

April 7, 2005

Berkeley Chancellor Seeks More Minorities

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Filed at 11:35 p.m. ET

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) -- The chancellor at the University of California, Berkeley, says black and Hispanic enrollment on campus is shockingly low and he doesn't think that's what voters intended when they banned affirmative action.

Chancellor Robert Birgeneau, who was appointed to lead Berkeley last September, stopped short of declaring war on Proposition 209, the 1996 ballot measure outlawing consideration of race or gender in public hiring, contracting and education.

However, he said campus officials will look for ways to work within the system to change the admissions picture.

“Part of what I'm trying to accomplish here as a new chancellor is just saying, ‘Look, this really is a crisis,’” Birgeneau said in a breakfast meeting with reporters Thursday. “This is a problem that has got to get solved. We're not meeting our obligation as a public institution.”

In 1997, the last year affirmative action was allowed at UC campuses, Berkeley enrolled 260 black students. Last fall, there were 108 out of a freshman class of more than 3,600.

Overall, the class breakdown was 3 percent black, 9.5 percent Hispanic, 0.4 percent American Indian, about 45 percent Asian-American and about 33 percent white. The remaining 10 percent or so listed other races or declined to state race.

Across the nine-campus UC system, however, the number of black and Hispanic students is above 1997 levels.

Birgeneau's contention that voters didn't bargain for the effects of Proposition 209 got a cold reception from Ward Connerly, the recently retired UC regent who fought for race-blind admissions and went on to chair the campaign for the proposition.

“Clearly the voters knew full well what the consequences would be,” Connerly said Thursday. “They just concluded that at the most selective institutions of higher education in this state they did not want race to be a factor.”

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Berkeley in the News

A daily selection of stories about UC Berkeley and higher education that have appeared in the local and national media.

Friday, 8 April 2005

1. **Berkeley: Cal chancellor warns of diversity crisis Birgeneau blames Prop. 209 for decline**

San Francisco Chronicle

Charles Burress, Chronicle Staff Writer

April 8, 2005

UC BERKELEY'S NEW CHANCELLOR, ROBERT BIRGENEAU, sounded the opening priority for his administration Thursday by issuing a call to action on a student diversity crisis at the highly ranked university. Citing the drop in under-represented minorities on campus, especially African Americans, Birgeneau called for research into refining admissions standards and finding the best ways to create a more multicultural campus.

"Part of what I'm trying to accomplish as a new chancellor here is to say this really is a crisis," Birgeneau said in outlining his agenda to reporters at a campus faculty club.

Birgeneau's diversity campaign -- including an op-ed column in the Los Angeles Times on March 27 -- represents his first major public initiative since becoming chancellor in September. The former University of Toronto president will have his formal inauguration ceremony on April 15....

UC Berkeley is failing in its responsibility to be "educating the leadership of the state," he said, noting that African Americans and Latinos were projected to make up about 60 percent of the state's population in 20 years, yet represent less than 10 percent of the university's students....

THE CHAIR OF CAMPUS FACULTY SENATE, CLASSICS PROFESSOR ROBERT KNAPP, said the faculty's Diversity Project called for hiring six to 10 professors for research and teaching that would support greater diversity.

In a related development Wednesday, Stiles Hall, a community service organization in Berkeley, announced \$1 million in anonymous donations that will be used to help increase African American enrollment at Cal.

[Another story on this topic appeared in the [Oakland Tribune](#); AP versions appeared in the [New York Times Online](#), [San Jose Mercury News](#), [Sacramento Bee](#), and dozens of other outlets nationwide] [Full Story](#)

2. **Editorial: Challenge at UC Berkeley**

San Francisco Chronicle

April 8, 2005

NEW UC BERKELEY CHANCELLOR ROBERT BIRGENEAU is understandably upset about the declining numbers of black and Latino students on his campus.

In this year's freshman class, there are a mere 108 African American

students and 340 Latino students -- out of a class of 3,671. At the UCB College of Engineering, widely viewed as one of the best in the world, not a single African American is represented in its freshman class.

The enrollment figures are a direct outgrowth of the university's ban on affirmative action, approved by the UC Board of Regents in 1995, and followed by Proposition 209, the initiative approved by 54 percent of voters the next year.

We share Birgeneau's concerns about Prop. 209's impact on the ability of the campus to enroll a diverse student body. Even the U.S. Supreme Court has acknowledged that a lack of campus diversity detracts from the educational experience of all students. It also means that a significant segment of our society will not benefit from the career enhancements that a UC Berkeley degree can confer. "It does matter where you go to school in American society," he said Tuesday. "It matters if you go to a flagship university."

