

Strategic Planning Steering Committee Meeting

9/18/2020 1-3 pm, Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Present: **UCR:** Tom Smith, Jason Stajich, Christiane Weirauch, Crystal Petrini, John Haberstroh, Yat Sun Poon, Xiaoping Hu, Timothy Lyons, Xuan Liu, Christian Shelton, Gabriela Canalizo, Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera, Kathryn Uhrich, Chris Lynch, Juliet McMullin, Rodolfo Torres, Peter Hayashida, Brian Haynes, Ken Baerenklau, Julia McLean **AKA Strategy:** Tony Knerr, Belinda Li, John Braunstein

Absent: Eddie Comeaux, Luis Huerta, Rebekah Richert, Bruce Link

Agenda in Brief

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

1:15 Discussion of New Sections of the Strategic Plan

1:05 Orientation (*AKA Strategy*)

1:15 Breakout Group Discussions (40 mins)

1:55 Reports from Breakout Groups & Discussion

2:00 Group #1

2:10 Group #2

2:20 Group #3

2:30 Group #4

2:40 Additional Discussion

2:55 Final Comments and Adjournment

Meeting Minutes

Welcome (*Tom Smith*)

Welcome everyone, hopefully you've had a chance to look at the new draft and the new sections which include the Chancellor's letter, the introduction, a new vision statement, a section on core values, and the mission statement. The introduction is meant to offer a compelling storyline for the document, one that provides rationale for our goals. The new vision statement conveys an image of what UCR aspires to be and what the goals should accomplish collectively. The mission statement is unchanged since the last plan so we'd like to give it a close look and see if it still works today. For the first part of this meeting, we'll go through each of these new sections and discuss.

The rest of the document you have already seen earlier versions of but let me review the major changes:

- *Vignettes:* A major change since last time is the creation of vignettes. In response to feedback about strategies being either too high level or too specific and either too centrally organized or too unit-level, we worked the initiative framework from the previous draft into these vignettes. The vignette idea was used in the CPG working group report and we thought it would work for the strategic plan. We have a breakout exercise in the second half of the meeting which will help us brainstorm some more vignettes.
 - We won't spend time today wordsmithing or reconstructing the current vignettes. That feedback is welcome, but please send it to us in an email after today's meeting.
- *Higher Level Rhetoric:* You will also notice that the rhetoric of the new draft is at a little bit of a higher level. This was a tough decision because much of the criticism for the previous plan was that it lacked specifics and a bridge to implementation and that the monitoring didn't materialize the way people had expected or hoped. We have tried to make sure that isn't the case of this plan, by highlighting the role of deans, vice chancellors, and other units to develop plans that are more strategic and that lay out the details and timelines and milestones.

- *Greater Research and Graduate Student Emphasis:* At a micro level, based on feedback from the last meeting, we've placed greater emphasis on research and graduate students in this draft.
- *Enabling Our Goals:* We've developed an "Enabling Our Goals" section to emphasize the Sustainability, Infrastructure, Operations and Finance related goals. Particularly, in linking this plan to resource and budgeting decisions. This section is new and will need a few more revisions so if you have ideas, please send them in.
- *Appendices:* In the appendices, the plan will provide links to each of the working group reports. Those reports have provided invaluable research and the content for what we've gotten so far in the draft and will be essential to the implementation and will be used as a valuable resource

Finally, before we dive in, we want to acknowledge your work and thank you for your leadership because it is fundamental and crucial to the planning process.

Discussion of New Sections of the Strategic Plan

Initial Comments

- Does this mean that the bullets will be taken out of the plan all together?
 - **Response:** Yes. If you were to compare the previous version with this draft you'd see that a lot of the bullets are connected to the vignettes as well as the language preceding them. The goal was to keep the things that we felt were really good ideas but present them in a way that paints a picture of the future without being overly prescriptive.
- Remove the bullet point of connecting the strategic plan to budget priority because it will end up directing funds to central that will never get distributed; I don't trust that one.
 - **Response from SIOF:** We understand the history and this statement is not attempting to do that. Instead, there has been a clear sense out of SIOF that if this document is to accomplish anything the goals of the strategic plan must be brought into the budget process. SIOF feels strongly that it is necessary to leave in such a statement.
 - **Discussion Point:** BCOE has some serious projects that need to be budgeted through their department, like the Nano-fabrication facility, for example. There are other resources that benefit broader campus and we need some way to take care of those things too, but we also have to run budgets effectively. We can let the idea develop and see what it looks like in the next draft.
 - **Discussion Point:** I understood that point more as a link to accountability rather than tying into a specific budget model so maybe we want to leave it in there but look at the wording.

Chancellor's Letter

- It might make more sense to have this be one of the very last things we review.
- General positive reaction, appreciation for the fact that it touched on social justice and COVID.
- I appreciate that accountability is in there but elsewhere in the document there should be detail on the process of how units and colleges may implement. We really appreciate that shared governance has been shaping what we're doing but we must ensure it continues.
 - **Response:** Ensuring accountability will be part of the strategic plan as its own section.
- This letter could use more on sustainability, not environmental but institutional.
- Concern about not having an end date. Topics will change quickly over time and we need to have a timeline and parameter for review.

- **Discussion Point:** This document cannot be relevant for 25 years. We must look back on this and revise and re-write. If it's a significant change, we must have the opportunity to repeat this process, but if not, then a process for rewrites and revisions in pieces. Either way, those options need to be captured well.
- **Discussion Point:** Agreed, it is not clear what the end date is or what the revision mechanism would be? Do we know what the intent is? 5 years, 10 years? Must it remain a recognizable version of this plan?
- **Discussion Point:** If it looks like we're going to change it all the time, then we probably haven't done our job.
 - **Response:** We absolutely do not want to, and cannot, go through this intensive process every five years, but we could do a review more regularly and have a mechanism to restart this process if a review determines that is needed.
- **Discussion Point:** It is critical to have an end date in order to create a sense of urgency. This plan cannot be a plan for 2054, otherwise it might as well be a plan for 2400.
- **Discussion Point:** Under current circumstances, and particularly given the message from the Chancellor, we're going to need to look at this in 5 years.
- **Discussion Point:** Consider that while the Chancellor's remarks reflect the current time, the issues that are discussed are all long lasting issues.
- **Discussion Point:** The Chancellor's letter does not need to read like a crisis report. There needs to be more balance in the language. These are pessimistic times but we need this document to be optimistic.
- **Discussion Point:** The first paragraph does seem to paint a picture of a crisis moment. However, these problems, diseases, racial justice, and climate change, have been around for a while. I wonder if this is the moment that we are seeing these in a new way and because of that it is our aspiration to be more flexible to address these persistent problems in new and innovative ways.
- **Discussion Point:** This document should be evergreen and there should be a commitment to regularly review it. Perhaps a general set of terms stated up front but more detail in accountabilities at the end. It does not need to all go into the Chancellor's letter.

Introduction

- The first paragraph is trying to set the storyline but it is confusing to me. We also have to be careful about saying we're a young campus.
- I'm looking at the italicized phrase, 3rd paragraph last sentence, "UCR will be a model for," Aren't we already there? We are doing really well but we can do more, with our community, etc. I'd like to revisit that phrase to accurately reflect what we've already accomplished and express a desire to continue to do more.
 - **Discussion Point:** I have a different take. I do not think that we are there yet, especially regarding the research university portion. Further down, at the 5th paragraph talking about teaching mission, there's so much that is undergraduate oriented. I'm still not feeling a strong sense that graduate education is central or that research is central.
- I would suggest that these are just bumpers on the ends of this document. The Chancellor's letter and introduction on the front end and the accountability and enabling goals section on the end. These are important but we need to spend more of our effort and time on the goals in

between. These opening and closing sections are more substantive than window dressing but they are not the heart of the plan.

- Can we change “teaching mission” to “education mission” to encompass the broader aspects of education?

Vision Statement

- I’d like to see this compressed down into something that is less abstract. It is inspiring and has nice language but it does too much. Plus, I think most people will only read about 3 lines of this so let’s use their attention wisely.
 - **Discussion Point:** Agreed, great language but too long, if you remove every other sentence it says about the same thing.
 - **Discussion Point:** The next step might be for UA and Communications to workshop this.
- The document is missing that a purpose of research universities is also blue-sky curiosity, not just problem-solving research. That aspect should resonate throughout the document more.
 - **Discussion Point:** Agreed that the blue-sky research orientation is missing.
- Perhaps the verb in this statement needs to be “envisions”. It is currently trying to describe a state of being but I think it should be more aspirational.
- Specifically, I actually love the first sentence, the first half of the 2nd sentence and the last half of the 5th sentence. I’d be happy to wordsmith on this one (Dean Uhrich). I like the idea of creating knowledge, that is what we do, in the classroom and in the community. I like blue-sky but can we package this in a different way? Perhaps knowledge creation or knowledge generation. This document needs that and pulling in graduate education will highlight that well.
 - **Discussion Point:** A foundational theme is service to the public and this seems like a good way to tie all of this together with the kind of research that Tim and Gaby are talking about.
 - **Discussion Point:** When we say “blue-sky” to non-academics, some people are going to be critical and ask why. We have to remember that this document is for external stakeholders too, who might not appreciate that.
 - **Discussion Point:** How societal relevance of our work plays out is very broad. We are not here as a service institution. We have to leave open the range of inquiry and it has to be visionary and seem like its tax dollars well spent.
 - Those are not mutually exclusive: societal benefit and open curiosity; some societal benefits are less tangible but they improve the overall quality of life, which is our real vision – that what we do will be meaningful for everyone.
 - **Discussion Point:** Perhaps this is the “search” (blue sky) for “new knowledges”
- This doesn’t feel visionary enough for me. I want to echo the thought that someone mentioned that this should be more aspirational in nature.
- Not all research is for creating knowledge, that might be too narrow. Maybe creating knowledge and solving problems?

