

# **SENATE RESPONSES TO STRATEGIC PLAN Draft #2**

*June 16, 2010*

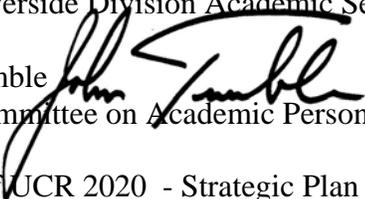
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**UC RIVERSIDE** | UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA | **Academic Senate**  
**Committee on Academic Personnel**

June 3, 2010

To: Anthony W. Norman  
Chair, Riverside Division Academic Senate

Fr: John Trumble   
Chair, Committee on Academic Personnel

Re: Review of UCR 2020 - Strategic Plan - Draft #2

CAP reviewed the "Why Excellence" document in the revised Strategic Plan. The International Programs document was not available for review.

We have several comments. First, we recommend changing the title of this section to "Furthering Excellence" (or something similar). The current title suggests that the faculty do not understand the need for excellence and therefore needs to be convinced that excellence is important. Subheadings like "Why is Excellence is Important" simply reinforce the concept that the faculty do not understand the value of excellence. CAP routinely sees the evidence of excellence that exists on our campus and suggests that we need to improve on this excellence, not simply convince faculty that excellence is a good idea.

Second, the document again seems to focus on generating more funding as a key metric of excellence. We suggest that the primary measure of excellence is scholarship and productivity. These concepts, along with national and international recognition should take precedence in lists such as the one in the third paragraph of page 1 that puts 'major research grants' first. Also, the first bullet point on page 3 is 'competitively funded federal research support'. We suggest that this is not the most important factor evaluated for AAU membership. In addition, why is USDA funding listed in a bullet point with state and industrial funding when the first bullet point is 'competitively funded federal research support', a category that includes USDA funding?

Third, the four pages of the document describe in some detail the way faculty can improve 'excellence'. However there is only a short, three line paragraph on page 4 that notes that administrators should hold themselves to high standards. We strongly suggest that this section be expanded and clarified so that faculty can see the metrics that will be applied to excellence in administrative leadership.

June 5, 2010

TO: A. W. NORMAN, CHAIR  
RIVERSIDE DIVISION

FR: M. MARTINS-GREEN, CHAIR  
COMMITTEE OF DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

RE: UCR 2020 DRAFT #2 – Comments on the Three Faces of  
Transparency: A Commitment to Intelligibility, Access and Openness

The document is in general well and clearly written and brings up the three key issues related to transparency. Our committee supports this document but would like to make the following comments.

1. Budget intelligibility and transparency should not be just at the level of administrative units. It should also go all the way down to individual PIs and their ability to understand and therefore intelligently review statements they receive monthly for their grants.
2. The issue of intelligibility and transparency is also crucial concerning the Graduate Division. As pointed out in Section II of the Paper, it is not at all clear how decisions are made for distribution of fellowships.
3. Strategic investments in areas of excellence. The comment in the document indicates that decisions about where to invest have been made in a biased manner in the past. It is crucial that we do not make decisions for strategic investment with consultation only internally.

### **Comments on Strategies #2 and #3**

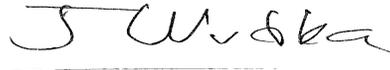
We think that the language in the following strategies of the strategic plan is fine but could be stronger to promote diversity. For example, Strategy #2.A.2 should not be limited to aiming at "feeder schools" for recruiting events to increase the population of underrepresented minorities. Strategy #2.A.3 should identify by name some grant funding specifically directed at diverse students, such as NSF's Minority Fellowships program.

For Strategic Goal #3, the paragraphs are concise and it would help to mention specifics such as our commitment in Strategy #3.6 as a tangible way to foster assessment of climate and bring attention to necessary improvements in climate.

June 2, 2010

TO: ANTHONY NORMAN, CHAIR  
ACADEMIC SENATE

FR: JOSE WUDKA, CHAIR  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY



**RE: COMMENT ON STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The CEP reviewed the newest version of the UCR planning document during its meetings on May 14 and 28, concentrating on the areas pertinent to undergraduate education. The Committee had mixed responses to the document.

The CEP agrees with the general goals presented in the document; in fact, one would be hard pressed to find any member of any academic community that does not agree with them. These goals are very ambitious and worthy, but there is a clear difference between ambition and wishful thinking. The document provided no information on how the proposed plan can be achieved, especially given the current budgetary situation, and the proposed growth in other areas such as graduate education.

Despite the ornate language and hyperbolae, the Committee found the goals concerning undergraduate education to be easy to summarize: UCR will strive to accept better students, to educate them better and to provide a better experience for them, all the while keeping time to graduation as close to 4 years as possible. We found these to be unimaginative and uncreative, and unlikely to motivate the faculty to innovate in the area of undergraduate education.

The Committee also had more specific concerns about the various ideas put forth.

- Strategy #2.B.1 mentions the Education Abroad Program as an important component of a UCR education. This is certainly not the case in its current format, where students have no idea whether the courses they take abroad will count for anything but college credit. The CEP was disappointed that the document does not focus on this as an issue to be addressed (the more so since the structure of the EAP is currently in flux).
- Strategy #2.B.2
  - a.) The idea of using a holistic review of student applications is, of course, very appealing; but this is also expensive to implement. Where will the funds come for instituting such a system?

b.) While recognizing that student leadership and other forms of civic engagement are indicators of commitment and maturity, having these as the sole examples of added criteria (as opposed to academic excellence) is troublesome. It weakens the document.

c.) The wording on the document, listing specific characteristics has the danger of degenerating into yet another admission checklist whose use will undermine the goal of a holistic review. These added criteria for admissions only become useful when they are part of a holistic review of an application, rather than being incorporated into an ad hoc numerical ranking, as is now the practice.

d.) Lastly, and most importantly, there is no recommendation to restrict, as soon as possible, the number of admits based on academic quality (even if using the current imperfect admissions criteria). The CEP would like to emphasize that this is the one tool available to UCR for improving the quality of incoming students.

- Strategy #2.B.4 the tone of the document suggests that the Campus has decided to create an Honors College. But before such a step is taken, the CEP strongly suggests that the campus community be provided with the evidence that this move will indeed attract higher-quality students and will provide a better educational experience for them.

The CEP also briefly discussed the Working Paper on Implementation and was concerned about the lack of clarity on the power of implementation to be given to the Planning Committee, especially when its views come into conflict with those of the Senate or the Colleges. The specific charge of such a committee should be clarified and vetted by the Senate and Administration in order to avoid future complications

This document also concludes with the accurate observation that the campus has repeatedly gone through the exercise of preparing planning documents, only to see them filed and forgotten, yet the assurances that this time is different are unconvincing.

JUNE 3, 2010

TO: A.W. NORMAN, CHAIR  
RIVERSIDE DIVISION

FR: D. HARE, CHAIR  
COMMITTEE ON FACULTY WELFARE

RE: CFW RESPONSE TO 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT OF UCR STRATEGIC PLAN

The Committee on Faculty Welfare (CFW) is carefully appointed to represent the diverse faculty constituencies on campus. CFW has been asked to comment upon numerous proposals and reports this academic year. Although the majority of CFW find the second draft of UCR's Strategic Plan to be much improved over the first draft, it still generated a variety of responses among Committee members.

Most members were unimpressed with Section I. It appears that this section, in particular, was written for outsiders. Some members tolerated the "boiler plate rhetoric and platitudes" better than others, though numerous wording suggestions were received and are passed on to the authors in the Appendix to this report. At a minimum, the authors are encouraged to give this section a careful proofreading and rigorously test the credibility of the assertions in this section. The writers also may want to consult the recently-posted "Campus Climate" Report of the Academic Senate regarding the environment for faculty that is described on pp. 7 and 8. Faculty members from different units on campus may differ substantially in their inclination to agree with these statements

The Committee had numerous comments concerning Section II. Most committee members concurred with Strategy 1.1, increasing extramural grant support where possible. We point out that everyone goes through cycles of grant support, and that this should be understood, as well as the fact that all disciplines do not have equal access to extramural funds. CFW also reiterates a concern from its response to the first draft of the Strategic Plan as follows:

Throughout the plan (Draft 1), there is an implicit presumption that the goal of applying for a grant is the grant itself. Although this may be true from the viewpoint of the Administration, which seeks far higher levels of indirect cost return, the intellectual goal of the grant is to facilitate the research that the grant supports. CFW recommends caution in utilizing grant awards *per se* as an index of scholarly distinction and recommends that a truer index of such distinction be the quality and significance of the research findings funded by the grant.

CFW was especially supportive of the re-tasking of the Office of Research Affairs Strategy 1.4). The committee was more reticent concerning Strategies 1.2 (interdisciplinary centers), 1.3 (Optimization of Departments), and 1.6 (New Professional Schools), for most important details were lacking. The Committee points out that the initiative for Strategy 1.3, especially regarding majors and other programs of instruction, resides with the Academic Senate, and CFW expects that this objective would be achieved through faculty-led initiatives rather than initiatives from the Administration. CFW reiterates its objection to the use of Administration-appointed task forces instead of utilizing the appropriate Standing Committees of the Academic Senate for these tasks.

CFW probably was most divided on Section 1.5, the Strategic Priorities and the Working Paper associated with it. Although it can be argued that these priorities represent the strengths of the campus currently, one member pointed out that a long-standing concern of many faculty members is that the priorities may have been influenced too much by the particular individuals who were assigned to the working groups developing the priorities. A more important concern for faculty buy-in overall is that many are skewed to the sciences and engineering, probably because that is where the money is (to paraphrase Willie Sutton). Although this may appear to be a necessity in this economic climate it is not in keeping with the university's broadly inclusive mission. The negative impact on existing areas of excellence within CHASS, in particular, stands to be substantial should the priorities not be revised according to a vision that is genuinely comprehensive in its integrative emphases and reflective of the university's intellectual diversity.

Graduate Education: The Committee also favored Strategic Goal # 2, to enhance opportunities for Graduate, Professional, and Undergraduate students, but with some reservations. CFW finds it difficult to understand how UCR can increase the proportion of qualified and motivated graduate students to an optimal, target ratio if the number of undergraduate students continues to grow out of control, as it has done the last several years. As shown by the recent Campus Climate survey, faculty members in CNAS and BCOE are not greatly impressed with the quality of their undergraduate or graduate students. This could be problematic in those two colleges because that is where the greatest growth in extramural funding to support their graduate students is expected. Some faculty members in those colleges probably will not share the Administration's enthusiasm for recruiting and paying for large numbers of additional graduate students if the quality is no better than that of current students. This becomes an important issue with regard to "feeder schools."

