

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE  
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September 11, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to a new year on campus! I hope you had some restorative time over the summer.

The Senate's goal for this year, growing out of last year's [periodic review](#), is to get better at doing shared governance: really working collaboratively with the administration to address problems. We are doing that with three major initiatives, most of which will involve a wide group of faculty along with the administration. These initiatives are:

1. Academic planning: The debate on the General Education proposal last spring made it clear that one of our challenges was that people did not know what resources they would have at the end of 2020. Absent that knowledge, faculty, particularly in impacted programs, were uneasy about the pedagogical resources they would have. Our academic planning process will address those concerns, as well as concerns of small programs that are neither practically nor intellectually sustainable.
2. School Reorganization: As we move to a more traditional departmental structure, we need to figure out how staff support for the work of departments is provided and managed both efficiently and effectively. What stays in the Deans offices? What is localized? What gets centralized?
3. Budget policy: What are our instructional budgets? How are resources allocated? As these budgets are devolved to departments, this question will be important. Budget policies to be developed include carry forward, as well as the distribution of funds from indirect cost return and future revenue generating programs.

These three initiative intersect in multiple ways. They will also engage many of us in thinking collaboratively about our future. Our goal is to have drafts of each by the beginning of the spring semester, so we can all review them and think through the ways they connect.

While these big processes are going on, the Senate keeps doing its work. The General Education Subcommittee (GESC) is working on rolling out our new program, and making the process as simple as possible for faculty members. The Undergraduate Council (UGC) already has reviewed a proposal for a Philosophy major, and Graduate Council (GC) is reviewing proposals for several new graduate programs. UGC and GC are also leading the rollout of Curriculog, which will manage both the undergraduate and graduate CRF process, and the catalog. Paperwork for our first professional degree program is being submitted to the Office of the President. Faculty Welfare is completing analysis of the survey on afterschool childcare, and also working with the administration on issues relating to free speech on campus. There's more, of course, but this gives you a sense of the range of things we are addressing.

We will keep you updated on the three big initiatives, and we look forward to your contributions to them. As you know, the Senate is all faculty, not just those on committees. It works because of the things that all of us do together.

I look forward to working with you this year.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Amussen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "S".

Susan Amussen, Chair  
Merced Division of the Academic Senate