Core Values

- How do these core values connect to the UC Core Values? For example, Integrity is a UC value, but it is not on this list.
 - **Discussion Point:** UC has 4 core values, maybe we should start with this and then add to the list with what differentiates us or makes us stand out as a campus?

- I do not think of public service as a value, so much as a role. Social justice either, more as an outcome. Where are the lines between desired outcomes and vision and our values?
- This list was influenced by the values in the old plan (UCR 2020). Diversity, which was a value, has now evolved into what we are presenting as Social Justice. Public Services was elevated, as well. Access wasn't quite as prominent but Sustainability we tried to make more prominent.
 - **Discussion Point:** It seems that these are more a reflection of the plan, rather than core values that UCR would maintain regardless of the strategic plan. Could we call them something different? Themes, guiding principles, thematic priorities.
- Why are we prioritizing MS, which is contradictory to AAU?
 - **Response:** It does relate to another goal thought which is financial sustainability.

Enabling our Goals:

- Regarding the financial sustainability, it is necessary for this plan to help us find resources for our goals so that we are not so tied to state cycle. This is especially important because when a dean or department head is making the decision to pursue a vision, a large part of their decision comes from whether there are resources to do it. They should be driven to look at the strategic plan to make those decisions.
- Environmental sustainability feels a little out of place here, maybe that needs to be re-written or taken out; look at the updated SIOF working group report.
 - **Discussion Point:** Seconded, environmental sustainability does not belong here. Internal sustainability belongs in this section.
 - **Discussion Point:** It might fit better in the section below.
- Maybe the last set of bullets could be consolidated. Some are too in the weeds. Perhaps instead this could link to the SIOF document.
 - **Discussion Point:** Support for this; maybe it doesn't need to be in this plan, just linked to in the working group report.
- Do we give a great enough emphasis on new resources of revenue?
 - **Discussion Point:** By volume of text, no. But I don't know that it is the correct place for that to be in the strategic plan; perhaps the implementation plan.
 - **Discussion Point:** In terms of revenue streams, get rid of the phrase "punches above its weight". Instead, let's emphasize that we are on a strong trajectory, something a bit different there.
 - **Response:** This was from SIOF report and was meant to talk more about staffing levels.
 - **Discussion Point:** Also, I don't see any articulation of how innovation that is happening on our campus could drive entrepreneurship that could spark things and we could create a more thriving community.
 - **Response:** SIOF does talk more about entrepreneur and patent sources of revenue; we could certainly add some of that in there and link to it.
- We want to be adaptive, at least we talk about that a lot up front, but that is a bit buried. Being adaptable would allow us to maintain the sustainability talked about in this section.
- "Analyze demand for services regularly" My attempt to translate this section would be about setting benchmarks and seeing how much space is allocated and trying to adhere to those things

as we expand; I think maybe we can title it differently. There should be some metrics set for achieving the excellence that we want. There should be different analytics for different things.

- Reflecting back on the language on the bullets, we can pull a lot of the tactical stuff out and put it in an appendix. This feels tactical and cluttered but we don't want our successors to not realize that we've already done this work, so linking to an appendix to show we've thought about these things feels like a good solution.
- We are too passive about creating diversity and utilizing diversity and graduate education is still not central enough. We need the document to convey that we will be more proactive on both of these.
 - **Discussion point:** MS should not be as central to our goals as PhD.
- The CPG group wanted to convey that the purpose of their vignettes was as a tool for inspiring imagination, but not necessarily *instead* of the bullet points.
 - **Discussion Point:** Much of the bullet points was captured in the vignettes but also in the preceding paragraph.

Breakout Group Orientation

Everyone should have come prepared today having read the draft and having prepared a few headlines or ideas for vignettes for their assigned group/goal. We will break off into small groups for about 20-25 minutes of discussion and then come back for a short reporting out period.

Breakout Group Reports and Discussion

Group #1: *Distinctive, World-class Research and Scholarship*

We started off with some discussion about the vignette approach and had some debate. We decided we'd talk about vignettes and see how we feel about it.

