



June 8, 2020

Kim A. Wilcox
Chancellor, UC Riverside

Dear Chancellor Wilcox,

We write to you today as the elected representatives of Staff Assembly, the campus-wide association dedicated to supporting the interests and well-being of UCR staff.

Based on California Governor Gavin Newsom's May Revise to the state budget and the financial fallout related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we understand UCR faces budget reductions not seen in more than a decade. Before any budget decisions are made, **we urge you in the strongest possible terms to ensure staff representation is included in your discussions.** UCR staff play a pivotal role in campus operations and deserve to participate in budgetary decisions.

As you know, the recent 2019 UCOP/CUCSA Engagement Survey cited an inability to speak up within the organization without fear of retaliation, as well as a lack of retention as two of the most problematic issues facing UCR. We implore you to include Staff Assembly in discussions for how any reductions or changes are announced so that we can be supportive of our fellow staff, as well as help mitigate some of the negative emotions that reductions cause.

In difficult times, everyone — faculty, staff, students — must do their part. We are realistic and understand that staff will have to share this burden. However, it is important to consider the historic understaffing UCR faced prior to COVID-19. While rectifying the staffing shortage may no longer be possible under the current economic conditions, we strongly urge you to ensure that UCR staff are not unfairly and disproportionately impacted by any financial solution.

Should salary reductions become the only viable option, we categorically recommend that senior leadership advocate for temporary furloughs in lieu of permanent salary reductions to UCOP and the Regents. Salary cuts and layoffs will cause staff to feel devalued, which might trigger a mass exodus. The loss of their expertise and institutional knowledge, when combined with our staff deficits, places UCR in a position where we are unable to fulfill our commitments to our faculty, students, and community. UCR's staff have been integral throughout the transition to remote learning and working, despite national civil unrest and a global pandemic. Our value must not be overlooked.

We hope that you will keep us, the staff who love and help operate this campus, in mind as you make decisions about how UC Riverside will move forward.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to receiving your written response to our concerns.

Sincerely,

UCR Staff Assembly Executive Board

Cc: UCR Campus Administration, UCR Academic Senate