



Draft Revisions to the UC Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations and Students

The Policy Revision Process

The University of California has policies in place to guide the activities of student government and other student organizations, including how they spend the University funds they receive. These funds include fees the University collects from all students for the support of student government. Student government, as an official UC unit, operates under the same restrictions on using University funds and resources as other University divisions.

UC's "Policy on Student Governments" has not been revised since 1994. UC began a process to revise and update its policies in this and other student-related areas four years ago. UC has already revised the student conduct and privacy policies and is now revising the Policy on Student Governments, along with other related policies.

As an important part of this process, UC routinely circulates any proposed revisions to its current policies to the campuses in order to receive comment from all affected campus communities, including from student leaders. After receiving input from the campuses on an original draft revision of the current Policy on Student Governments in February 2003, UC released a second draft of the proposed revisions for another round of comment in early February 2004.

What the Draft Revisions to the Policy on Student Governments Say

- Current policy prohibits the expenditure of University funds by student government in support of political positions, with the exception of lobbying government officials. In contrast to current policy, the proposed revisions expand the right of student government to engage in public policy activities using University funds in all student-related areas, consistent with the educational benefit that such activities provide to students.
- However, the right of student government to expend University funds for these purposes is not without legal limits. California law restricts the usage of University funds and resources in certain circumstances, and makes very clear that a public agency (including all of its sub-units) may not expend public funds to promote a partisan position in a State election campaign.
- As a consequence, UC, including its official units such as student government, may not use University resources to support or oppose a particular candidate or ballot proposition in a non-university political campaign. This restriction applies to the entire UC system and relates specifically to the use of University funds and other resources. This is a part of State law and did not originate with UC policy.
- UC has long-standing legal guidelines, "UC Participating in Ballot Campaigns," which are specifically referenced in the draft of the proposed revisions to the Policy on Student Governments. The draft revisions merely summarize these existing legal constraints in an effort to provide further clarification and guidance to student governments.

What Happens Next

The policy review process is ongoing and UC is coordinating with campus communities, including student leaders, to get their input. UC wants to have a thorough review process before finalizing the revised policies. Current UC policy remains in place until the proposed revisions are finalized and issued to the campuses. UC expects to have final policies in place for the 2004-05 school year.

The current UC Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students can be found at:
<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/ucpolicies/aos/toc.html>