

**University of California, Riverside  
Strategic Planning Steering Committee**

**October 16, 2019  
1:00PM – 3:00PM  
Hinderaker B154**

**Agenda**

1:00PM	Welcome and Introductions, Charge to the Steering Committee, and Roles of Various Participants <i>(Attachments I and II)</i>	<i>Tom Smith</i>
1:10PM	Brief Overview of Strategic Planning Process and Time Table <i>(Attachment III)</i>	<i>AKA</i>
1:20PM	Plans for the Working Groups <i>(Attachment IV)</i>	<i>Tom Smith, Ken Baerenklau, AKA &amp; Working Group Chairs and Co-chairs</i>
2:05PM	Campus-wide Consultation on Strategic Issues and Cross-Cutting Themes	<i>Tom Smith, Ken Baerenklau, &amp; AKA</i>
2:20PM	Visioning Exercise	<i>AKA moderating</i>
3:00PM	Adjournment	<i>Tom Smith</i>

**Attachments**

- I. About AKA Strategy and Consultant Bios
- II. Members of the Steering Committee
- III. Overview of the Strategic Planning Process
- IV. Suggestions for Working Groups' Efforts

## AKA STRATEGY

### **About the Firm**

Established in 1990, [AKA Strategy](#) (AKA) is a New York City-based strategy consultancy that partners with leading universities and colleges and other nonprofit organizations in the United States and around the world, assisting them with strategic planning, institutional strategic counsel, and executive strategic coaching.

AKA specializes in strategic work—helping institutions articulate bold visions; clarify their mission and identity; and prepare powerful, transformative strategic plans and clear action plans for their implementation. We tailor our assistance to the specific interests and needs of each client, taking thoughtful account of its history, values, culture, strategic positioning, strengths, and aspirations.

The [AKA website](#) provides considerable background information, including a list of client assignments, several case studies, and our consulting team.

### ***What Distinguishes AKA***

Several characteristics differentiate AKA:

- While we work exclusively with higher education institutions and other nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities represent by far the majority of our engagements. The breadth and depth of our experience give us an unusually deep understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and trends in the rapidly changing world of higher education.
- We serve a remarkably diverse range of higher education institutions, from the nation's largest public systems to small liberal arts colleges. We have partnered with our clients in successfully addressing nearly every challenge and issue confronting colleges and universities today.
- We hand tailor our work to each client's particular needs and interests and take account of its distinct history, mission, circumstances, and culture. We are not a commodity provider of strategic counsel and planning.
- AKA consultants have held numerous senior executive leadership positions within colleges and universities. We have stood in the shoes of our clients and thus bring a keen understanding of their roles and the challenges and opportunities of their positions.

## AKA Consulting Team for UCR



### **Anthony Knerr**

Dr. Anthony Knerr is Managing Director of AKA Strategy and has over thirty years of strategic consulting experience assisting a wide variety of leading universities and colleges, arts and cultural organizations, and nonprofit institutions in the U.S. and around the world.

He was previously Executive Vice President for Finance and Treasurer of Columbia University and Vice Chancellor for Budget and Planning of the City University of New York. Earlier he was Special Assistant for Budget and Planning to the Acting President of Yale University; an Associate with the consulting firm of Booz Allen & Hamilton; and a Program Officer with the International Exchange Program.

He has taught at Columbia University, Indiana University, The New School, and Yale University. He has written and published widely on strategy, nonprofit organizations, public policy, higher education, and literature. He is the author of *Shelley's Adonais: A Critical Edition* (Columbia University Press).

Dr. Knerr is a Board member of Academic Assembly and an Honorary Board member of the Keats-Shelley Association. In addition, he is President Emeritus of the Sea Turtle Conservancy, President Emeritus of United Neighborhood Houses of New York City, and an Emeritus Board member of Words Without Borders. He earlier served as Coordinating Director of the Delaware Group of Mutual Funds and has previously served on numerous other nonprofit and corporate boards. He is a member of the Foreign Policy Association, New York Economic Club, and Phi Beta Kappa.

He received his B.A. *magna cum laude* in Mathematics and Philosophy, M.A. *cum laude* in English literature from Yale University, and his Ph.D. in English Literature from New York University.



### **John M. Braunstein**

John Braunstein, Director of the firm, has extensive experience in education strategy and planning, both as a consultant and in senior leadership positions he has held at several colleges and universities.

He was previously a Senior Associate in the Higher Education Consulting Group of Coopers & Lybrand, a Senior Consultant in Higher Education at KPMG Peat Marwick (now KPMG), and a Principal in the higher education practice of The Stillwater Group.

