



## Provost Newsletter — September 15, 2020

*September greetings to all of you. We are now fully engaged in our fall semesters across the University, still learning by doing in our online teaching modality. I am relieved that those colleagues who faced evacuation and disruption due to unprecedented wildfires this past week are on their ways home, for the most part. We continue to provide temporary housing and support for those who cannot yet go home. Please let my office know of any colleagues who are in need of assistance.*

*This Newsletter includes bios on our new colleagues who joined us as full time tenure track, term, and visiting faculty at New Faculty Orientation; updates on COVID 19 and financial planning; reminders about best practices for upcoming promotion and tenure reviews; and new about the leadership transition underway in the College of Arts and Sciences. But first, I'd like to share my thoughts on our University commitment to furthering diversity, equity and inclusion.*

### **Welcome to the Struggle**

As Provost, I urge the faculty, as well as the entire University, to acknowledge historical and current systemic racism in the United States, and its influence and impact on all universities, including ours. We should undertake a comprehensive consideration and examination of the University's operations, conditions, rules, policies, and practices at all different levels, in order to identify bias. We've addressed bias and fostered greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in the past. Speaking specifically to the 36 years I have been a member of the faculty and administration at Redlands, I note several examples: the Ford Foundation sponsored multicultural curricular reform when I joined the University in 1985; the USC equity scorecard initiative from 2003-2006; the creation of one of the earliest EdD programs in the nation focused on educational justice; the mandate for all faculty and staff to Eureka training; the establishment of the University-wide Council on Inclusiveness and Community; and the concerted efforts to diversify the faculty through recent changes to search processes that require greater attention to the dynamics of race, inclusion, and equity.

We are a better University because of what we have accomplished in the past. But it is not enough; I have no doubt that experiences of bias reported to us by faculty, students, and staff at Redlands should demand our attention. Complacency is not an option. Now we are called—as is the nation—to do more and to do our part to address fundamental conditions that continue to foster inequality, racism, and discriminatory criminal justice practices. I am reminded of an exchange in 2016 between alumnus Joe Richardson and one of our students at our Black Lives Matter forum. Our students lamented that the fight for racial justice seemed long and hard, with true racial justice elusive. Joe gently but firmly responded to the forum by saying “welcome to the struggle.” His was

a statement of encouragement, of mentorship, and a sobering reminder that this work is ever before us, now more than ever.

The goal, as I see it, is to find any aspects of ourselves that may adversely affect the admission of students, hiring of faculty or staff, equitable treatment, or progress and achievement of persons of color within a diverse University. Also, I hope we will identify those practices that may serve as positive examples of active inclusivity, which if practiced more broadly can facilitate personal, academic, and professional support and success for all members of the University community. We have already started to do so through the strengthened policy on discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct recently approved by the Board of Trustees; the Challenging Conversations series sponsored by senior diversity and inclusion officer Christopher Jones and the Office of Advancement in summer 2020; the Public Square Conversations on Social Justice sponsored by CAS; the Maopopo: Understanding the Native Hawaiian project; and the UCLA “Diverse Learning Environments Survey” to be conducted in fall and spring 2021. We will do more.

In order consistently to understand the DEI priorities of faculty, students, and staff, we will be in meetings...this is inevitable...it is how we collectively do our work. Along with my Cabinet colleagues, I’ve welcomed conversations, for example, with the faculty engaged in the ongoing initiative to achieve designation as an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). We expect to be in dialogue, and that dialogue requires a space in which we will acknowledge pain, anger, confusion and frustration, as well as suggestions, recommendations and ideas. Truth be told, we’re not well practiced at fostering authentic dialogue in the academy, especially when our working lives and relationships are at stake. The Black Lives Matter movement has called us to reckon with the costs of that lack of authenticity, as many movements for social and racial justice have done before. Fortunately, we have a common practice that should guide us: teaching and learning.

Let us meet this moment by facing the difficult conversations before us together, and let us do so without excluding or denigrating dissent and dissenters. This requires us to resist a national political context that does both. We must frame our work differently with courage, candor, and genuine openness to learning from one another. Formally, we depend as an institution on collaborative governance committees, as well as a senate and assemblies to focus our dialogue on curriculum, programs, policies, and communications. Less formally, conversations and meetings with faculty and staff organizations are also central to diversity, inclusion and equity initiatives. I deeply value what I have learned in recent meetings with the UCIC, (University Council on Inclusiveness and Community) and the BSFSAA (Black Students, Faculty, Staff, and Administrator Association). Our dialogues will help me be more effective as an inclusive leader, and members of these organizations also learned directly how administrators are addressing the concerns shared with us.

I enter any conversation or dialogue with the expectation that I will hear perspectives and positions that are different from my own, that will challenge me, trouble me, and even agitate. I anticipate that those conversations will speak to the objective and the subjective, to the head and the heart. When I am in the classroom, when it is my responsibility as an educator to foster challenging and

respectful dialogue with my students, these possibilities are uppermost in my facilitation of learning. So, too, it is my responsibility as Provost to do so with you now. To that end I invite you to include myself and my Cabinet colleagues in the transformational work ahead as we reckon with our past and our present. That is our shared responsibility.

*Kathy Ogren*

Provost, and Marin Campus Executive Director

## **COVID-19 and Financial Planning**

The College of Arts and Sciences announced yesterday that it will continue the rest of the CAS semester through remote teaching and learning, which ends Monday, November 30. We have also postponed the plans for on campus 2020 Commencement celebrations until the spring semester. The CAS announcement does not change plans for teaching in the other U of R schools, which currently remain online. Regional campus decisions will be subject to county guidance outside of San Bernardino.

Now we turn our attention to planning for contingencies that will shape the potential reopening of residential instruction in spring 2020. Our choices will be dictated by the color-coded threat level tier system recently announced by Governor Gavin Newsom. A “reopening” subcommittee of the Emergency Preparedness committee (EPP) has met regularly throughout the summer and fall semester to identify and prioritize our next steps. University Dean of Students Donna Eddleman and University Director of Planning Jordan Henk are preparing the documented protection plans we must present to the County of San Bernardino before any reopening could be authorized. The deans and I will be reviewing various scenarios this week, which will then be shared with faculty for comment and planning. The modeling undertaken in the fall to identify and plan for socially distanced classroom learning, as well as for instruction outdoors will help us in these efforts. Dean Eddleman and her team are reviewing safe housing and in residence options.

Similarly, VP for Finance Kevin Dyerly and I are meeting regularly with the Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) to review the 20-21 budget that will need final approval from the Board of Trustees in October. You can expect that we will soon be inviting faculty participation in structural budget analysis to help the BPC and others as we plan for the next three years.

## **New Faculty for 2020-21 — Welcome!**

**Yang Ai**, Assistant Professor, School of Education. Ph.D. (anticipated), Counselor Education and Supervision, University of Missouri; Ph.D. (anticipated), M.A., Education Administration and Economy, Wuhan University; M.Ed., Clinical Mental Health Counseling, University of Missouri; B.A., English Education, Hubei University of Education.

**Jon Berquist**, Visiting Professor, Graduate School of Theology. Ph.D., M.A., Vanderbilt University; B.A., Northwest Christian College.

**Trevor Browning**, Visiting Assistant Professor, Environmental Studies. Ph.D., Earth Sciences, Ohio State University; B.S., Marine Science, Eckerd College.

**Brian Furgione**, Assistant Professor, School of Education. Ph.D., M.A.T., University of Central Florida; B.A., Rutgers University.

**Hassan Hefzi**, Visiting Professor, Accounting. Ph.D., Business Administration, Arizona State University; M.A., Western Illinois University; B.S., University of Tehran.

**Deborah Huston**, Senior Lecturer, Mathematics and Computer Science. B.A., M.S., Mathematics, University of California, Riverside.

**Roy Jafari**, Assistant Professor, School of Business. Ph.D., Industrial Engineering, Mississippi State University; M.Sc., Industrial Engineering, University of Tehran; B.Sc., Industrial Engineering, Tafresh University.

**Brandon McCoy**, Visiting Assistant Professor, Economics. Ph.D., M.A., Economics and Statistics, University of Missouri; B.A., Lewis & Clark College.

**Andre Myers**, Assistant Professor, Music. D.M.A., M.M., Composition, University of Michigan; B.A., Composition, Eastman School of Music.

**Gregory Ramos**, Professor, Theatre Arts. M.F.A., B.A., Playwriting, School of Theater, Film, and Television, University of California, Los Angeles.

**Amarnath Ravva**, Visiting Assistant Professor, Creative Writing. M.F.A., California Institute of the Arts; B.A., University of California at Berkeley.

**Althea Sircar**, Assistant Professor, Political Science. B.A., Political Science, Duke University; M.A., Asian Studies, Cornell University; Ph.D., Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles.

**Samantha Sterba**, Assistant Professor, Economics. Ph.D., University of Massachusetts Amherst; B.A., Roanoke College.

**Kathryn Tucker**, Associate Professor, Race and Ethnic Studies. B.A., English and Comparative Literary Studies, Occidental College; Ph.D., Comparative Literature, University of California, Los Angeles.

## Leadership Transition in CAS

Dean Kendrick Brown of the College of Arts and Sciences will leave us in January 2021 to become the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Morehouse College. As stated elsewhere, I am very sorry to lose Kendrick from our academic affairs team, as well as his spouse, Hideko Sera, who has ably served the administrative team in the School of Education.

A search for an interim CAS dean launched a week ago. The Interim Dean appointment will be from January 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. A national search for the CAS Dean will take place in academic year 2021-22. The deadline for applications is 4:00 p.m. September 16, 2020. My office will announce a schedule of open forums for each candidate soon thereafter. We hope to conduct those forums during the week of September 21-25.

## Academic Affairs Updates

### **Office of Career and Professional Development**

The OCPD held its **Fall 2020 Career Alliance session** with guest speaker, Christine Cruzvergara, Vice President for Higher Education and Student Success at Handshake revealed **how COVID-19 is impacting many employer's recruitment efforts of college students**, and how we can best help UR students prepare for a tougher employment landscape. If you missed it, [check out the recording here](#).

**Participate in Career Week!** This October 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, faculty, staff, and students will be celebrating all things career! Some are hosting special guests from various industries to speak during class hours, while others are integrating class assignments to focus on different professions. [Complete the Google Form to participate!](#)

**The OCPD Career Studio will remain open** all year, albeit virtually. We recommend encouraging your students to schedule a session with our office at <http://go.oncehub.com/careerstudio>. Here's what students can get help with:

- Support Choosing a Major
- Graduate School Planning
- Internship/Job Searches
- Resume and Cover Letter Writing Guidance

**OCPD Fall Events:** While we might be virtual, we have lots of events this fall for students to enhance their professional development and connect with employers and alumni. We highly recommend sharing this calendar with your students and encouraging them to attend specific events relevant to their needs. We are hosting a Virtual Career & Internship Expo on October 7<sup>th</sup> from 10am-2pm – students can connect with ESRI, Amazon, JB Hunt, Childhelp, Target, and more! [Download a printable version of the calendar!](#)