

Bruin Democrats at UCLA

Official Platform

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Table of Contents

Bruin Democrats Mission.....	2
1. Environmental Stewardship and Climate.....	2
2. Economic Equity and Labor.....	2
3. Healthcare Access.....	3
4. Women's Rights and Gender Equality.....	3
5. Transportation.....	4
6. Education Reform.....	4
7. Foreign Policy and International Relations.....	4
8. Criminal Justice Reform.....	5
9. Immigration and Refugee Rights.....	5
10. Voting Rights and Civic Engagement.....	6
11. LGBTQ+ Rights.....	6
12. Youth and Student Advocacy.....	7
13. Housing and Urban Development.....	7
14. Technology and Innovation.....	8
15. Disability Rights.....	8
16. Arts and Culture.....	8

Bruin Democrats Mission

In accordance with the Charter of the Young Democrats of America, the mission of the Bruin Democrats is fivefold:

1. To stimulate young people with an active interest in governmental affairs and promote their involvement in the political process.
2. To promote the acquisition of political power by young people, and to promote the policies and practices which are consistent with Democratic values.
3. To increase the efficiency of popular government and to provide the highest degree of justice and social welfare for the citizens of our country.
4. To act as the principal representative of Democratic policies, elected officials, and values to the UCLA student body.
5. To reach out to entering freshmen and transfer students, and provide a safe, fun, and enriching experience for all Bruin Democrats members.

1. Environmental Stewardship and Climate

In a time where climate change is becoming an ever-growing threat, as evidenced by recent increases in extreme weather events, we believe that it is necessary for the United States to invest in sustainable energy and processes to protect our planet. Bruin Democrats support:

- Increasing renewable energy sources and battery storage, such as wind and solar energy;
- Removing fossil fuels from our electrical grid and phasing out oil and gas drilling, especially near communities;
- Investing in projects that reduce water usage;
- Land restoration;
- Increasing the use of native plants in landscaping;
- Mandating green space minimum requirements in urban areas, particularly at educational facilities, and increasing green space overall.

2. Economic Equity and Labor

A fair and equitable economy is necessary for Americans everywhere to thrive, meaning their wages are livable and their cost of living does not rise. We believe that for Bruins, both past and present, an economy that guarantees work and invests in social safety nets is a successful one for students and families. Bruin Democrats will support this position by:

- Engaging with labor unions throughout Southern California to ensure blue-collar communities are protected and guaranteed safe and equitable working conditions;
- Advocating for a federal minimum wage increase that coincides with economic growth and cost of living;
- Working with student advocates to protect federal work study and government grants to reduce the cost of higher education, both public and private;
- Highlighting policies that attack or refuse to uplift disability, social security, medicare and unemployment benefits in government spending;

- Underscoring the need for progressive taxation and redistribution of wealth managed by government agencies such as the IRS and California Board of Equalization.

3. Healthcare Access

Healthcare is an ever-growing need for the American public, as industry standards have consolidated providers and enhanced economic barriers to quality care. Minority communities bear the brunt of these practices, being unable to access quality healthcare plans, afford their prescriptions, or seek out emergency care. Bruin Democrats wholly and unequivocally support:

- Universal Health Care, both at the state and national level, with explicit support for an implementation of CalCare in California;
- Responsible Equity Training for providers mandated by the State of California to ensure well rounded care is accessible to all;
- Gender Affirming Care coverage by all insurance plans at the state and national level, removing barriers of access to all gender affirming care for Transgender, Gender Diverse, and Intersex (TGI) communities;
- Mental Health Care provided at an equal if not greater standard of quality to physical care with therapists and psychiatrists employed at varying levels of hospital and outpatient care facilities;
- Setting price maximums for medications beyond Medicare part D and other limitations, for medications such as insulin and others;
- State level production of certain life-saving medications such as insulin, modeling programs established by the State of California;
- Providing free and confidential access to treatment and screening services for sexually transmitted diseases/infections (STDs/STIs), along with HIV testing, screening, and treatment services.

4. Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Our country will only function appropriately with full gender parity in all economic and political realms. Women deserve every opportunity to be appreciated and heard in their livelihoods, and as political activists at the collegiate level, we ensure that women and their wellbeing are front and center in our minds and our priorities. As declared feminists within Bruin Democrats, we:

- Stand for the right to choose a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay, and oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right;
- Call for statewide and nationwide healthcare coverage of reproductive care, including abortion, access to contraceptives, over-the-counter birth control, affordable birth control, and menstruation-related hygiene products;
- Urge the President, Congress, and state legislatures to consider the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment as it has crossed the 38 valid ratification vote threshold with Virginia's ratification in January 2020;
- Urge legislation to eliminate the wage gap and ensure pay equity regardless of gender;

- Address issues of misogyny and denial of rights and opportunities on campus at UCLA, including issues of discrimination that occur within the democratic community on campus;
- Recognize that violence, abuse, and harassment, domestic or otherwise, are social plagues that women deserve freedom and protection from at all costs;
- Call for the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, so women may bring their abusers to justice in civil court;
- Support efforts to combat human trafficking of women across Los Angeles, noticing the unique trend California has in being a target for trafficking networks;
- Advocate for more women to enter the political force by running for office, engaging in campaigns, and working in paid capacities in legislative and nonprofit sectors;
- Guarantee paid parental leave of at least year and provide universal childcare in accordance with standards for a developed nation;
- Call for the abolition of the tax on menstruation products as “luxury items”.

5. Transportation

Transportation is an issue closely linked to environmental and housing policy. Increasing public transportation and walkability of cities is a key way to find solutions to a plethora of larger issues. With UCLA centrally located in Los Angeles, yet severely restricted from the public transit network, Bruin Democrats will:

- Work to support heavy rail transportation access and mobility through West Los Angeles, with a strong focus on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor and Purple Line Extension;
- Recommend improvement of the mobility, accessibility, and safety of the LA Metro system, highlighting the effectiveness of fare removal along with safety ambassador programs on LA Metro;
- Defend public transit networks for bus, microtransit, and protected bike lanes;
- Support legislation that will lead to phasing out gasoline powered automobiles including the following:
 - Support subsidies for electric vehicles;
 - Fund the building of necessary infrastructure for electric vehicles;
 - Ensure policies that help end gasoline powered transport are not going to harm working class individuals in the short term.

6. Education Reform

Education is the key to economic and social mobility within the United States, and as college students and stakeholders in education policy at the state level, we believe an increase in funding for all areas of education protects children and uplifts minority communities to have equal access to social services and economic opportunities. We also identify that teachers, stewards of education for hundreds of thousands of children throughout California, are severely under attack

and underappreciated in our policy choices made in the Democratic Party. In order to support these populations and advocate for robust educational reform, Bruin Democrats stands for:

- An increase in per pupil spending in California for public schools;
- Funding for public schools coming primarily from the state level as opposed to property taxes, so that low-income communities get equal access and opportunities;
- A decrease in primary and secondary school class sizes to ensure student to teacher ratios are stable and allow teachers to promote the education of their students with equal attention and results;
- Providing free programs before and after school, both academic and extracurricular;
- Ensuring we have rigorous, evidence-based curriculum standards that prepare students for college and the workplace;
- Provide career technical education for students who seek out careers in trade labor for economic and social stability;
- Specific medically accurate mandates for sex education and refrain from abstinence only programs;
- Encouraging the pursuit of student loan forgiveness;
- Supporting a liveable wage and support for school teachers and faculty.

7. Foreign Policy and International Relations

It is abundantly clear that youth advocates, young democrats across the country, and members of this club are well aware of the consequences of militarization and involvement in foreign affairs by the Government of the United States. While the security of our country, its nationals and its interests are of great importance, the United States holds a unique position of responsibility when engaging in foreign affairs. Bruin Democrats seeks to support federal candidates and policy stances that:

- Hold our allies accountable to democracy and peace;
- Keep NATO unified, ensuring the threat of war and armed conflict is deterred by a strong security alliance that does not splinter;
- Support demilitarization and divestment from the military industrial complex, highlighting the history of corporate and federal contracting that uses public funding to engage in war crimes and disproportionate uses of force;
- Promote diplomacy and tactful partnerships with our competitors to fulfill the sustainable development goals of the United Nations;
- Support and advocate for human rights across the globe.

