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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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Lisa Alvarez-Cohen, Vice Provost for Academic Planning
David Culler, Interim Dean, Data Sciences
Frances Hellman, Dean, Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences
Bob Jacobsen, Dean, Division of Undergraduate Studies
Tsu-Jae King Liu, Dean, College of Engineering
Randy Katz (or designee), Vice Chancellor for Research
Anno Saxenian, Dean, School of Information
Barbara Spackman, Chair, Academic Senate, Berkeley Division

Re: Division of Data Science and Information Administrative Transition Working Group

Dear Colleagues:

On November 1, 2018, the Chancellor and I announced the Division of Data Science and Information, a new and innovative structure to enable Berkeley faculty and students to work together across boundaries to better explore the foundations, applications, and implications of data science, information, and computation in a way that serves the interest of the public, the campus, and our academic community through a new teaching and discovery environment.

A search is underway for the Associate Provost and Dean who will lead the division, with the goal of having them on board by July 2019. In the meantime, there is much work to do in preparation for July, including academic planning, fundraising strategy coordination, and mapping out the operational processes to support the new division.

I am inviting you to serve on the Administrative Transition Working Group (ATWG) to advise me on some of the most critical academic decisions that need to be made in advance of the hiring of the Associate Provost and Dean. I have asked Vice Provost Lisa Alvarez-Cohen and Academic Senate Chair Barbara Spackman to co-chair the ATWG. I intend to participate in your launch meeting, and will attend meetings as needed to provide support and guidance to your deliberations.

Scope:
The Administrative Transition Working Group is advisory to me and has the following scope of responsibilities:

1. Faculty Working Group (FWG) - Develop the charge and membership for one or more faculty working groups with responsibility for making recommendations to you, and ultimately to me, about the following issues:
   a. Building on existing Academic Senate processes, develop preliminary guidelines for the process by which the EECS and Statistics Departments will affiliate with the new Division and the nature of their continued affiliation with COE and MPS.

b. Building on the description of the Data Science Commons in the FAQs, develop preliminary guidelines for the Data Science Commons. This should include the process by which interested groups of faculty, as well as existing programs and initiatives can make proposals to join the Data Science Commons, as well as questions of how these will be vetted, the term of affiliations, mechanisms for reviews, and sunsetting provisions, and how relevant institutes and centers can affiliate with the Division, including the Commons.

c. Propose an approach that coordinates current and planned curricular offerings so that Berkeley's data science programs convey a coherent educational strategy.

d. Provide advice about cross-cutting data science and information themes in the Signature Initiatives.

2. Operations - Provide advice to me through interim Data Sciences Dean David Culler - in close collaboration with I School Dean Anno Saxenian - about transition issues such as staffing, space, and budget. David will be taking the lead on this in collaboration with my office, and is expected to consult with other affected stakeholders .

Related Activities:

As you know, the search for the Associate Provost and Dean will be taking place in parallel with the work of your group. I will keep you informed of our progress and note when there might be intersections between your work and interests of the search committee and/or candidates.

I have also convened many of you, along with our colleagues in UDAR and your Chief Development Officers, to begin working on an overall fundraising strategy for the Division. If that intersects with the work of the ATWG, I would be happy to join you for your meetings to discuss those intersections.

Dean Culler will continue to manage the existing Division of Data Sciences and prepare for it to transition into the new Division in July 2019 including the evolution, where appropriate, of existing committees and operational structures. As issues arise that need the advice of, or coordination with, the ATWG, Dean Culler will make sure to bring those to the group.

Timing:

I am assuming that the ATWG will exist at least until the Associate Provost and Dean is onboard, and perhaps a bit longer to ensure a smooth transition. I will take your advice about the right timing for your group to dissolve. I defer to Lisa and Barbara to consult with you in establishing the frequency, length, and structure of your meetings.

Thank you for your willingness to serve on this important initiative.

A. Paul Alivisatos
Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost