

THE **Current**

December 17, 2017

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Extending Staff Emergency Leave Policy

In a memo to the campus, Chancellor Henry T. Yang announced the extension of the emergency leave policy for all staff impacted by the Thomas Fire. The full text follows.

December 17, 2017

Dear Campus Community,

The Thomas Fire has significantly impacted all of us and our families in many ways – physically and emotionally – during the last two weeks. As the fire continues to burn around Santa Barbara, and many have been evacuated, we want to ensure that you can make choices that are in the best interest of yourselves and your families.

Therefore, this week we are extending the emergency leave policy for all staff and again directing the managers, deans, and vice chancellors to exercise maximum flexibility in granting additional emergency leave and/or allowing people to work remotely. Members of our community – staff, faculty, and students – should feel empowered to make decisions about their own safety and health, and that of their families, during this stressful time.

We know that many staff will not be able to come to work and will need more than two emergency leave days in the coming days. As a result, many campus services that are typically available will be limited due to staffing shortages. We are

extremely grateful to our dedicated staff and all members of our community who have worked hard under challenging circumstances to ensure that important research and critical services are not disrupted, that our campus remains operational, and that remaining students, volunteers, and our first-responder guests have a safe place to stay.

We have been reassured that our campus is safe and not in any physical danger from the fire. We are currently hosting more than 200 individuals in the Red Cross emergency shelter at the Rec Cen's Multi Activity Court (MAC) as well as up to 200 law enforcement officers, including some National Guard troops, who have come to assist local officials with the fire response over the next few days.

My wife, Dilling, and I have been on campus and have had the opportunity to meet with many staff, faculty, students, and visitors over the last two weeks. We want to offer our sincerest thanks to our entire community. We are tremendously proud to be members of this community and we continue to be awed by the courage, dedication, and generosity that we have seen and experienced during the fire.

I have also been in touch with President Napolitano, and am grateful for her counsel and help. She expressed that her thoughts are with our UCSB community, and that UC Office of the President stands ready to offer any support it can.

We want to again extend our gratitude and deepest respect to the huge numbers of firefighters, first responders, and UCPD whose service, sacrifices, and valor are helping to protect our campus and the lives of those in our community.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang

Chancellor

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we

draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.