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Letter - President's Welcome Letter, Fall 2010

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President's Welcome Letter, Fall 2010

August 19, 2010

To the University Community:

Welcome back to Pacific! Our three campuses are humming with the activity and promise that a new academic year brings. As I write, our freshman here in Stockton are getting settled into their new residences, and I am delighted to report that they are one of the strongest first-year classes in Pacific's history. We received nearly 20,000 applications, making it our most competitive process to date. At just over 1,000 students, this is also our largest class ever. Tomorrow we all set off on MOVE, Pacific's Mountains, Ocean and Valley Experience for incoming undergraduates. Bill and I will be joining students, faculty and staff at the Marin Headlands. I am sure it will be as fun and rewarding as last year's experience in Yosemite.

In my second year as Pacific's President, I remain deeply impressed by our strong university and as committed as ever to our mission. Pacific seeks to prepare students for lasting achievement and responsible leadership through a superior, student-centered learning experience integrating liberal arts and professional education. As you know, last year I embarked on a listening and learning campaign, engaging with faculty, staff, students, alumni and local community members. Based on what I learned, it is clear to me that Pacific is on the path to becoming a truly great university known for its quality programs, dedication to students and commitment to community.

To help us move forward, I have worked with university leaders to identify institutional priorities for the next few years. These priorities are aligned with our strategic plan, Pacific Rising.

- We will work to enhance the academic enterprise. Pacific's first priority will always be the education we provide. I will look to our faculty, deans, and provost for leadership in focusing and shaping this priority.
- We will undertake rigorous development, diversification and management of resources. While we are fiscally strong right now, we must ensure that we will have the resources we need in the future to be a great university. This includes increasing our fundraising efforts, securing diverse revenue streams, and stewarding our resources wisely and conservatively.

- We will initiate Pacific's development into a Three-City University. We will explore ways to leverage our unique foothold in three major regions of Northern California in order to expand and enhance our educational offerings and increase Pacific's regional visibility and influence.
- We will establish and communicate Pacific's core identity. We want to better understand the Pacific Spirit and make certain we support and communicate our distinctive identity so that others recognize the exceptional nature of University of the Pacific.
- We will enrich our diversity and inclusivity. We need to ensure access, equity and success for students, as well as faculty and staff, from diverse backgrounds to create a rich learning environment.
- We will serve our communities through partnerships at the local, national, and global levels.
- Finally, we will expand international competence as a hallmark of Pacific's education. We must prepare our students for tomorrow's global world.

This year we will develop a specific action plan for each priority in order to help us focus our resources most effectively.

Another important issue for the coming year will be Pacific's ongoing Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) reaccreditation process. Last spring we welcomed a visiting team from WASC for the first phase of reaccreditation, the Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR). I am pleased to report that the visit was a success; I will be sending out a separate letter soon with details, including specific actions that the team has recommended.

A key part of the WASC reaccreditation process is demonstrating that we monitor the quality of our academic programs and our students' learning. We are a university that is, first and foremost, dedicated to educating students. Toward that end, we all aspire to continually improve. Implementing a system to assess our students' learning and to review our academic programs will inform our faculty's efforts to enhance the education we provide.

I'm pleased to report that US News & World Report has just ranked University of the Pacific as a top 100 university. Our placement increases Pacific's visibility and indicates that your hard work is being recognized. As always, thank you for the extraordinary work you do for our university.

Again, welcome back everyone. Best wishes for a successful academic year.

Sincerely,

Pamela A. Eibeck, PhD
President