CALL FOR PROPOSED SPEAKERS

THE PROVOST’S FORUMS ON
THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY AND THE SOCIAL GOOD 2013–14

To continue the dialogue on the challenges and opportunities facing the public university in the 21st century, suggestions are now being solicited for individuals who might participate as speakers in the second year of The Provost’s Forums on the Public University and the Social Good (AY 2013–14). The events in the upcoming year will build upon a very successful first year for this important series of lectures. For information on the Provost’s Forums series and videos of last year’s main presentations, see the “Future of the Public University” webpage residing on the Provost’s website (http://provost.ucdavis.edu/initiatives-and-activities/activities/future/index.html).

The passionate conversations sparked by last year’s forums made apparent a wide scholarly research vacuum at UC system on the subject of the public university. So, in addition to furthering awareness and dialogue on this subject within and beyond the university community, the goal for the 2013–14 forums is to explore critical issues facing the public university’s role in contemporary society at the local, regional, national, and global levels. In parallel with the series, a faculty committee will be considering whether a formal center for the study of the future of the public university should be formed at UC Davis.

By suggesting possible speakers, members of the campus community can help define what should be addressed in this year’s Provost’s Forums. The nature and importance of the subject demand that the series present speakers from as wide a range of disciplines and perspectives as feasible.

In the 2013–14 academic year, we expect to have approximately nine public events in the form of individual speakers or half-day symposia. The series will be overseen by a committee of faculty, which is currently being formed by faculty members from across campus under the coordination of Martin Kenney (Human Ecology) and the Office of the Provost in cooperation with the UC Davis Center for Regional Change.

All lectures and associated events will be open to the campus community and the general public. As was true of last year’s forums, future videos and presentation materials will be archived on the “Future of the Public University” webpage (http://provost.ucdavis.edu/initiatives-and-activities/activities/future/index.html).

Content of the Provost’s Forums 2013–14

The public university’s role in society is multiple and only partially understood. Fundamental questions could, but need not, be limited to the following:

1. What is the role of the public university in social mobility, and how is it performing?
2. How can the public university ensure diversity in terms of students, faculty, and administration?
3. What do the changing norms of scholarly communication in terms of Open Access journals, requirements that data be made freely accessible, and the role of new media in pedagogy mean for the public university’s operation?

4. How can the public university most effectively facilitate knowledge transfer and regional development?

5. What is the importance of the public university’s role in the provision of non-market goods such as scientific knowledge that informs society about problems such as global warming, etc.?

6. What is the proper balance between engagement with society and the “Ivory Tower?”

7. What do changing university-funding models mean for the public university, and how can these evolving models be shaped in socially positive ways?

8. More than ever before, U.S. universities are now in a global sociopolitical system. What are the implications of this for the public university?

Ideally, the speakers will address questions like these both in their lectures and in related events with the larger UC Davis community, including a day of meeting with faculty and students, and departmental events.

**Program Details**

This year’s forums could have different formats, including the following possibilities:

1) There will be a main presentation by 1) an invited guest speaker with high distinction in a relevant field; 2) a speaker from the UC Davis community, comparably qualified; or 3) a team comprising one guest speaker and one or two speakers from the UC Davis community, comparably qualified. The expectation is that each main presentation will draw an audience of 50 to 100 persons.

2) The speaker/s making the main presentation will also participate in a two-hour seminar/workshop for a smaller group (e.g., 20) of highly interested participants.

3) Ideally, the campus unit that invites a speaker or speakers will serve as the host department, and will maximize a forum’s benefit to the entire university by arranging related events such as class presentations, meetings with faculty, and meals with the invitees.

Costs will be covered for an appropriate honorarium for each main speaker, plus expenses for traveling, lodging, and a public reception. Co-sponsorships are encouraged.

**How to Suggest a Speaker or Speakers for a Provost’s Forum**

Speaker suggestions from the campus community will be vital to the success of this year’s Provost’s Forums. Any interested department, group, or member of the extended UC Davis community may suggest one or more candidates.
With the new academic year right around the corner, the critical task at this moment is to “get the ball rolling”—that is, to collect suggested names accompanied by no more than a couple of paragraphs that include the following information:

1) The likely theme/s of the main presentation;

2) The reasons that the suggested individual/s should be invited to speak (Please address the individual’s or individuals’ qualifications, professional stature, and impact or promise of relevant work; a curriculum vitae may be sent with your suggestion, or later during the selection process);

3) *If a campus unit or UC Davis–affiliated group is making the suggestion:* An indication as to whether the unit/group is likely to be able to contribute to a forum’s financial costs, and if so, approximately how much.

The organizing committee working with the Center for Regional Change (and in consultation with the Office of the Provost and others as appropriate) will review the submitted suggestions, giving most weight to those that promise, individually and as part of the year’s plan, the greatest benefit to the UC Davis community. A diversity of focus and perspective among the nine forums will be a key criterion in determining which suggested candidates will be invited to participate.

After the initial review of speaker candidates, we will pursue, as appropriate, further dialogue with the units or individuals who have submitted suggestions in order to collect more information or materials, and to discuss logistical or financial arrangements, before we finalize the year’s plan.

*Please send speaker suggestions (addressing the three items listed above) plus any additional supporting materials to Professor Martin Kenney at mfkenney@ucdavis.edu.*

Review of suggestions will begin July 16, 2013, but applications may be submitted at any time.