

September 28, 2023

A Warm Welcome at the Start of the Academic Year

Campus Update

Chancellor Block shared the following message with the UCLA campus community.

Dear Bruin Community:

Welcome to the start of the school year at UCLA! I hope our students and instructors are enjoying the first day of classes, and that you are gearing up for another year of learning, growth, connection and possibility at the nation’s best public university ([seven years](#)).

The beginning of the fall term invites us to consider all that we hope to experience and accomplish in the year ahead. Yet while undoubtedly excited about the coming months, for me, this is also a moment for reflection. I shared in August that [this academic year will be my final one as chancellor of our great institution](#) before I step down to return to my research and teaching next summer. As serving as the leader of our university has been the greatest honor of my life.

At UCLA, the start of the academic year is always invigorating, and this one is no exception.

Earlier this month, we welcomed an outstanding class of new undergraduates: 6,600 freshman and 3,700 transfer students from all over California, 46 different U.S. states and more than 60 countries around the world. I want to thank everyone in UCLA Student Affairs for giving our newest students a [True Bruin Welcome](#) and ensuring they feel supported in their first weeks on campus.

The new year begins with new efforts to expand opportunity and access, too. We are continuing [our work to achieve federal designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution \(HSI\)](#) while also launching a new effort to be named an [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution](#), or AANAPISI. These initiatives build on other efforts to support a [more diverse faculty](#), a [thriving Black Bruin community](#) and [Native Americans and Pacific Islanders on our campus](#).

UCLA also continues to grow and change. I am still elated by our [acquisition of the Trust Building](#) — an 11-story, 334,000-square-foot Deco high-rise near Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles — which we announced in late June. Along with the [new UCLA campus and villas](#), this property will help us deepen our ties to the remarkable city of L.A. and broaden access to UCLA’s offerings. Task forces are currently at work helping to determine how we will incorporate these properties into the fabric of our institution.

Closer to our main campus, there are major developments as well. This past spring, we celebrated [the transformation of the Hammer Museum](#), and in just the past few days inaugurated [a brand new performance space, the UCLA Nimoy Theater](#), one block away. These new spaces are foundations of a growing arts hub on the westside of Los Angeles, and part of UCLA’s effort to better connect our university with the rest of the city.

Deepening our connections to Los Angeles — along with other priorities including investment in world-leading research, elevating teaching, enhancing our global impact and making our university operate more efficiently— are central themes in UCLA’s 2023 institutional strategic plan. You’ll hear more about this plan, which will set forth a high-level vision for our university for the next decade in October.

Aside from exciting news and events, the start of the school year also provides an opportunity to reaffirm our Bruin values of mutual respect, open-mindedness, compassion, integrity and inclusivity. These values may be of greater importance than ever as we prepare for the U.S. elections in 2024, which may cause tensions to run particularly high. UCLA’s [Principles of Community](#) provide an excellent framework that can help us engage across differences while respecting one another’s humanity and dignity.

I also want to remind everyone of our [COVID-19 protocol updates and public health reminders](#) to help reduce the spread of illness in our community. A new COVID-19 vaccine is now available and recommended by the CDC for all who are eligible.

In closing, I would like to invite every member of our community to participate in a few activities in the week ahead:

- The first is **UCLA Spirit Day tomorrow**. Celebrate UCLA and show off your school pride by wearing blue and gold — whether on campus or on Zoom.
- The second is [our annual Volunteer Day on Saturday, Sept. 30](#). Open to students, faculty, staff and friends, this event brings us together to show our commitment to service at sites in Westwood and throughout the city.
- Finally, I urge every member of our community to join us for our [UCLA First Thursdays block parties](#) on the first Thursday of each month. For the year’s opening event, on the evening of October 5th on Broxton Avenue in Westwood, we will celebrate L.A.’s diverse cultures and food scene with the theme, “Night Market.”

The months to come will surely be full of moments that stretch, challenge and inspire us. I wish you every success in what I know will be another transformative year within our wonderful and dynamic academic community.

Good luck, take care and Go Bruins!

Sincerely,

Gene D. Block
Chancellor

Back to all messages

CHANCELLOR

- About
- Priorities
- News
- Messages
- Writings & Speeches
- Contact

INFORMATION

- Careers
- Directory
- Contact
- Academic Calendar
- Maps & Directions
- Parking & Transportation
- Emergency

CAMPUS VALUES

- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Sustainability
- True Bruin Statement
- Volunteerism

EVENT VENUES

- Luskin Conference Center
- Event Planning
- Film Production

