

This document has been prepared by the [Council of UC Staff Assemblies \(CUCSA\)](#) as a tool for any policy covered staff member who may want to give public comment at any UC Regents Meeting. These general guidelines have been informed over years of public comment efforts made by CUCSA, and the feedback CUCSA members have gotten from Regents and other leaders from UCOP. **If you are an active CUCSA Delegate - check with the current executive board about how to align your comments with CUCSA initiatives.**

Basic principles

- Public comment affords **anyone** the opportunity to speak directly to the Regents (and anyone in attendance at the Regent's Meeting - chancellors, chiefs of staff, etc.).
 - While anyone can sign up to speak, there are often more signups than time available. Speakers are chosen randomly, and you won't know if you will speak until you get called on (or not).
 - Each person selected to speak has 60 seconds to deliver their remarks.
 - Regents will not respond to remarks in the moment - do not expect them to engage in back and forth on a topic.
 - If you are calling in, assume the audio will work as expected - do not waste your precious seconds asking "can you hear me?" - they will tell you if something is not working as expected.
 - All business at the Regent's Meetings are recorded in the minutes - including your name and the summary of your comment. If follow up is warranted, the right folks will be able to find you.
 - Anyone can register to speak at [this site](#).
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Introductions

In just a minute, you are not going to be able to impress the Regents with your life story. However, you do want to include:

- Name
- Location
- UC Affiliation (policy covered staff, represented staff, faculty, student, etc.)

Things you could add if you wanted to:

- Your salary as a percent of market rate (or how short of market rate your salary is) - as calculated by this [CUCSA tool](#).
- UC alumni status if applicable
- Years of UC service
- Job title
- If you are speaking for a Staff Assembly (or other staff group) - which assembly and your role

Introduction Examples:

- Good morning! My name is (Name here), and I am a policy covered staff member from UC (Location), and my salary is (X)% below market rate.
 - Good afternoon! My name is (Name here). I am the (Job title) at UC (Location). I have (Your years of service) years of experience as a policy covered staff member.
 - Hello. My name is (Name here), and I am a Staff Assembly member from (location).
 - Good morning, and thank you for the chance to speak today. My name is (Name here), and I am a policy covered staff member from UC (Location). I am also a UC (Location) Alum.
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Your 'Ask'

You can place your 'ask' up front, at the end, or both! Some common advocacy subjects staff may be focused on now include:

- An across the board policy-covered-staff salary increase of significance
- Do not increase employee pension contributions

In practice, here are some ways your ask can be positioned:

- Intro, Justification, "and so, we recommends a 7% across the board increase for policy covered staff salaries.", Closing
- Intro ... "and I am here today to recommend a 7% across the board increase for policy covered staff salaries.", Justification, Closing
- Intro ... "and I am here today to recommend that employee pension contributions remain unchanged", Justification ... "Keeping pension contributions unchanged will help staff already struggling with these difficulties" (whatever was mentioned in your justification), Closing

It is important that your 'ask' be delivered respectfully. The Regents listen to students, community members, and represented staff members who all often give pretty aggressive comments, and they can be easily tuned out.

Justify Your 'Ask'

A lot of factors may inform your 'Ask'. It is important to articulate exactly why you may believe a specific course of action is reasonable, and it is good to share those. Below are some reasons to justify the example 'asks' above:

- Policy covered staff buying power has not held steady over the last few years. With a 0% salary increase in fiscal year '21, and below inflation increases in fiscal years '22 and '23, our buying power has shrunk when compared to rising prices.
- With interest rates rising significantly over the last few years, mortgages or rent, utilities, groceries and other expenses have all outpaced the slow wage growth of policy covered staff. Industry data consistently show that compensation is the largest driver in voluntary

turnover in higher education. We cannot hope to fix the rolling vacancy rate of staff across the UC without addressing staff compensation.

- Our health benefits have increased by a significant amount. While we appreciate the large increase UCOP has made to the employer contributions of our premiums, we are still facing some of the largest premium increases in the history of the university. We need more salary support to make ends meet.
 - If you want to share a personal anecdote about how UC compensation has not kept up for you or your family, this is the place to share it!
 - The number of pressures on policy covered staff purchasing power seems to be growing by the day. Salary increases that lag inflation, higher grocery bills, huge health plan increases, and the possible increase to retiree benefit increases - it is too much. The staff are underwater and we cannot maintain the status quo much longer.
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Closing

Closing with gratitude or ideas for how to accomplish the things we ask for is strategically sound. Consider the following:

- Thank you for your time and consideration today.
 - Thank you for listening.
 - I hope my comment has been helpful - thank you for listening.
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About CUCSA:

Our delegation consists of two Staff Assembly delegates from each UC campus, plus Agriculture & Natural Resources, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and the Office of the President. CUCSA provides communication, collaboration, advice, and advocacy throughout the UC system on issues of interest to staff, and in particular policy-covered staff. We do this work under UC Systemwide HR's sponsorship and are proud to have done so since 1974. You can find more information [on our website](#).

This year's delegation is emphasizing policy and advocacy work related to retention issues, with three workgroups tasked to analyze: compensation, staff identity, and workforce sustainability respectively. We are also actively campaigning in each of the following areas:

- We oppose increased pension contribution costs because they effectively reduce take-home pay
- We are concerned about reductions in the value of our health care coverage, such as the recent reduction in provider support for Delta Dental
- And, we strongly support annual salary increases that are predictable and keep pace with the cost of living