Dear faculty colleagues:

As we come to the end of this extraordinary year, I want to express my sincere thanks for your exceptional work in the face of challenging conditions. We know that our students have suffered a great deal over this past year; but in surveys, they also report their overwhelmingly positive experiences with faculty, citing with appreciation your support for their learning and well-being even while navigating the many difficulties of remote modalities. I know how much this reflects your effort and care, and I join our students in appreciation for all that you’ve done.

I hope that the summer brings you rest and rejuvenation—and maybe even some travel and togetherness with friends and loved ones, thanks to widespread vaccination and relaxed restrictions. As we look forward to a post-covid era, I also hope we can all take the chance to reflect on what we’ve learned, not only from life during the pandemic, but from the reckonings with racial injustice, economic inequity, and environmental crisis that these difficult times have forced. As Sonya Renee Taylor urges us to remember (in a passage for which I owe thanks to Professor Sherria Taylor), “we are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment”:

“We will not go back to normal. Normal never was. Our pre-corona existence was not normal other than we normalized greed, inequity, exhaustion, depletion, extraction, disconnection, confusion, rage, hoarding, hate and lack. We should not long to return, my friends. We are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment. One that fits all of humanity and nature.”

With our historic commitment to educational equity and social justice, San Francisco State has a special contribution to make toward building this inclusive future—starting with the students and graduates who have benefited so much from your mentorship and guidance.

Wishing you the very best,

Jennifer Summit
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
San Francisco State University