



320 STEPHENS HALL

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
April 7, 2021

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We are reveling in each small step back to normal. One highlight: if you've been vaccinated for COVID-19 anywhere, you can upload your information to e-Tang and your campus access badge will stay green for 90 days without further COVID-19 testing. We anticipate additional steps in research and office reopening soon. Keep wearing your mask, and plan on in-person lunch or coffee with colleagues soon.

At the same time, challenges remain. A new and important risk is associated with the cyber attack involving University of California files which was announced last week. In today's environment it is easy to become complacent and dismiss alerts about cyber attacks. In this case there are [real risks](#). Hackers gained access to files and confidential personal information including names, birth dates, Social Security numbers and bank account information. They are threatening to publish, or have published, stolen information on the dark web. PLEASE sign up for the free Experian credit and identity monitoring service offered to all UC employees last week. Enter enrollment code JCZGTC333.

Divisional Council Meetings

Your Divisional Council met on March 8th, 15th and on April 5th. Discussions included items requiring the Division's approval and items where we gathered information from campus leaders.

Fall 2021 instruction

We heard reports from the EVCP and senior leaders on Fall instruction planning. As messaged directly to faculty and staff, the baseline plan is to reopen for in-person operations except for lecture portions of classes larger than 200. There will be a small number of exceptions, some depending on as yet unknown rules about masking. Also, if you are scheduled to teach in a room with course capture technology, you will be expected use it and make those recordings available to your students, or else move your course to a different room.

Discussion with outgoing Deans

Many of our Deans and key administrative leaders are stepping down this year. DIVCO invited some of the Deans to a discussion of how the Deans and Academic Senate could partner more effectively. Discussion was wide ranging. It was noted that the culture of participation in the Senate is uneven across campus and we discussed strategies for strengthening engagement.

Another idea that emerged was to provide an early orientation to the Senate for Deans, especially those arriving from outside the campus.

Future of Work

DIVCO heard from Chief People & Culture Officer/Assistant Vice Chancellor-Human Resources, Eugene Whitlock and Chief of Staff, Academic Planning, James Ford about their efforts to develop consensus around proposals to expand the amount and scope of work that staff are able to do remotely—once that becomes optional and not a requirement. We heard about competitive pressures in some key job categories that make additional flexibility essential to recruitment and retention of outstanding staff. Faculty expressed deep concern that this was a slippery slope to a culture that doesn't understand and advocate for the core mission of the University and that if done poorly it could erode the personal relationships that are so essential to getting some things done on campus.

Systemwide Policy on Research Data

DIVCO, informed by memos from individual faculty and the Committee on Research, discussed a proposed systemwide policy on research materials. Narrowly tailored, the policy appeared to be useful and well intentioned. However, we identified so many categories of research where the policy would be problematic (e.g. ethnographic diaries, community collaborative research, some human subjects research, and many others) and thus hamper faculty ability to do research that we asked for a substantial revisions with attention to the full scope of research in which we engage.

Systemwide Policy on purchase of goods and services

DIVCO reviewed changes to the systemwide policy on purchasing of goods and services. Members were alarmed at the length and complexity of the document. The specific changes at this moment were regarding “certified” small-businesses. DIVCO wondered whether these particular changes would add cost to the University through delays in time from request to order to delivery of purchases. DIVCO recommended that a larger review of the policy be undertaken with an eye to substantial simplification and streamlining.

MS in Range Management

Name changed to: MS in Rangeland and Wildlife Management

Systemwide policy on Policing

DIVCO reviewed proposed revisions to the systemwide policy on policing. While DIVCO considered the proposed changes to be directionally correct, we see them as far too modest. We recommended more rapid and comprehensive engagement with the recommendations from individual policing review panels at the campuses, centrally including our own Chancellor's Advisory Board on Policing, whose thoughtful advice we thought could be productively incorporated.

Budget

DIVCO heard an update from the Chancellor on short term budget tactics and the longer term outlook. In the longer term, the Chancellor was upbeat about philanthropic support for fellowships, scholarships that support the financial aid system, philanthropy supporting

construction of new housing for students and gifts that provide budget flexibility to individual schools and colleges. The core budget challenge remains: our expenses are rising about \$50 million a year faster than our revenues. In the short term, there are a number of sources of one-time funding from the state and federal government that will help to reduce, but not eliminate, the deep current fiscal year deficit. Significant austerity measures will need to remain in place in the next fiscal year as a result.

Announcements

April 29, Division meeting

The Spring Division Meeting will take place by Zoom on April 29th from 3-5 pm. The Division meetings are a critical aspect of shared governance, where we meet as a whole faculty in service of the campus. Please put it in your calendar and plan to attend!

This meeting we will take time to acknowledge the many efforts to hold body and soul together this last year and to create excellence in the face of exceptional challenges.

We will recognize colleagues for their teaching with an award aptly named by the Committee on Teaching, “Extraordinary Teaching in Extraordinary Times.”

Taking a cue from COT, we will also take some time to reflect on and acknowledge many others who made the last year a success in the face of so many challenges in a segment of the meeting we’ll call “Extraordinary service/leadership and collaboration in extraordinary times.”

Fiat Lux,

Jennifer Johnson-Hanks
Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate
Professor of Demography and Sociology

Ron Cohen
Vice Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate
Professor of Chemistry and Earth and Planetary Sciences