This collection of speeches, papers, and other writings documents the eight-year tenure (1995-2003) of the University of California’s seventeenth president, Richard C. Atkinson. Before his appointment as president, Atkinson had served as chancellor of the University’s San Diego campus from 1980 to 1995. UCSD rose to rank tenth in the nation among research universities under his leadership. He was director of the National Science Foundation under Presidents Ford and Carter and a long-term member of the faculty at Stanford University. Atkinson’s research in the fields of cognitive science and psychology earned him international recognition and election to the National Academy of Sciences at an early age.

The Board of Regents chose Atkinson to head the ten-campus UC system effective October 1, 1995, in the midst of a budget crisis and just six weeks after the Board had voted to ban the use of race and ethnicity in admissions and employment.

“I come to the position with full knowledge of the challenges facing the University,” Atkinson said in his acceptance remarks to the Regents. His perspective on those challenges was grounded in strong views about UC as a research university. “The tradition of research universities has been to value knowledge for its own sake,” he wrote in an early paper on the future of the University. “However, society’s increasing need for applications of knowledge has placed new demands on these institutions, including the University of California, as we move into the twenty-first century.” President Atkinson’s goals and initiatives for the University—including decentralizing more authority to the ten campuses—flowed from his conviction that UC must organize itself in new ways to meet its responsibilities for producing the educated people and new ideas essential to a complex society increasingly dependent on knowledge.

He emphasized maintaining the quality of UC’s faculty and its academic programs and preparing UC to educate the children of the Baby Boomers, a huge new generation of students known as Tidal Wave II. He expanded the University’s research partnerships with industry and worked with Governor Gray Davis to create the California Institutes for Science and Innovation, a new paradigm for scientific research in which state and federal governments, private industry, and UC campuses collaborate on achieving high-technology breakthroughs that will keep the California economy competitive. He established the California Digital Library, a virtual “library without walls.” And he proposed a new UC policy on academic freedom to explicitly recognize the primary authority of the faculty over academic matters.

1 “Remarks to the Regents of the University of California,” August 18, 1995.
4 “UC and the National Research Council Ratings of Graduate Programs”: Commentary and Excerpt from Change magazine, 1996.
His most difficult task, however, was keeping the University accessible to students of all backgrounds in the post-affirmative action era. UC’s first step was to redouble its efforts in outreach and partnerships with the K-12 schools.\textsuperscript{10}

With the help of the chancellors and the Academic Senate, UC also undertook a far-reaching review of its admission policies and practices. As a public university in a demographically diverse and knowledge-based society, Atkinson argued, those policies and practices must be “demonstrably inclusive and fair.” To that end, he proposed and the Board of Regents approved four new approaches to admission—eligibility in the local context, the dual admissions program, comprehensive review, and elimination of the SAT I as a requirement for admission.\textsuperscript{11}

President Atkinson’s proposal to eliminate the SAT I requirement at UC—because it was based on “‘ill-defined notions of aptitude’” rather than on measuring real academic achievement—attracted nationwide attention when he announced it in the 2001 Robert H. Atwell Distinguished Lecture,\textsuperscript{12} delivered at the Eighty-third Annual Meeting of the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C.

Eight years after the Regents eliminated race and ethnicity in admissions, the number of African American, Latino, and Native American students exceeded the number enrolled before the Board’s action. Nonetheless, in 2003 the gap between the number of such students in California’s high schools and in the University had widened significantly—“something that should trouble us all,” President Atkinson wrote.\textsuperscript{13}

The Atkinson years were a time of prosperity for the University. By the end of President Atkinson’s tenure, however, California and thus the University faced a budget crisis even deeper than that of the early 1990s. In his farewell remarks\textsuperscript{14} to the Board of Regents, President Atkinson pointed out that the University would be thoroughly tested in the years ahead. “The genius of the California experience,” he concluded, “is that we have created a university that is both great and accessible—a public university that fulfills a distinctly American vision of democracy and meritocracy. What happens to this university next is up to all of us—the UC community, the political leadership, and the people of California—for we are, all of us, its trustees.”

\textsuperscript{10} “After 209: Now We Must Raise the Achievement of K-12 Kids,” San Jose Mercury News, April 10, 1998.
\textsuperscript{14} “Farewell Remarks to the Board of Regents,” September 18, 2003
Overview

- A Brief History of the Atkinson Presidency.
- A Timeline of the Atkinson Presidency.

The research university

- The California Solution, keynote address at the California Coalition on Science and Technology Summit, Sacramento, May 28, 1996.
- Present Challenges of a Research University, remarks at the conference “University in Transition,” University of California, Berkeley, March 1997.
- Binational Cooperation and the Quest for Knowledge, remarks at the signing of the Agreement of Cooperation between UC and the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnologia (CONACYT), Mexico City, July 1997.
- The Role of Research in the University of the Future, address at the United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan, November 4, 1997.
- The Globalization of the University, keynote address at the inauguration of President Akimasa Mitsuta, Nagasaki University of Foreign Studies, Japan, May 26, 2001.

The faculty, academic quality, and academic freedom

- UC and the National Research Council Ratings of Graduate Programs, commentary and excerpt from the May/June 1996 issue of Change.
• **Tradition at the University of California**, remarks at the Regents’ dinner, September 17, 1998.


• **The Quality of the University of California**, letter to a UC alumnus concerned about the quality of the University, January 28, 2002.

• **English R1A Course Section**, letter to the Regents about the academic freedom and faculty responsibility issues involved in a reading and composition course at UC Berkeley, with Professor Robert Post’s analysis of the implications for academic freedom, August 14, 2002.

