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## UCLA Dean for Students Appointed Pacific VP for Student Life

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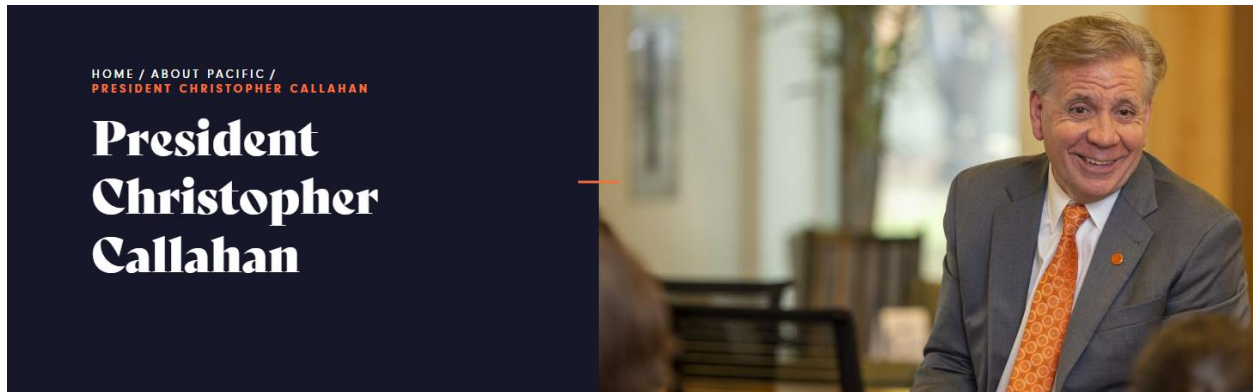
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## UCLA Dean for Students Appointed Pacific VP for Student Life

APR 30, 2021



Maria Q. Blandizzi has been appointed vice president for student life at University of the Pacific

UCLA Dean for Students Maria Q. Blandizzi, a key student life leader at the 45,000-student national university, has been appointed vice

president for student life at University of the Pacific, officials announced today.

Blandizzi has led a 60-person student life team at UCLA since 2014, overseeing a wide array of student services and activities, including student conduct, LGBTQ programs, student alumni programs, family engagement, accessibility, financial wellness, Title IX, crisis response and campus climate. She also serves as advisor to student government leaders.

“Dr. Blandizzi brings to Pacific a depth and breadth of experience, a profound passion for understanding the complex issues impacting students and a commitment to building an engaging and supportive campus community,” said Greg Boardman, former vice provost for student affairs at Stanford University and a Regent-elect at Pacific who served on the search committee.

At UCLA, Blandizzi established a financial wellness program, expanded crisis response teams, advocated for creating nonbinary gender categories in university systems, expanded free meal programs and led efforts to recruit diverse first-year and transfer students. She also contributed regularly to the Daily Bruin campus newspaper on critical student issues.

Prior to her role as dean for students, Blandizzi was executive director for student services initiatives at the university. U.S. News & World Report ranks UCLA as the No. 1 public university in the nation, and Times Higher Education ranks the university as the 15th best in the world.

"Maria Blandizzi combines the extraordinary gift of being an outstanding administrator with a genuinely warm heart. She treats each student and their family as if they are her sole concern."  
—UCLA Chancellor Gene Block

“Maria Blandizzi combines the extraordinary gift of being an outstanding administrator with a genuinely warm heart,” said UCLA Chancellor Gene Block. “She treats each student and their family as if

they are her sole concern. We will sorely miss her presence at UCLA; however, we are proud of her taking on a leadership role at the University of the Pacific.”

Before joining UCLA in 2011, Blandizzi was director of special projects for the vice chancellor of student affairs at University of California San Francisco and before that served as a student affairs policy and program analyst for the University of California Office of the President.

She earned her doctorate in education from the Rossier School of Education at USC and her MA in education from Columbia University. She holds undergraduate degrees in sociology and anthropology from University of California Irvine.

“It is an incredible honor to assume this position at Pacific at this moment in our history,” Blandizzi said. “I was immensely impressed with the number of constituents that participated in the search process, which affirmed for me the laser focus President Callahan and the campus community has on centering the student experience in all aspects of the university’s operation.”

“I will aim to bring visionary leadership to the Division of Student Life, to think strategically with campus partners, students, faculty and staff in ways that bring out the best in our community, and to show up for students in ways that demonstrate our care and belief in them,” she continued. “This work takes all of us. I look forward to engaging in a series of conversations to hear the community’s perspectives and experiences. I am so ready to get to work and continue the long legacy of what it means to be a Pacifican.”

President Christopher Callahan called Blandizzi the perfect match for Pacific.

“Dr. Blandizzi brings extraordinary expertise in engaging and supporting students at the highest levels, but also great empathy, a true sense of the importance of collaboration and an inspiring energy

level,” he said. “Our students will benefit enormously from Dr. Blandizzi’s leadership.”

She will start her Pacific career living in student residential housing on the Stockton campus.

Blandizzi is the latest new member of Pacific’s leadership team.

Callahan joined the university 10 months ago as [president](#) after 15 years as dean and vice provost at Arizona State University. Liz Orwin, head of engineering at Harvey Mudd College, was named [dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science](#) earlier this month. Mary Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, vice provost for diversity at University of San Francisco, was appointed [Pacific’s inaugural vice president for diversity, equity and inclusion](#) last month. Christopher Ferguson, an enrollment strategist from Occidental College, started in September as [Pacific’s vice president for enrollment management](#).

Pacific, California’s first university with campuses in Stockton, Sacramento and San Francisco, is ranked as the No. 18 university in the West by The Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education.