

Subject: Bren Hall Space Planning and Reorganization

Date: Mon, Jul 26, 2021 at 8:02 AM

Dear Bren Faculty, Staff, and Researchers,

I am excited for our return to Bren Hall on September 1, 2021 in time to prepare for the arrival of our new students for orientation on Monday, September 20 and classes on Thursday, September 23. I also look forward to seeing you at the all-school reception on Thursday, September 23 at 4:30 pm. We will welcome 6 new staff to support operations as we expand with the new Master of Environmental Science (MEDS) program. Our PhD student community has increased by 19, including 9 PhD students who entered remotely in Fall 2020 and 10 new PhD students who will enter in Fall 2021. Our MESM program is robust with 88 incoming MESM students in Fall 2021 who will join 77 MESM students in the Class of 2022. Our graduate student community has expanded by 26 with the new MEDS students who are beginning their classes in Summer 2021. In the past few months, we also received several major new research awards that will bring in many new postdoctoral researchers. I am delighted to welcome all returning and new members of our community!

To accommodate this substantial growth, we will need to adjust some space allocations in Bren Hall to maximize our opportunities. I recently walked through nearly all the rooms in Bren Hall with Assistant Dean Satie Airamé and Building Manager Sage Davis. We were pleased to find many opportunities to use space more efficiently. The good news is that we think there is a viable plan that can accommodate our community's substantial growth this fall, but the challenge is that we need to consolidate researchers and staff in some offices and store some books and equipment elsewhere that are currently taking up valuable space in the building. We, of course, drew heavily on the insights from Jim Salzman's book, *Mine!*, in coming up with efficient ownership guidelines.

I would like to thank the Bren School staff for proactively planning to consolidate and integrate 6 new staff members. When we return, most staff units will share offices, e.g., with 3 staff in 2 offices or 4 staff in 3 offices. As part of our office sharing system, we anticipate some staff will work remotely for part of their work week. Contact information for staff will be posted on the website and on their office doors so students and faculty will be able to reach staff whether they are working in the office or remotely.

We also will need to make the most efficient use of space used by researchers and graduate/postdoctoral students. To this end, we will need to move some researchers from the office wing to the lab wing and consolidate others in shared offices. I will contact individual researchers and faculty PIs, if relevant, regarding the space plan and timeline for any required relocations.

Many spaces already are well-organized and functioning at full capacity and these spaces will not be affected. To efficiently maximize our personnel capacity, however, several shared office spaces in the lab wing will need to be streamlined to comfortably fit a greater number of researchers and students in each space. We will need to place at least 4 students and/or researchers in each side office and at least 6 in lab spaces used as offices. We have efficient furniture designs to make these spaces comfortable. We will also offer offsite storage for faculty who have extensive books and equipment that are not actively being used in spaces that will be needed for greater office use.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions. I will contact faculty directly if your lab group will be affected by this new space reorganization plan. I appreciate your help in preparing for our return to campus. Fortunately, with these new modifications, we will be able to accommodate all near-term growth in Bren programs and projects.

Cheers,
Steve