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Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to update you on the Senate's work. But first I want to congratulate everyone on completing another academic year. I wish each of you a summer that is restorative and hopefully productive.

As usual, there are many interesting things happening on the Merced campus. One of the most interesting was the announcement of our next chancellor, Dorothy Leland. When Chancellor-designate Leland visited campus on May 19, one of her first meetings was with Divisional Council. In general, we talked about building a research university. We discussed the importance of hiring faculty in numbers that match student numbers, and the importance of growing the graduate student numbers. We discussed resource limitations such as space and faculty start-up funds. We discussed support for assistant professors and what is starting to be an issue on our campus, faculty retention. In general, the meeting had a collegial tone and made me optimistic that the Senate and our future Chancellor will have an excellent level of communication. I am sure you join me in eagerly awaiting what UC Merced and its new Chancellor will accomplish in the upcoming years.

With regard to the faculty retention issue, I think it is time to start a campus conversation. Although the number of faculty leaving is still small compared to other campuses, there's been a recent increase. To put the question positively, what can we (faculty and the administration) do to retain colleagues who consider moving elsewhere? I see this is a broad issue—how can we improve UC Merced as a workplace for all faculty? Here's a recent article that covers both monetary and non-monetary aspects of retention < http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/05/31/public_universities_hit_with_economic_and_political_uncertainty_face_loss_of_top_faculty >. Please share your thoughts with me or any member of Divisional Council—I suspect that this issue will continue to come up.

Undergraduate Council (Susan Amussen, chair) has had a busy year, with its Program Review Sub-Committee (Gregg Camfield, chair) conducting three program reviews: environmental engineering, physics, and writing. Program Review is staffed by the Senate Office, in particular someone many of you know, Fatima Paul. Fatima has just won the Staff Assembly's Staff Excellence Award. She received more nominations than anyone in the history of the award. This is a very well-deserved honor.

One development that I would like to highlight is that Undergraduate Council has developed a Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award for Lecturers, to complement the Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award for Senate faculty. Given that so much outstanding teaching on our campus is provided by lecturers, establishing this award is overdue. EVC/Provost Alley has agreed to provide financial support for the award, which will first be given in the spring of 2012.

Recently, Undergraduate Council made an important decision, which was to eliminate the requirement for CORE 100 (although the course may still be offered in the future). I hope that this decision will have a positive effect in terms of allowing us to concentrate our teaching resources elsewhere.

Graduate and Research Council (Chris Kello, Chair) has had an equally busy year. This committee reviewed an astonishing number of award applications. For example, 73 graduate students were given research awards of \$7500. Likewise, 24 faculty were given summer research awards of up to \$5000. Finally, Graduate and Research Council has taken the lead in reviewing applications for the Hellman Family Faculty Fund, which will provide \$20,000 in extra research support for second- and third-year assistant professors, with five awards per year for the next five years.

To conclude, please feel free to contact me or any member of DivCo to raise issues of importance.

Sincerely,



Evan Heit, Chair
Merced Division of the Academic Senate
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Divisional Council Members 2010-2011

Evan Heit, Chair, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
Anne M. Kelley, Vice Chair, School of Natural Sciences
Nella Van Dyke, Secretary, Rules/Parliamentarian, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
Susan Amussen, UGC Chair, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
Thomas Hansford, CoC Chair, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
Tom Harmon, CAP Vice Chair, School of Engineering
Shawn Kantor, CAPRA Chair, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
Chris Kello, GRC Chair, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
Ignacio Lopez-Calvo, At-Large, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
David Noelle, At-Large, School of Engineering/School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts