

Colleagues,

Welcome to the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year, and CSUSB's launch of our long-planned semester conversion. This has been a multi-year undertaking, which has included a review of our course offerings from top to bottom and a review and re-vamp of campus processes and practices. From the revision of the academic calendar to curricular re-design and re-imagining, our faculty and staff have put in an extraordinary amount of work. I want to thank personally the Q2S steering committee for its leadership and for the time and assistance of everyone engaged in this undertaking. We would not have reached today without all of your efforts. You have my deepest gratitude.

The start of the new academic year is also a return to where we left 2019-20: offering the CSUSB experience through an online, virtual medium due to the ongoing exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic. With no vaccine readily available and this highly contagious disease continuing to spread, CSUSB has renewed its pledge to ensuring the safety of everyone on campus. I would like to thank our faculty for their exceptional work in making the transition from in-person to on-line; to our outstanding ITS division for all it has done to keep our network robust and supporting our students, faculty and staff through the spring, summer and into the fall; and for our staff for keeping both the business operations running and our physical campuses looked after. Our commitment to access has meant that we have sought to ensure that students have the tools (computers and Wi-Fi) to allow them to successfully complete their coursework. While this is an ongoing project, I want to thank you all for your intensive work and dedication to ensuring the university delivers the optimal higher education experience and striving to imagine how best to utilize this brave new world for innovations in pedagogy and delivery methods.

In essence, we are beginning the new academic year having navigated two revolutions: one, in the transition from quarters to semesters, which was several years in the preparation; the second, in the nearly overnight transition from our in-person and face-to-face teaching methods to a remote format.

Nevertheless, the start of this academic year, as always, offers the opportunity for a fresh start: the chance to build on what has been learned and achieved over time, to break new ground while we innovate, make discoveries through research, and continue supporting one another and our local and regional community. With the expansion of the Strategic Plan and its two-year extension, and the identification of new objectives, we will continue to use this document as our framework in planning, assessing and strengthening CSUSB.

Our university has long held a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. In the coming year, we will both strengthen our focus and strategically align our activities with these objectives. Let us reiterate today that this work requires us to move forward as an anti-racist community, more than ever intent on creating a space for learning, working and living that is safe and nurturing for

everyone who steps onto our campus. In this way, as much as through the academic education that we offer our students, CSUSB can truly continue to make a difference in the lives of the residents of our Inland Empire.

I am energized to begin the new academic year. While we cannot yet all be together in person, I urge you to remember how important it is for us to remain in community. Our beautiful campuses in San Bernardino and Palm Desert are still here, being diligently tended to and cared for in the belief that, in the not-too-distant future, we can once again resume our educational mission in-person.

Let's get started.

Tomás D. Morales
President