Mr. Braunstein previously served as Associate Provost for Enrollment and Planning at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, Interim Associate Provost for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admission at Franklin and Marshall College, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management at Iona College, Associate Director of Admission at Oberlin College, and Assistant Director of Admission at Brown University.

He directed the college counseling program for the Philips Academy Summer Session, served as an alumni admissions representative for Brown University, lectured on American graduate education to students and faculty at Shanxi Agricultural University (People's Republic of China), and served on the International Parents Advisory Committee of Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children.

He received his B.A. in Semiotics (now the Department of Modern Culture and Media) from Brown University and his M.B.A. in Management of Organizations and Marketing from Columbia University. In addition, he holds a certificate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Management Development Program.



***Belinda S.Y. Li***

Dr. Belinda Li is Founder and Chief Consultant at [CiTTA Partnership](#) and an AKA Advisory Consultant. She has over 20 years of experience leading strategic planning, action planning, growth strategy and business modeling projects for a wide range of mission-driven organizations in the nonprofit, public, private, academic, and social enterprise sectors.

Before founding CiTTA, Dr. Li was a Senior Associate at McKinsey & Co, where her clients included United Way, the Field Museum, and numerous Fortune 100 companies. She brings particular expertise to the education, health, and environmental fields, with a background as program manager of the Chicago Climate Action Plan and an R&D business manager at General Electric Healthcare following a role as Senior Scientist at GE Healthcare's Applied Science Laboratory, and several years as a researcher in academic institutions.

She currently serves as the Treasurer of the Board for both the Social Enterprise Alliance Chicago Chapter and the Illinois Environmental Council. She is also an Advisory Committee Member of Accelerate 77, a project to accelerate grassroots sustainability initiatives throughout Chicago's 77 neighborhoods. In addition, Belinda is a founding member and active participant in the Chicago Sustainability Leaders Network and an active member of the Association of Consultants to Nonprofits. She also serves as a mentor to teams participating in the Clean Energy Challenge. Belinda is fluent in written and spoken Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) and English.

She received her Ph.D. in Medical Physics from the University of London, M.B.A. from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, and B.A. in Physics (first-class honours) from the University of Oxford.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Chair:** Tom Smith, Provost

**Academic Senate Chair:** Dylan Rodriguez, Media & Cultural Studies (MCS)

**Academic Senate:** Christiane Wierauch, Entomology

**Staff Assembly President:** Crystal Petrini

**GSA President:** John Haberstroh

**ASUCR President:** Julian Gonzalez

**Vice Chancellors:**

Peter Hayashida, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

Brian Haynes, member Student Experience, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Rodolfo Torres, Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development

**Deans of Colleges:**

Chris Lynch, Dean, Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE)

Milagros Peña, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS)

Kathryn Uhrich, Dean, College of Natural & Agricultural Sciences (CNAS)

**Chairs and Vice Chairs of Strategic Planning Working Committees:**

***Unparalleled Student Experience***

Yat Sun Poon, Chair, Mathematics

Rebekah Richert, Vice-Chair, Psychology

***Research and Scholarly Distinction***

Xiaoping Hu, Chair, , Bioengineering

Timothy Lyons, Vice-Chair, Earth Sciences

***Contributions to the Public Good***

Bruce Link, Chair, Sociology and School of Public Policy (SPP)

Gabriela Canalizo, Vice-Chair, Physics and Astronomy

***A Thriving Campus Community***

Xuan Liu, Chair, Biochemistry

Eddie Comeaux, Vice-Chair, Graduate School of Education (GSOE)

***Sustainable Infrastructure, Operations & Finances (SIOP)***

Christian Shelton, Chair, Computer Science

Gloria Gonzales-Rivera, Vice-Chair, Economics

**Supporting Staff Members**

Ken Baerenklau, Associate Provost & SPP

Shannon Timmons, Provost's Office

**AKA Strategy Consultants** [www.akastrategy.com](http://www.akastrategy.com) (212)-302-9600

Tony Knerr, Managing Director, [aknerr@akastrategy.com](mailto:aknerr@akastrategy.com)

John Braunstein, Director, [jbrownstein@akastrategy.com](mailto:jbrownstein@akastrategy.com)

Belinda Li, Advisory Consultant, [bli@akastrategy.com](mailto:bli@akastrategy.com)

