one. Each campus has programs that are world leaders – pillars of excellence throughout the UC system.

<Q> I would like to know how President Dynes views the UC role in K-12 public education.

BOB DYNES The state of California has the top public university in the world and must have the top K-12 system to meet the needs of the state. We need to be involved in that effort; otherwise, there's a disconnect. We must be working with our partners in higher education to open up all avenues for young people in K-12 to achieve their potential.

<Q> I feel that my UC education has done much to make me competitive in the job market, but during these tough economic times – do you have any advice for recent graduates looking for jobs?

BOB DYNES For one, I would suggest networking with alumni. The alumni associations are there to help you make contact. Use your affiliation with UC to open doors. Don't sell yourself short!

<Q> How do you expect Cal-IT2 [California Institute of Telecommunications and Information Technology, one of four new California Institutes for Science and Innovation] to affect the California economy? Will it cause an acceleration in innovation? What support role will you play as president?

BOB DYNES How will it affect the economy? Let me count the ways! I believe Cal-IT2 and the other institutes will result in new ideas that are undreamed of and will continue to propel California as the world leader in so many innovative fields. These new ideas create new jobs and even new industries for California's future economic growth and for our graduates.

I think we're out of time, but let me thank everyone for participating in this web chat. It will be not be our last opportunity to talk. As I visit your

community in the coming months, please come and say hello. There will be events specifically for alumni as I travel around the state. I will be seeing you soon. Bob.