In view of the faculty concerns with graduate student quality, it is difficult for CFW to identify "feeder schools" that predictably provide UCR numerous high-quality graduate students within California. Most faculty members are suspicious that the feeder schools are the California State Universities. Although there is no question that there are a few highly-qualified and motivated students within the Cal State system, most faculty members have been disappointed with the overall quality of both the Bachelor's and Master's Degree graduates from these institutions. Rather than try to maintain the quality of current graduate programs with Cal State graduates, faculty members are more interested in recruiting students from peer institutions of UCR or better, even at some reduction in optimal graduate student numbers.

CFW generally agrees that more emphasis may need to be placed on raising funds for more graduate students. The challenge in accomplishing this through additional extramural funding by faculty members will be in finding graduate students that are willing to work as hard as their faculty mentors and in convincing PIs that graduate students are at least as effective as full-time technicians or postdocs to help PIs achieve their funded objectives.

Undergraduate education: In view of the general dissatisfaction that faculty have with undergraduate students (see "Campus Climate Survey"), faculty can only applaud the Administration's claim that "UCR will improve undergraduate persistence and time to degree, increase GPA at graduation, decrease the number of entering students requiring preparatory math and writing, increase the percentage of students who complete a degree in their original discipline of choice, improve the percentage of students continuing to graduate and professional school..." *etc.* Faculty members also look forward to more selective admissions and a rational enrollment management process.

Section III. CFW is in full support of the Administration addressing the uncontrolled growth of compliance issues and the goal of providing support for faculty "to maximize time spent on teaching, research, and service." CFW also notes that this position also concurs with a position recently adopted by the Systemwide Academic Council. CFW also supports the goal of enhancing transparency not only by providing far more data than currently but also "in a form that should be easily accessible by non-experts, to meaningfully answer critical questions pertaining to the deployment and evolution of UCR 2020 and the concomitant allocation of resources." CFW, among other standing committees of the Academic Senate, intends to hold the Administration to that goal.

CFW found Section IV: "The Next Steps..." to be vague and incomplete. There is no current plan. The implementation plan, including setting priorities, appears to be something left to a future committee, the "Implementation Advisory Committee". From the working paper, CFW is pleased to see representation of Academic Senate faculty on this advisory committee but wonders if only three such members is sufficient to represent the diverse interests of all colleges and professional schools.

CFW was disappointed not to see any financial model anywhere in the strategic plan, and there really are no priorities. All goals are unlikely to be achieved simultaneously, so it is unclear to faculty where the first investments are to be made. Because of the heavy emphasis on extramural research, much of the plan affects CNAS, BCOE, and perhaps some professional schools far more than CHASS. In this second draft, there is still little in the plan to inform CHASS of their role in the campus in 2020.

Working Paper, Strategic Priorities. Comments have been included.

Working Paper, Research Infrastructure. This largely focused upon redesigning and retasking the Office of Research Affairs. Faculty members strongly favor such reforms. CFW also suggests that ORA become incentivized from the VCR on down to reward the number of SUCCESSFUL grants that ORA processes and not simply on the total number

of grants processed, whether funded or not. Some of the colleges have grant specialists available to their faculty members to help assemble teams of collaborators and to help with the development of complex proposals that go beyond thinking about questions and designing experiments. The Staff member in BCOE was particularly well-thought of, and CFW recommends that BCOE can serve as a model for CNAS and ORA as to how staff can be trained to facilitate the preparation of grants by faculty members. In no case, however, should the salaries of anyone assisting with grants in ORA or any of the colleges be charged specifically to any individual grant. That could lead to conflicts of interest in terms of who receives assistance and who does not.

Appendix. Phrases in Section I that various CFW members suggested to be re-written for greater clarity.

a) Redefining excellence: the so-called definition of excellence given on page 2 is not, in fact, a definition. It is a list of adjectives. It is incompletely conceptualized in this regard. This seriously undermines the plan's introduction as a whole. The subsequent statements about excellence read as a haphazard sequence of impressions.

b) pg 2: "Excellence is value-driven." The sentence should be omitted. The term, "value-driven," which is itself evidence of anything but excellence in English vocabulary, reads as ironic? It is difficult to take seriously any statements following it.

c) pg 3: "These are the values of excellence to which we hold our campus." The phrase is a non-sequitur to the paragraph preceding it, which does not, in fact, identify values but rather attempts to elaborate on the meaning of the concept and describe conditions for its development. The statement mixes tropes in a manner bordering on nonsensical.

d) Pg.3-4: "For our faculty, UCR provides an encouraging, supportive, and collegial environment in which to thrive. Faculty members have the opportunity to realize their potential in research and creative activity and to compete on the world stage." This statement is patently untrue for many faculty members. How can a faculty member compete globally when the university doesn't provide them with a telephone line? The disconnection between this statement and the harsh reality that many faculty members currently encounter is galling. This section should reframe its discussion with a more accurate characterization of existing austerity conditions and identify a path that would lead from these to the desired "preeminence." The text as it stands is vacuous.

e) Pg. 5: The uncritical reliance on AAU standards of excellence expressed at the top of the page is again unjustified and constitutes an inferior means of characterizing the university's aspirations. Moreover, it is contradicted at the bottom of the page, as being only "one element." The attempt to provide a justification for the selection of the AAU "guidepost" given in the box gives only the very weak rationale of "wide acceptance" and is, on that basis, lacking in integrity. UCR is characterized as blindly following suit, and complying thoughtlessly with pre-existing practices. No excellence in intellectual leadership is demonstrated here.