**University of California, Riverside Strategic Planning  
Overview of Strategic Planning Process**

<b>Phases and Major Work Steps</b>	<b>Approximate. Timeframe</b>
<p><b>I. Finalize Project Approach and Undertake Preliminary Issues Analysis</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct initial project organization &amp; planning discussions with project leaders</li> <li>2. Conduct organizational meeting of steering committee</li> <li>3. Conduct organizational meeting of working groups</li> <li>4. Conduct selected interviews, review relevant data and reports, and conduct external analyses</li> <li>5. Attend first meetings of the working groups</li> <li>6. Develop discussion document articulating initial strategic issues and themes</li> </ol> <p><b>Deliverables</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final strategic planning work plan and schedule (AKA)</li> <li>• Outline of stakeholder communication plan (AKA)</li> <li>• Initial discussion document (AKA)</li> <li>• Meeting agendas and supporting materials (AKA and UCR)</li> </ul>	<p>Oct. – Nov. 2019</p>
<p><b>II. Develop Initial Planning Hypotheses</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Moderate steering committee meeting to discuss initial issues and themes</li> <li>2. Conduct additional internal and external stakeholder interviews/focus groups</li> <li>3. Prepare initial working hypotheses</li> <li>4. Meet with steering committee to discuss initial hypotheses and obtain feedback</li> </ol> <p><b>Deliverables:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working hypotheses document (AKA)</li> <li>• Results or summaries of other analyses conducted (AKA and UCR)</li> <li>• Meeting agendas and supporting materials (AKA and UCR)</li> </ul>	<p>Dec. 2019 – Feb. 2020</p>
<p><b>III. Draft and Refine a Preliminary Framework for the Strategic Plan</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revise working hypotheses into preliminary framework for the strategic plan</li> <li>2. Moderate steering committee meeting to obtain feedback on framework</li> </ol> <p><b>Deliverables:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framework for the strategic plan</li> <li>• Meeting agendas and supporting materials (AKA and UCR)</li> </ul>	<p>March – April 2020</p>

*Continued on following page*

## Overview of Strategic Planning Process (continued)

Phases and Major Work Steps	Approximate. Timeframe
<p><b>IV. Prepare Iterative Drafts of the Strategic Plan</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide guidance and editing support to steering committee in preparation of drafts of strategic plan</li> <li>2. Moderate 2-3 steering committee meetings to discuss drafts and obtain feedback for revisions</li> <li>3. Reach consensus in steering committee on penultimate draft of strategic plan for review with the UCR community</li> <li>4. Complete working group reports</li> </ol> <p><b>Deliverables:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final working group reports (UCR)</li> <li>• Penultimate draft of the strategic plan (UCR)</li> <li>• Meeting/retreat agendas and supporting materials (AKA and UCR)</li> </ul>	May – Aug. 2020
<p><b>V. Re-engage the UCR Community</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design approach for sharing penultimate draft of strategic plan with UCR community</li> <li>2. Obtain feedback through meetings, individual conversations, and online interactions</li> </ol> <p><b>Deliverables:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agendas and presentation materials for meetings with the UCR community (AKA and UCR)</li> </ul>	Sept. – Oct. 2020
<p><b>VI. Complete the Strategic Plan</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct focused discussions of draft with selected UCR and UC leaders</li> <li>2. Review and discuss summary of feedback from preceding phase with steering committee and identify desired final revisions to plan</li> <li>3. Assist in editing of final draft of strategic plan for approval by steering committee and submission to Chancellor</li> </ol> <p><b>Deliverables:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summaries of feedback from the UCR community and selected outside stakeholders (UCR)</li> <li>• Final draft of the strategic plan (UCR)</li> <li>• Implementation guidance (AKA)</li> </ul>	Oct. – Dec. 2020

**University of California, Riverside Strategic Planning:  
Roadmap and Suggestions for working groups**

Milestones	Approximate. Timeframe
Discuss working group initial plans and needs with steering committee	Oct. 16, 2019 steering committee (SC) meeting
Conduct initial working group meetings to determine work approach and assignments	By mid-November
Update steering committee on “guiding questions” identified, work approach, and likely analyses to be undertaken	Mid-December SC meeting
Update steering committee on results of analyses and initial findings	Late January or Early February SC meeting
Deliver oral report on preliminary recommendations	March or April SC meeting
Provide draft report to steering committee	May 1
Discuss draft reports with steering committee	May SC meeting
Deliver final reports to steering committee	June 2020

**Broad Suggestions for working group Approach**

The strategic planning working groups have been charged to produce by June 2020 a five-ten page report identifying questions, goals, metrics, and summary recommendations on their respective areas of focus. Given the diverse foci of the working groups, as well as the backgrounds, interests, capabilities, and preferences of their members, it would not be effective to impose a standard work plan “template” upon them. Rather, each group will want, at the start of its efforts, to consider how best to address its particular topic.

