April 21, 2010

Humanities Faculty, Staff and Students

Re: Humanities Division Budget Reduction for 2010-11

Dear Humanities friends and colleagues,

As you may know, EVC/CP David Kliger, in his message of April 1, 2010, announced the budget reduction targets for all campus units for the upcoming academic year, 2010-11. The Humanities Division is slated to receive a cut of $483,000 or 2.7% of its current operating budget.

In planning our response to this decision, I have made several heuristic assumptions and identified several guiding strategies.

I am assuming 1) that there will be mid-year cuts in 2010-11; 2) that the cuts for 2011-12 will be of the same order or greater than those set for 2010-11; and 3) that the budget for 2012-13 will still require cuts but hopefully of a much lower amount.

For those who believe that the recession is “over,” I refer you to the UCLA-based Anderson Forecast, which last month declared a “bipolar economy” with a growing GDP but lagging job creation. In particular, the California unemployment rate is unlikely to dip below double digits before 2012, resulting in lower tax revenues and continuing deficits for the state government.

My guiding strategies, given these assumptions and barring radical change, will be 1) to maintain the division’s liquidity in order to meet these anticipated future costs; 2) to mitigate reductions in services as other campus units slash their budgets and eliminate staff; and 3) to invest strategically in rebuilding and rebalancing our curricular and research capacities.

The latter aim requires the ongoing pursuit of the ATFR process to a wider level of consensus and resolution. Based on my reading of the many thoughtful and thought-provoking responses to the initial ATFR report, I do not feel that we have reached sufficient consensus, and therefore, I see no alternative to pursuing the current “default” scenario, whereby FTEs vacated by retirement or separation will not be replaced. I will
write a more detailed response to ATFR and suggestions for how to move forward in a subsequent message.

To the extent that we can maintain liquidity from these opened provisions, I will strive to minimize negative impacts on students and faculty by supplying funds to recall selected emeriti faculty, to add T’Aships for impacted courses, to support the hiring of targeted postdoctoral teaching fellows and visiting professor appointments. Priority funding in these categories will go to departments that can demonstrate critical curricular need as well as documented measures taken to achieve greater efficiency in the deployment of their ongoing faculty (through streamlining of the curriculum, parsimonious managing of course release and leaves, increased output by ladder faculty in numbers of courses taught, total numbers of students taught, and increased breadth of curricular offerings, etc.).

That said, the divisional reduction will take place by the following measures, which remain consistent with the earlier scenarios, detailed in my response of January 28.

As of June 30, the division will return $13,175 in I&R support dollars.

As of June 30, the division will return $42,500 of it remaining cache of $91,300 in upgrade funds.

As of June 30, the division will return 7 FTE worth $427,325, for a grand total of $483,000.

Let me add how very much I appreciate the profound sacrifices and selfless energy that characterizes the indomitable spirit of the Humanities at UCSC as we weather the ongoing fiscal crisis in the university and state of California.

Yours,

[Signature]

Georges Van Den Abbeele
Dean, Humanities Division

CC: Chancellor George Blumenthal
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