1. **Sustainable agriculture** cuts across multiple departments and our campus. We could apply that expertise to local challenges and global food production.
2. **Logistics industry** converted into new approaches and new solutions to the industry and in particular highlighting our research capacity for robotics and AI and tying it to our research strengths.
3. **Social Mobility** – In this research section we highlight five different cross-cutting areas that are prime for investment and one of them has to do with improving the human condition. We could have a vignette on how we are not only advancing social mobility through our education but how our research is advancing social mobility, too.
4. More detailed visions for **CARB** which is coming to Riverside as well as the OASIS concept.

Group #2: *A Rigorous, Engaging, and Empowering Learning Environment*

1. **PhD programs and Mentorship** – Our group emphasized that there were not enough vignettes on how we could improve or change the PhD programs. We talked about tying it into a better mentoring system and better training for mentors. There is a range of things that new faculty need to be trained on when they come to campus, so we thought they ought to have mentorship training too.
 - a. A story about this could be how a student utilized UCR as a pipeline and is now a leader (president?)
 - b. Better serve PhD students, more support, faculty, alumni input

- c. Vignettes on getting graduate students and faculty out to national and global conferences
 - d. Incentives for developing and leading training grants
- 2. **Undergraduate to PhD Pipeline** – There was interest in thinking about different aspects of a pipeline from our undergraduate programs into the PhD program. We talked about what departments would need to do and to think about like how do students learn about what it is like to earn a PhD? What do people with PhDs actually do with their knowledge?
 - a. UCR could have outreach to high school, undergraduate, and graduate programs, building a network of pipelines.
 - b. Better at connecting academic to outside world
- 3. **Implementation of Professional MS Degrees** – Our conversation circled back to an emphasis on departments implementing more professional MS degrees. Not just for revenue generation, but in order to contribute to our country. The skills that many needs are not fulfilled by a PhD program and there aren't necessarily jobs for those with PhDs but there are many jobs for people with professional masters.

Group #3: A Welcoming, Inclusive, and Collaborative Community

- 1. **Top Placement of URM Students in Faculty Positions** – A vignette about UCR leading the nation in placing underrepresented groups into top faculty positions. Perhaps about faculty realizing or discovering how many UCR people were in faculty positions at a conference.
- 2. **Botanic Gardens as a Community Pipeline** – The Botanic Gardens brings more people into UCR but many don't realize it is UCR campus. A story about someone visiting the gardens, discovering that they could get involved and that there are other physical spaces bridging to campus.
- 3. **A World-Class Museum on Campus:** A model of UCR Arts downtown but on campus. There is plenty of parking for busses (school trips) and it gets many different people engaged and on campus.
- 4. **Spanish Only Science Days:** Something that has already happened but that we could strive to make happen more regularly is a day of science on campus. The event is hosted in the group's native language, which helps to blur the line between campus and community, and brings a day of fun and science to whole families. It also exposed parents of 1st generation students to the things that their child could do in science.

Group #4: An Exemplary Model for Advancing the Public Good

We thought that the vignettes that sound too realistic sound a bit like directives; if that was their purpose they are okay, but if not, they should be raised a level to make them more imaginative and aspirational.

- 1. **School of Medicine:** There should be a vignette involving our School of Medicine in this Public Good section. We are also missing a public health piece so this could be sewn together through a generation of experiential learning opportunities in public policy, environmental sustainability, public health, etc. and partnering with the community to provide opportunities.
- 2. **Research Learning Communities (4.2):** Research Learning Communities are made available to all undergraduate students. It is group-oriented research that involves more undergraduates (in a less personally threatening way, meaning the onus is not on the student to seek out a 1:1 faculty

relationship which can be a tall barrier). Also, students experience the group and social aspects of research early in their educational career introducing the social activity side of research to people who wouldn't otherwise think they'd like it.

3. **"UCR Ends Housing Insecurity for Students (by 2024)"** a possible headline for advancing the public good. Something about how UCR's housing policy ensures every student has access to safe and stable housing. There also might be something here for transportation security.
4. **"Consortium for the Study of Land Grant Reparations"** UCR acknowledges its history as an institution and the land it occupies.

Final Comments and Adjournment (Tom Smith)

Thank you everyone for a productive discussion; it was one that will absolutely push us forward in our draft writing. Our goal is that what we will present at our meeting in October should be pretty close to the final product. If it is not seeming close already, and especially by October, please give us your honest feedback, written and in that meeting. Your buy in on that draft is critical because the step after that is taking it to the campus.

Breakout group recorders, please send your notes to Julia so that they get distributed. Also, if there is something important to you that you didn't get the chance to talk about today please let us know about that. The discussion went a lot of different ways today so if you didn't have a chance to talk about something you had wanted to, please send us those thoughts. Thank you and see you in October.