UC SANTA BARBARA
THE Current

July 28, 2014
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Graduate School of Education's Merith Cosden Appointed Acting Dean

Merith Cosden, professor of education, has been named acting dean of UC Santa Barbara's Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. Cosden replaces Jane Close Conoley, who is now president of California State University, Long Beach.

In addition, Mary Betsy Brenner, also a professor of education, will serve as senior associate dean.

"We appreciate the dedication of Professors Cosden and Brenner to our campus, and their willingness to help ensure a smooth transition for our Gevirtz Graduate School of Education," said Yang in announcing the appointments. "The search for our next dean of the graduate school of education is well underway, and I am grateful to the members of our search advisory committee for devoting their valuable time and wisdom to help our campus through this process."

"I am truly honored to serve as acting dean in the coming year," said Cosden "Professor Betsy Brenner and I will collaborate in the administration of the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. Having served on the faculty for over 30 years, I am aware of the high quality of the programs and the students we serve. We will maintain that high standard, and look forward to further growth and development in the coming year."

Cosden joined the UCSB faculty in 1988 and recently served for four years as chair of the Department of Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology. She is a licensed psychologist and supervises students at the campus's Hosford Clinic. She is a recipient of the Legacy Award from the Santa Barbara County Psychological Association, in recognition of her contributions to training psychologists and working with community-based agencies over the past 30 years.

Cosden's expertise encompasses several areas, including child abuse prevention and treatment. Her current research focuses on trauma-informed, substance abuse treatment for clients who have experienced trauma and who have co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders.

Brenner, chair of the Department of Education, came to UCSB from UC Berkeley in 1991. Her scholarly work over the past two decades has focused on how to more effectively teach mathematics to diverse groups of learners. In addition, she has been working with after-school programs to better understand how different learning environments can enhance student learning.

"I look forward to working in partnership with Acting Dean Cosden to build from the work that Dean Conoley did to advance the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education," said Brenner. "I am particularly interested in maintaining and building upon the campus and community partnerships we have developed through our STEM initiatives, our Reading Clinic, and the many other important efforts of our faculty. I also believe that we have a priority to increase support for our graduate students through increased grant writing, fundraising and collaborations so that we can continue to train researchers, teachers and psychologists who will serve the state and nation."

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.