f) Pg 6-9: The section on "committed faculty, staff, and administrators" is relatively weak in terms of presenting any compelling evidence. The claims made here read as wishful thinking more than in other sections. The stepping-stone identity of the campus, at least as far as faculty are concerned, is real and widely recognized. Denying it on the basis of vague survey documentation does little to dispel it.

a) Pg 10: "aspirational future"--this construction is awkward and borders on the ludicrous; likewise the passage, "Choices will have to be made, and it will not be possible to support all programs and initiatives equally. Nevertheless, UC Riverside will neither waver in its aspirations, nor retreat from their pursuit", is logically incoherent. No clear argument is advanced here



June 16, 2010

TO: ANTHONY NORMAN, CHAIR  
ACADEMIC SENATE

FR: JOHN BAEZ, CHAIR  
COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY & SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

RE: The UCR Strategic Planning Report Draft #2

The Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications doesn't have anything particular to say about The UCR Strategic Planning Report Draft #2; the report looks fine and doesn't particularly touch on the library.

June 9, 2010

TO: Anthony Norman  
Chair, Riverside Division

FM: Carol J. Lovatt  
Chair, UCR Academic Senate Planning and Budget

**RE: Reviews of Campus Strategic Plan - Draft #2, Implementation of UCR 2020, and Chancellor's Strategic Priority Areas**

Strategic Plan Draft #2 is a strong articulation of UC-Riverside's core principles with a vision of the campus in 2020. We are convinced that the goal of attaining AAU membership is essential for this campus to secure its rightful place as a major research university within the UC system. We are pleased that the School of Medicine is now openly integrated within the Strategic Plan. It will become a significant part of who we are as a campus by 2020. The plan describes six priority areas of existing strengths that are broad enough for energetic, committed faculty in multiple disciplines to contribute in achieving the campus vision for each. Importantly, the Strategic Plan also provides the opportunities for faculty whose research, creative and scholarly efforts lie outside these six areas to originate new foci of academic excellence that attract and retain outstanding faculty, students and funding that contribute to the national and international reputation of UCR. We applaud the plan's goal of building on campus strengths, while providing the environment and culture that will foster the innovation of the next generation of campus strengths.

However, the members of Planning and Budget feel obligated to evaluate the financial implications of all documents that come before the committee. Therefore, we cannot endorse the Strategic Plan until it incorporates a corresponding financial plan that includes the following:

- (1) Specific goals to be met in achieving the campus vision, along with a time line for each goal that identifies the milestones to be accomplished in working toward each goal;
- (2) Resource and infrastructure needs and estimated costs associated with each milestone and the total cost of each final goal;
- (3) Identification of available and future funding sources for each goal and its milestones.

Related to this, we would like to review a financial plan that will sustain the campus under the likely scenario of continued budget shortfalls in State funding to UC through the next 5 years. Additionally, we would like to see strategic and financial plans for the next five-year period of campus growth, assuming a scenario of improved allocation of resources to UCR.

The Planning and Budget Committee recommends that a working document listing AAU criteria be posted online. Within this document, it would be useful to prioritize the criteria, define the metrics UCR will use to evaluate progress towards satisfying each criterion, identify key milestones in the process, and assign target dates for the fulfillment of each.

### ***Implementation of UCR 2020***

Implementation of UCR 2020 requires that all campus planning and resource allocation decisions be based on the Strategic Plan. To facilitate implementation of the Plan, the working paper proposes appointment of members to a Strategic Planning Implementation Advisory Committee (SPIAC) chaired by the EV/CP, who has primary responsibility for implementation of UCR 2020. This committee's charge is to develop a set of goals, milestones, metrics, benchmarks and timelines to assist in bringing each of UCR's academic and administrative units in line with the Strategic Plan and in evaluating each unit's contributions to the plan. Members of P&B reiterate their concerns that semi-annual review is too frequent and re-emphasize that the campus should attempt to use, perhaps with modification, existing mechanisms for reviewing unit plans to also assess the contributions of academic and administrative units to the Strategic Plan.

Planning and Budget members have additional concerns. The first is the composition of SPIAC: the EVC/P, two additional administrators, three faculty and one staff representative. The second concern is SPIAC's stated charge of "setting priorities – particularly in times scarce resources." Having only three faculty members on this committee does not adequately represent campus faculty or academic units. Whereas the working paper states that "the committee will also be responsible for utilizing all available mechanisms to assure transparency throughout the implementation process and for providing multiple opportunities for feedback from all stakeholders," Planning and Budget is concerned and disappointed that the standing academic senate committees, which provide broad campus-wide representation, are not integrated into the stated plans for achieving transparency. In the spirit of shared governance, P&B recommends that the working document include a defined mechanism for Academic Senate committee review during the process of setting priorities, *especially when resources are limited*. Further, P&B recommends that faculty members who are to serve on SPIAC be appointed by the Committee on Committees and include the Chair of the Riverside Division, or his/her designee, and other faculty members selected from among the membership of the Academic Senate Planning and Budget Committee, Faculty Welfare Committee and Graduate Council.

### ***Strategic Priority Areas***

Members of Planning and Budget were generally supportive of the working draft of the *Chancellor's Strategic Priority Areas*, but felt that there was too much emphasis on basic and applied research and on translating the results of this research in a usable form to others and not enough emphasis on UCR's creative activities and the high quality of its scholarship. To bring these two important facets of UCR into balance, an additional paragraph is suggested for inclusion in the text on the first page of the *Chancellor's Strategic Priority Areas*. The two paragraphs preceding the proposed insert and one following paragraph are included for convenience.

