

Overview on Campus Planning Progress

Over the past few years, a variety of units and offices across UC Davis have embarked on various self-assessments and planning exercises for future initiatives. Most of those efforts have flowed from the University's 2010 Vision of Excellence, a broad-ranging blueprint for success developed after widespread collaboration with members of the UC Davis community.

This year, in order to ascertain how much progress the university has made in achieving the goals laid out in many of these subsequent documents, we asked two leading organizational development consultants from the Bay Area, Miriam Abrams and Nancy Feinstein, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of some 51 different planning documents. The consultants' February 2014 "Summary and Synthesis of Documents" is the result of that analysis and it grouped major recommendations under the six elements of the 2010 Vision of Excellence.

1. Foster a Vibrant Community of Learning and Scholarship
2. Drive Innovation at the Frontiers of Knowledge
3. Embrace Global Issues
4. Nurture A Sustainable Future and Propel Economic Vitality
5. Champion Health, Education, Access and Opportunity
6. Cultivate a Culture of Organizational Excellence, Effectiveness and Stewardship

After the recommendations were organized under the six elements, we asked our vice chancellors to review the material and report back on the status of those recommendations which fall under their jurisdictions.

As one might imagine, a great deal of progress has been made in many areas, others are still works in progress and still others have been delayed for different reasons. What follows is a broad overview of progress made for some of the most salient areas and recommendations identified in that February 2014 "Synthesis of Documents" report produced by Abrams and Feinstein. The spread-sheet matrix also found on this website provides a more detailed status report on the many specific recommendations made in the various planning reports as well as the progress made by a specific college or department in striving to meet those recommendations.

Many of the more detailed recommendations had to do with Student Support, which falls under the first element in our Vision of Excellence, and I am happy to report that a great deal of progress has been made in those areas. Student Affairs and the Office of the Provost, for instance, have taken a number of steps to act on recommendations that the university streamline, professionalize and otherwise improve student advising.

As part of these efforts, the campus has committed about \$2.2 million ongoing funding for academic advisors for undergraduates since 2011-12 and we have hired the university's first Director of Student Advising. We are also realigning our advising functions and capabilities to develop a more cohesive centralized model for delivering prompt, responsive and individually tailored and consistent advising services.

These efforts are crucial to improving our time-to-degree and retention rates for our students, which we are addressing and making progress on in a number of ways. There also remains work to be done making sure that our students who are members of under-represented

minorities have the same levels of success, retention and time-to-degree rates as other UC Davis students.

To better support our students and to foster a greater sense of community, considerable progress has also been made with the opening of the new Student Community Center and with plans for a Memorial Union renewal and a new lecture hall, recital hall and art museum. Our Blue Ribbon Committee for Enhancing the Undergraduate Student Experience made a number of thoughtful recommendations that are being implemented, such as creation of a student advising portal.

Also in the area of Student Support, we have made progress in developing new and/or merged majors, such as Coastal Marine Sciences and Agricultural Sustainability. On the recommendation that we develop innovative ways of teaching and learning, a good deal of work has been done but this is also a work in progress. The Provost organized and hosted an Online Learning Retreat to assess the current climate and future needs at UC Davis with regards to online learning and the report issued as a result of that retreat is now with the Academic Senate, which will help us determine where the next investments in this area need to be made.

As part of our overall commitment to students, we must also acknowledge that to be a truly great university that meets the needs of its students we need to develop a “customer service” culture where students are always treated well, get their concerns and questions addressed in a courteous and timely manner and are made to feel like they truly are the most important element of what we as a university do day-in and day-out. Students should never be made to feel as if they are some type of inconvenience or distraction to the university’s regular work when they come to us with concerns or questions. To address their needs is our regular work and we need to make sure students know this and feel this is the case.

When it comes to diversity at UC Davis, creating a more diverse university has been an ongoing aim at UC Davis and this is still very much a work in progress and a high priority. Like other UC campuses, when it comes to having a faculty and student body that accurately reflect the demographic makeup of the State of California, there remains considerable work to be done. The goal is to make a commitment to diversity at UC Davis a university imperative that permeates everything we do so the culture and expectation for a diverse faculty and student body become ingrained in UC Davis from top to bottom.

We have, however, made notable progress under our 2020 Initiative and by virtue of the goal we have established for becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution by 2018-19. We are increasing the percentage of national and international students and are in the process of growing the Hispanic student population from its current rate of about 18 percent to the 25 percent required for HSI designation. Within Student Affairs, we have also established the AB 540 Undocumented Student Resource Center, which includes a Center director and augmentation of financial aid support to help these students. Additionally, greater diversity and the hiring of faculty that complements our overall priorities and strategic goals will be achieved through the Provost’s Hiring Investment Program, which was announced in December 2013.

We are also in the second year of our NSF ADVANCE grant, which will add to our Latina faculty in the STEM disciplines and has led to the creation of the Center for the Advance of Multicultural Perspectives on Sciences (CAMPOS), a research center that will attract women

and Latina STEM scholars to our campus by providing an accessible and inclusive community of research collaborators interested in research topics that intersect the needs of this underserved community and provide a social network that enhances mentorship and research opportunities for these scholars.

What we need to also continue working on is to make sure that our students are having enough cross-cultural exposure and experiences so they get the full benefit of receiving their education at a diverse university. It is not enough, in other words, to simply achieve numerical diversity. We must achieve experiential diversity as well, and more work needs to be done on that goal.