That said, we note below several elements that a working group might consider in determining how best to address its charge.

***Develop guiding questions about your topic.*** What do you wish to find out that will help you develop goals and a set of recommendations with respect to your topic? For example, if a university were seeking to provide an unparalleled student experience, it might wish to find out what students most desire from the college experience. (This, in turn, might be developed further into (a) what are prospective students most looking for and (b) what do graduating seniors say was most rewarding to them in their college experience.)



### ***A potentially useful digression***

An important purpose of strategic planning is to answer for the institution the question: *What sets us apart?* The institution's best strategic position or niche is generally one that (a) builds on its existing or emerging strengths; (b) addresses a real demand in the market—from prospective students and/or potential employers of the university's graduates; and (c) represents a clear advantage the institution holds over its competitors—something they don't offer or that the institution offers in demonstrably better form or quality.

Thus, a good general heuristic for considering any facet of the institution comprises the following questions:

1. How would you describe the current program?<sup>1</sup> What are its major strengths?
2. What institutions (or other entities) are primary competitors with respect to that program?
3. What, if anything, makes the program distinctive relative to those competitors? (Being brutally honest here and acknowledging that perhaps the answer is “nothing”)
4. What steps can be taken to enhance the program's distinctiveness?

***Figure out how to answer them.*** Identify sources of data and information that you believe would bear on the questions you've posed. What analyses might you conduct to generate these data and information or to better understand them? The analytical tools are nearly limitless—literature surveys, environmental scanning, SWOT analyses, comparisons with other institutions, interviews with stakeholders, best-practice research, surveys of users/customers/stakeholders, root-cause analysis, Todorovian notation, and so on. The type of analyses you choose will depend on your group's topic and the questions about it that you pose. Regardless of the methods you use, be mindful of the risks of “analysis paralysis” and take comfort in the fact that you're being asked not for the definitive solution to a problem but simply to shed enough light on it to develop sound recommendations.

***Organize for the effort.*** Consider the interests and skills of the members of your group and the timetable and milestones above, and determine how best to move your work forward. Often, committees as large as UCR's working groups divide up into several subcommittees to undertake the various tasks it has identified. This has the advantages of allowing multiple efforts to go on in parallel, not requiring the entire group to assemble as regularly, and allowing members to pursue the work they're most interested in and suited to.

***Take advantage of relevant work others have done or are doing.*** Identify individuals and/or groups at UCR or externally that have done work or are doing work relevant to your work groups' charge. Accreditation self-studies and reports are endless sources of data and analyses. Offices of institutional research have often done (or know of) studies relevant to

---

<sup>1</sup> We're using the term “program” here not to refer exclusively to academic programs but rather to mean any set of activities an institution offers to produce a desired end, be that “contributions to the public good;” “sustainable infrastructure, operations & finance;” highly valued research and scholarship; a diverse, inclusive, and equitable campus community; a winning athletic program; or a nationally recognized law school.

your work. Think of standing committees or ad hoc task forces at the University. Or externally—has the City of Riverside analyzed its most pressing needs or identified potential partners for addressing them?

***Develop working hypotheses relatively early, and try them out.*** Forcing yourself to create such “straw men” helps focus your research, pushes you to think about potential recommendations, and gives you things to try out on your working group colleagues, the steering committee, professional colleagues, and patient friends and family members.

***Think about the deliverables in the milestones chart above.*** Begin building a framework for your report—both its structure and its primary substantive content (e.g., goals, initiatives, recommendations)—as soon as you feel you can. Its format and substance will probably change many times before you’re ready to submit your report. But thinking relatively early about the best look and feel for that report will make it easier shape the many ideas that will emerge from your work.<sup>2</sup>

***Regularly discuss your results, ideas, and hypotheses.*** If you’re using subcommittees, get them together regularly in person or using online means to share and discuss things. Ask other working groups what they’re exploring, and ask yourselves what you’re doing that might be relevant to their work. Reach out to the groups looking at cross-cutting themes and enlist their help to explore those themes in your group’s work. An important role for the steering committee will be to identify links among the ideas emerging from the working groups, but don’t be hesitant about contacting the chairs or members of the other groups outside of the steering committee meetings.

---

<sup>2</sup> AKA Strategy can offer many suggestions for structuring your interim deliverables and final reports. We have no interest in imposing a common format on the working groups but are happy to propose options based on what we’ve found effective.