August 29, 2014

Dear Colleagues:

UCLA continues to generate an ever-expanding amount of data about the members and activities of our campus community. These data offer new opportunities for increasing the efficiency of campus daily operations; for instructional enhancement; and for accreditation and governmental review. Commercial entities with other purposes also are interested in such data. On the other hand, we have numerous examples from outside UCLA about both the misuse and unintended consequences of big data. This points to the need for UCLA and members of the UCLA community to have a consistent set of expectations about ethical and appropriate use of such data, as well as security, accuracy, and compliance obligations. We also need a governance structure that ensures those expectations are met.

Good data governance gives assurance to the UCLA community that the campus is acting with credibility and trust with respect to data about its faculty, students, and staff. While ad hoc discussions on data policies and practice have occurred at UCLA, they have been limited in scope. As the demand for data increases, it is incumbent upon us to articulate underlying principles about the use of these data and to ensure that we have the capacity through our governance mechanisms to consider campus data holistically and address both current and potential issues.

We are therefore charging a joint Academic Senate–Administration task force to define those principles and to recommend how institutional data governance should be structured and operated for UCLA, including mechanisms to address new data requests, resolve conflicts, and align policy and practice among data stewards.

We would like you to serve as members of this new Task Force. We ask the Data Governance Task Force to provide recommendations for an initial set of principles by which governance decisions can be considered, a UCLA data governance structure, and necessary surrounding processes by March 1, 2015. The Task Force
should begin with existing policy and practice regarding campus data usage and should consider models from comparable institutions. Please address the following:

1. **Principles:** What are the initial operating principles that will guide UCLA when considering how data about members of its community should be used?

2. **Governance structure:**
   a. Is UCLA’s existing governance – such as the IT Planning Board, the Board on Privacy and Data Protection and the Oversight Committee on Audit, IT Governance, Compliance and Accountability – robust enough to address and administer the growing concerns regarding data governance and usage?
   b. If so, where in the existing structure should this responsibility lie? If not, what should be the scope and authority of any new entity charged with those responsibilities; what would be the criteria for membership on this new governance structure; and how would it be appointed?
   c. How should this structure be initiated to ensure it will scale?
   d. How should the governance structure be staffed and resourced to do its work?

3. **Governance operations:**
   a. How should the governance structure work with individual data stewards?
   b. How can individual students, faculty, and staff participate in decisions regarding the use of data about themselves?
   c. How should the campus identify and address concerns, conflicts, and opportunities?

We hope you will agree to serve on this important task force. Please contact Assistant Provost Maryann Gray if you are unable to do so or have questions. Otherwise you will be contacted soon for scheduling. Thank you for this important service to UCLA.

Sincerely,

Scott L. Waugh  
Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost

Janice L. Reiff  
Chair, Academic Senate

cc: Vice Provost Jim Davis  
Assistant Provost Maryann Gray