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Letter - Spring Semester 2021

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Oct. 8, 2020

Dear Pacific students, faculty and staff,

The extraordinary attributes of our people and our university, which make University of the Pacific such a special place, have been on full display this semester.

Our students are excelling in new learning environments and engaging in a wide array of co-curricular activities despite the physical limitations posed by remote learning. Our resilient students are not letting this historic global pandemic stop them from pursuing their education—and their dreams.

Our faculty are teaching and creating Pacific learning experiences at the highest levels even though they are delivering their courses in very different ways. Like our students, our creative faculty refuse to let COVID-19 stop them from pursuing their passion—teaching our students and growing the next generation of leaders.

Our staff are going over, around and through any COVID-19 obstacles so they can deliver their trademark quality and caring support of our students and faculty. Like our faculty and students, COVID-19 is no match for our dedicated staff.

We are so proud of all that you are doing in this, the most unusual and challenging semester in the 169-year history of California's first chartered university.

While everyone has continued to perform at the highest levels in this remote environment, we also know that you are all excited about returning to our three campuses. We are too. Please allow me to give you some updates as we look ahead toward January.

Right now, we plan to be back on our campuses in January, as long as conditions allow us to safely do so. Decisions about each campus will be guided in part by what the public health authorities allow in the counties of San Joaquin, Sacramento and San Francisco. We believe we will be able to return in the new year safely, but please

understand that we cannot guarantee that we will indeed return. As we have seen over the past eight months, COVID-19 is unpredictable. As you know, until COVID-19 took a dramatic turn for the worse in our communities in June, we were ready to execute our plan to return this fall.

Assuming we can indeed return in January, it still will not be business as usual. We will implement the **safety protocols** that we have already designed. Much of the **Pacific health and safety plan** already has been put into place, while some elements will be modified as research on COVID-19 evolves. We will update you as we get closer to the new year.

The classroom experience also will be different. Many of our courses will return to our classrooms, labs and studios, but not every student will be able to attend every class in person every day. We will have a rotation so we can safely socially distance within our learning spaces. On days when students are not in class, they will be attending remotely, as we are doing now. Additionally, many students who cannot come back to our campuses, or prefer not to return in January, can continue to take their classes remotely (although attendance may be required for some of our professional and graduate programs with clinical and lab experiences).

While many courses will be taught in the HyFlex model, some will remain fully remote. That will be the choice of individual faculty members, some of whom will not be able to be on campus because of health, family or personal reasons. Staff assignments will come as we get closer to January so we can better assess COVID-19, but we likely will keep to a reduced staff presence as long as COVID-19 continues to be an issue.

And please know that, unfortunately, all of this is subject to change, depending on COVID-19. If we get closer to the start of classes in January and conditions are deemed dangerous, we will remain remote, despite our desires to be back on our campuses. We must put the health and safety of our community members first.

For undergraduates interested in returning to residential housing on the Stockton Campus in January, Student Life will have details on the spring housing process by Oct. 31. Sacramento and San Francisco housing will continue without change.

A final note: we are delighted that some of our communities are easing COVID-19 restrictions as rates continue to decline. That is great news. Nevertheless, we have not lessened our fall restrictions. We want to keep those restrictions in place to improve the likelihood of a January return.

Again, thank you all for your perseverance, creativity and positive spirit despite the challenges around us. We will get through this, together, and be stronger for the experience.

Stay safe and stay well.

Sincerely,

Christopher Callahan
President