Dear Colleagues,

We have received a few inquiries about our opposition to the proposed UC Health-Dignity Health affiliation (see email reproduced below). Specifically, a few members asked if "Option 2" (UC Health would not affiliate with Dignity Health) would affect our ability to receive care at Dominican Hospital, which is affiliated with Dignity Health. The answer is that there would be no change at all.

The proposed affiliation with Dignity Health (Option One) would result in UC medical-school faculty or UC-employed care-givers or interns being subject to Dignity Health regulations. Option One would also officially link the University of California to a prominent institutional proponent of the overturning of Roe v. Wade. We feel that UC care-givers need to be able to provide the best care they can provide, not subject to religious restrictions. In addition, Option 1, by binding the UC more closely to Dignity Health, could conceivably at some point in the future leave UCSC staff and faculty with more restricted access to hospitals or provider networks other than Dignity.

Option 2 would in no way affect patient access to care at Dominican Hospital, or at any Dignity Health-affiliated hospital. Although some in Santa Cruz may regret that our main hospital is a religious hospital, with the added inconvenience of having to go further away for services excluded by Dominican's religious restrictions, we will not lose any access to Dominican under option 2.

The Santa Cruz Faculty Association, along with colleagues in CUCFA and elsewhere in the UC who have worked closely with issues around employee health benefits in recent years, advocate strong UCSC support for Option 2 (our original letter is reported below for your reference). Please make your voices heard (the link is here; for suggested text see our original email, copied below).

Sincerely yours,

The Santa Cruz Faculty Association
Dear Colleagues and Community,

This week, the University of California (UC) released a report with request for public comments that considers whether UC should affiliate with religious hospitals that prohibit basic reproductive health services for women and LGBT people.

The authors of the report were divided in their recommendation, providing two options, open to comment: OPTION 1, supported by UC Health, in which UC would expand affiliations with restrictive religious hospitals, makes the argument that said affiliation would expand access to care; and OPTION 2, which the SCFA supports, preventing UC from affiliating with entities that discriminate against women and LGBT people by prohibiting contraception, abortion, assisted reproductive technology (eg IVF), and gender-affirming surgery for transgender people (see this LA Times article -- behind partial paywall -- and this letter to UC President Napolitano. Also consider UCI Law Prof. Goodwin's assertion that it is illegal for UC to restrict care based on religious directives).

This is an active issue and stakes are high. Regents will vote in May on UC-wide policy. Please support our position by posting comments on this matter by Feb 21. The more who participate, the stronger our voice. Here is a sample text that can be used on the comment form:

*The University of California must not affiliate with health systems that use religious directives to prohibit essential medical care for women and LGBT people. I support OPTION 2 in this report because UC patients should not receive care that is restricted based on religious doctrine. UC doctors, nurses, and students should not be asked to work in hospitals where religious policies prevent them from providing scientifically-based standard of care services. Particularly given the current political climate nationwide, when access to women's reproductive services and protections for LGBT people are under threat, California's public university system must be strong and unequivocal in its support of rights to contraception, abortion, and gender affirming care.*

Sincerely yours,
The SCFA Board