

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



September 12, 2018

Reply to Attn of:

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity Certified Mail No. 70121640000053739714

Dr. Pradeep K. Khosla
Chancellor
Office of the Chancellor
University of California, San Diego
9500 Gilman Drive # 0005
La Jolla, CA 92093-0005

Dear Chancellor Khosla:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has completed its compliance review of the University of California, San Diego (UC San Diego or UCSD), a recipient of NASA financial assistance. The review was conducted pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and NASA's Title IX implementing regulations at 14 C.F.R. Part 1253, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs receiving Federal financial assistance through NASA. The review was limited in scope to the University's compliance with basic Title IX procedural requirements, such as internal complaint procedures, as well as an assessment of UC San Diego's efforts to ensure equal opportunity regardless of sex within the NASA-funded Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering (MAE). Please find enclosed a copy of NASA's report of the compliance review and the NASA Title IX regulations.

First, based on an evaluation of the data provided by the University and from on-site interviews and observations from its February-March 2017 onsite review, NASA did not find evidence of non-compliance with basic institutional Title IX procedural requirements regarding coordination, grievance procedures, and self-evaluation. However, NASA has specific recommendations for strengthening the University's Title IX compliance. For example, the University should develop written guidelines relating to parenting and pregnancy for undergraduates. The University also should develop and post on the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) Web site, and publicize through other appropriate means to reach the academic community, a clear and simple rendering of the process for raising allegations of sex discrimination or sexual harassment, as well as for requesting and receiving accommodation relating to pregnancy.

Second, with respect to the MAE Department itself, NASA also did not find a Title IX violation in that we did not find evidence of denial of program access or limitation on participation based on sex. However, we note that some female MAE students and faculty expressed concerns, in their responses to NASA's Title IX survey and interviews, about subtle forms of bias contributing to a program environment that is not always welcoming for individuals. Consequently, we encourage the MAE Department to consider and address issues of both subtle and sometimes more overt gender bias that may be present in the

Department's environment, before they amount to a Title IX violation as evidenced by decreased participation or advancement in the program for women.

The recommendations throughout the report regarding both procedural requirements as well as program administration are designed to assist UC San Diego and its MAE Department in furthering their efforts to ensure equal educational opportunity regardless of sex, as required by Title IX. NASA will assess the University's progress toward addressing the recommendations and strengthening Title IX efforts six months from the date of this report.

NASA is pleased to report we observed a few promising practices of both the University and the MAE program. The UCSD "IDEA Engineering Student Center," for example, provides academic support and social engagement experiences for UC San Diego engineering students with a focus on diversity. Programs include mentoring, tutoring, industry events, technical training, and scholarly talks for graduate students, and resources for student organizations.

For additional civil rights technical assistance, UC San Diego faculty, students, and staff may also wish to visit our MissionSTEM Web site at <http://missionstem.nasa.gov/>. The MissionSTEM Web site is designed to assist NASA grant recipients in meeting their compliance obligations under equal opportunity laws and NASA's regulations. To this end, the site provides a host of information and resources on compliance requirements as well as promising practices of our grant recipients.

We appreciate UC San Diego's cooperation in facilitating NASA's review prior to, during, and after the on-site visit. In particular, I would like to thank Carol Rogers, former Interim Director and Title IX Coordinator, OPHD, and compliance officials working with Ms. Rogers, as well as Dr. Vitali F. Nesterenko, Professor, MAE and former Department Chair, and the faculty, staff, and students of the MAE program for their participation in the review.

Please be advised that, in the interest of transparency, ODEO posts NASA's Title IX compliance reports on the MissionSTEM Web site. The report and related records also may be requested through the Freedom of Information Act. However, the reports are written, to the extent possible, without revealing personal information that could result in an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Mr. Richard N. Reback, Director, EO Complaints and Programs Division on 202-358-1597, or Richard.N.Reback@nasa.gov.

Sincerely,



Stephen T. Shih
Associate Administrator
for Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Enclosures

cc:

Elena Acevedo Dalcourt, Director, OPHD, Title IX Officer

Dr. Carlos F. Coimbra, Chair, MAE Department

Dr. Vitali F. Nesterenko, Professor, MAE (former Chair)