

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

Thank you for your continued ingenuity, commitment, and perseverance as we advance our academic mission through remote and virtual modes of instruction. While the “stay-at-home” directive to slow the spread of COVID-19 has disrupted academic life throughout California and the nation, at Cal Poly Pomona our creativity and innovation has not waned. Indeed, our commitment to helping our students succeed has only intensified in the face of these new challenges, and I want you to know how much I appreciate all that you are doing to support our students and to actively demonstrate the values of our inclusive, polytechnic University. I could not be more proud of our faculty, staff, department chairs, deans, and academic leadership.

Cal Poly Pomona remains deeply committed to faculty success, to increasing the number and diversity of tenure-track faculty, and to improving our tenure density. Since academic year 2015-16, we have approved and conducted 236 new tenure-track faculty searches, with searches in every academic department and college, including the University Library. During this period, we have had a net gain of 41 full-time equivalent tenure-track faculty. We have also developed and implemented strategies to diversify the faculty and expanded professional development opportunities for new and continuing faculty. We have done this in alignment with our [University Strategic Plan](#) and [Academic Master Plan](#), and through disciplined, prioritized use of institutional resources.

We know, however, that recovery from the pandemic will require increased demands on the state’s budget to cover emergency management expenses, health care costs, increased unemployment, and other expenses. The California Department of Finance has communicated to the CSU that we must re-evaluate the Governor’s proposed budget in light of these changes and this will have an impact on all 23 campuses throughout the state.

Across all divisions of the University, we are re-evaluating our budget assumptions and anticipated revenue and expenses for 2020-21. We take very seriously the need to be fiscally responsible and prudent, especially given today’s uncertainty. We are looking closely at all open staff and management searches to evaluate priorities and assure funding availability for both replacement positions and any new positions.

In Academic Affairs, we started this year having approved searches for 53 new tenure-track faculty positions. I have authorized moving forward with the 40 tenure-track faculty searches where offers have been extended and accepted. The remaining 13 tenure-track faculty searches in progress that have not yet resulted in offers or acceptances will be postponed, and search committees should suspend further activities.

The complete list of searches underway may be found on the [Faculty Affairs website](#). Cal Poly Pomona will send a letter to all candidates communicating the suspension of the search and asking them to consider us next year. Any tenure-track faculty searches that were not completed this academic year will be forwarded to the next recruitment cycle.

In Fall 2020, we will revisit tenure-track hiring and the positions that were carried forward, with a full understanding of our student enrollment, departmental needs, and the state's budget allocation to the CSU. In the CSU and across the nation, institutions of higher education will be closely monitoring and taking stock of the pandemic's impact on enrollment. It remains unclear how the economic circumstances of our continuing and new students will impact our enrollment. Our admissions team is notifying prospective students of their standing and their financial aid awards earlier than usual. We are proactively connecting with new students – first-time freshmen and transfers – through innovative use of technology to stay connected and engaged.

I understand and genuinely share the disappointment that this news will have on search committees and faculty in departments who had hoped to complete faculty searches this year. I know that you also understand that we have a fiscal and ethical responsibility to ensure that there is permanent base funding for any new faculty position.

Thank you for your commitment to recruiting and retaining talented and diverse faculty, and for your resiliency and commitment to the success of our students.

Sincerely,

Sylvia A. Alva, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs