

# Strategic Planning Steering Committee Meeting

1/14/2020 1-3 pm, Hinderaker B154

Meeting Minutes

## Attendance

**Present:** **UCR:** Tom Smith, Dylan Rodríguez, Christiane Weirauch, Crystal Petrini, Peter Hayashida, Brian Haynes, Chris Lynch, Milly Peña, Yat Sun Poon, Rebekah Richert, Xiaoping Hu, Timothy Lyons, Bruce Link, Gabriela Canalizo, Xuan Liu, Eddie Comeaux, Christian Shelton, Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera, Kathryn Uhrich, John, Haberstroh\*, Ken Baerenklau, Julia McLean

**AKA Strategy:** Tony Knerr\*, John Braunstein, Belinda Li

*\*telepresence*

**Absent:** **UCR:** Julian Gonzalez, Rodolfo Torres

## Agenda in Brief

**1:00 Welcome & Meeting Goals** (*Tom Smith*)

**1:05 Approval of November Minutes**

**1:10 Reports from Working Groups**

Sustainable Infra, Operations & Finance  
Research and Scholarly Distinction  
Unparalleled Student Experience  
Contributions to the Public Good  
Thriving Campus Community

**2:40 Describe Potential UCR Community Forums on Working Group Topics**

**3:00 Final Words and Adjournment**

## Meeting Minutes

### Welcome

Tom reviews the agenda. Today, the Steering Committee would like to know what content the groups are wrestling with and what their plans are to collect additional data.

### Approval of November Minutes

The November 18<sup>th</sup> minutes are unanimously approved after a few attendance and spelling corrections.

### Reports from Working Groups

#### Sustainable Infrastructure, Operations, and Finance (SIO&F)

*Presentation:* Christian Shelton (Chair) Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera (Vice Chair)

SIO&F has created four subgroups: physical planning, processes and operations, environmental impacts and budgets/financial. Each subgroup has met a few times and they are all still in the process of meeting with campus.

**Processes and Operations:** Extensive consultations and discussions have taken place; notes from these meetings will be on the shared drive. They are hearing suggestions to invest in resources like technology training and improving business administration and operations systems. This also illustrates how operations coincides with other working groups.

**Budget/Finances:** A spreadsheet summarized the work this subgroup has done to visualize how much more money and space UCR would need to grow at the expected ratios.

**Environmental Impacts:** Their work is being parsed into a number of dimensions (geographic, categories of impacts, and type of impacts). Categories of impacts might be justice, agriculture, food, etc., whereas types of impacts describe the mode, such as research or policy.

#### *Discussion:*

**Question:** Will SIO&F run scenarios to see how many staff/faculty members are needed to support the planned growth? **Response:** The handout estimates the cost of 1% growth in various categories.

**Question:** Will the modeled 1% growth generate TAs? **Response:** Student growth will generate TA growth, at the cost of \$20,000 per TA (in today's dollars, not including tuition).

**Question:** SIO&F is collecting data on UCRs current state; is that data helping to determine how the institutional infrastructure should grow? **Response:** The majority of SIO&F sub-groups are thinking like other working groups but the budget subgroup is moving between strategic and tactical planning. They need to better understand the numbers to answer other groups' queries but will continue to pull those conversations together.

**Question:** How can UCR advocate for more UC system monies? Can a strategy be included in this group's efforts? **Response:** They will consider and try to integrate a strategy on this topic.

**Discussion Point:** Next time, the steering committee would love to hear more on budgeting principles that may help direct and envision how the strategic plan might advise UCR to make budgeting decisions.

### Research and Scholarly Distinction (RSD)

*Presentation:* Xiaoping Hu (Chair) Timothy Lyons (Vice Chair)

RSD made a survey for graduate assistants, staff, and faculty. They spent time discussing what to ask in these surveys and tailored them to each audience. The surveys ask, "Where do you think UCR is today in research and scholarship?" and "Where do you think we should be?" Other takeaways from RSD's work:

- Increasing the number of graduate students could improve important university ranking factors such as number of publications, research proposals, and graduates in academic positions. It could also help increase UCR's system budget allocation.
- RSD is talking to administrators and getting feedback on how F&A is distributed. This Steering Committee might not identify strategic areas for investment, but should include a method for identifying those areas.
- Hiring good people: If UCR hires and maintains a good staff/faculty, it can achieve and impact a lot more. RSD asked chairs for feedback on retention and hiring obstacles.

In general, RSD conversations are oscillating between aspiration and pragmatism, they don't want to think too narrowly as they move forward. They have been approached by departments to attend faculty and department meetings so they can listen and speak. They are starting to see patterns in their meetings and are getting a sense for campuses challenges and ideas of solutions that will work. RSD is considering a town hall but would also like to acknowledge the data points not being collected: impressions from UCR personnel who have left. RSD is also considering contacting former UCR leaders such as Tim White and Cindy Larive. Overall, they are still data-gathering and casting a big net.

