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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
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August 29, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

As incoming Chair of the UC Merced Academic Senate, I am delighted to welcome both the new and the returning faculty to what we hope will be a productive academic year. First, I would like to thank all our colleagues who served in Senate Committees last year and, particularly, the Chairs of those Committees. I also want to thank former senate chair Peggy O'Day for her leadership, dedication, and enthusiasm. Her goal of strengthening shared governance and of clarifying governance processes in our Schools and Graduate Groups has helped create a base on which to build this year. This academic year, we hope to continue improving the communication among the Academic Senate, campus administration, and Schools' Executive Committee by fostering a culture of mutual respect and open exchange.

As a legislative body run by the faculty, the Academic Senate will not only make decisions on academic matters but will also advise the administration on faculty appointments and promotions as well as on budget, space, and financial planning. It is thus a venue through which the faculty make sure that shared governance continues to be observed. By sharing the management and government of the University, UC Merced's faculty will have the opportunity and responsibility to build an even better campus for our 6000 students. For this reason, the Senate leadership thanks all the colleagues who have agreed to serve in Committees and encourages others to follow in their footsteps in the upcoming years.

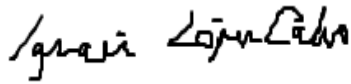
With the help of our new Senate Director, Dejeuné Shelton, and her outstanding team, we will try our best to serve the University by representing your interests and by communicating your concerns, always making sure that decision-making processes are transparent. At the same time, we will welcome your participation, input, and feedback in Senate surveys and requests. The engaged participation of our faculty will lead our campus in the right direction, serving the academic mission of the University of California. More importantly, it will help us serve our students. We will continue to recognize and celebrate diversity. As you know, Merced is the most diverse campus in the University of California, with a student population that is 35.2% Hispanic, 33.6% Asian-American, 18.2% White, 8.4% African-American, 1.0% Native American, and 0.8% International. Nearly 60% of our undergraduates are first-generation college students.

In close dialogue with our administrative leadership, the Academic Senate will help develop a new strategic plan for our campus, one of the keys to our continued success as an institution. We will try to improve graduate student recruitment in our campus, as we aim for 530 faculty, 1,000 graduate students, and 9,000 undergraduates by 2020. To achieve this goal of having enough advisers for our graduate student population, our campus will have to rebalance the ratio of tenured and tenure-track faculty to lecturers. The Academic Senate will also try to find solutions for our well-known space limitations. Along with the construction of new buildings, Chancellor Dorothy Leland and her team have decided to consolidate administrative personnel off campus and to create a higher density, smaller footprint for our campus that will help reduce the cost of expanding infrastructure.

In these and all our endeavors, it is our goal to make sure that the Academic Senate represents the voice of the faculty in our campus. We therefore hope that you feel confident in communicating your concerns to your

School's Executive Committee, the Chairs and members of the Senate's Standing Committees, the Division Council's Vice-Chair, Jian-Qiao Sun, or me. For information on Senate activities and current membership, you can check the [Academic Senate website](#) , which includes the monthly Senate Newsletter. Please feel free to give us feedback (senatechair@ucmerced.edu) on ways to improve our communication and efficiency. It is in this spirit of shared governance and a culture of dialogue that the Senate leadership and the Standing Committees look forward to working closely with our Chancellor, Provost, Deans, Graduate Groups, and School Executive Committees.

Fiat Lux,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ignacio López-Calvo". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ignacio López-Calvo, Chair
Merced Division of the Academic Senate