March 21, 2005

Open Letter to the California State University, Los Angeles community:

During the winter 2005 term, a three-year review of James M. Rosser, President of California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State L.A.), was conducted. The review took the form of collecting and summarizing letters from a selection of the campus community, both internal and external. The review concluded on March 15, 2005, with discussion of the review by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees and I appreciate the contributions of those who worked with us on this review.

Criteria established by the Board of Trustees in 1984, and updated in 1994 and 2001, were used to assess the performance of President Rosser and the progress of the institution. These measures included the overall management of the institution, relations on campus and within the system, educational leadership, community relations, major achievements of the campus and the president, and personal characteristics of the president. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community representatives were invited to submit written comments responding to the trustees' criteria.

The review concluded that James M. Rosser is an outstanding president of Cal State L.A. He performs at a very high energy level and is aware of all activities and events at the campus. His detailed knowledge surprises some people.

A constant theme over his years at Cal State L.A. has been providing access to higher education. Dr. Rosser is extremely proud of the value added education that Cal State L.A. provides for its students. It should be noted that Cal State L.A. has one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation, and campus climate is peaceful.

Dr. Rosser is passionate about Cal State L.A. – a campus serving first generation college students. The faculty is very productive in obtaining grants from the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health, particularly with an emphasis on education of underrepresented students in mathematics and sciences. Dr. Rosser is nationally known for his commitment to the education of underrepresented persons in mathematics and engineering education. Of special note is that Cal State L.A. has more chemistry and biology graduates enrolled in UCLA’s doctoral program in chemistry than any other university.
The campus executive group has been in place for about five years and is viewed as a strong team by most of the on-campus respondents. Dr. Rosser has strong budget management and planning skills.

The physical appearance of the campus continues to be improved over its condition in the early 1990s. In recent years some buildings, such as Engineering and Music, have been rehabilitated; new buildings, such as the Golden Eagle multi-purpose facility and a new parking structure, have enhanced the campus. A new student union will be constructed soon. These projects are illustrative of the president's planning for the future needs of the campus.

The long-standing good relations among the university, the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department led to an agreement to build a $96 million state-of-the-art forensic laboratory on campus. This world-class facility will provide students with valuable internship experiences and access to the latest equipment in a crime lab. It is currently under construction. This facility will enhance the university's M.S. degree program in criminalistics.

Another mark Dr. Rosser has made on Cal State L.A. was in the fund raising and construction of the Luckman Fine Arts Complex. The Intimate Theatre, with seating for 250, recently was completed. Members of the surrounding community speak highly of the Complex and its programming because it fills a void in their cultural lives.

CSULA successfully converted its financial, human resources, and student systems to PeopleSoft as part of CSU's Common Management System (CMS). The campus has 58 technologically enhanced classrooms.

The relationship of the president with the academic senate is strong and stable. There is good rapport and mutual respect. Student leaders reported that they have access to the president.

President Rosser generously makes himself available for CSU system activities. He serves on the Technology Steering Committee and a statewide committee of school superintendents. He does not hesitate to offer using his personal relationships with legislators to help advocate CSU's position.

Business, civic, and community leaders in Los Angeles know Dr. Rosser very well and give him high marks for his contribution to the community.

A few reviewers suggested that closer attention should be directed to the student services offices.
The following are goals for President Rosser for the next three years:

1. Continue efforts leading to good communications with campus constituent groups, especially faculty leaders.

2. Continue giving encouragement and support for faculty for scholarship, especially scholarly work involving students.

3. Consider the utility of periodic e-mail communications to the campus.

4. Continue the practice of recognizing faculty and student achievements.

5. Continue being available for service on CSU system committees.

6. Work with the Vice President for Student Affairs to monitor the quality of student services for responsiveness to customers.

7. Continue discussions with the Chancellor’s Office on approaches to increase use of campus enrollment capacity.

President James Rosser is an enthusiastic and solid executive. He is a strong, effective leader and a person of integrity. Dr. Rosser has high standards that he expects for himself and others at Cal State L.A. California State University, Los Angeles is fortunate to have him as its chief executive officer.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Charles B. Reed
Chancellor

CBR/wd