“Chancellor White chose the six strategic priority areas described below by combining emphases in the lists provided by the two subcommittees and then revising the composites that emerged to reflect his own assessment of the areas in which UCR can have a continuing and significant impact. The Chancellor's Strategic Priorities are thus based on a combination of current knowledge about the campus and vision about what it can achieve in the future.

The choice of strategic priority areas is important to the campus community, because this choice will help to shape the profile of the university over the next decade. The choice is just as important for the broader community surrounding the university. Supporters and friends of UCR want to know how the university intends to use its resources, not only to advance disciplinary knowledge, but also to improve the quality of life in Inland Southern California and beyond.”

*The identified priorities are selected as areas of emphasis within the core commitment of UCR to be and remain a comprehensive research university pursuing excellence across the full range of our scholarly endeavors. As a research university, UC Riverside is committed to achieving excellence in its research and scholarship. Academic excellence requires programs that are at the forefront of their respective fields, as well as creative activity that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries and garners national recognition. By achieving a high profile for its research and creative activity, UCR will enhance undergraduate and, especially, graduate education; attract and retain the best faculty; and garner grants, awards, and recognition for its people and programs.*

“Universities are places that create the future in many ways – by educating the next generation of citizens and highly-skilled workers, by conducting basic and applied research, and by translating the research results into forms that can be used by others. For this reason, the six priority areas described below are, by design, forward looking and progressive. They

build on Chancellor White's vision of a 21<sup>st</sup> century land grant university, one that works hand-in-hand with business, government and community groups to revitalize community, and to discover and stimulate productive change."

June 7, 2010

TO:

A. Norman, Chair, Riverside Division

FROM:

J. Ganim, Chair, Committee on Physical Resource Planning

RE:

**REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT, *DRAFT #2* “EMERGING PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLD**

The Committee on Physical Resource Planning (PRP) was asked to review the document entitled “Emerging Professional Schools.” By and large the report restates the rationale put forward during the three decades our professional schools have been “emerging,” but also makes some qualitative recommendations about which schools should be supported in the decades ahead. The report reflects a widely shared skepticism about the feasibility of, for instance, a school of nursing, but its skepticism about a school of law may come as a disappointment to the advocates of such a professional school across campus and in the community.

Present long range plans envision physical facilities for professional schools to be developed on the so-called “west campus.” Obviously the budgetary limitations on such expansion will limit the full development of such a plan. And since physical separation either implies or results in disciplinary and intellectual segregation, we wonder to what degree the continued emergence of the present and proposed professional schools will share physical resources with existing core disciplines (the traditional triad of arts, humanities and sciences). In some cases, such as the planned School of Public Policy, we imagine something like cohabitation, but that school requires a less elaborate technical infrastructure.

This question of such interdependence is not merely speculative. Buildings for professional schools at other UC campuses (at least medical, legal and business schools) have had the lion’s share of their costs covered by gifts and other development sources. Will the physical development of the professional schools be funded as they are at other campuses? Or will the physical development of the professional schools involve a trade-off with that of the core colleges? Up to now, these questions were more or less begged by state funding priorities, but as the cost of capital projects are increasingly charged to the individual campuses, the answers to these questions become more urgent and unavoidable.

As one member stated, “the general campus can expect its physical resources to be siphoned off for at least several years before we reap the benefit of its ‘rainmaking.’ The campus planners should be cautious that the rapid growth in academic stature of UCR in recent years not be negatively impacted by any professional school initiative.”

JUNE 13, 2010

TO: ANTHONY NORMAN, CHAIR
RIVERSIDE DIVISION
FR: RICHARD ARNOTT, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH
RE: UCR STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFT #2

First of all, I would like to apologize for being late in submitting the Committee's reaction to the second draft of the university's Strategic Plan. The fault is mine.

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The Committee was asked to opine formally on three documents associated with the draft: i) The working paper, "Why Excellence?"; ii) the working paper, "Research Infrastructure/Support"; and iii) the second draft. The majority of Committee members felt that the second draft is an improvement over the first draft, being more coherent and articulate, and having less of a bias towards big-money science.

Why Excellence?

All three documents are remarkably well written, and convey the theme of excellence with passion and conviction. Committee members agree that a commitment to excellence -- to the highest standards in scholarship, teaching, and service -- is a sine qua non of a successful university. And yet, in keeping with the rhetoric, one member posed the question: Beyond Excellence? What other goals are important? The term "creativity" was conspicuous by its absence in the document, apart from its use in reference to the creative arts. But if the university is to be an intellectual leader, it must not only emphasize commitment to high standards of scholarship but also encourage challenging intellectual authority and blazing new paths. Other important goals, which were acknowledged but understated, include fostering diversity and pluralism, contributing to the community -- both local and global, and championing the underdog.

Research Infrastructure/Support

This document too was written well and with conviction. There are indeed problems with the Office of Research. Yet the Office of Research was made a scapegoat. The Office of

Research is but one facet of a culture of administrative authority that views faculty as ill-behaved children who need to be kept in line. Some other offices on campus are at least as culpable, since they insist on strict adherence not only to external regulation but also to a skein of regulations of their own making, which add considerably to the time faculty members spend on administration, at the expense of research and creative activity. The document pays little attention to the financial realities of funding research infrastructure, which is understandable in a visionary document. The document also neglects the creative arts.

