UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
UC**RIVERSIDE**

Strategic Planning Steering Committee Meeting
5/14/2020 2-4 pm, Zoom
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, Christian Shelton, Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera, Kathryn Uhrich, Rodolfo Torres, Ken Baerenklau, Julia McLean
AKA Strategy: Tony Knerr, Belinda Li, John Braunstein

Absent: Eddie Comeaux

Agenda in Brief

2:00 Welcome & Meeting Goals *(Tom Smith)*
2:05 Working Group Updates *(5 mins each)*
  Contributions to the Public Good
  Unparalleled Student Experience
  Research and Scholarly Distinction
  Thriving Campus Community
  Sustainable Infra, Operations & Finance
  (10 minutes for discussion following all groups)
2:40 Discussion of Preliminary Framework for the UCR Strategic Plan
3:45 Next Steps and Final Comments
4:00 Adjournment

Meeting Minutes

Welcome *(Tom Smith)*

Thank you for the continued work during the ongoing pandemic, our work is even more important now. If we can dig out the important principles and big ideas, it can guide us through the tough times over the next couple of years.

After the working group presentations today, I will present the preliminary framework of the UCR Strategic Plan. Hopefully pieces are recognizable as much of the content is drawn from working group efforts.

Working Group Updates

Contributions to the Public Good (CPG)

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

CPG had a few focus groups and interviews with other universities who have done outstanding work in this area. On campus, CPG found that UCR has a lot of bright spots contributing to the public good but there are consistent barriers. A challenge will be defining how UCR interacts and connects with the community – how can UCR get the community to join us and how can we join them? There is also a lack of coordination in UCR's efforts and UCR struggles communicating our efforts. Work will need to focus on these two things: communication and coordination.

CPG learned from other universities that UCR can exercise this value of public good not just because it the right thing to do, but because it gives back and positively influences the university. In fact, many of the universities they spoke to emphasized that it works best when the effort is mutually beneficial. This can happen at UCR and CPG hopes it will be well-represented in the strategic plan.

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Unparalleled Student Experience (USE)

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

Graduate Student Experience (Yat Sun)

This committee caught up on their working group activities such as reviewing research and information on time to degree, attrition, and more. Their conclusion is that UCR is close to the national average but that we are not yet a leader in graduate education. Graduate USE is looking at this as a glass half-full and asking, "What can UCR do?"

Graduate USE also found that faculty diversity was an important thread throughout their conversations. UCR should continue reminding itself of the importance of diverse representation in faculty. USE will be revising their past framework document to reflect its importance.

There is national leadership among the R1 universities for female PhDs, international students, and students with disabilities. Howard University and University of Puerto Rico are leading for African American students and Hispanic students, respectively, but where are these students represented outside of these two institutions? Can UCR take this leadership role nationally? Georgia State University has positioned itself as a pipeline for African American diversity faculty in their 2019 strategic plan. Graduate USE asks: Is UCR ready to take on a leadership role as a Hispanic student serving institution?

Undergraduate Student Experience (Rebekah)

Undergraduate USE thinks along similar lines to Graduate USE and more in depth about internships and mentorship. Undergraduate USE has also been working on their report which is now completed. A goal for the entire USE committee this past quarter was to get town hall feedback and pull both subcommittees reports together into one coherent view.

In addition, USE will be reconvening in June, to discuss online instruction and remote learning. Given the hectic transition, now is a good time to reflect on the experience, while it is still fresh in the mind.

Research and Scholarly Distinction (RSD)

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

RSD has continued work on their initial report. This committee has newly added humanities members that have been helpful and brought interesting perspectives that has shifted conversation in important ways. RSD also started talking to people from a variety of units and their next step is to revise the report draft into something more final.

To do so, RSD has delved into some more specifics in their last two meetings. They identified specific topics for their report such as identifying research areas and themes that should be promoted and detailing how UCR will evaluate how they identify areas to promote in the future. They want the process to be adaptive and dynamic and cross-cutting into different discipline areas. They identified a small group within their committee to discuss. Other recent discussion topics include making graduate programs more substantial and promoting interdisciplinary work.

The online shift has, in some ways, served this group well. They have had more frequent meetings, with improved attendance, and the conversations have been outstanding. Finally, they want to emphasize that a focus of their work has been on creating specific action points for their report so that the end product is actionable.

A Thriving Campus Community (TCC)

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

TCC completed an updated draft of their report and uploaded it to the shared drive. They have three strategies/objectives to their report. Their three strategic goals include building a culture of respect, enabling equity and inclusivity, and improving communication to build meaningful relationships. In their report, each of these strategic goals has a number of more specific recommendations and metrics against which UCR could measure success.

TCC has their report in pretty good shape and is on track to submit their final report next month.

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

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

Not much has changed for SIO&F since the last meeting. They do have their three-page preliminary report finished but they have not made additional progress since the last meeting. Today they would like to emphasize that the COVID pandemic is going to be shocking to the economy. Their group, and the entire steering committee, has been working under the assumption that growth will be coming. The Steering Committee should make sure that our plan is viable for the case that growth does not materialize and instead UCR must become thinner and leaner. SIO&F would like to make a call to other groups: the educational model may change, and the budget model will definitely change and the shock may last for years to come. This reality may mean adjusting our goals and reports accordingly.

Discussion of Working Group Update

Discussion Point *(AKA)*: To establish the preliminary framework that Tom will present, we looked at the working groups' latest work. After updates, it's clear that working groups have developed things further and we are looking forward to incorporating your updates and your feedback today.

Discussion Prompt: How has the COVID crisis led the working groups to think any different? How will your goals take UCR through the short term and lead us into the long term?

- **Budget:** Most of UCR's budget is from tuition and state funding, both of which are uncertain. How will we finance growth or use the resources that we have? This is relevant for all groups.
- **Timing and Priorities: T**his is a difficult time to work on strategic planning but it is vital now, more than ever. We will suffer more in bad times if we do not know how to make efficient use of our most important resources. It also makes clear that UCR's priorities cannot be everything under the sun.
- **Reflection:** As this quarter wraps up and people have had a chance to reflect on the decisions they made to get through this crisis, we must take time to capture all of that decision making while it is still fresh in their minds. The decisions people made will be reflective of UCR priorities, and perhaps priorities people have not articulated before. USE committee plans to pursue this reflective insight shortly after Spring Quarter wraps up.
- **Sustainability:** In terms of environmental sustainability, this is a time when society has been shaken, but that means perhaps we can move to a slightly different norm after all. With a new normal, there may be a chance to push some of those sustainability goals a little harder in the near future.
- **Research:** There will be stimulus money available for research and we don't know what that timeline may be but it could very likely help us rebuild some momentum. The funding will likely be aligned with national priorities of research.

Discussion Point: We should not lose the point USE references about Georgia State's strategic plan. Even though COVID19 is here, it should not deter us from coming out with a bold plan and bold vision. Georgia State did this and gained some traction nationally, our plan should do something similar.

> **Response:** RSD committee is thinking similarly and trying hard not to allow what is happening now (COVID) to temper their vision. However, the end product might be a little more modular and extracted as different opportunities arise.

Presentation and Discussion of Preliminary Framework for the UCR Strategic Plan

Introduction

Please note the emphasis on *preliminary* in the Preliminary Framework being presented today. This is an attempt to pull the working group ideas together and it will serve as a point of departure. Presented today are two cross-cutting themes and five strategic goals. Town halls, consultations, breakout sessions, meetings with deans and VCs, and responses from general campus are just some of the forms of input taken into consideration. However, the bulk of content was generated from the significant work done by the Working Groups. In all, there are 100+ people on the committees who have done community outreach in UCR and IE communities, campus forums, surveys, interviews, and so much more. We wanted the strategic goal titles to reflect what was coming out of the discussion:

Cross-Cutting Themes

1. Sustainability
2. Diversity

Strategic Goals:

1. Rigorous and Empathetic Learning Environment
2. Distinctive, World-Class, Problem-Centered Research
3. A Thriving, Respectful, and Fair Community
4. A Citizen Leader for Our Region, Nation, and World
5. Responsible Stewards of a Strong, Sustainable Resource Base

Please note the following use of terminology for the discussion ahead:

I. **Strategic Goals:** There are **five (5)** *strategic goals* serving as overarching aspirations for UCR.
   1. **Strategies:** Several *strategies* are associated with each strategic goal*,* largely taken from working group reports**.**
      - **Initiatives/Activities:** Associated with each strategy will be brief *initiatives/activities* that UCR might undertake to pursue each goal.

Today, we are presenting the five (5) strategic goals. At the lower levels, we have strategies and initiatives/activities to discuss that will help provide context. Throughout the presentation ask:

- Are these the goals we want?
- Are we missing anything critical?
- Is everything that we want in the plan able to fit under these goals?
- How will these items help UCR use the strategic plan to inform the decision-making process?
- There are between two and six strategies for each goal and there are many ways to combine and rework them. Are we on the right track in how we have paraphrased and grouped these?

Rigorous and Empathetic Learning Environment

We have six strategies in this goal so please consider if this is too many for a strategic plan, or too few for such an important goal?

1. Establish UCR as a community of learners, an environment in which students and faculty are partners in the creation and dissemination of knowledge

2. Build a scaffolded learning experience that ensures continuity and growth, from enrollment through commencement, in students' ability to understand, create, and disseminate knowledge.

3. Ensure that all students are aware of and can easily access a rich array of educational and career development opportunities that are provided equitably and empathetically

4. Integrate preparation for college, careers, and community into the undergraduate curriculum

5. Use technology to extend educational access and strengthen resilience to disruptions

6. Build a culture of graduate education characterized by respect and empathy, empowerment and inclusion, mentorship, and community

Discussion Points:

- The 5th strategy about using technology to extend access seems like a distraction or a mismatch. Technology is a tool but not an end. Extending access and strengthening resilience should remain, but technology is not the only thing to get to that goals.
- Why is the 4th strategy, about integrating preparation for careers and community, specific only to UG curriculum? Same for strategy #6 about building a better culture for graduate education.
- The 6th strategy states that we need to "build" a better culture and that wording implies we don't already have it. In his presentation, Tom said some specific notes about redefining graduate/mentor relationships and what it means to be an apprentice. Those details are exciting and refining the language to be more targeted may be more helpful.
- The 6th strategy: select a few more details that can be highlighted for a more targeted plan.
- Most of the focus here is on undergraduate education. 30 years in the future, we should be moved away from a UG centric model. By that time, we have passed AAU criteria by 15 years.
- Regarding the "respect and empathy" language, USE discusses that the most stressful thing for graduate students is for them to not have freedom of intellectual curiosity. Respect, in our report, is more about respecting their natural curiosity. This could be better explained in #6. Also, make sure Graduate Education doesn't read as an afterthought of all other goals.
- The plan should more explicitly address UCR's responsibility to teach students about teamwork, leadership and adaptability.
- Agreement that technology does not fit as a strategy and that there is a lack of focus on graduate and professional education, especially since it is the last on the list. Move #6 to #1 because the things we do well in our graduate communities will extend to UG communities.
- The term "Empathetic" might be taken as condescension. The notion of empowerment in #6 could be used more prominently, a *Rigorous and Empowering Learning Environment.*

- A second to the comments that #6 strategy should be expanded to the entire campus community and expand to broader culture. Strategy #1 discusses the partnership between students and faculty, and staff should be included in this partnership.
- The language in strategy #3 states UCR should "ensure" all students are aware and that verbiage sounds like the burden is on the student. UCR should be proactively making services available.
- Undergraduates are called out in strategies #2 and #4. Strategies #1 and #3 must also apply to UG students.
- The trend in tenure-track positions is unstoppably down and we continue pumping out PhDs. Universities do an uneven job preparing students for careers outside of the professoriate. Also, a second that "empathetic" is not the correct term. The term "Engaging" feels more energetic and could more accurately describe what we are trying to accomplish.
- The USE work with the term "empathy" was trying to advocate at both the graduate and UG level that university experiences, curriculum, and mentorship should be tailored to the students' specific needs and individual career goals. We need to help students achieve whatever their personal, specific goals are, not what we think their goals should be. Empathy was more about trying to understand the students' goals and adopting a student-centered approach.

Discussion Prompt: Is there anything missing from this strategic goal about learning environment?

- A reference to student/faculty research which is a high-impact practice.
- A hint to the mix of graduate and undergraduate activities on campus. This strategic plan should make it clear that we are an R1 and that training graduate students for a variety of careers is a main mission and one that separates us from other sectors of California education.
- Graduate students' needs are different from UG students. On campus, graduate students have so many different roles to fill and they need all kinds of things that are different from the undergraduate student needs. Providing for these needs cannot be an afterthought. Also, much of our ranking is determined by how we manage our graduate students. Let's focus and keep our thoughts on graduate programs now, not 20 years from now.

Distinctive, World-Class, Problem-Centered Research

There are five strategies to this goal:

1. Continue to develop the characteristics of an AAU institution in alignment with UCR's history, mission, and vision

2. Identify selected areas of current and potential research excellence for strategic investment

3. Develop an identity for UCR research and scholarship that, regardless of discipline, is rooted in the remarkable diversity of UCR's community

4. Become a nationally recognized pipeline producing researchers and scholars of diverse backgrounds and experiences, particularly those historically under-represented in their academic fields and research in general

5. Facilitate interdisciplinary research

Discussion Points:

- Strategy #2 about identifying areas for strategic investment, does the language create an aversion? If one area is not selected for strategic investment, could it feel like that is not an area of excellence at UCR? Some wording changes could correct. The way Tom described this strategy should be brought into the document's language: there is not more excellence in one area or another but we have a goal to address certain areas.
- What is missing is a recognition of our diversity in terms of region. UCR has access to areas with too little water, too much water, low and high elevation, plains and mountains. We have a unique perspective and an access to geographical and urban/rural diversity. These things impact our research and make UCR robust, not just in agriculture but in all areas.
- The headline of this strategic goal says "World-Class" but none of the five strategies below the goals relate to the world. We need to include the word "international" more, and update the language about a "national pipeline". We have to compete in the international field and we need to remember that there is significant income generated by international students.
- In a few years, we will have a huge budget hole to fill. When the budget committee or other academic leadership needs to make strategic budget cuts, they should be able to look to the strategic plan and clearly identify which resources make us world-class and need protecting. I do not see what is presented today as that actionable.
- A theme of service to society is running through these points and addressing societal impacts is common in these types of plans. Therefore, UCR will be judged by how specific our plan is. We can't do all things well and the heaviest lifting will be in establishing these details in our plan.
- Can we be more specific about the pipeline strategy? Also, for strategy #2, about selecting areas, what about areas of research that are not yet on campus? (For example, a school of public health.) If we have 30 years to accomplish this plan, we should have more components that are missing from our university right now.
- "Problem-Centered" in the title feels narrow and should be modified; perhaps, "Leading-Edge"?
- Another strategy to consider is building a mechanism that facilitates finding cross-disciplinary problem areas that can benefit from multiple units joining together.
- We must go one step beyond finding excellence and find what it is unique about UCR. Finding a unique advantage paired with excellence is where we should look for opportunity.
- We cannot be naïve but we also cannot use our immediate position or potential budget cuts to define our strategic plan. This plan needs to be optimistic and should be kept visionary.
- UCR needs well-funded and well-maintained user facilities and our current model does not prescribe that. We need to answer the question, "What core facilitates enable that research?"

A Thriving, Respectful, and Fair Community

This strategic goal has had the most work done in the working group since it was written into the preliminary framework. For this reason, their most current work is not yet reflected in this framework. We have just two strategies for this goal. Ask, "What is missing?" and, "Are these strategies targeting the kind of community we want to build on campus?"

1. Create an equitable and inclusive environment that enables all students, faculty, and staff to maximize the quality of their campus experiences

2. Improve communications and build meaningful and collaborative relationships throughout the campus community

Discussion Points:

- We all celebrate the kind of institution that we are with diversity, and the benefits we gain with the associated visibility and accolades. This is tied to what it means to have an inclusive environment as a goal. It requires research, teaching, and institutional commitment to this mission. It might be disingenuous to say that we value this diversity if the things we cut undermine that mission.
- The third TCC goal that was not mentioned in the presentation is about building a culture of respect, responsibility, and collaboration that promotes a climate of wellbeing and inclusion. UCR wants to embrace collective backgrounds and expand shared governance beyond faculty to staff and students.
- Another point discussed in TCC's updates is creating a sense of identity and belonging and being proud of what UCR is achieving.
- On the 2nd strategy about building collaborative relationships, it could and should include graduate students. A consultation with graduate students would be helpful in improving the learning environment and all kinds of outcome parameters.

A Citizen-Leader for Our Region, Nation, and World

This fourth strategic goal has six strategies.

1. Enhance UCR's contributions to upward social mobility, in particular for the Inland Empire region

2. Create a culture at every level of University operations in which choices are guided by a commitment to the public good

3. Create networks of local, regional, national, and global institutions to address such pressing societal issues as food security, housing, the environment, education, political representation, and health

4. Serve as the primary engine of equitable economic development for the Inland Empire—a magnet for resources and talent from outside our region and a trusted local source of education and expertise that helps retain our area's best people

5. Create a healthy, flourishing, culturally rich, creative environment on and around campus that draws diverse communities to stay and contribute to the growth of the region

6. Become a model for advancing the public good that can be used in other communities and at a broader scale in California, the nation and the world

Discussion Points:

- When we talk about economic development in the IE, we need to also include Coachella Valley.
- Strategies four and five look like two sides of the same coin. "Expertise that helps retain our area's best people" is a good point but could also be reversed: our area should be attractive

enough to retain the best expertise. Our goal is to create an ecosystem where we can flourish because of community and community can flourish because of us.

- Strategies two and six feel similar. Enhancing our contributions to the public good and becoming a model for doing so seem like the same thing but at different points on the continuum.
  - o Combine two and six, and four and five?
- CPG will aim for their points to be more specific and clearer.
- In this strategic goal we mention our region and nation but between those levels is our state. Since we are a part of the state system should it be mentioned outright?
- This goal reads geographically and the next iteration should add in the human dimension.
- This is a good place for the document to mention "innovation". Not just through research but through entrepreneurship and all these other things that contribute to the public good.

Responsible Stewards of a Strong, Sustainable Resource Base

This goal has five strategies. For this goal, consider whether or not this should be a standalone pillar? Should this be integrated into all of the other goals? An option is for environmental sustainability to be a thread throughout and economic sustainability as a concept that we use to close out the strategic plan. Economic sustainability might be a context in which we situate all of our goals.

1. Create a culture of sustainability so that all administrative units, organizations, initiatives, programs, and activities support environmentally sustainable practices

2. Diversify revenue streams to ensure sustainable generation of funds to strengthen the quality of research, education, and outreach

3. Plan and budget for facilities and other infrastructure that is safe, inviting, accessible, and suitable to support the vision of this strategic plan.

4. Invest in UCR's human capital—faculty and staff of the quality and quantity necessary to perpetuate the University's world-class research, education, and outreach.

5. Provide responsible stewardship that responds to the trust placed in UCR by the people of California and ensures that the University is recognized as an exemplar of sustainable human, financial, physical, and environmental resources

Discussion Points:

- UCR has an opportunity to collaborate with industries coming to the area like CARB and others. Downtown is developing and is an untapped area for our campus. With greater focus on partnerships and sustainability, we can link this type of development to our research goals and support graduate and UG students and advance our leadership goals. Let's move away from a logistics-focused community that does not serve Riverside the way it could.
- Strategy #1 in this goal is more of a strategy but the way we describe the others in the SIOF report is more tactical or internal and don't necessarily address the sustainability of processes. Whether these strategies sit alone as a pillar or are threaded throughout the document, we don't have a preference, as long as they are obviously visible.
- We cannot accomplish the other four goals without this one but this does feel like more of a "how" than a "what" or "why". It is also listed last, as #5, but it can't possibly belong higher up

on the list, so there is a good case to break it up. How do we make sure that the concepts which are pulled out here are embedded in each of the other four strategic goals? We don't want to risk shiny object syndrome.
- There are many aspects of sustainability as a concept (environmental, economic, or conceptual/strategic sustainability). We need to define sustainability for the document. This is the scaffolding that holds up the rest of the plan and should not be lost in the final version.
- The phrasing that "stewardship responds" is passive and reactive and should be rephrased

Next Steps and Final Comments

With our partners at AKA Consulting, we will incorporate your feedback from the meeting, along with content emerging in the working groups' developing reports, to produce the next iteration of the framework. You will receive that document about a week before the June 15th Steering Committee meeting. We ask that you review it and come to the June 15th meeting prepared with your reactions, suggestions, and questions.

Additional guidance for the chairs/vice chairs of the working groups will be detailed in the Guidance document.

Adjournment *(Tom Smith)*

This was an enthusiastic and helpful discussion. We will be taking all of your feedback into account and moving this into version 2.0. Thank you for your continued efforts.