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**Date:** August 30, 2021 at 9:58:38 AM EDT  
**To:** MedStudent Class of 2024 <2024dgsom@lists.ucla.edu>, MedStudent Class of 2023 <2023dgsom@lists.ucla.edu>, MedStudent Class of 2022 <2022dgsom@lists.ucla.edu>, Medstudent Class of 2025 <2025dgsom@lists.ucla.edu>, MedStudent LOA <somloa@lists.ucla.edu>  
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**Subject:** [2022dgsom] Statement from Student Leaders on new DGSOM Interim Dean Appointment

*Thank you to Rohini Nott (MS2 Class President) for forwarding this letter on behalf of students of the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA:*

We are writing to inform you of the recent appointment of the proposed Interim Dean, Dr. Steven Dubinett. We will not accept this appointment. While we respect Dr. Dubinett's experience and leadership roles as a physician and researcher, the process of his appointment was not transparent, inclusive, or equity-centered. We demand a moratorium for the following reasons:

1. This decision was made by a small number of individuals, namely Dr. John Maziotta, CEO of UCLA Health, and Vice Chancellor Emily Carter, without meaningful input from students, trainees, or faculty. Additionally, there is a complete lack of diversity in those involved in the decision process.
2. Sending out a call for nominations to faculty and a short online form to students, that did not include a nomination option, does not constitute meaningful involvement. Students were not asked for input on the candidates nor informed of the criteria that informed the selection of these candidates. To add to this inconsistency and devaluation of our stakeholderhood, medical students still have not received official notice of

this appointment despite the news being shared with members of the larger UCLA community who are likely far less impacted.

3. Furthermore, the duration of this appointment is for up to two years which indicates that this interim dean will be overseeing the implementation of the new curriculum, reintegration of in-person activities following the pandemic, and numerous health equity implementation efforts.
4. The opaque nature of this decision follows a pattern of implicit and explicit racist decision-making\* (*please refer to the "Additional contexts" section at the end*) at UCLA Health. The appointment of someone at this moment in time with minimal health equity work, minimal undergraduate medical education and graduate medical education experiences, and through this opaque and unstructured process directly contradicts the stated values of the "Cultural North Star." The proposed candidate has had little interaction with medical students beyond those who may have an interest or exposure to specific medical departments or the Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute program. To our knowledge and from our research, he has not interfaced with student leaders, and is unaware of ongoing issues in the community that concern us as current medical students at DGSOM. Furthermore, it is extremely concerning to us that extensively qualified candidates, such as Dr. Clarence Braddock, who currently serves as Executive Vice Dean within the medical school administration, were passed over despite several years of service and extensive experience directly working with students that uniquely qualified them for this role.
5. Perhaps most alarming of all, we are deeply concerned that this appointment represents an attempt to consolidate and centralize power within UCLA Health rather than maintain DGSOM's autonomy and responsibility as a public institution to serve our diverse communities. Students have led efforts over the past several years to make our curriculum and institution more equitable and anti-racist. We are continuing to do this work and we have not received the impression that this new leadership shares our priorities. While organizational restructuring is a normal and necessary process for an institution to grow, this cannot happen without involvement and inclusion of all stakeholders, particularly those who have historically been excluded from rooms of power within the UCLA Health system and the DGSOM campus. If the process of this appointment is any indication, we have no confidence in current UCLA Health leadership to conduct any restructuring in an equitable manner.

We unequivocally reject this interim dean appointment due to issues of process and demand that it is rescinded immediately. We demand the process to appoint the interim dean be restarted and conducted in a manner that is transparent, equity-centered, and involves students throughout the process. Any permanent dean must be appointed through the due process involving the

UCLA Academic Senate, UC Board of Regents, and with direct and longitudinal involvement of DGSOM students, trainees, and faculty. UCLA Health leadership must stop making decisions behind closed doors. The restructuring of DGSOM, a public institution, must go through a transparent and equity-centered process that involves student leaders, trainees, and faculty from the very beginning to the very end.

In respectful solidarity,

Student leaders of the David Geffen School of Medicine representing or from:

- DGSOM Class of 2022
- DGSOM Class of 2023
- DGSOM Class of 2024
- Asian Pacific American Medical Association (APAMSA)
- Disability and Chronic Illness at DGSOM (DCI)
- First Gen @ DGSOM
- Health Equity Hub
- Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA)
- Muslim Student Union (MSU)
- PRIDE Alliance
- Student National Medical Association (SNMA)
- UndocuMed Students & Allies

If you have additional questions, please email

[uclahealthequityforum@gmail.com](mailto:uclahealthequityforum@gmail.com).

**Additional context on previous harms by UCLA Health:**

\*Again, DGSOM and UCLA Health have failed to meet our responsibility as a public institution in one of the most diverse and segregated major metropolitan areas in the nation. A few of the past and ongoing harms include the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) implementing admissions policies of 3.4 Science GPA/512 MCAT (which was reversed due to student advocacy and organizing) fully knowing these policies directly targeted historically excluded students, and a track record of students experiencing racist abuse during their clinical rotations. In addition, demands and promises made by DGSOM following the national movement for racial justice in the summer of 2020 continue to be unfulfilled. Further harms include the purchase and closure of Olympia Hospital to be rebranded as a UCLA Health center without local community input, and the continued lack of universal acceptance of Medi-Cal at most UCLA Health centers. The appointment of Dr. Dubinett as Interim Dean follows the recent appointment process of Vice Dean for JEDI that was untransparent and failed to follow through on promised meetings between finalists and community stakeholders. At far too many points has UCLA “included” students only to disregard and ignore their input at the most crucial time.

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