*UCR Strategic Plan, Draft #2*

This draft is impressive in its clarity, coherence, conviction, and comprehensiveness. The majority of Committee members were pleased that this draft places less emphasis than did the previous one on big-money science research and more on other facets of the university endeavor, particularly the arts and humanities, undergraduate and graduate education (such as establishing learning communities and providing more generous funding for graduate students), diversity, and community outreach. Individual committee members had four general criticisms of the draft. The first is the standard criticism of strategic plans, that it neglects financial realities. The second is that the draft pays short shrift to creative expression and cultivation of a sense of the aesthetic. Participation in creative activities tends to be viewed as a form of entertainment and relaxation rather than as an essential element of a healthy life. The third is similar though broader. The document is permeated by the worldview of a broadly educated and benevolent scientist; the arts and humanities have their place, but science dedicated to improvement of the human condition is central. The emphasis on excellence carries echoes of the Perfectibility of Man. The fourth is more mundane. Creative endeavor, whether scientific or artistic, requires time for thought and contemplation. To realize their creative potential, faculty members, and indeed all members of the university community, need more uncommitted time.

June 8, 2010

To: Anthony Norman, Chair  
Riverside Division, Academic Senate

From: Vivian-Lee Nyitray, Chair  
Undergraduate Admissions Committee

Re: Response to assigned working paper, "Why Excellence?"

Our committee took some exception to the title of the working paper, as it suggests that "excellence" is not something UCR possesses already; indeed, it implies further that UCR faculty need to be persuaded that "excellence" is something to which we should aspire. We urge some rethinking of the title, perhaps to "Enhancing Excellence" or something similar.

Beyond the title, UGA committee members identified three major points to address:

1. The working paper is notable for its lack of attention to the full range of academic disciplines and research orientations on the UCR campus; in particular, the working paper needs to acknowledge in a substantial manner the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts in its account of what constitutes excellence. As presently composed, the paper defines the "measures" and "standards" of excellence solely with implicit references to the sciences and engineering. Membership in the AAU is calculated in terms of funding possibilities, a measure that favors the heavily subsidized sciences and engineering and not the lesser- or non- subsidized disciplines housed in CHASS. Intellectual specialization and advances in technological communication have eroded the former primacy of the humanities and ignore the centrality of social science inquiries and the relevance of the arts to every facet of our lives. The working paper should espouse an expansive view for re-vitalizing the Humanities (and its intellectual heritage) as an agent in overcoming insularity and parochialism. For obvious reasons, this is not the agenda of the sciences.

2. A significant obstacle to achieving "excellence" is UCR's high student-to-faculty ratio. The example offered by a UGA committee member focuses on CNAS. This year, the student-faculty ratio for CNAS is 28:1. It will go to 30:1 in Fall 2010. The *U.S. News and World Report* on university rankings divides colleges into three categories based on student-faculty ratio: 15:1 or lower, 15:1 to 20:1, and 20:1 and

higher. The Dean of CNAS believes that "excellence" can only be achieved with a student-faculty ratio of 22:1 -- and 18:1 would be better. To get to 22:1 would require hiring 60 new IR faculty members in CNAS; an 18:1 ratio would entail hiring 96 new faculty (net). The other option would be to cut CNAS enrollment by 2400 students. It is the sense of the committee that somewhere in the "Why Excellence" document there needs to be a statement that "excellence" can only be achieved when the student-to-faculty ratio is brought into line with what is considered excellent for the best universities. UCR cannot achieve AAU membership unless we reduce this ratio. The ratio at UC Irvine, our biggest competitor, is 19:1.

3. Finally, the committee believes that greater attention should be paid to the role of the campus administration in any effort to enhance excellence; in the words of one committee member, "We are a group, not stand alone units" of faculty, staff, students, and administration. How will the administration work toward achieving the goals outlined in this working paper?

To: Anthony Norman, Chair Academic Senate  
From: Aemea Walker, Chair Biomed Exec Comm.  
Re: Emerging Professional Schools

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010

The Biomedical Sciences Executive Committee considered the "Emerging Professional Schools" part of the Strategic Plan (for UCR 2020).

The committee approves the statement in general, which supports development of the Medical School and a School of Public Policy, and expansion of programs within SOBA and GSOE.

Once again, we are very pleased to see that UCR ranks very favorably in terms of life and health sciences publications per senate member. This has been true for some time and is information that should be highlighted more often.

While it is disappointing for those interested in a School of Law, the arguments against such a school at this time are convincing. In regard to future consideration of a School of Pharmacy, we find the wording extremely vague and ask for some clarification of what is meant by "the campus should give serious consideration to beginning in a manner similar to the UCR/UCLA Haider Program in Biomedical Sciences rather than as a stand alone school of pharmacy in Riverside." Does this mean a joint program with another UC? If so, would this not result in the graduates being more likely to practice where they finish their degree and reducing the impact on the local community?

Date: June 9, 2010

To: Anthony Norman  
Chair of the Academic Senate  
University of California, Riverside

From: Jay A. Farrell  
Chair of the Faculty  
Bourns College of Engineering  
University of California, Riverside

The BCOE Executive Committee discussed portions of draft 2 of the UCR Strategic Plan at an unofficial meeting on June 2, 2010. Specifically, BCOE was asked to consider the Strategic Plan, the Priority Areas Working Paper, and the Implementation Working Paper. Following is a summary of the main points of the conversation.

Draft 2: The overall sentiment was that draft two was a great improvement over draft one. There are a few specific suggestions.

