



# A Gut Reaction to Obesity: The Impact of Diet, the Microbiome and the Environment

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## The Event

The Health Care Symposium is an annual conference organized by students at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine for their fellow students, the broader UCLA community and the general public, with the intent of exploring a topic of importance to modern health care. The topic for the 2015 Health Care Symposium was “A Gut Reaction to Obesity: The Impact of Diet, the Microbiome and the Environment”.

## Objectives

- To provide a forum where undergraduates, medical students and graduate students can learn from established experts about the connections between food and health.
- To integrate basic science with clinical knowledge of food and diet, and to demonstrate how this knowledge can inform policy, consumer decision-making and personal lifestyle choices.
- To contribute a medical perspective to the valuable conversation about healthy living begun by the Healthy Campus Initiative at UCLA
- To bring together students, faculty and community members from diverse backgrounds to engage in a multidisciplinary conversation about food and health.

## Future Plans

A new group of student directors has been selected to organize next year’s Health Care Symposium on a topic to be determined. Feedback from this year’s symposium will be taken into consideration when planning the next event.

## The Speakers



### Michael Moss

Pulitzer Prize-winning author, *Salt Sugar Fat*

Keynote speaker Michael Moss presented an expose of how corporations knowingly use salt, sugar and fat—and the latest in food science—to addict us, and how we can fight back.



### Sarkis Mazmanian, PhD

MacArthur Genius grant winner  
Luis B. and Nelly Soux Professor of Microbiology, Caltech

Dr. Sarkis Mazmanian was scheduled to present a discussion of the science of the microbiome—the symbiotic bacteria that inhabit each of us and help us process our food. Dr. Mazmanian was unable to make it due to a family emergency.



### Emeran Mayer, MD, PhD

Executive Director, Oppenheimer Family Center for Neurobiology of Stress  
Co-director, CURE: Digestive Diseases Research Center at UCLA  
Professor, Departments of Medicine, Physiology and Psychiatry UCLA DGSOM

Dr. Emeran Mayer spoke about the mind-body connection and our “second brain”—the enteric nervous system which operates independently from the central nervous system.



### Paul Simon, MD, MPH

Director, Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Dr. Paul Simon gave a talk on the obesity epidemic, one of the most prominent public health issues of our time.



### Wendelin Slusser, MD

Associate Vice Provost, UCLA Healthy Campus Initiative

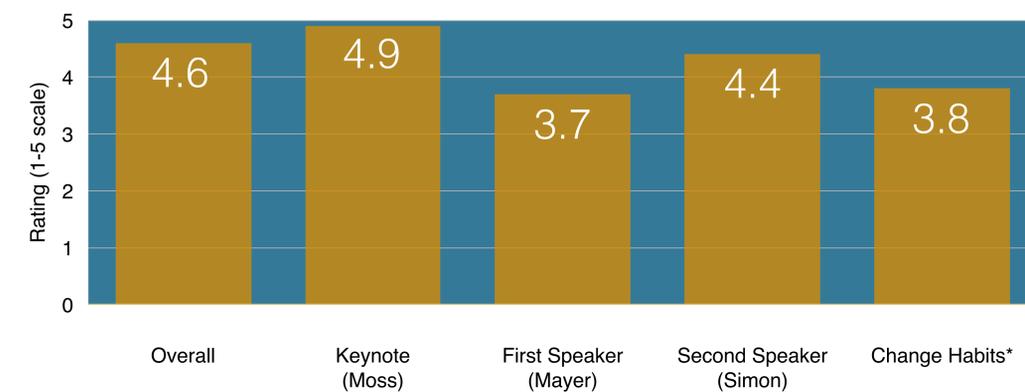
Dr. Wendy Slusser served as emcee for the symposium, and moderated the Q&A sessions with our speakers.

## Attendance and Feedback

Number of RSVPs: **740**

Number of attendees: **345**

Number of survey responses: **57**



\*How likely is what you learned at the Health Care Symposium to change your eating/purchasing habits?

### Positive feedback

- attendees enjoyed the exercise break
- keynote speech was universally praised

### Negative Feedback

- AV equipment malfunctioned
- too sunny for outside lunch
- first speaker was hard to hear/understand
- speaker cancellation
- check-in could be smoother

## Acknowledgements

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