April 10, 2020

To: Undergraduates who are on track to graduate in spring 2020  
From: Chancellor Cynthia Larive  
Subject: Commencement ceremony survey

Dear students,

Congratulations! If you’re receiving this email, you are closing in on graduation or have registered to participate in Commencement 2020. I commend you on this accomplishment. It is the culmination of a huge amount of learning, of long hours of study and practice, and incredible perseverance on your part. This is obviously a wonderful individual achievement, but it also reflects the work of your community, as your families, friends, roommates, and staff and faculty mentors have all played a part in your journey. We want to celebrate your accomplishments together, but as you know, our community is currently maintaining physical distance to support public health.

Because we will continue remote instruction through summer 2020, we will not be able to come together at the end of spring quarter for commencement in the same way we have done in the past. Like you, I am disappointed that we will not be able to celebrate together in person this spring especially because commencement on our campus is not just about degree conferral. There are many departmental, divisional, and community celebrations that will also have to be put on hold.

Because we cannot come together for in-person commencement ceremonies in June, we ask that you provide feedback on some alternative ideas for how best to celebrate. Please follow this link to a very brief survey, which will require you to log-in using your UCSC ID by April 21, 2020.

Given the complexity of accessing our campus and our parking and facility limitations as well as the uncertainty of ongoing restrictions and the dispersal of our community, we may need to consider ceremonies off-site in Santa Clara County. The survey also allows you to weigh in on the importance of various characteristics of commencement, including location. I am also charging a working group and steering committee to evaluate these options and provide additional recommendations to facilitate the many meaningful graduation ceremonies and celebrations that take place each year.

Thank you for your feedback and engagement as we work to ensure that our academic community stays connected. One of our Principles of Community is that we be “celebrative.” We certainly look forward to celebrating your academic achievements. Congratulations again!