1. Page 5, Yellow Box, Line 5: "comprised of" This is poor grammar. It should not be in a highlighted box about excellence.
2. Page 6, Paragraph 2: The Fellows of professional societies is given second level status in two ways. First, it says "many" instead of giving a specific number (or saying "more than N"). Second, it is outside of the list that is two sentences prior. In engineering, being a Fellow of a Professional Society (ACM, IEEE, ASME, AIChE, etc.) is much more prestigious than being Fellow of AAAS. It is recommended that UCR determine the number N (or at least a lower bound), insert that number instead of N, and move this phrase to be part of the list two sentences earlier.
3. Page 19, Paragraph 2, Sentence 2, Clause 2: "UCR will also stimulate interest in ... among its diverse UG population" Given its location in the document, this phrase implies that UCR will encourage its UG's to attend graduate school at UCR. Faculty at many institutions question the practice of students continuing graduate studies at the same school where they earned their UG degree. Some faculty at our meeting were completely opposed to the practice. Do we really want this to be an explicit portion of the UCR strategic plan?
4. Page 22: The topic of International students is raised in the section on "Enhancing student success."
  - More international students may be a good idea, but this seems the wrong place to put it. It does not seem to enhance student success.
  - The plan makes frequent use of the word "diversity," often with different preceding adjectives. While it is unclear whether more international students would increase the "ethnic diversity," they would likely increase the "geographic and cultural diversity." The document would read better if it was made explicit by inserting the appropriate adjective.

Implementation Working Paper: This document generated a long discussion on items 3 and 4 summarized below.

1. Page 1, Paragraph 2, Sentence 1: “engagement” seems incomplete. It would be better to state “engagement with ...”
2. Page 1, Paragraph 2, Last sentence: The parenthetical comment set off by dashes does not fit. The “including as measured” should be either removed or rewritten.
3. The majority of the people present were opposed to the implementation advisory committee, at least as described in the current document. The reasons given were various:
  - a. This is a tactic not a strategy.
  - b. How would the committee members be selected?
  - c. How would the committee members be removed? It should be made clear so that they do not appear to serve only if they agree with the administration.
  - d. What is the committee charge? It should be clearly stated. Currently it is unclear.
  - e. The text needs to clearly state:
    - i. that all decisions are the responsibility of the Chancellor and EVC/P;
    - ii. that the role of the committee is to provide a diversity of opinions and to advise the Chancellor and EVC/P.
4. Those in attendance were unanimous in the idea that the Seed Funding discussion does not belong in this document or under this committee. The committee charge is previously stated as oversight, goal/ metric definition, etc. That is already a huge task. Why also give it the completely different task of selecting areas for strategic research funding. There is a working paper on Strategic Areas. This function and a separate committee should be discussed in that document. In addition, the oversight role of the committee applies to all UCR organizational units. The seed funding only applies to the academic portion of campus.

Priority Areas: Only a few minor issues.

1. Page 1, Paragraph 2: The phrase “for cooperating faculty members” is misplaced. It seems to say that the sentence applies to “cooperating faculty members” only. “Cooperating Faculty” is a specific UC title.
2. Page 10, Second paragraph for the bottom: Replace “cooperating” with “collaborating”. “Cooperating Faculty” is a specific UC title that could be misinterpreted.
3. Page 3, New Hires: This section would be better without the example. Why mention this specific new hire? Many other examples could be given. This seems like a done deal for a specific interest.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521-0132

28 May 2010

To: Tony Norman, Chair, UCR Academic Senate

From: David Herzberger, Chair, CHASS Executive Committee

Re: Comments on Draft #2 of Strategic Plan: a) Strategic Priority Areas; b) Implementation

- a. 1. We find much that makes sense about the 6 priority areas; however, we note once again (as we did in our comments on the first version of the Plan) that there is no mention of the Humanities in any of the priority areas and that the bias in focus and in structure tilts heavily towards the sciences. By no means do we oppose science and its central role on campus. However, we believe that the arts and humanities are equally important to the attainment of AAU status. Even the innovation incubator proposal does not speak to how the Humanities work in a practical sense: the model here seems geared toward the collaborative research carried out in the sciences rather than toward what is often individual research in the humanities, with a book as the outcome of large projects in most cases.
2. We urge that the creative and performing arts find a place in the priority area “revitalizing communities”: we believe that the arts can play a central role within this priority
- b. The implementation component seems largely on target; some concern was raised about the role and authority of the advisory committee. Faculty input will be critical here, especially through the Academic Senate and its committees.

June 11, 2010

To: Anthony W. Norman  
Chair, Academic Senate, Riverside Division

From: Marylynn V. Yates  
Chair



RE: Review of UCR 2020 – The Path to Preeminence, Draft #2

The CNAS Executive Committee discussed UCR 2020 – The Path to Preeminence, Draft #2 at its meeting of June 10, 2010. Comments were also solicited via email.

An overriding concern of the Committee is that the strategic plan will be touted as a consensus document, due to the widespread opportunities for comment. However, this is not the case. Although comments were solicited, the final document is a reflection of the final reviewers of the document – the EVC/P and the Chancellor. We are not saying that this is wrong, just that this should be clearly understood and overtly stated.

Because of its relative importance to our committee’s charge concerning undergraduate curricula, the main focus of our comments is on Strategic Goal #2: “Access – Enhancing Opportunity for Graduate, Professional, & Undergraduate Students”.