Less convincing is Birgeneau's assertion that if voters had anticipated Proposition 209's impact on UC Berkeley, they might not have voted for the initiative. In fact, predictions were made throughout the Prop. 209 campaign -- among others, by Berkeley's chancellor at the time -- that it would further depress enrollments of underrepresented minorities. Yet voters still convincingly approved the initiative.

Birgeneau, who came to UC Berkeley last fall and will be officially inaugurated as chancellor next week, is stoking a discussion on a subject that has roused great passions in the state -- and could do so again. He will have to be careful not to trigger a backlash against a plethora of initiatives UC has undertaken to achieve a more diverse student body, despite the restrictions imposed by Prop. 209....

The challenge for Birgeneau is how to convince Californians to take a fresh look at affirmative action -- even as he pledges to obey state laws that clearly prohibit the use of race in admissions, contracts and hiring.

[Full Story](#)

3. MCRI-like policy reduced minority enrollment at UC UCLA and Berkeley minority enrollment have yet to rebound

[The Michigan Daily](#)

By Anne Joling, Daily Staff Reporter

April 07, 2005

The number of underrepresented minority students at California universities declined significantly after the passage of Proposition 209 in 1996 ended the use of affirmative action by government bodies in California.

But despite efforts to increase the number of minorities, only some UC schools have been able to rebound, while the more competitive ones still have extremely low numbers of minority students, according to reports issued by the UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SYSTEM-WIDE OFFICE.

Proposition 209 is nearly identical to the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, which will be on the 2006 ballot in Michigan if enough of the 508,000 signatures gathered are verified. Many opponents of the initiative fear a significant decrease in the number of minorities enrolling at the University will also occur if MCRI passes....

The total number of freshman applicants for UC schools for 1995 was 45,714, 22.1 percent or 10,083 of which came from underrepresented minority applicants. The total number of freshman applicants for fall 2005 was 76,152, 22.7 percent or 17,287 of which came from underrepresented minority applicants.

But the number of underrepresented minority students at two of UC's

most exclusive campuses — BERKELEY and Los Angeles — have not recovered back to their rates before Proposition 209 was passed.

At the BERKELEY and Los Angeles campuses, the percentage of underrepresented minority students accepted to these schools declined from 26.1 percent and 26.7 percent, respectively, in 1995, to 11.2 percent and 12.7 percent respectively in 1999. But the numbers increased slightly in 2004, rising to 13.1 percent and 17.6 percent respectively.

In an opinion piece published in the March 27 edition of The Los Angeles Times, UC BERKELEY CHANCELLOR ROBERT BIRGENEAU said he believes Proposition 209 has created an environment that students of color feel is discriminatory.

"Freshman enrollment at UC Berkeley, for instance, has gone from 260 black students in 1997 to just 108 students this year," Birgeneau said in the article. "That's too small a number to form a supportive student community, and many of Berkeley's black freshmen view themselves as struggling against a hostile environment."...

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4. **UC Berkeley to hire data security expert after theft**

[Oakland Tribune](#)

By Kristin Bender, Staff Writer

April 8, 2005

Berkeley — UC BERKELEY'S CHANCELLOR has called for an outside auditor to examine the university's handling of personal computer records following the recent theft of a laptop containing personal information of nearly 100,000 graduate students and alumni.

On March 11, a thief entered private graduate division offices and stole an IBM laptop containing the names and Social Security numbers of University of California, Berkeley, alumni, graduate students and past applicants — some from nearly 30 years ago, police said.

UC Berkeley campus policy requires that restricted information stored on portable equipment be electronically protected in case the equipment is lost or stolen. However, the data on the laptop had yet to be encrypted because of a backlog of work, campus officials said.

"The incident revealed serious gaps in our management of this kind of data," wrote CHANCELLOR ROBERT BIRGENEAU in a letter to the campus community. "The campus has been instituting new policies to address these issues for several months, and we will do much more. Accountability for this effort ultimately lies with me...."

The university is sending e-mails and letters to people whose names and personal information were stolen. There is information at www.berkeley.edu on how to protect your identity. The chancellor's entire letter is available at <http://idalert.berkeley.edu/chancellorletter.html>.

[Another story on this topic appeared in [SC Magazine](#)]

[Full Story](#)

5. **Op-Ed: ID theft -- Victims devastated, criminals slapped on the wrist**

[San Francisco Chronicle](#)

Chuck Poochigian

Sen. Chuck Poochigian, R-Fresno, is vice-chair of the Senate Public Safety Committee. For more information on the Identity Theft Traffickers Act, visit www.sen.ca.gov.

April 8, 2005

Identity theft is running rampant in California and across the nation, with sophisticated criminals grabbing headlines exposing weaknesses