James Hildreth, Dean, College of Biological Sciences
Steven C. Currall, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor
Carolyn de la Peña, Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education
Helene Dillard, Dean, College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences
Armando Figueroa, President, ASUCD
Julie Freischlag, Vice Chancellor, Human Health Sciences/Dean-School of Medicine
Jeffery C. Gibeling, Vice Provost, Graduate Education and Dean, Graduate Studies
Rachael Goodhue, Vice Chair, Academic Senate
Dianne Gregory, Chair, UC Davis Staff Assembly Executive Committee
Suad Joseph, Distinguished Professor and Advisor to the Chancellor
Maxwell Kappes, Vice President, ASUCD
Shaun Keister, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Relations
Andre Knoesen, Chair, Academic Senate
Michael D. Lairmore, Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine
Dave Lawlor, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Resource Management, and Chief Financial Officer
Luanne Lawrence, Associate Chancellor, Strategic Communications
Lina Layiktez, Chair, UC Davis Staff Assembly
Harris Lewin, Vice Chancellor, Research
Lyn Loffland, President, UC Davis Emeriti Association
George R. “Ron” Mangun, Dean, Division of Social Sciences
Emily Prieto, Chief of Staff, Student Affairs
Ramak Siadatan, President, California Aggie Alumni Association
Laura Van Winkle, Chair, Academic Federation
Erica Vonasek, Vice Chair, UC Davis Graduate Student Association
Michael Yardly, UC Davis Health System
Heather M. Young, Dean, Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing

Re: Creating the University of the 21st Century Committee

Dear Colleagues,

Over the summer, I wrote to some of you about serving on a committee whose charge was to re-examine our 2010 “Vision of Excellence” in the context of UC Davis as the UC of the 21st Century and to try to define a vision to guide us forward in the next five to ten years. In parallel, we initiated an
effort under the leadership of Steve Currall, then Dean of the Graduate School of Management and now Senior Advisor to the Chancellor, to start asking whether a bigger presence in Sacramento would serve UC Davis well in its efforts to strengthen its policy, clinical and education programs as they apply to disciplines at the nexus between Food and Health. The feedback we received from both efforts led us to believe that the two activities are not disconnected, but in fact are very synergistic and that we should bring them together under one team and one effort.

Considering that the scope of the questions we are asking and the answers we are seeking has expanded significantly, we now wish to determine whether and how the committee should be updated, revised and/or broadened to lead us forward with the important question of what University we aim to create via the decisions, actions and investments we make today and in the future. At the same time, we should identify the legacies we wish to leave behind for the generations of future students, faculty and staff who will join our campus in this century.

In discussing this effort at the last Council of Deans and Vice Chancellors retreat, there was agreement that with the original committee up and running, this was an opportune time to expand its membership and include student, faculty and staff representatives that will bring different and broader perspectives to the table. We also agreed that the revised committee should have a broader outlook than the original charge letter suggested. With this new letter, we invite additional participation in this effort and expand the charge of the committee so we may think more broadly and include additional perspectives.

The committee’s new title is “Creating the University of the 21st Century,” and its expanded purview includes an effort to help us define this University in a way that reflects our aspirations and dreams. The committee’s inquiry should include but not be limited to questions such as: how should we identify possible new areas of focus to address the most pressing challenges faced by our nation and the world in the 21st Century; how to best organize the university in a way that more directly focuses our attention on achieving our mission; how to better prepare our students so that they leave our campus well-equipped to excel in a rapidly changing workforce and in careers that might not currently exist; and ways in which to better integrate our various physical locations into a more cohesive whole and how to better expand our physical and intellectual spaces to make UC Davis an intellectual, educational and economic powerhouse that is driven by its values of academic freedom, freedom of expression and speech as well as its adherence to social justice. As these deliberations proceed, I ask this committee to produce two over-arching results: a definition or vision about what would constitute the University of the 21st Century and what goals and objectives must be in place to realize that vision.

The work of the committee will continue to be led by James Hildreth, Dean of the College of Biological Sciences, along with Steve Currall as co-chair. With this letter, I thank and welcome the additional members participating in these important deliberations. In adding to the original charge, I believe we can achieve the best results by combining our deliberations in this way.

I look forward to coming to one of the newly constituted committee’s early meetings to participate in a discussion with all of you about this work and to respond to any questions you may have. Given the expanded committee and its more extensive scope, I would now like to receive your recommendations for this broader vision by June 1, 2015. Once we have had time to review and discuss the committee’s work, we can then plan how best to share our ideas with the broader UC Davis community as part of a
comprehensive and inclusive outreach and consultative process, using some of the best community engagement ideas I referred to earlier.

Thank you again for your participation and contributions to this vital undertaking for the future of UC Davis.

Sincerely,

Linda P.B. Katehi
Chancellor