October 21, 2013

FACULTY, DEANS AND DIRECTORS

RE: High Impact Hiring Plan

Dear Colleagues:

UC Irvine’s upcoming 50th anniversary is an occasion to renew the commitment to scholarly preeminence and educational impact that informed the recruitment of those outstanding scholars, scientists, and artists who formed our founding faculty. Our goal should be the creation of a university as innovative and transformative as was imagined at the establishment of our campus, but with even higher aspirations supported by the past half-century of achievement and distinction.

The greatness of every academic community arises from the strength and energy of the faculty, and those early recruitment efforts were the cornerstone of our remarkable ascendency over the past fifty years. Given our current, diverse strength across many fields of inquiry and practice, UCI is now well-positioned to recruit a new group of exceptional faculty leaders who will enhance our standing among the best research universities, build on existing strengths, catalyze new inter-school and campus-wide initiatives, and further our commitment to scholarly inquiry on issues of inclusion and equity.

The foundation of that recruitment plan will be a High Impact Hiring Plan open to all units on the general campus. This plan will use what are in effect new faculty FTE and funding that were allocated to the campus in association with past enrollment growth but that were not distributed to the units or otherwise permanently committed. The State-funded enrollment growth that supports this initiative was discontinued several years ago and is unlikely to be resumed at such a scale in the future. This is a unique opportunity to use this finite pool of resources to recruit new faculty who are most likely to have a transformational impact on the quality, reputation, and impact of our academic mission.

The total number of positions allocated through the High Impact Hiring Plan will depend on the levels of appointment approved at time of allocation, but expectations are as follows:

- At the foundation of the plan will be the targeted recruitment of 6-10 prominent and influential faculty leaders whose scholarly, scientific, and creative accomplishments and career trajectories promise to accelerate our ascendency among the ranks of globally preeminent research universities. Candidates may be eligible for appointment at the level of Chancellor’s or Distinguished Professor (pending review as usual), but we also encourage
consideration of candidates with exceptional accomplishments and extraordinary promise at somewhat earlier stages of their careers.

- These senior leadership appointments will be supported by 10-15 additional hires at lower levels, with the option of linking up to 5 of these more junior positions with each of the leadership hires. In most cases, at least one or two of the less senior positions should be in units other than that of the leadership hire to encourage broader impact on the campus.

- Positions allocated through this initiative will be available for recruitment immediately but can remain open until filled pending an approved hiring schedule. Proposals for individuals to be recruited through this program will be accepted until all available positions are filled.

Clustering positions around each of these distinguished appointments should increase opportunities for successful high-level recruitments by demonstrating the campus’s commitment to outstanding research and global impact in the selected field. In addition to the High Impact Hiring Plan, other hiring will proceed as usual, including the Career Partner Program, a few opportunistic hires as they may emerge, and approximately thirty-five expected turnover positions already allocated to the schools.

As is the case whenever we seek to recruit new faculty to our campus, our commitment to a culture of inclusive excellence requires us to consider a diverse cross-section of highly accomplished scholars and researchers. When developing proposals for the High Impact Hiring Plan, authors should consult with their school’s Equity Advisor for assistance in addressing how the proposed positions build on and advance the campus’s commitment to diversity and inclusion at all levels. In addition, we will seek to recruit at least one or two high impact scholars whose research focuses on diversity and inclusion. To reinforce the link between our research agenda and continuing development of our graduate programs, special consideration will be given to proposals that strengthen our participation in the Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience Initiative (DECADE).

Nominations for compelling candidates will be considered on a rolling basis and may be submitted by individual faculty, groups of faculty, departments, centers or institutes, and academic deans. Nominations should include the following:

- A 2-4 page thoughtful articulation of the ways in which the individual would advance the university’s standing, build on existing strengths, catalyze new inter-school or campus-wide initiatives, enhance our commitment to graduate education and outstanding undergraduate programs, and contribute to the diversification of our faculty community; and a description of the major contributions that the individual has made to research and scholarship in his/her field.

- An account of how the proposed appointment will contribute toward the campus’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

- Information about affiliated candidates for the associated cluster positions, if any, including how their scholarly, scientific, and/or artistic accomplishments contribute to the campus-wide objectives and recruitment strategies of the High Impact Hiring Plan. (Identifying affiliated candidates for a cluster is optional.)

- The CVs of the senior nominee and any affiliated candidates, plus evidence of the senior candidate’s likely interest in the position; and

- A brief statement from all relevant dean(s), chair(s), and center or institute director(s) regarding the nomination, including any additional school-based resources or other forms of program support that may be made available.
Nominations should be submitted in electronic format to the Office of Provost at provost@uci.edu. Nominations submitted before February 14, 2014, will be reviewed as described below, with the expectation that at least two of the senior positions may be authorized for recruitment starting as early as Spring Quarter 2014. Subsequent to this first round of submissions, proposals will be reviewed as they are submitted and recruitments authorized throughout the year. Proposals for individuals to be recruited through this program will be accepted until all available positions are filled, which presumably will take several years.

Nominations will be put through an extensive process of consultation with campus groups including the deans, the Distinctions Committee for appropriate candidates, the ADVANCE Program Advising Committee, and more specialized ad hoc groups of faculty as needed for expert assessment. The Academic Planning Group will review all nominations, consider input from these other groups, and provide me with 1) an assessment of whether the nominee meets the high standard of quality and impact that is required for appointment through this initiative, and 2) an assessment of the nominee’s potential, in conjunction with the proposed cluster, to advance the University’s standing in strategically significant ways. In light of this guidance, if I conclude that further consideration of the nomination is appropriate, I will initiate discussions with the pertinent dean(s) to develop a recruitment plan. All candidates will be subject to the normal review process for senior faculty appointments.

Any questions about this process should be directed to Michael Clark, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Planning, at mpclark@uci.edu.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping us identify and recruit this new group of outstanding faculty leaders.

Howard Gillman
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor