



# OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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October 25, 2014

Dear Colleagues:

In July, I announced Dr. Mary Nisbet's decision to retire after six years of exceptional leadership as our Dean of Undergraduate Education in the College of Letters and Science, and 23 years at UC Santa Barbara. I thought now that the fall quarter is underway, and this is our Parents and Family Weekend, I would like to take this opportunity to share with our campus community and parents our appreciation of Dr. Nisbet's contributions.

Dr. Nisbet holds a Ph.D. from the University of Glasgow, Scotland, and is a fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. Prior to coming to UC Santa Barbara, she was a tenured faculty member in the Department of Accounting and Finance at the University of Glasgow in the Glasgow University Business School and in the School of Financial Studies at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji. From 1991 to 1993, she was a Visiting Assistant Professor in our Department of Economics, and in 1993 she became the department's Academic Coordinator. In 1994, she became a Senior Lecturer with Security of Employment in Economics. She was the Director of our Accounting Program from 1993 to 2001, and Vice Chair of our Department of Economics from 1995 to 1997. Beginning in 1997, she took on the role of Assistant Dean and then Associate Dean of Student Academic Affairs for our College of Letters and Science. After two years as Acting Dean of Undergraduate Education for the College of Letters and Science, she was appointed Dean in 2010.

As Dean, Dr. Nisbet's philosophy was to improve the quality of, and access to, UCSB undergraduate education by enhancing academic services to undergraduates (particularly advising services), optimizing access to courses, and facilitating the development of new and improved academic programs and courses. She worked closely with Academic Senate committees and departments on matters of academic policy, such as policies for on-line courses, re-uniting of courses, and restructuring of majors. She helped lead university-wide systems development to improve workflow and provide better communications and services to students. She also undertook a reorganization of the Division of Undergraduate Education, providing mentorship for staff and fostering a strong spirit of teamwork, cooperation, and innovation. In the face of state budget challenges, she worked tirelessly to develop and implement campus strategies to help students get needed classes and reduce time to degree. She played an integral role in advancing the excellence and diversity of our undergraduate student body, helping the College and our campus to recruit new students while providing outstanding academic guidance and support for current students.

Dr. Nisbet has been deeply engaged in university service throughout her career, participating in a broad range of campus committees, councils, and advisory groups, and in systemwide activities related to undergraduate issues as well. She was the convener for the systemwide group of Deans and Vice Chancellors of Undergraduate Education, providing strategic input to the Office of the President on matters related to undergraduate education. On our campus, she co-chaired our Senior Women's Council and served on committees looking at issues such as transportation,

computing, athletics policy, student conduct, student information systems, and strategic planning, among many others. From 2009 to 2014, she served as our Accreditation Liaison Officer to the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, working with me, the EVC Office, the Academic Senate, and colleagues across all disciplines to assess educational effectiveness and student learning outcomes, and to support student success. These collaborative efforts led to the reaffirmation of our WASC accreditation in April of this year, for the maximum ten-year term.

Our university has benefited in countless ways from Dr. Nisbet's dedicated teaching, service, leadership, and extraordinary contributions over more than two decades, and I am honored to have this opportunity to say "thank you."

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang  
Chancellor