



Academic Senate

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

October 2, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the start of our new academic year. After sustained and intense work on the part of Senate staff and our IT support, we have an engaging new [Senate website](#). I hope you will enjoy browsing through it.

The 2014-2015 academic year is a period of hope and excitement for our teaching, research and public service, and also offers much for us to do. We had 66,803 applicants in 2013. The average GPA for incoming first year students is 3.98, we admit high quality transfer students, non-resident undergraduates now constitute approximately 8 to 9% of our undergraduate student body, and the enrollment melt rate was at its lowest this year. To top it all, the diversity of our student body keeps getting better. This is very good news for our teaching and research, and encourages for UC Santa Barbara students to study hard in our vibrant academic community.

You will have read Chancellor Yang's [letters of June, July and September](#) that inform us of the work undertaken by the campus in order to move towards ensuring that Isla Vista is a safer community. I have also worked with the Trustees Advisory Committee on Isla Vista Strategies throughout the summer, whose report will be available in late October 2014. In addition, Associated Students and Student Affairs have created a [Gaucho pledge](#). Students are now also required to indicate they have read the [Campus Regulations](#) which include the Student Code of Conduct and which covers plagiarism, behaviors on- and off-campus, and similar, so that students know what is expected of them.

I have been asked by many faculty as to what we, as faculty, might do to support campus efforts. During the past few months, I have discussed with some (including Professors Omer Blaes, Denise Montell, Harry Nelson, Victor Rios, Tim Sherwood, Paul Spickard, Richard Watts and Kim Yasuda, as well as Zaveeni Khan Marcus, in Student Affairs and Dr. Denise Stephens, the University Librarian) to see how Senate faculty could be more involved in Isla Vista. I have also met with Isla Vista Parks and Recreation, long-term residents' groups, and the Isla Vista Community Network, among others. Of course, many faculty already conduct office hours, research projects and classes in Isla Vista. Perhaps even more of us could do this. Our work could make a contribution towards stabilizing Isla Vista so that the community, in addition to being a place for living and relaxation, develops into an explicit space of study and intellectual activity. To that end, and with the support of the Office of the Chancellor, Senate faculty have initiated new Isla Vista-based projects for students in Engineering, Computer Science, Art, and in the Social Sciences, in addition to the ones that already exist. These will start in the coming week or so in order to encourage and strengthen faculty-student scholarship and engagement in Isla Vista. In addition, Senate has supported [IV First Friday: Lounge at the Loop](#), a Community-Campus Arts and Culture Initiative, led by Professor Yasuda in the Department of Art, whose pilot run will be on Friday October 3rd. Please do come if you are able.

More ideas are still needed. Senate will hold a lunchtime Faculty Forum from 12 noon to 2 pm on October 15 at the UCEN Harbor Room, where these and other initiatives will be briefly presented, and we can then discuss other thoughts that may emerge. If you have ideas for developing faculty-student collaboration in Isla Vista, please let me know, either in advance of, or at, the October Forum. Please do mark this date in your calendars.

Finally, I want to thank all faculty who offer their service to Senate through our Committee structure so that we continue to be active in shared governance. And if you have not yet volunteered, and wish to do so, please do go to [this page](#) to see what part of Senate is of most interest for you.

All the best for the Fall and the coming academic year.

Kum-Kum Bhavnani
Professor, Sociology
Chair, Academic Senate | 805.893.4511 | bhavnani@ucsb.edu
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