

# ACTION PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2008

## NEAR-TERM INVESTMENTS WITH A LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE

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The campus's *Strategic Academic Plan* (<http://planning.ucsc.edu/acadplan/docs/AcadPlan.asp>) articulates a vision for UC Santa Cruz as a top-ranked research university and the leading public university for the quality of the education it provides students. With recognized centers of excellence and a track record for uniquely defining the undergraduate experience, the campus is poised to move forward in a leadership position in developing and promoting new areas of scholarship and in equipping students with the knowledge and intellectual tools to prepare them for the world in which they will live and work.

That said, however, the campus has seen significant growth in enrollments and requirements for new services during a difficult fiscal environment in which State resources did not recognize workload increases—indeed, a period in which student faculty ratios deteriorated and academic support operations were downsized. Given that California's fiscal environment will continue to be challenging for a number of years, the campus will not be able to devote sufficient resources to make equivalent progress toward achieving all our goals, but we must make investments that will continue the momentum of our academic programs and lay the foundation for success.

The *Action Plan* takes a near-term view of the actions we can take to begin to fulfill our mission within available resources. This is neither a campus wide strategic plan, a blueprint for the allocation of faculty FTE to academic divisions, nor a set of priorities for making annual allocations. Instead, it is intended to identify specific actions the campus will undertake immediately and the individuals responsible for leading these efforts.

Some of the proposed actions may require a new approach, or review of data, rather than additional resources; others represent early investments in areas that will be needed to lay the foundations for later investments; or to bring to fruition efforts that have been under discussion/development for a number of years. The focus is on what can be accomplished to lay the foundation for continued excellence. It is intended to be the first step in an annual process to be reviewed and revised, based on progress made.

In order to keep our goals and principles foremost in our planning, the campus' future annual processes will include a review of our progress on the actions identified in this document, and a refinement of our goals and actions that is informed by campus performance on high-level and divisional strategic indicators. An initial set of proposed indicators, as well as a process for expanding and maintaining such metrics, will be discussed in a companion document, *Measuring Our Progress*. As we measure our progress, we will make use of broad, high-level indicators that allow us to track our development against comparison institutions and we will track more nuanced metrics that recognize the differences across campus academic divisions and the qualities that make UC Santa Cruz unique.

## AN ACTION AGENDA

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As a result of consultation during 2007-08, a number of near-term actions have been identified to put into place or to strengthen the building blocks necessary to achieve the following key campus goals:

- Maintain and further improve the campus's leadership position as a top-ranked research university, and for showcasing existing academic excellence;
- Establish and maintain a strong and sustainable foundation for the undergraduate educational experience;
- Improve the infrastructure supporting campus goals for research, scholarship, and graduate education; and
- Address long-standing foundational elements with respect to work-life issues and the need to diversify the campus resource base.

## ACADEMIC RESOURCES

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A University is defined, in large part, by its preeminent programs. The campus's fundamental responsibility in continuing to build its academic strength is to sustain the quality of its nationally/internationally recognized programs and to transform those with the potential for top ranking through investments to recruit and retain world class faculty. Our success in building a world class faculty is also advantaged by ensuring that UC Santa Cruz is nationally and internationally recognized for its teaching and research—including our notable achievements in existing departments, in building interdisciplinary programs, and in creating new knowledge at the intersection of disciplines.

While the foci of the following near-term actions relate to faculty and program development, a great university also needs to consider great students, alumni, and staff among the hallmarks of academic excellence. The campus will also look to the Vice Chancellor for Business and Administrative Services to provide the services and resources needed to support the academic programs. Actions to address these fundamentals either appear elsewhere in the plan or are embedded in the responsibilities and outcomes for which cognizant principal officers are held accountable.

### Continue to build academic strengths

- Allocate new faculty FTE to enhance existing strengths and to strategically build new interdisciplinary programs. In 2008-09, the campus will reach agreement on whether, and how, to adjust our current FTE allocation approach for new and replacement faculty to one characterized by differential investment—consistent with the principles articulated in the *Strategic Academic Plan*;
- Recruit new and replacement faculty FTE to enhance existing strengths and/or create new synergistic strengths—including strategic senior hires in cases that provide the opportunity to quickly build nationally- and internationally-recognized programs;
- Invest in carefully selected and sustainable new programmatic initiatives; and
- Offer competitive faculty salaries and start-up packages.

The campus has in place a process for allocating faculty FTE—as well as long-term targets for each academic division— and for authorizing faculty recruitments. However, in this difficult fiscal environment, the ability to replace or utilize open FTE will be constrained and the pool of new FTE available for allocation will be considerably less than that required to fully address divisional aspirations or to meet immediate workload. Further, external constraints and/or opportunities mean that individual programmatic growth toward these divisional target sizes could occur at different rates. Thus, it is even more critical now that the campus focus on the strategic deployment of its faculty lines by selective recruitments.

