Dear faculty colleagues,

Welcome back to an academic year like none other. I hope that you, your families and loved ones are safe and well, and that the summer has offered some respite during challenging times. Although we can’t be together in person, I know that we’re joined in concern for the welfare of our university and the people who make it up. As you’ve learned from President Mahoney, we’ve entered a difficult fiscal reality, compounded by a dramatic drop in new student enrollment. In the year ahead, we will face a number of hard decisions and conversations, but you can expect transparent communication and shared governance as we move through this time together.

In the midst of the pandemic’s many challenges, I want to thank you for your powerful and ongoing commitment to our students, who draw strength from your support. I also want to extend thanks and congratulations to the faculty who participated in the Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning’s (CEETL’s) summer teaching programs supporting remote instruction and educational equity, which have seen over 1,500 registrations. Your investment in your professional development will directly impact our students’ success.

This fall brings many changes, and I write to share some updates as well as point you to campus resources to which you can turn regularly for information. First, please make a point of reviewing the university’s COVID-19 page for faculty, which offers an overview of campus planning efforts. In addition, the Academic Affairs website gathers information and links of special relevance to faculty and academic programs, which will be regularly updated: please visit it frequently or submit a question if you need information that you don’t see addressed.

With the start of the new academic year, I want to draw your attention especially to several items that will help you plan for the first week of classes and beyond:

**Synchronous Meeting Times**

If you are teaching a course with a synchronous meeting time noted on the public course schedule, please email your students prior to the first day of the course to let them know how to meet with the class at that time. Please note that synchronous meeting times cannot be required outside what is posted on the public course schedule, because students have registered for their courses (and made other life commitments such as work schedules) around the times that the course schedule indicates.

**Tutoring and Academic Support**

The Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) is available via Zoom for tutoring appointments, drop-in tutoring, workshops, and group study sessions. Students can schedule tutoring appointments for writing, subject-based tutoring, and study skills by sending TASC an appointment request or by emailing tutoring@sfsu.edu from their SF State email account. Requests should include the student's name, ID number, the course for which they are seeking tutoring (DS 412, ENG 114, etc.), and the days/times they are available for an appointment. Faculty can fill out a referral form in order to get students connected with support. Please email tutoring@sfsu.edu if you have questions.

**Academic Advising**

Professional academic advisors in the college-based resource centers, the Educational Opportunity Program, and the Undergraduate Advising Center are available to assist students remotely. Starting this fall, all freshmen and undeclared students will have an assigned advisor in the Undergraduate Advising Center, Sophomores, juniors, and seniors with declared majors can be referred to their college-based resource center for advising. Students can make advising appointments
by accessing Navigator, SF State's student success platform. Virtual drop-in advising hours are also available and can be viewed on the center websites.

Faculty advisors have a new resource this year: Dr. Nancy Gerber has joined the Division of Undergraduate Education and Academic Planning (DUEAP) as the Faculty Director of Predictive Analytics and Proactive Advising, through a project funded by a three-year grant from the Stupski Foundation. In her new role, Dr. Gerber will support faculty advisors and chairs by introducing them to advising analytic tools and developing a faculty advisor community of practice, along with other efforts that include Transfer Orientation activities and the Faculty Ambassador program. Dr. Gerber has set up a listserv for faculty advisors to share information, messaging, and professional development opportunities around advising; if you would like to be added to the list, please contact her at ngerber@sfsu.edu. She will also convene a Faculty Advisor Town Hall on September 11 (see below).

**Graduation Process Changes**

There are major changes coming to how students apply for graduation. Beginning with those graduating in Spring 2021, students will apply for graduation between September 1, 2020 and October 16, 2020. This will allow students to obtain feedback on their progress towards degree completion before registering for spring classes in December. Applications will be submitted through their Student Center and will be accepted after October 16, albeit with a $5 late fee. Changes to policies and processes important to faculty advisors will be the topic at the first Faculty Advisor Town Hall on September 11, 2020 from noon to 1:30 p.m. To RSVP for the meeting please complete this Qualtrics survey.

**Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CEETL) Support**

CEETL’s support for faculty teaching excellence continues through the academic year. In addition to personalized, one-on-one virtual consults with instructional designers, videographers, and faculty fellows to help develop equitable and inclusive online courses and affordable instructional materials, faculty may also join a series of faculty development programs offered throughout the fall semester. Upon completion of one or more of these programs, faculty will receive a stipend funded through a CARES 2 Act allocation to support the transition to remote instruction:

- **QLT Online Teaching Lab:** a fully online, asynchronous course about quality online teaching and learning that explores inclusive pedagogies to humanize the online experience for students and instructors. **Fall cohort: August 25-December 20, 2020.**

- **Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Institute:** a fully online, asynchronous course developed and facilitated by SF State faculty members, focuses on developing anti-racist pedagogies, centering student voice and experience and universal design for learning. **Fall cohort: August 21-October 23, 2020.**

- **Online Teaching Squares:** groups of four faculty members share inclusive teaching practices and learn from each other throughout the fall semester in supportive, non-evaluative “teaching squares.” Ongoing until December 20, 2020.

These voluntary programs need not need not be taken sequentially, though they have been designed to build upon each other in meaningful ways and can lead to a PIE Certificate in Online Quality Learning & Teaching. To learn more and register, visit the CEETL Website. To schedule a consultation, email iteach@sfsu.edu.

**Academic Technology Support**

Academic Technology (AT) support teams are available to assist faculty with expanded hours for the start of the fall semester from 8am to 7pm (M-Th) and 8am to 5pm (F). AT staff have also expanded
online support resources with more help guides and a self-paced iLearn tutorial. Faculty can contact AT for help with using iLearn or Zoom, or with general technology issues, by phone (415-405-5555), email (at@sfsu.edu), or the chat feature embedded in iLearn. With funds from CARES 2, AT has also secured laptops, headsets, webcams, and other items to support instruction; faculty can request technology accessories and laptops or request assistance with internet connectivity through the Instructional Continuity Instructor Quickguide website. In addition, the Library Student Laptop Checkout Pool has been doubled and a process established to support student internet connectivity needs. Faculty can refer their students with remote instruction technology needs or questions to the Instructional Continuity Student Quickguide.

Again, please visit and bookmark SF State’s COVID-19 page for faculty and the Academic Affairs website for more information—much of it regularly updated to reflect evolving conditions—about many other topics and issues, such as Library opening plans; faculty access to offices and facilities; research, scholarship, and creative activities; clinical placements and fieldwork; and other information about campus access protocols and remote and in-person teaching. You may wish also to review SF State’s COVID-19 page for students, to aid in referrals; the university is in frequent communication with students regarding the plans and resources detailed (and updated) on this page.

Finally, I hope to see you at our fall Convocation on August 20, 2020 from 9:30-10:30 am, live streamed at https://senate.sfsu.edu/convocation (no zoom link required), which will welcome 37 new faculty colleagues to SF State and launch the academic year with updates and virtual community. While this marks a time of great challenge, I welcome the opportunity to meet it together.

With all best wishes,
Jennifer

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