8. Criminal Justice Reform

Criminal Justice has long disproportionately focused on the mistreatment of BIPOC communities by law enforcement. With an significant increase in the prison population since the beginning of the War on Drugs in the 1980s, several key reforms have been emphasized as necessary to reduce crime and promote restorative justice. When evaluating the criminal justice stances and effects

that candidates and proposed legislation will have both in California and Los Angeles, Bruin Democrats will:

- Exclusively support a federal and state ban on capital punishment;
- Encourage mental health initiatives and social work care in probationary departments at the state and local level;
- Unwaveringly be in favor of legalization of marijuana and removal of state and federal drug-related charges on marijuana;
- Call for the funding of public defenders to be well staffed and equipped to dedicate time and effort to each case they encounter;
- Recommend the end of cash bail;
- Urge all elected officials representing the UCLA community to:
 - Eliminate slave labor in prisons;
 - Remove private prisons from public usage or contracting;
 - Ensure humane criminal conditions and end solitary confinement in all prison systems;
- Support Reproductive Health Care for incarcerated women, including pre- and post-partum care, access to contraceptives, and menstruation-related hygiene needs;
- Call for ending qualified immunity for government officials;
- Support creating an easier, more straightforward process for filing and winning civil rights lawsuits.

9. Immigration and Refugee Rights

As residents of the most diverse state in the country, with several industries and education pathways uplifted and supported by migrant communities, Bruin Democrats recognizes the immense impact migrants have had in California, and especially Los Angeles. We also recognize the enormous difficulties that migrant communities face when attempting to climb the economic ladder and achieve the American dream. As such, Bruin Democrats:

- Opposes any political efforts to incarcerate, indemnify, wrongfully deport, or otherwise mistreat migrant communities of all ethnicities and nationalities;
- Calls for a national amnesty of all undocumented individuals to gain a pathway to citizenship, with special attention to DACA recipients and migrants whose primary language is not English;
- Recognizes that no human is illegal, and all deserve a country to call home and proudly participate in the economic, political, and social structure;
- Condemns the lack of humanity and due process in immigration proceedings, particularly highlighted in the Trump Administration with unsanitary detainment facilities and unregulated court hearings for migrants seeking asylum;
- Urges federal, state, and local support for Sanctuary Cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco to protect individuals from detainment due to immigration status.

10. Voting Rights and Civic Engagement

Protecting voting rights and promoting civic engagement are essential elements of ensuring that our elections reflect the interest of the American people. We believe elections should be accessible to all citizens regardless of race, income, disability status, geography, or English language proficiency, and fight to protect our fundamental right to vote. As such, Bruin Democrats supports:

- Making Election Day a federal holiday to allow all working class citizens and families the ability to vote without time restrictions;
- Promoting voter accessibility and registration, including by allowing vote-by-mail ballots and removing voter ID laws;
- Advocating for youth voter accessibility for those turning 18, nearly achieved in California in 2020 with Proposition 18;
- Anti-Gerrymandering Reforms to prevent partisan gerrymandering and protect minority-majority districts, such as independent redistricting commissions to follow the rules of the Voting Rights' Act;
- Congressional action to overturn *Shelby County v. Holder*, which severely removed authority from the Department of Justice to enforce the Voting Rights' Act.

11. LGBTQ+ Rights

The LGBTQ+ Community is strong across the country, yet with increased diversity at UCLA, Los Angeles, and California, our club holds the rights of the LGBTQ+ Community with high importance. As a minority community that is consistently underrepresented, under threat of attack, and misunderstood, Bruin Democrats will take the following actions:

- Participate in public forums to protect students from parent notification policies, or “forced outing” in public and private schools;
- Work with LGBTQ+ organizations within the Democratic Party to ensure our LGBTQ+ members feel empowered and emboldened to engage in the political process;
- Engage in on-campus advocacy to protect the rights of LGBTQ+ students to feel safe on campus and to use facilities that match their gender identity;
- Bring attention to the needs of gender affirming healthcare not being covered under public health insurance;
- Support all relationship expressions, and emphasize marriage is a social construct that may not reflect the attitudes of family and social structure of many Queer and LGBTQ+ people.