While constrained, the allocation of new and open faculty positions provides the campus with an opportunity to focus on how best to invest this key resource consistent with the principles of our academic plans. Thus, sustaining the quality of our nationally- and internationally-recognized programs—as well as transforming those departments with the potential for such top ranking—will require that the campus reconsider its strategy for the investment in new faculty consistent with the four guiding principles articulated in the *Strategic Academic Plan*: (i) view UCSC as a single unit; (ii) invest differentially by targeting development in areas that will have the greatest impact; (iii) evolve disciplines through the investment of new FTE as well as reconsidering and realigning positions opened by retirement or departure; and (iv) align academic and budgetary processes and priorities.

### Actions

Under the leadership of the **Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor** and the **Vice Provost for Academic Affairs**, the campus will revise the campus's strategy for the authorizing the recruitment and deployment of faculty. Specifically, the EVC and Vice Provost, in consultation with the academic deans and the Academic Senate, will:

- Develop criteria and a framework for authorizing the recruitment of faculty FTE and for redeploying existing (vacant) faculty;
- Based on these criteria, work with the Deans to identify programmatic strengths;
- Recommend changes, if appropriate, in current policies about how vacant FTE are handled; and
- Recommend changes, if appropriate, in the principles that guide the use of academic resources.

Under the leadership of the **Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor** and the **Vice Chancellor for Planning and Budget**, the campus will, in consultation with the academic deans and the Academic Senate:

- Develop a 5-year state major capital improvement program that aligns with the academic program;
- Propose a 10-year capital and financing strategy that will allow the Regents to delegate to the Chancellor approval for non-State capital projects under \$60 million; and
- Develop long-term resource models for academic support divisions that are aligned with the academic plan so they can carry out more effective intermediate-range planning as with academic divisions.

Under the leadership of the **Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor**, the campus will, in consultation with the Academic Senate:

- Examine current policies and practices, at all levels of the academic personnel review, which affect faculty salaries and recommend modifications that ensure UCSC salaries are equitable relative to other UC campuses (*Senate and Administrative Task Force on Faculty Salaries at UCSC*); and
- Explore options to address the challenges of faculty salary and start-up costs.

Under the leadership of the **Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor** and the **Vice Provost for Academic Affairs**, the campus will:

- Determine which of the proposed professional schools and/or graduate programs to pursue.

**Further improve national and international recognition**

The accolades accorded our faculty are impressive (see <http://www.ucsc.edu/about/distinctions.asp>). Our objective is to ensure that the strengths of our faculty, and the contributions of their research, are appropriately recognized and that our constituents regularly associate UCSC with high quality research and teaching.

**Actions**

Under the leadership of the **Chancellor** and the **Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor**, the campus will:

- Analyze the campus’s position relative to other AAU institutions on criteria and indicators considered for membership; and
- Identify a clear strategy for gaining membership in the AAU.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Research**, the campus will:

- Work to nominate faculty for national awards; and
- Work to nominate faculty for participation on national and international organizations and committees.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for University Relations**, the campus will:

- Develop a comprehensive plan to communicate campus achievements to prospective students, faculty, and donors; potential corporate partners, key national organizations and committees, and other stakeholders;
- Showcase achievements of students, staff, and faculty; and
- Develop strategy to ensure that web-based communications, including search engine optimization, include our distinctive strengths in research and teaching.

## RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND GRADUATE EDUCATION

Recognizing the strong relationship between research, scholarship, and graduate education, the *Academic Plan* articulates twin goals to (i) serve California as a top ranked research university, generating scholarly knowledge that contributes to solutions to the world's most critical challenges and (ii) enroll substantially more graduate students and prepare them to address the needs of California, the nation and the world; enhance the quality of the undergraduate experience by providing opportunities to work together with graduate students; and allow all interested faculty greater participation in graduate education as well as to support the research interests of the campus.

Success in achieving these goals is enhanced by (i) a well-functioning research support infrastructure—including appropriate incentives for participation; (ii) new opportunities for faculty to expand the campus educational and research presence; and (iii) mature academic support services for graduate students—spanning recruitment and retention through job placement.

### Research support infrastructure

Two areas in which near-term initiatives can advance the campus's research agenda are efforts to (i) improve faculty competitiveness for large, multi-PI, or multi-disciplinary research awards, and (ii) improve research technical support, including support for the maintenance of specialized facilities. The campus strategies to contribute to these goals include:

- Increase the competitive advantage of UCSC faculty in obtaining extramural funding in biomedical areas and environmental science and policy—areas of faculty interest as well as funding availability;
- Increase incentives for faculty to increase their level of research activity and to secure research support for graduate students;
- Optimize the campus's research administrative organization—particularly the services provided in support of research activity; and
- Strengthen and, where possible, simplify compliance procedures.