General comments/questions:

- Much of the report still does not appear to be a strategic plan, with clear priorities backed up by a thorough analysis of the issue. Notable exceptions to this are the working papers on “Emerging Professional Schools at UCR” and, to a lesser extent, “The Size and Shape of UCR”. These documents reflect a careful analysis of the issues, and makes recommendations for the future based on those analyses. The entire plan should be constructed in the same manner as these.
- There are concerns about the speed with which the plan is proposed to be implemented. There should be a phased implementation of the proposed changes, reasonably achievable goals, and a realistic timeline.
- To achieve the described goals, we need to hire a large number of faculty; not just strategic hires. To think that the goals can be accomplished without massive hiring of faculty is unrealistic.
- It is unclear how much, if any, critical winnowing of ideas has been done. As an example, there is still reference to the proposed ignition seminars and capstone courses (bottom of p. 20), despite that fact that no fewer than four Senate committees were strongly critical of them, and clearly articulated their pragmatic

shortcomings. We found no evidence of support for these recommendations in the aggregate Senate response.

- The authors of the working papers should be clearly identified on the working papers. The Committee finds it ironic that a working paper entitled “Transparency” has no identified authors. It is important to know who has written, reviewed, and endorsed these papers.

Specific comments:

Strategic Goal #2: “Access – Enhancing Opportunity for Graduate, Professional, & Undergraduate Students”

- From a CNAS perspective, the proposals concerning enhancing graduate study opportunities and undergraduate success are not well coordinated, and may even be in conflict. To achieve the profile of an AAU institution, the graduate student enrollment must approach 20% of the total student body; in CNAS it should probably be somewhat higher. In the Fall of 2007, the graduate student percentage in CNAS was 14.8%; by 2009 it had declined to 13.7, and it will almost certainly drop below 13.0 in Fall of 2010. This trend can be largely ascribed to uncontrolled growth of the undergraduate population. We could not agree more with the assertions on pages 19 and 23 concerning the need for “careful management of undergraduate enrollments”. However, this would be such a departure from recent experience that we must confess to some cynicism concerning the likelihood of this actually coming to pass. We also were perplexed by the recommendation to appoint yet another task force to assess the admissions process (page 23), as there are already competent Senate bodies (UAC, BOARS) specifically charged with such oversight.
- There are concerns regarding the recommendation for “personalized faculty mentorship” (p. 20). First, this not clearly defined, at least mechanistically. Second, it seems to ignore obvious pragmatic obstacles. The student to instructional FTE ratio in our college will exceed 30 this coming fall. In addition to the obvious implication concerning attainment of an AAU “profile”, we are dealing with daunting numbers of undergraduates whose disciplinary interests are highly skewed toward the biological sciences, and toward human health. The profile of our faculty is quite different, so it remains very unclear how such mentorship could be delivered in any pedagogically meaningful way.
- Regarding the merits of different advising models, this strikes us as very much of an experiment in progress, and one that will require continuous reevaluation. The UAAC in CNAS is a relatively new enterprise, and its ability to effectively dovetail with any faculty-driven advising remains an open question. Similarly, the first-year learning communities are, within CNAS, an experiment for which there are presently only meager data. Given their resource-intensiveness, these will require careful and continuous evaluation, and difficult allocation decisions are likely to be necessary for the foreseeable future.
- It is not clear why increasing the number of international students *per se* would increase/enhance undergraduate student success (page 21)? We should take

advantage of the diversity of our existing student body to educate all students about cultural diversity. How would increasing the number of international students not negatively impact access for California residents?

- Admitting additional undergraduate students this year clearly hinders the goal to increase the number of graduate students in the defined time period. Historically, international students comprise a good percentage of our graduate students and thinking that we can increase the number of graduate students without increasing the number of international students is unrealistic. Many international students, particularly in the sciences, are better prepared than the domestic students and that is why we recruit and admit them.
- Recently, the Graduate Division changed its funding for NRT from two years to one year. This action will seriously jeopardize the recruitment of international students. Unlike most states, international graduate students in California never become residents and therefore faculty at UCR will have to take on additional costs for accepting international students in their labs.
- As stated earlier, faculty hiring is a critical requirement to increase the number of graduate students and bring the graduate student ratio to what the UCR 2020 describes.
- What objective evidence is there that our graduate-student support packages are (i) not competitive, (ii) not multi-year, and/or (iii) most importantly, a major reason that prospective students choose to enroll elsewhere? Is this a campus-wide issue, or one that is unique to certain units? In our experience, there are probably a number of challenges in convincing the top students to come to UCR, but we are not aware of any data to suggest that this is primarily a *fiscal* issue, since the GSR levels were recently increased.

#### Implementation of UCR2020

- The advisory committee that is established to implement the Strategic Plan will have a formidable task, and will require a large time commitment of the members. Consideration should be given to assigning some of the tasks to existing committees, who can then pass on their recommendations to the advisory committee.

#### Strategic Priority Areas

- The areas covered by the strategic priorities are sufficiently broad that almost all faculty should fit into at least one of them. It is still not clear what criteria will be used to make decisions about putting resources into one area over the other.
- To achieve the described goals, we need to hire a large number of faculty; not just strategic hires. To think that the set goals can be accomplished without massive hiring of faculty is unrealistic.
- The plan is intended to move us through the next 10 years, yet many of the research topics mentioned as areas that we would like to strengthen are already several years old (*e.g.*, study of drainage problems in the Central Valley, use of microorganisms to detoxify waste). To be prepared to address the issues of the

future, we need to hire faculty who have sound training in fundamental disciplines, so that they are sufficiently nimble to adapt their research areas as new issues arise.