

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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## CHANCELLORS

Dear Colleagues:

As you will recall, in November 2002, I convened a group of senior women faculty and administrators from across the UC system for the President's Summit on Faculty Gender Equity. I am pleased to enclose a copy of the report of the Summit's proceedings, which represents the combined recommendations of the participants. I am sending this report to the campuses through you and to the Academic Council in order to seek comments, recommendations, and initiatives for furthering the report's goals. I ask that you provide me with input from your campus by May 1.

After participating in the Summit and reviewing the report, I am even more convinced that gender equity is one of the most pressing issues facing the University of California today. UC will remain competitive as a leading institution of higher education only if it is successful in addressing the under representation of women among its faculty and academic leaders. Women and American minority groups constitute the fastest growing pool of faculty candidates. If the University of California can tap into this pool effectively as it enters this phase of rapid growth, it will be able to take full advantage of all available intellectual resources in building the faculty of the future. The University of California will retain its status as a leader in higher education in the years ahead only if we are committed to the full inclusion of women in our faculty and at the highest levels of our academic administration.

One of the themes expressed at the Summit was the importance of policies and practices to accommodate childbearing, child rearing, and other family needs within the faculty career path. The University of California has excellent policies providing faculty with childbearing leave, active service with modified duties for child rearing, sick leave, and up to two years off the tenure clock for childbearing. However, women faculty expressed concerns that faculty may be unable to benefit fully from these policies due to department chairs being unfamiliar with these policies or a departmental culture that discourages faculty from using these benefits.

It is my belief that well-written and thoroughly implemented family accommodation policies are fundamental to an equitable and productive academic environment. I want every academic administrator to be fully aware of these policies and to ensure that these benefits are accessible to all faculty who need them to accommodate family needs. I encourage careful monitoring of the departmental climate and the merit review system so that no faculty member is disadvantaged in their promotion, advancement, or compensation because they have chosen to have a family along with their academic career.

To facilitate the utilization of these policies, I am proposing two policy changes. The first change involves modifying systemwide family accommodation policies to clarify that every eligible faculty member is entitled to childbearing leave and active service/modified duties and that such leave is automatic for the academic term including or immediately following the childbearing leave. With this modification, childbearing faculty members will be entitled to these accommodations upon notice to the department. A faculty member who does not wish to take childbearing leave or active service/modified duties following childbearing may have an exemption from the policy. Existing policies providing for child rearing leave and active service/modified duties will continue to be available for non- childbearing parents and parents by adoption upon request.

The second change involves modifying campus procedures to centralize funding for family leave and modified duties on campuses so that individual departments are not disadvantaged by faculty who make use of these policies. If departments are required to pay for family-related teaching release time out of their own budgets, this is a burden for small departments and departments with larger numbers of women faculty. Department chairs may discourage women faculty from taking leave or modified duties for budgetary reasons, or women faculty may be reluctant to ask for leave or modified duties out of concern for departmental resources.

In addition, I am supporting the systemwide distribution of the Work Family Initiative, a Web-based survey of ladder-rank faculty about work and family experiences and their use of family accommodation policies developed by UC Berkeley principal investigators Mary Ann Mason, Dean of the Graduate Division, and Angelica Stacy, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Equity. Information gathered from the survey will be instrumental in evaluating and strengthening University of California family accommodation policies for faculty and will improve the departmental climate by promoting a greater understanding of issues facing faculty with family responsibilities. A copy of the survey can be found at <http://lgradresearch.berkeley.edu/workfamilybtm>].

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Finally, I want to acknowledge that the barriers facing women faculty are not just those associated with childbearing and child rearing, but also may be imbedded in the peer evaluation process that is fundamental to the selection, promotion, advancement, compensation, and recognition of ladder-rank faculty. I want to reaffirm the University's commitment to implement the recommendations of the Bureau of State Audit's 2001 Report on Gender Equity in faculty hiring. This commitment involves the active implementation of existing policies and practices at every level of the academic personnel system, including considering gender equity in the academic planning process, ensuring that women faculty have opportunities to serve on departmental search committees, expanding faculty recruitment efforts, monitoring faculty search and selection procedures, analyzing faculty compensation for gender disparities, evaluating academic administrators on their efforts to address gender equity and acknowledging the importance of gender equity in the achievement of true academic excellence.

While November's Summit focused on faculty gender equity, I am also aware of important concerns regarding the representation of racial and ethnic minorities on our faculty. I am making a personal commitment to create a more equitable and inclusive University of California for the next generation of students and faculty, and I strongly urge each of you to join me in that commitment. To that end, I ask you to make these issues a campus priority. I hope each campus will host a followup meeting to the Summit on Faculty Gender Equity, so that our faculty can participate actively in partnership with the academic administration in developing effective solutions for the future of the University of California.

Fiat Lux,

Richard C. Atkinson  
President

Enclosure

cc: Provost King  
Senior Vice President Darling  
Assistant Vice President Arditti  
Assistant Vice President Switkes  
Council of Vice Chancellors