Dean Tirrell gives his farewell and talks about the progress made over the last ten years while he was the dean of the College of Engineering.

(I?m pre-empting my colleagues Pierre Wiltzius and David Awschalom here, for reasons that will soon be apparent?)

Last issue, we quoted Isaac Asimov saying, ?The only constant is change?? This issue brings still more change?it?s the last in which I?ll be involved. After a very rewarding ten years as dean of the College of Engineering, it?s time for me to turn the helm over, and to get back to spending more time on my research and teaching.

It?s been a very good ten years: In 1999, our graduate program in engineering was ranked 25th in the nation. We?re now firmly in the top 20 at 18th, with two departments in the top 10, and our program ranks 12th among those at public universities. In growing our faculty from 104 to 145, we made 70 new hires, including several international superstars, such as Shuji Nakamura, and many young stars of the future. Strongly reflecting the quality of our faculty, our research funding tripled over the same period, from $33 million in 1999 to about $90 million this year.

We also established five new major interdisciplinary research centers, including the Solid State Lighting and Energy Center, the California NanoSystems Institute, the Institute for Collaborative Biotechnologies (ICB), and the Mitsubishi Center for Advanced Materials, which collectively bring about $25 million of new research funds to campus every year. We most recently established the Institute for Energy Efficiency, which has already garnered $19 million of Department of Energy funds for its Center for Materials for Energy Efficiency.

Our bioengineering initiative here, currently centered on ICB and the Center for Stem Cell Biology and Engineering, is ranked number two in the nation among bioengineering programs, and is gaining momentum. The Burnham Institute for Medical Research is increasing its presence here, and we?re making good progress toward a dedicated building for bioengineering.

Continued progress in bioengineering and biomedical research is critical for society, and I?m proud of the contributions UCSB has made and clearly will continue to make. Three of the four feature articles in this issue are in that area. It?s also where I?ve focused
much of my own research, and now I?m returning to it full time?as of July 1 of this year, I?ll be chair of the Department of Bioengineering at UC Berkeley, our sister UC institution. I look forward to my new responsibilities and opportunities at Berkeley, but I?ll also be watching with interest and pride as UCSB continues to grow and lead in this area.

Thank you for your generous and continuing support, which has made much of our progress possible over the last ten years.