12. Youth and Student Advocacy

As students, we recognize the importance of ensuring our school policies reflect our values. We believe in empowering student voices and investing resources into the growth and development of student advocacy skills. As such, Bruin Democrats supports:

- Student suffrage for school policies;

- Increasing outreach and resources to student organizations, especially at the high school level, to help them develop the skills they needed to advocate for themselves;
- Organizational collaboration with other on-campus organizations with like-minded political activism and agendas of change, as well as partnerships with off-campus organizations helmed by other youth activists;
- Voter outreach, marketing, and Get Out The Vote initiatives for the 18-25 voter cohort;
- Political professionalization of Generation Z and future generations;
- Institutionalizing knowledge on the democratic process and the functions within the California Democratic Party.

13. Housing and Urban Development

With the growing housing crisis in Los Angeles, we firmly believe that more action needs to be taken to ensure housing for everyone in our community. We believe that housing is a basic human right that should be affordable, accessible, and available to all. We also recognize the importance of racial equity and justice in housing. In order to achieve this, Bruin Democrats calls for our local and state officials to:

- Fund and build more affordable housing where it's environmentally responsible;
- Remove red tape and archaic zoning laws that historically and currently prohibit the building of new housing in areas with high population density or diversity;
- Increase tenant protections such as rent control, protections from landlords, emergency voucher availability, and guaranteed legal representation in eviction proceedings;
- Address urban blight in both residential and commercial real estate, citing the growing number of studies that show land rehabilitation reduces costs of living and reduces crime in residential areas;
- Responsibly and safely rehouse individuals in temporary and transitional housing in order to prevent poverty-related illness and death.

14. Technology and Innovation

Artificial intelligence, machine learning, and other new technologies present opportunities for growth and innovation. While we as students strongly support science and technology research, we believe these technologies should be limited to protect the privacy of users, protect the creative works of artists, protect vulnerable groups, and more. Bruin Democrats supports:

- Requiring bias testing of machine learning algorithms before release for use by the public or licensing to governments or other organizations;
- Increasing regulations that protect data privacy;
- Prohibiting the use of facial recognition technology by law enforcement;
- Requiring consent from the individual before their data is used for the creation of machine learning algorithms;
- Protection for artists from AI making derivatives of their copyrighted works;
- Investing more in science and technology research;

- The standardization of charging technologies and other auxiliary features similar to the EU's model.

15. Disability Rights

Disabled people are one of our nation's most vulnerable communities, waiting until 1990 for protection from discrimination on the basis of disability. With Bruin Democrats largely alert and aware of the varying ranges of disabilities, the large inaccessibility of UCLA's campus, and the wider need for disability inclusion in public and private spaces and sectors, Bruin Democrats will work to:

- Fortify and protect the disabled community on campus at UCLA, ensuring all of our events are accessible and advocate for facilities at UCLA to be increasingly accessible;
- Collaborate with on campus organizations to create programs that support disabled adults and help them with stable housing, and when possible, employment;
- Advocate for reducing education segregation, while providing all necessary accommodations, as much as possible so that everyone is able to learn from and interact with each other no matter their abilities;
- Recommend legal conservatorships be avoided when possible, and reforms should be made to protect the autonomy of disabled people and prevent abuse;
- Recommend limiting the use of involuntary hospitalizations for mental illness as involuntary hospitalizations are for emergencies only and should not be used to systematically institutionalize mentally ill people and deprive them of their right to make decisions about their lives and bodies;
- Ensure the disabled community is involved in policy decisions, endorsement considerations, and event planning.

16. Arts and Culture

Arts and culture organizations are crucial to the liveliness and heart of our society. They help stimulate local economies, improve community engagement, and create positive opportunities for our youth. As such, Bruin Democrats supports:

- Establish protections for cultural heritage in artistry;
- The health, wellness, economic stability and access to resources for individuals in the creative industries;
- Inclusivity within arts education, particularly in K-12 education to support music and arts of all cultures and expressions;
- Funding and assistance for small arts organizations, with emphasis on public extracurricular programs for children and youth in afterschool programs.