



Provost Newsletter

April 6, 2020

Hunkered Down

Greetings to you all. As encouraged in last week's Newsletter, several of you shared with me greetings and updates of your own about experiences adapting to our new reality. I want to call out one in particular today, a collective communication sent to us by GST faculty called "[Take Heart](#)." I have especially appreciated two recommendations from the video. Rev. Yolanda Norton reminding students—and us—that "this is a moment, not a lifetime." And from Dr. Wendy Farley, remembering when the prophet Jeremiah despaired dark times. Wendy reflects Jeremiah was told to "buy a field." Because there's "gonna be a time when things are bought and sold again, so buy a field. And love each other in the meantime."

The next lifetime of this University will follow COVID19 and a structural deficit. It will. And it will not be entirely the same as this lifetime has been. We are now in "hyper planning" mode for that lifetime. Metaphorically, we are also deciding what "fields to buy," as in the investments for the future we need to make together.

As I noted last Friday to the Senate, the deans, Cabinet, trustees and I will be reaching out to Senators and to other faculty leaders through our existing shared governance committees over the next week. I will have specific proposals to share at the Assembly on April 10. I anticipate that we will also seek participation and consultation with you for additional planning specific to the structural deficit, to the ongoing launch of the new strategic plan, and for academics-specific initiatives. I expect this work to carry into May and certainly into the summer. This will raise questions for us to address about things like the possible need for summer stipends and Senator assignments as you transition in and out of governance roles in May. In the meantime, I welcome your questions now, as well as suggestions for how we will work together on the extraordinary matters.

All of the deans are reaching out to their faculty and students weekly. I know you are hearing from them within the individual College and Schools list serves. I have attached last week's updates from Andrew and Tom in the Updates listed below.

Please stay healthy and as sane as possible in these challenging times.

Kathy Ogren
Provost



[GST Take Heart Message](#)



Provost Updates

Senate Remarks April 3 (edited for length and context).

1. How are we managing COVID19?

How are we managing the crisis? The University began a Covid19 emergency management group sometime in early March. It has now been expanded and combined with our Emergency Preparedness Planning group (EPP) that meets for twice a week. This group includes all of Cabinet, our Public Health and Safety leaders, Associate Provost for Internationalization and the CAS Study Abroad/Study Away leads, Student Affairs, Facilities, Business and Finance, Health and Safety, Risk Management, CIO, Human Resources, and the Directory of Planning. Now that our purpose and our timing has been standardized, we're asking Mark Kumler, as your Senate President and Ben Aronson, as the Hunsaker Teaching Chair to join us. This will enhance faculty understanding and contributions to our management and coordination.

All University employees' compensation and benefits will be paid through April 26, 2020, and the University is following local county, state and federal stay at home directives until they are modified and/or cancelled.

2. What is ahead? A new normal and many unknowns, especially in enrollment.

We face unprecedented and uncertain times in the next 2-3 months and beyond. For us, the immediate focus remains the health and safety of employees, almost all of whom are teleworking. Our new and immediate normal—like all colleges and universities in the United States—has many unknowns, especially as we ride out the arc of COVID19.

Enrollment is top of mind for us, as this is the key season for our CAS enrollments, as well as the months in which the last cohorts of fiscal year 19-20 launch in our Schools. Those enrollment projections for the Schools of Business and Education, and the GST, have been revised downward modestly, given the uncertainty and potential financial impact to many of those prospective students. In the College the focus is on transitioning to a virtual yield strategy.

- Thirteen academic departments are recruiting through live virtual information sessions, including Johnston, Music, Psychology, Biology, and Business.
- Communications to prospective students and their families have included a faculty panel on the topic of COVID-19 its implications within the context of a Redlands/liberal arts & sciences education; eight interactive student panels; parent to parent webinars; virtual information sessions, virtual campus tours.
- Abbreviated virtual admitted student program on March 13 and April 4.
- Extended opportunity to all Southern California inquiries to apply late if they were reconsidering staying closer to home given COVID-19. Generated 47 new applications in four days after email deployed.

- Targeted outreach to admitted transfer applicants from current transfer students.
- Faculty members making phone calls to admitted students.
- Regional admitted student receptions (WA, OR, Bay Area, CO), will be converted to an online format.
- A transfer application session and transfer student panel will be offered to prospective transfer students.
- Students are being encouraged to join our class of 2024 pages on Facebook and Instagram to get students connected. More students have joined this week and we are seeing them interacting more with one another.
- An admitted student's day care package is being put together and sent to students who RSVP'd for the March event, and the team will follow up the same way for April.
- An "all things virtual" events page is being created so students can access recordings if they missed the "live" event.
- Phone appointments will be offered to Spanish-Speaking families.
- The enrollment deposit deadline is being extended for those that need it to June 1.
- The School of Business offered prospective students an opportunity to apply for a hardship "scholarship" (a discount).

Nonetheless, enrollment projections for the budget have been revised. In early March, we were -8% in FY applications. Currently projecting to get 3,300 FY admitted students, which is -6% from last year. If our yield holds steady, that is 675 FY students. It's too early to know full budget impacts because we don't know what the financial aid would look like. We are receiving requests to look at packages and increase them, and our competitors are doing so, too. We will model impacts that presume 5-15% additional negative impact. It is also too early to know how the recession will impact current students and their families with regards to financial aid, housing, room and board.

3. Structural Deficit

The Cabinet has met many hours to address the challenges of the structural deficit and COVID 19. Our COVID19 budget impact numbers are not final, as the Board must still approve a final policy on room and board refunds and other expenses are still being tabulated. However, what was once about a \$7m deficit has increased to \$10-12m when we include deferred maintenance, technology infrastructure needs and other longer term expenses.

Several Senators and faculty in attendance at the Senate meeting requested a definition of a structural deficit. It's a term that is used for business and government, so how does it apply to education? Here is how we defined it in the response to questions from the March 9 Presidential Forum shared with you last Friday. It provides a helpful starting point:

"A structural deficit is defined when the size of any enterprise (largely the number of employees and departmental activities) grows larger than its sources of revenue can sustain, which is for us tuition and related revenue. In the past several years, our non-

structural deficits were from huge enrollment variability year-to-year in CAS and SB. Now, the most probable projections don't see growth in enrollment able to overcome that variability. Instead, either the structure is too large, or the revenue is too limited. Demographic declines in enrollment, increasing need for financial aid for our students, and differing kinds of students are not new--they are a two-decade-long trend.

There are not national of industry norms for profit & loss for academic departments or offices of the University. Even if there were, every university has departments that "use" more resources than they generate revenue. In fact, many universities account for expenses in different categories, which make comparisons "apples to oranges." It's interesting to imagine how we could compare profits and losses on a department-by-department basis. How do you compare philosophy to physics? Or business schools to schools of music? If dollars of revenue, minus expenses was the only metric that drove us, we could have a university with a department of "Advancement," but no college.

These are understandable questions, given the definition of a structural deficit, that many people might be asking themselves. In our response, we are attempting to clarify that our decisions cannot be driven solely by comparing revenues to expenses; nevertheless, we do have to address these issues for the University as a whole."

The Cabinet is specifically reviewing about 25 short and midterm initiatives to address how we can reverse the structural deficit projected over the next 3 years and sustain financial health instead. Faculty will be invited to join us in specific curricular, program, faculty resource, and shared governance consultation and decisions. The BPC has had some preliminary conversations with senior leadership last week, deans will be working with their respective assemblies and leadership groups. I plan to have a summary of the initiatives we need to explore with you ready to share at the April 10 Assembly.

I don't have details today, but these are some categories to expect:

- What contingency plans can we make for any continued impacts from shortfalls in our enrollments throughout the next 18 months to two years?
- What program and curricular changes should be immediately under discussion?
- What creative curricular and program design innovations should we continue to pursue now that we have adapted instruction on the fly moved all instruction into technologically enhanced instruction? We currently have a combination of on-ground, online, and hybrid modalities. We expect students to continue to look for more of these options—how will we meet expectations and preserve our "personalized" and high quality education? What would we do if we are still required to remain socially distanced? This seems far-fetched to me personally, but it is under modelling across the country.
- How might faculty assignments and loads change in the future? Can we become more cross-unit and multidisciplinary in our programs? Can we make creative use of faculty profiles, affiliate, cross and joint appointments? Right now, I have asked that deans work with you to limit 20-21 visitors and identify instead adjunct faculty for courses.

My decision to hold off on announcing authorized searches for full time positions in 20-21 is also a part of this short term planning.

- How might student and academic services, including staff and administrative assignments, be reorganized for greater service and efficiency?
- What do we do best, what can we do better, what should we do differently, and what should we stop doing?