There have been a number of recommendations made to identify and take advantage of new collaborations, which falls under Element Two and the need to drive innovation, where we have also made strong progress. Two examples are our West Village zero net energy project, along with the West Village Energy Hub established there, and creation in June 2013 of the UC Davis World Food Center. Another solid example is the UC Davis Health System's partnership with BGI, the Chinese genomic science firm, to create a new genomic science center on the UC Davis campus in Sacramento.

We have also broadened our research efforts with our RISE and IFHA programs that direct research money into promising collaborative interdisciplinary teams on campus in hopes that the seed money will enable some of these teams to land significant outside research funding for potentially transformative projects.

Coincidentally, the UC Davis Office of Research in February 2014 issued a draft report on recommendations made by the Research Recommendation Implementation Committee on ways to strengthen and improve the university's Research enterprise. One of the ongoing needs identified by Harris Lewin, Vice Chancellor for research, is an upgrading and improvement of our overall research facilities and infrastructure. As VC Lewin has correctly pointed out, this must be done not just for our overall continued excellence, but making sure we have state-of-the-art research facilities is essential in recruitment and retention of world-class faculty and students and to make sure we don't lose ground vis-à-vis other outstanding public research universities around the nation and in the world.

Under Element Three, with regard to embracing global issues, we are expanding our Study Abroad programs and we are in the design process for a new UC Davis International Center that we hope to break ground on in 2015. As part of our 2020 Implementation strategy, Strategic Communications is working on ways to enhance the university's international profile and better publicize the already existing international programs on campus. Moreover, our 2020 Implementation strategy, which naturally includes more aggressive recruiting of international students, will serve to strengthen and broaden UC Davis' international reputation. In the fall of 2013, we also increased our international profile with creation of the Confucius Institute at UC Davis, the first center of its kind in the world that is devoted to Chinese food and beverage culture.

In the past, UC Davis was an institution that seemed to look inward more than at the broader world at large. That is changing as the world and as California and our nation have changed, but there still is work to be done to better connect UC Davis and out students and faculty to the broader world so this truly is an international university with a global perspective.

Realization of this goal will also be enhanced as we recruit to fill the new position of Vice Provost for Global Affairs, which will help sharpen our global focus.

While we continue to look to our faculty to initiate changes in some of our graduate programs to better align them with the big issues of our time, we have made progress working with the UC Office of the President, other UC campuses and UC engineering deans to create a system wide graduate program in engineering focused on the so-called “Grand Challenges” that tackle global issues related to food, water, health, security and safety, environment, infrastructure, poverty, economy and education. While we, of course, place a deep value and commitment to our graduate students and programs, we must always be cognizant of the need to make sure our graduate students feel like they are central to the university’s overall mission and success. As seen in the matrix, the Dean of Graduate Studies and his staff are making considerable progress in this area.

Under Element Four, which calls for a sustainable future and the advance of economic vitality, Element Six, these are ongoing works in progress, including our partnership with SARTA, the Sacramento Area Regional Technology Alliance. To cite just one example of that partnership, UC Davis and SARTA teamed up in 2012 to win a \$1 million federal grant to create an AgTech Innovation Center to help farmers and ranchers grow their business. The UC Davis World Food Center also envisions bundling UC Davis research in food sciences and agriculture with other research organizations that enhances our ability to commercialize some of the cutting-edge research done by the university.

Under Element Five in the Vision of Excellence, regarding the championing of health, education, access and opportunity, we have made progress in strengthening our teaching hospital and clinical programs and will continue to do so under the leadership of Julie Ann Freischlag, our new Vice Chancellor for Human Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine. The matrix lists many examples of progress in these areas.

As the new Vice Chancellor has correctly pointed out, we need to be more attuned going forward to the importance of disease prevention and wellness rather than merely focused on treatment. Given the limited public resources available and shifting demographics, wellness and prevention take on even greater imperative and we want to make sure UC Davis is at the forefront of those efforts.

Element Six in the Vision of Excellence calls for UC Davis to cultivate a culture of organizational excellence, effectiveness and stewardship, and we have seen considerable activity on various recommendations that fall under this heading. On the recommendation that we develop a university-wide strategic plan for facilities development, for instance, that process is well underway and scheduled to be completed by the end of 2014.

With our 2020 Initiative, recently completed fundraising campaign, increased research funding and implementation of our new budget model, progress has been made on a key recommendation cited by the consultants that we become less dependent on funding from the state. But this is a very much a work in progress that will require ongoing creativity, efficiencies and vigilance moving forward.

On the various recommendations that have been made about faculty hiring, including “strategic” decision-making in this regard, this is being addressed in the Provost’s recently

announced Hiring Investment Program for new faculty. As the Provost has noted, the university needs to do a better job making sure our faculty are assigned to work in areas that reflect the university's priorities and values.

Under this same element, Development and Alumni Relations now have the fundraising infrastructure in place to operate in a highly effective manner, as evidenced by the successful completion of the \$1 billion Campaign for UC Davis more than a year ahead of schedule. There is, however, an acknowledgment that we can be more effective in establishing our geographic identity in regions like the San Francisco Bay Area, where 45 percent of our alumni come from, and take better advantage of fundraising opportunities there.

We have also made progress improving the university's Office of Strategic Communications, hiring a new associate chancellor for strategic communications after a year-long national search, and launching the university's first-ever integrated marketing campaign in November 2013. In addition, Strategic Communications has completed a university-wide staffing assessment and is now in the process of seeking best practices in harnessing the talents and resources dedicated across the units to communications and marketing activities.

The search for a new Chief Information Officer is well underway and part of his or her charge once appointed will be to centralize decision-making about Information Technology and increase oversight of and coordination with the UC Davis Health System, which are also recommendations that have been made in this area.