

February 5, 2016

Academic Senate  
Santa Cruz Division

Dear Colleagues:

I'm writing to encourage you to join fellow Senate members at this term's Academic Senate meeting, scheduled for Friday, February 12, at 2:30 in the Stevenson Event Center. I will very briefly highlight some of the key topics on the agenda, which may be viewed at <http://senate.ucsc.edu/senate-meetings/agendas-minutes/2015-2016/2016-February-12-Meeting/index.html>.

A number of critical issues for both the near future and the longer term trajectory of the campus and the university figure centrally in our discussions, and I strongly encourage you to join the discussion.

Central among these issues is the report of the system-wide Retirement Options Task Force (ROTF), a complex and consequential document that responds to legislative pressures at the state level. The new policy (also known as the third retirement tier) would come into force July 1, 2016, and so would not affect the benefits of anyone currently employed by UC. At the same time, this proposed tier – in whatever configuration appears – will profoundly affect the benefits we will be able to offer future colleagues and through that UC's capacity to recruit and retain the very strongest faculty and staff. You all received an e-mail from the Academic Senate on January 20<sup>th</sup> with a brief discussion of the quite abbreviated discussion process as well as links to the report itself, to a summary account from UCOP, and to Academic Council Chair Dan Hare and Vice Chair James Chalfant's very useful "Guide to reviewing the recommendations of the ROTF." If you haven't had the opportunity to consult these documents, I'd strongly encourage taking a look before the meeting. There is also a webinar hosted by the Office of the President to discuss the report and respond to questions. To join the webinar, on Wednesday, February 10 from 1:00-2:30pm, go to <https://www.readytalk.com> and enter the participant code: 5854736. Senate committees have been discussing the ROTF in great detail. Individual committee responses and my response on behalf of the division (the divisional response may be viewed at - <http://senate.ucsc.edu/archives/Current%20Issues/UCSC%20Academic%20Senate%20Response%20to%20Retirement%20Options%20Report.pdf>) have just been forwarded to Academic Council. James Zachos (Chair, CFW) and Abel Rodriguez (Chair, CPB) will be helping field questions during the discussion of the third tier during the February Senate meeting.

CFW will also be reporting to the Senate on several other significant topics, including child care and faculty partner/spouse hiring resources. They will also present the results of CFW's most recent faculty salary analysis.

CEP is moving legislation to establish a separate Committee on Courses of Instruction to complement the policy-focused work of CEP. Chair John Tamkun will also report on CEP's reconsideration of UCSC writing general education requirements.

Finally, there are two important pieces of new business. The first is a request that the Senate form a Special Committee on Athletics to consider the future course of UCSC's NCAA teams and report back in the spring. Second, it is clear that UCSC is operating at capacity in terms of classroom scheduling and that the mandated enrollment growth over the coming years will put considerably greater stress on current space. VPDUE Hughey has developed and circulated to the Senate a proposed revision of instructional time slots. (Senate committees responded to an earlier version of this proposal, responses linked in the Senate Call). VPDUE Hughey and University Registrar Sanger will present an overview of these proposed changes at the Senate meeting; Senate discussion of such a significant possible change is crucial.

As you can see, it is a full agenda, and one that addresses policies and practices that will have long term effects on the campus. I strongly encourage you to join us on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Don Brenneis".

Don Brenneis, Chair  
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Santa Cruz Division