4. Commencements

Commencements have been postponed until October. They will coincide with Homecoming, an idea promoted by many alumni, families and at least some students. The GST will combine its 2020 and 2021 Commencements on Memorial Day weekend 2021. Most deans are planning some virtual recognition of graduates to coincide with the April 16-18 weekend.

Academic Affairs Updates

Updates from Deans



[Dean Wall's March 30 Message](#)



[Dean Horan's latest message.](#)

In addition to Dean Childers' [Take Heart](#) weekly communications, each dean is reaching out through email and videos to their faculty and students.

- Dean Wall continues the *Monday Morning Message* in the School of Education. **Update:** The School of Education is currently planning for a Commencement to be celebrated on Saturday morning, October 31.
- Dean Brown publishes daily messages, a *Connections* newsletter and update.
- Dean Horan is sending external communications via the website, landing pages, social media and Bulldog blog to continue to reach prospective students, as well as internal communications with faculty and staff including a virtual assembly planned for this week. In his [latest message](#), Dean Horan announces a COVID scholarship.

For Faculty

by Ben Aronson

1. There will be the weekly installment of a WebEx meeting to discuss distance teaching challenges and solutions with one topic (likely among others) being: ***how we plan on doing a final assessment of students if the syllabus called for something that is harder to do when not meeting face-to-face*** (exams? change to some other kind of written work? video contributions from students? allowing greater flexibility for how students might do final projects?). This will be held on Tuesday April 7th at 4:00 and can be joined using this link:

https://redlands.webex.com/meet/ben_aronson

2. I recommend looking at the following resource if you are in the midst of preparing for an on-line course that wasn't originally planned to be that way: <https://acue.org/webinars>.

Note that the radio button "Details and Registration" leads to a page that has some useful information and resources on that particular topic. And registration for the Webinars are free and quite straightforward. They will be useful for those with classes that start in the near future.

3. Shariq Ahmed in ACIT has developed a site to point you to various useful URLs to learn more about how to use WebEx. Here is the URL:

https://uredlands-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/shariq_ahmed_redlands_edu/EYhcopaknTFHvGA_c7o42sgBCF04A5-g3BWH9grhO3atAA?e=kWARQj

Military & Vertan Services

by Monique Pope,
Director

President Trump signed S.3503 into law on March 21, 2020.

Based on the new law, Post 9/11 GI Bill students who pursue resident courses converted to an online modality solely due to COVID-19 will continue to receive the Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) rate for resident training. The law only authorizes this special authority from March 1, 2020, to December 21, 2020. The new law applies equally to current and new students enrolled in the converted courses.

Note: Only applies to converted courses — online courses cannot be paid as resident courses.

**State Colleges, K-12 Systems Issue
Joint Statement
on College
Admissions and
Placement
Agreements**

**New accommodations mark historic coming together of
California's education leaders**

The following is a joint statement from the California State Board of Education, California Department of Education, California State University, University of California, California Community Colleges, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities:

California's K-12 and higher education communities are committed to helping high school and community college students overcome university admissions and placement challenges presented by the suspension of in-person instruction.

The State Board of Education (SBE), California Department of Education (CDE), California State University (CSU), University of California (UC), California Community Colleges, and independent nonprofit colleges and universities have been working together to understand and address the heightened concerns of students and families and the difficult conditions of this time.

As described in guidance from each of the sectors, the SBE and CDE have identified means to support:

- A range of distance learning
- Strategies for flexibility in grading
- Guidance for adjustments of local graduation requirements

The higher education community has offered assurances regarding:

- Re-evaluation of the financial needs, as well as the eligibility for federal and college financial aid, for families whose circumstances have changed;
- Acceptance of Credit/No Credit grades in lieu of letter grades for A-G high school courses completed in winter/spring/summer 2020;
- Flexibility associated with the receipt of official transcripts and confirmation of admissions offers, including deferments of deposits or fees where needed;
- Flexibility and support for students currently enrolled in dual enrollment course offerings;
- For community college students seeking to transfer to a four-year university: Acceptance of Credit/No Credit in lieu of letter grades in "Golden Four" and General Education/prerequisite

courses completed at a community college in winter/spring/summer 2020.

These are represented in [guidance from each of the sectors](#), available on the [CDE COVID-19 web page](#). We also encourage interested parties to contact university admissions offices with specific questions.

As educators, we understand the anxieties triggered by the many uncertainties students now face and trust these accommodations provide a measure of relief. We look forward to the days far past this pandemic when we can welcome back our students and greet new ones with a handshake or a hug.