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*Chair of the Assembly and the Academic Council
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May 4, 2012

**PRESIDENT YUDOF
VICE PRESIDENT BECKWITH
SENATE DIVISION CHAIRS**

Re: Statement in support of faculty harassed by opponents of their research

Dear colleagues:

I enclose a “Statement in Support of Faculty Harassed by Opponents of their Research,” proposed by the University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAF) and endorsed by the Academic Council at its meeting on April 25. Council urges support for academic freedom and for our colleagues to pursue their research free from harassment, and condemns acts of violence and intimidation directed against them. This statement, which can be used as a model for letters to the editor and other public statements, also serves to educate the public and policy-makers about the importance of controversial research in advancing science and the public good. Please feel free to distribute this statement widely.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Anderson, Chair
Academic Council

Cc: Academic Council
Executive Director Winnacker

Encl.

A STATEMENT OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL
IN SUPPORT OF FACULTY HARRASSED BY OPPONENTS OF THEIR RESEARCH
April 30, 2012

Universities in this country have three prominent missions: teaching, research and service to the broader community. Research is a critical component of the mission of academic institutions because it is the source of new knowledge that underlies progress in all human endeavors. University-sponsored research has made remarkable contributions to society. Unfortunately, the number of threats to research endeavors at universities is growing rapidly. Among these threats, our primary concern is the ongoing use of harassment, intimidation and violent attacks mounted by individuals opposed to certain types of research on college campuses. Recent attacks have targeted scholars engaged in research on Middle Eastern politics, as well as those who use vertebrate animal subjects. At UCLA alone, at least 13 acts of violence since June 2006 have targeted individuals who do research involving animals, including a car bombing at a researcher's home in March 2012. Illegal acts of violence and abusive behavior are a threat to the research mission of universities and are to be condemned harshly. They also represent an infringement of academic freedom, which is the principle that underlies the pursuit of new knowledge at modern universities. We strongly support the rights of our colleagues and other university researchers to engage in scholarly research in a safe and open environment, and we condemn the use of violence and other forms of intimidation that erode our shared values.