October 31, 2006

To: Henry Yang, Chancellor

From: Michael Witherell, Vice Chancellor for Research

Subject: Statistics on extramural funding for sponsored projects, fiscal year 2006

I am pleased to send you a brief annual report on extramural funding agencies’ support for research and other activities at UCSB.

The total funding awarded to sponsored projects at UCSB in fiscal year 2006 was $159 million. The yearly total has been within a few percent of this value for the last three years in a row. For comparison, the funding level one decade ago, in FY 1996, was $79 million.

The slowing in research funding growth during the last couple of years reflects a similar trend in federal support for research nationwide. Total federal funding for research increased at a rate of about 10% per year until FY 2003, but more recently has grown only about 2% per year. If funding increases now planned for NSF and other research agencies become real, we might expect our research funding levels to increase more rapidly again, starting next year.

The total of research expenditures, shown on a separate chart, was $137 million in FY 2006. This is somewhat lower than the award total, because it includes only direct spending on research and not the indirect cost return used to pay for facility and administrative costs. This chart shows a steady growth of about 7% per year in direct research expenditures, which are now 96% greater than in FY 1996. Although this remarkable increase in research activity represents an extraordinary accomplishment for UCSB, it places an increased burden on all of the organizations across campus that provide administrative support for research.

The Federal government awarded $112 million directly to the campus for research in fiscal year 2006, 79% of which comes from three agencies: the National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, and the National Institutes of Health. UCSB stands 18th among universities in total NSF support during the federal fiscal year 2005, the last year for which NSF shows the numbers, which is a remarkably strong position for the size of our faculty. UCSB is among the top 20 universities for five of the seven NSF directorates: Biological Sciences, Computer and Information Sciences and Engineering, Geosciences, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, and Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences. In addition, UCSB ranks 15th among universities in research funding from the Department of Defense for FY 2005.
For the first time, organized research units administered over half of the extramural research funding in FY 2006. The research funding administered by the Neuroscience Research Institute increased to $10.6 million from $4.3 million the previous year, and the total for the Marine Science Institute increased from $14.9 to $20.8 million, excluding the large NCEAS award.

We also report the research funding sorted by the home academic department of the lead investigator, which gives us a picture of research support by discipline. These charts show that the funding to researchers in the Department of Psychology increased by more than a factor of 2, from $2.5 million in FY 2005 to $6.5 million in FY 2006. Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology also had a particularly large increase, from $16.6 million to $22.7 million.

The attached charts and the tabulated data used to make them are available on the Office of Research web site at http://research.ucsb.edu/pubs/charts_and_graphs_2005-2006.shtml.

Although these statistics provide valuable information about research trends, I often point out that research funding is not the best measure of UCSB research, since it is dominated by fields that receive the greatest amount of federal funding. UCSB research also has great impact in fields for which the national funding is much less, including the arts, humanities, social sciences, and education. The vitality of UCSB research in these areas is not reflected in tables of research funding.

One only needs to look through the UCSB press releases over the last year to understand that it is an exciting time for research across UCSB. Credit for this is due to our outstanding researchers and to the strong technical and administrative staff members across the campus that they rely on.

Cc: Donna Carpenter, Vice Chancellor, Administrative Services
    Jane Conoley, Dean, Givertz Graduate School of Education
    Paul Desruisseaux, Associate Vice Chancellor, Public Affairs
    Arturo Keller, Chair, Committee on Research Policy & Procedures, Academic Senate
    Todd Lee, Assistant Chancellor, Budget and Planning
    Gene Lucas, Executive Vice Chancellor
    David Marshall, Executive Dean, College of Letters & Science
    Joel Michaelsen, Chair, Academic Senate
    Louise Moore, Executive Director, Office of Research
    Gale Morrison, Acting Dean, Graduate Division
    Martin Moskovits, Science Dean, College of Letters & Science
    Melvin Oliver, Social Sciences Dean, College of Letters & Science
    Bruce Tiffney, Dean, College of Creative Studies
    Matthew Tirrell, Dean, College of Engineering
    Ernst von Weizsäcker, Dean, Bren School of Environmental Science & Management
    Phillip Walker, Chair, Council of Research and Instructional Resources, Academic Senate
    John Wiemann, Vice Chancellor, Institutional Advancement
    Michael Young, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs

bcc: Margie Weeks, Budget & Planning
    Steven Velasco, Budget & Planning