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Dear Senate Colleague,

I write to update you on what's been happening at the University of California.

I, [Kum-Kum Bhavnani](#), began my term as Chair of the Systemwide Senate in September 2019, following my year as Vice Chair. [Mary Gauvain](#) started her term as Vice Chair in September 2019.

1. Presidential Search

President Napolitano will step down on August 1st 2020. Janet Napolitano has made a clear mark on the UC by, for example, initiating the [2013 Carbon Neutrality Initiative](#). Among other topics/issues, the UC President has been committed to streamlining [transfer into the UC for students from the California Community Colleges](#) as well as systemwide SVSH policies, [Open Access](#), and for [DACA](#) students. The Chair of the Board of Regents, John A. Pérez, has initiated the search process for a new President of the UC. [Regents Policy 7101](#) lays out how a [Presidential search](#) is to be conducted, including the formation of an Academic Advisory Committee (AAC), chaired by the Systemwide Senate Chair, that will screen candidates to assist the Presidential search committee.

2. UCM Chancellor search

There is a search for the Chancellor of UC Merced. Per [Regents Policy 7102](#), the [Search Committee](#) has been appointed, with a five person Faculty Search Committee: three from UC Merced, one at-large member, and the Chair of the Academic Senate. The Search continues...more news as it emerges.

3. Standardized Testing Task Force (STTF)

Chair Emeritus Robert May (2018-2019) established this Task Force (TF), following a request from President Napolitano. It is co-chaired by Professors Eddie Comeaux and Henry Sanchez. In his [Charge to the STTF](#) Chair May asked the STTF to evaluate if, and how, prospective applicants and the University are served by our current admissions policies. In the past nine months the TF has analyzed and evaluated many different perspectives – research-based and otherwise – on standardized testing. Academic Council looks forward to receiving their recommendations in early 2020.

4. Employee Contributions to the UC Pension Fund

At the September 2019 Regents' meeting, the employers' contribution to the UC Pension Fund was increased. A possible increase to employee contributions was discussed at the November Regents' meeting; that decision has now been postponed to the July 2020 Regents' meeting. The Senate Task Force on Investment and Retirement (TFIR), chaired by Professor David Brownstone, conducted the Herculean task of analyzing the impact on the pension funds if employee contributions were increased. These analyses, along with comments from UCPB and UCFW, greatly helped my informal conversations with Regents and Chancellors about the advisability of implementing such an increase.

Please do discuss these issues with colleagues – with your Divisional Chairs and others.

Wishing you all the best for this holiday period,

Kum-Kum Bhavnani

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