The Chair of the Division opened the Retreat with remarks on the characteristics of the best universities, as described by former Harvard University Provost Henry Rosovsky in his book "The University, An Owner’s Manual" and stated that he hoped these would form a useful framework for subsequent discussion.

Rosovsky has suggested that the best universities are those where faculty continually seeks to create new ideas and knowledge, students are selected for academic talent diversity, admissions are fair and flexible, there is disdain for orthodoxy and "school solutions", there is a drive for excellence, the environment for scholarship is attractive, research and teaching are complementary, graduate research programs are led by a distinguished faculty, competition exists for faculty, students, public attention and resources, and there is a love of learning. Rosovsky also emphasized that every academic administrator who leads the best of academic institutions must 1) provide the mechanisms for consultation, and 2) be accountable to his/her constituencies.

With this in mind the Retreat participants engaged in a dialogue on what can the Academic Senate and Administration do to maintain and enhance the academic esteem of the University of California at Riverside (UCR) as the campus moves toward 2010.

There were 35 participants in the Retreat, including Department Chairs, Senate committee members, Senate committee chairs, Chancellor Raymond Orbach, Executive Vice Chancellor David Warren, Vice Chancellor Gretchen Bolar, University Librarian James Thompson, and Associate Vice Chancellor for Development Pamela Hillman.

At the concluding session, the Chair of the Riverside Division presented both a written and an oral summary of the discussions. Highlights of that summary included:

The Academic Senate members in attendance endorsed the growth of the undergraduate student body at UCR to meet the Master Plan for Higher Education and to be the campus of access. However, they cautioned that to maintain both access and excellent quality in undergraduate programs outreach goals must be met either by a policy of "inreach" (resources for remediation) and/or application of a Darwinian approach which may result in longer times to degree and/or a decline in the continuation rate.

The members of the Academic Senate identified budgetary needs:

1. Greater consultation with the end users in the implementation of the new financial system,
2. Greater disclosure and consultation on budgeting priorities,
3. Greater funding for teaching infrastructure,
4. Graduate student support should be increased and matched with increased faculty hiring,
5. Greater funding for academic support units, including departmental administration

The Academic Senate members in attendance identified organizational issues:

1. Since the Academic Senate provides a voice for faculty for academic matters across the
Colleges/Schools there appears to be no compelling reason for the committees of the Academic Senate to be reorganized in conformance with the current decentralization of many functions to the Colleges and Schools,

2. Planning in the Colleges/Schools should be done in conjunction with the respective Executive Committees and these committees must be given greater responsibilities in development and in the review of College/School academic/budget plans,

3. The Dean of the Graduate Division should be a member of the Dean's Council,

4. A Division Committee (or Academic Senate mechanism) for liaison with the Development Office,

5. Space planning should map to the campus academic plan,

6. The Committee on Physical Resources must be involved much earlier in the capital planning process, and there must be adequate consultation with this and other Senate committees for equipping classrooms, and

7. The majority rejected the Administration's position on reorganization and decentralization of the functions statutorily assigned to the Graduate Division and the Graduate Council, and strongly endorsed the proposal of the Graduate Council, which maintains the proper administration of graduate education as defined by the Senate bylaws and the Standing Orders of the Regents.

It was the generally felt by the participants that the meeting was a success, and that the quality of the conversations in the three faculty groups were constructive and productive. Hope was expressed that the dialogue be continued and that, at some point in the future, there be another Administration-Academic Senate Retreat.