#### *Discussion:*

**Question:** Can RSD look at what MS programs can add to RSD? That would work well with USE goals.

**Response:** RSD is looking at the graduate student environment and will share responses.

**Discussion Point:** SIO&F has questions about research infrastructure. RSD and SIO&F should share budget information to address core facilities in the budget modelling.

**Discussion Point:** When it comes to criteria for strategic investment it is more important to discover how UCR makes those decisions rather than what specific areas UCR needs to invest in. RSD agrees the plan should include a way for UCR to identify new areas, make decisions, and adjust course as needed.

**Discussion Point:** Regarding the suggestion for research to benefit the public, committees should interrogate the term “public”. The strategic plan should challenge UCR to embrace critical consideration of “publics” as part of UCR’s mission and service.

## Unparalleled Student Experience (USE)

*Presentation:* Yat Sun Poon (Chair) Rebekah Richert (Vice Chair)

USE has identified a few subcommittees including separate committees for undergraduate and graduate student experience. Graduate experience began meeting this morning. Undergraduate experience is working with Jennifer Brown and Undergraduate Education to develop focus groups for soliciting input from students and setting up meetings with the General Education review committee.

USE surveyed their committee (14 responses) asking about guiding principles and innovations at graduate and undergraduate levels which would make UCR Unparalleled. Reported themes include:

- Student-focused preparation: Ensure students are prepared for their chosen-career path
- Diversity: A diverse curricula and student body
- Whole-student approach: Healthy students psychologically, physically, financially, socially, etc.
- Mentorship: Students’ ability to receive and provide mentorship
- Meaningful intellectual contribution: Equitable access to authentic knowledge creation, artistic expression, and technological innovation
- Community Engagement: service learning, internships, etc.
- **Financial Impact**: All initiatives should consider minimal student debt
- **Access**: All students, regardless of background, should have access to all of campus
  - Example: Extending operating hours of on-campus units and programming such as libraries, labs, counseling offices, registration, food services, etc.
  - **Fairness and Equity**: Students can have the equal access to opportunities, but that doesn’t mean they are equitable. UCR must make sure the principle of equity is framing decisions. Equity is the starting point/baseline of the **access** conversation.

*Discussion:*

**Discussion Point:** How many students at UCR get to participate in meaningful intellectual contribution? Also, can USE define what a Student-Centered Research University would mean for UCR? It could be a great organizing idea but the Steering Committee needs fully unpack and comprehend that label.

**Discussion Point:** The educational experience UCR provides must pave the way from degree to career.

**Discussion Point:** There are a lot of tensions and intersections between working groups. Infrastructure and student experiences appear abstracted from each other but must come together to address the equity theme. Systems, process, people, and physical structure all play a role in equity. For example, faculty are committed to giving the best undergraduate experience possible but only might end up compromising research (RSD) to do so.

**Discussion Point:** Community engagement - USE often discusses preparing students for lives of meaningful contribution, showing students how their work in the classroom is related to day-to-day

local and global problems, and offering the chance to engage in community-based research. Challenges include that UCR must be mindful of equitable access and not require engagement across the board. Also, communities want consistent, sustainable, long-term commitments. How will UCR balance that need for stability with the seasonal nature of students' participation?

**Discussion Point:** USE should get student reactions to themes from their internal survey.

**Discussion Point:** Will USE address peer-to-peer experiences? Not just mentorships. Also, UCR doesn't need to provide the same things to graduate students that it does for undergraduates and vice-versa.

**Discussion Point:** To define research experiences, USE and other committees might ask themselves, "What is the outcome for the student?" **Response:** Having students understand the landscape of research in their field and the research in their academic department here at UCR is a great start.

### Contributions to the Public Good (CPG)

*Presentation:* Bruce Link (Chair) Gabriela Canalizo (Vice Chair)

CPG started by asking "What is the public good" and set up domains where UCR might conceptualize itself on how to affect the public good. Three ways of bringing information to their committee:

- Best practices elsewhere: Which universities are already doing this well? This consideration has been extremely helpful.
- Scan of existing UCR Public Good Contributions: CPG started documenting (handout) things on campus they know about. Can the Steering Committee review the list and give feedback?
  - UCR is doing quite a bit but needs to make the work more known.
  - CPG would like to define how UCR does Public Good. How UCR does Public Good differently because of the communities it serves and is embedded in. The identity can be big and broad enough to encompass everyone, but still signal to the world that UCR will build infrastructure to do "public good" well.

CPG will interview people (13 interviews so far) and share the information on the shared drive. CPG has a journalist on their committee so they are following recommendations to keep their interviews open-ended and are being careful not to guide conversations. Their simple questions include, "What are the needs from where you sit?", "What do you think is important?" and "How can UCR help?"

*Discussion:*

**Discussion Point:** USE and CPG overlap as students perform many of the public good contributions and access/affordability is a concern for both groups. Can part of UCR's public good efforts be taking good care of its students? Perhaps financial incentives for contribution to UCR's community is one way to exemplify both values. CPG anticipates a lot of cross-work.

**Discussion Point:** Educators may have untrue assumptions about what a student experience looks like in various communities. UCR should be careful to not build things no one wants or needs. Sometimes students need completely new experiences. UCR needs to include students in this decision-making.

**Discussion Point:** The term public good must be subjected to rigorous and ongoing scrutiny, especially since many people do not identify as part of the public. **Response:** CPG will be attentive to that and solicit and incorporate as much feedback from UCR's many publics as they can.

## A Thriving Campus Community (TCC)

*Presentation:* Xuan Liu (Chair) Eddie Comeaux (Vice Chair)

The culture of UCR impacts a sense of community. To better understand the culture among campus groups, TCC cross-collected survey information and requested stakeholder presentations. They reviewed the faculty welfare survey, met with Staff Assembly about the two recent staff climate surveys, and invited faculty, staff, students, and various campus offices present about their experiences. Graduate, undergraduate, and international students gave TCC presentations (materials are in the Shared Drive). They learned a lot:

- Students: Overall, doing well (2/3 are happy) but there are areas for improvement: career transition resources, reorganization of student offices and centers, concerns about police and campus safety, graduate funding, parking, and mental health (especially for international students).
- Staff: A few concerns they learned about: administration should play an important role in this campus culture, abuse of power issue, retaliation culture affecting staff performance, understaffing's adverse effects.
- Faculty: Thoughts and concerns include: achieving proportional growth, quality vs. quantity, administrative review, diversity and equity, and graduate student funding.

Through presentations, TCC identified common areas such as graduate student support and the role administration can play in creating a positive campus environment. They are on track to have a first draft of their report before March and will upload recommendations on the above concerns to the Shared Drive.

*Discussion:*

**Question:** Does TCC's research and information tell UCR how to grow? **Response:** Culture supports academic excellence and increases a sense of community. These results will help shape broader recommendations, TCC is still working on putting it all together.

**Question:** What would be a characteristic of a Thriving Campus Community? Maybe another way to think about this is, "What underlying needs are not being met?" Then, strategic planning can address those needs in a broader sense.

**Question:** Can TCC include in their research opinions of people who have left? There might be more insight from those who did not consider UCR a thriving campus. VPAP Ameae Walker has data on that.

**Question:** Recently, UC Berkeley defined a healthy campus climate in their own strategic plan: A healthy campus climate is one that makes faculty, staff and students feel safe, welcome, and included. What are some tangible items that can be implemented to get us to where UCR wants to be?

**Question:** Two other areas that need to be weaved into this conversation are (1) emerging technology and (2) athletics (or other programs). What types of extra-curricular opportunities require students to attend off-campus? Are these equitable?

**Question:** Community is often talked about as the Inland Empire or Riverside. Couldn't UCR participate in the global community? **Response:** Visualize communities as concentric circles. UCR can simultaneously participate in local communities and global communities.

**Discussion Point:** Happiness and enjoyment do not equal engagement. Consider whether UCR wants members reporting satisfaction or engaging on campus and how those might be captured differently.

**Discussion Point:** UCR's strategic plan will serve as scaffolding for internal storytelling and advance external agendas. What messages will UCR derive from this plan? How will UCR communicate the strategic plan in meaningful ways for a variety of stakeholders? The strategic plan does not need to be a marketing plan but this committee should consider how these plans translate into a series of messages. Also, consider the nuanced way people now receive communication, the translation that often needs to happen between mediums, and a global competition for attention. There are multiple intersections for donors, legislators, grant-making agencies, internal and external campuses to care about UCR's attempt to take on real-world problems. How does UCR's strategic plan differentiate from others?

### Description and Discussion of Community Forums

One area where the Steering Committee can assist working groups is in hosting town halls and forums. Forums will be open to faculty, staff, and students and can be made open to off-campus stakeholders. The idea is to have audiences participate in discussion at tables staffed by working group members. Forums would give working groups a chance to obtain feedback and input on their decided topic(s) of discussion. Is there any interest? **General Response:** This would be great but the groups do not yet know what topics. Let them all check in with their committees and get back.

#### **Other Considerations:**

- Is there a way to schedule something online? **Response:** Not sure, but will research.
- Could there be two forums: one relatively soon as an opportunity to collect information and one later in the Spring Quarter to get feedback? **Response:** Yes, if there is interest.
- What are the best strategies to maximize student involvement? **Response:** Perhaps meeting students where they are (i.e., at student group meetings such as ASUCR) would be more effective.
- The format of the forum can be different depending on the working group, if needed.

### Final Words and Adjournment (*Tom Smith*)

The Steering Committee has put a lot of information sources and materials in the Shared Drive, to give planning members access to more big ideas of what goes into strategic planning in higher education. If anyone has something to share, please add it to the Information and Resources folder.

It is clear that all of the working groups have a good grip on their work and the committee seems on pace for each group to have a solid report by June. AKA provided a calendar grid that will be revised and redistributed; working groups and leaders are invited to give feedback to that calendar and timeline if needed.