• **Message at the Beginning of the Academic Year**, letter to members of the UC community on the exchange of divergent viewpoints.

• **Academic Freedom**, letter to the Regents on the Academic Council’s review of a proposed revision to the University’s Academic Personnel Policy 010 on academic freedom, April 23, 2003.


• **Academic Personnel Policy 010, Academic Freedom**, Letter to the Regents enclosing revised policy on academic freedom.

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**Educating students**

• **The Numbers Game and Graduate Education**, address at the Symposium on Graduate Education in the Biological Sciences for the Twenty-first Century, University of California, San Francisco, October 2, 1996.

• **Partnership for Learning**, opinion piece about the benefits of a UC education, published in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, and the *Davis Enterprise*, June 1997.

• **Prepare Now for the Next Wave**, opinion piece about the large numbers of students who will seek access to California’s colleges and universities in the next ten years, published in the *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 1999.

• **Commencement Address**, California Western School of Law, San Diego, April 28, 2000.

• **Educational Leadership for California**, testimony on demand for the education doctorate before the California Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education, Sacramento, June 12, 2001.

• **Valley Will Reap Infinite Rewards from UC Merced**, opinion piece about the UC’s tenth campus, published in the *Fresno Bee*, November 4, 2002.

• **Letter to the Regents** regarding student enrollment projections and long-range planning,

**Outreach and the K-12 Public Schools**

- **UC Is Unwaveringly Committed to Diversity**, opinion piece on UC’s efforts to achieve diversity without the use of race and ethnicity as factors in admissions, published in the *Los Angeles Times*, November 13, 1995.

- **Investing in California’s Children**, remarks at the California Senate Fiscal Retreat, an annual policy forum for California political leaders sponsored by the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee and the UC California Policy Seminar, Berkeley, January 28, 1998.

- **California’s Outreach**, published in *On Common Ground*, the journal of the Yale-New Haven Teachers’ Institute, winter 1998.

- **Admission to the University of California**, opinion piece about the challenges of expanding opportunities for students without regard to race and ethnicity, published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 1, 1998. Reprinted in the *Los Angeles Daily News*, the *Santa Barbara News-Press*, and the *Oakland Tribune*.

- **After 209: Now We Must Raise Achievement of K-12 Kids**, opinion piece about UC’s efforts to support K-12 education, published in the *San Jose Mercury News*, April 10, 1998.

- **Teach Children to Read? UC Is Lending a Hand**, opinion piece about summer institutes for California’s K-12 teachers sponsored by UC and the California State University, published in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, January 14, 1999.

- **Summer Institutes**, letter to the governor about the California Professional Development Initiatives, designed to improve teacher quality and student learning in California, September 8, 2000.


**Changing admission to the University of California**


- **Dual Admission Proposal**, letter to UC Academic Council chair proposing an alternative path to supplement the University’s current admissions process, September 20, 2000.

- **UC Looks beyond Test Scores for Students**, opinion piece about initiatives to expand opportunities for students to achieve admission to UC, published in the *Sacramento Bee*, June 15, 2001.

Achievement versus aptitude: the SAT


- **Let’s Step Back from the SAT**, opinion piece about elimination of the SAT I examination as a requirement for admission to the University of California, published in the *San Jose Mercury News*, February 23, 2001.


- **Statement on the College Board’s decision to alter the SAT I**, statement on the College Board’s new test, which will be in accord with specifications developed by UC’s Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools, June 27, 2002.

The university in a knowledge-based society


- **How to Improve US Productivity**, opinion piece on investing in university research and development to ensure intellectual and economic productivity, published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 4, 1996.

- **High Stakes for Knowledge**, opinion piece on the importance of funding university research, published in the *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1996.

- **UC and California’s Future**, address to the Commonwealth Club, San Francisco, May 2, 1996.

- **Town and Gown Join Forces to Boost State**, opinion piece on UC’s partnerships with industry to ensure the state’s economic leadership, published in the *Los Angeles Times*, December 31, 1996.

- **California’s Library without Limits**, opinion piece on UC’s digital library, published in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, October 14, 1997.


• Why Federal Funding for Basic Research Is Important, opinion piece on how basic research can help maintain the nation’s economic strength, published in the San Diego Union-Tribune, September 28, 2000.

• Higher Education Helps Drive the Economy, opinion piece about the partnership between the University of California and the California State University systems in contributing to the state’s economy, published in the Los Angeles Times, October 4, 2000.

• Food Safety First, opinion piece on UC’s activities to protect the safety and security of the nation’s food supply, published in the San Francisco Chronicle, May 2, 2002.

• California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology, remarks at the groundbreaking ceremony for the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology and the Computer Science and Engineering Building at UC San Diego, May 31, 2002.

• Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Fiftieth Anniversary, remarks at the fiftieth anniversary celebration, September 20, 2002.


Seventeenth president of the University of California

- Remarks to the Regents on appointment as seventeenth president, August 18, 1995.
- The Role of the President of the University, prepared for the UC student newspapers, December 1997.
- A Three-Year Report to Alumni, remarks at the fall retreat of the Alumni Associations of the University of California on goals for the University, October 16, 1998.
- The Future Arrives First in California, article on challenges facing the University of California, published in Issues in Science and Technology, winter 1999-2000.
- University of Chicago Alumni Medal, remarks on the occasion of receiving the medal, June 7, 2003.
- Farewell Remarks to the Board of Regents, September 18, 2003.