### Actions

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Research**, the campus will:

- Implement measures that stimulate multi-PI/innovative research initiative;
- Identify/deploy incentives for increased research activity;
- Simplify administrative procedures—including mandatory compliance structures;
- Develop a plan to unify and integrate technical support;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of and develop a plan to support patenting and licensing of intellectual property; and
- Streamline processes for industry agreements.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Information Technology**, the campus will:

- Develop prioritized plan for investments in core IT infrastructure that appropriately support faculty research; and
- Identify the most cost effective and efficient strategy to expand data center capacity.

### Provide new research opportunities

Investments such as those in the campus's Coastal Sciences Campus have increased significantly the opportunities available to our research faculty as well as the campus's stature in the important fields of ocean sciences and the environment—while also serving the unique needs of communities and organizations throughout the Monterey Bay crescent.

One of UC Santa Cruz's key service areas, Silicon Valley, provides similar opportunities—for research, service, and partnerships in philanthropy. The campus's \$330 million University Aligned Research Center (UARC) contract has formed the basis for a strategic partnership between UCSC and NASA Ames as a foundation for UCSC's presence in the Silicon Valley to serve graduate students and research faculty—as well as serving to enhance partnerships with regional educational institutions.

Building upon existing campus investments and partnerships in the region, the campus will focus its near-term strategy on initiating the key building blocks for collaborative research endeavors at the Silicon Valley Center. Given the diverse nature of issues facing business, government, academia, labor and the broader community in this UC Santa Cruz service area, the Silicon Valley Center has the potential to provide an important venue for rigorous scholarly activity that spans the sciences, humanities, and arts—and perhaps even emerging disciplines.

Specifically UCSC will:

- Lead the educational consortium developing the NASA Research Park (NRP) University Development Area;
- Stimulate faculty use of the Advanced Studies Laboratory (ASL);
- Integrate BIN-RDI activities and UCSC faculty research;
- Encourage NASA collaborations with faculty and students, as with other UC campuses and educational institutions;
- Build strong relationships with academic programs on campus; and
- Build strong relationships with public officials and private industry.

**Actions**

Under the leadership of the **Vice Provost for Silicon Valley Initiatives** and the **Vice Provost for Academic Affairs**, the campus will:

- Develop details of education and research programs to be located in Silicon Valley, including the feasibility of a graduate school of management;
- Execute a lease agreement for the NASA Research Park (NRP) “University Development Area” (UDA) reserved for university partners; and
- Identify master developer for the NRP UDA site.

**Graduate student services**

Now that graduate student enrollment is growing—with a goal of having graduate students comprise 15% of total campus enrollment—the campus must continue to expand the academic opportunities for graduate students, enhance graduate student services, and implement measures to ensure the quality of the overall graduate student experience. The campus strategies to achieve these goals include:

- Identify new programmatic opportunities consistent with the *Strategic Academic Plan*;
- Increase the visibility of Santa Cruz graduate programs in order to attract the highest quality, most diverse pool of graduate students possible;
- Provide additional opportunities for graduate students to mentor, engage in joint research with, and teach undergraduates and participate in their educational experience; and
- Identify areas where expanded/improved graduate student services are needed.

**Actions**

Under the leadership of the **Vice Provost/Dean of Graduate Education**, the campus will:

- Work closely with other UCs, private institutions and CSUs to cultivate a diverse pool of qualified potential graduate students, and facilitate their applications to graduate programs at UCSC;
- Engage faculty more actively in recruitment of new graduate students;
- Assist graduate students to obtain grants for their own support;
- Work with the EVC, Graduate Council and graduate programs to develop optimum multiple-year financial support packages;
- Assess current inventory of student mentoring, and improve where needed; and
- Expand protocols and structures for interdisciplinary graduate programs.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Research**, in collaboration with the **Vice Provost/Dean of Graduate Education**, the campus will:

- Facilitate faculty pursuit of extramural grants to support graduate students; and
- Facilitate faculty pursuit of training grants.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for University Relations**, the campus will:

- Raise private funding for graduate students.

## UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

UC Santa Cruz seeks to be recognized as the campus of choice for students across the State and to be a leader in providing a quality undergraduate education. Undergraduates will be exposed to world-class research and have the opportunity to join (with graduate students and faculty) in creating the knowledge that marks a great research university. The campus's residential college system will continue to provide a nurturing setting to introduce and support students as they address the challenges of university life. Co-curricular activities, internships, and public service opportunities will provide students with additional learning venues to further explore their interests.

To achieve this vision, the campus has, over the past several years, pursued a number of efforts to enhance its commitment to educational effectiveness and show high levels of undergraduate academic engagement; to improve undergraduate retention and graduate rates; and to establish a framework for planning, managing, and monitoring the capacity of the undergraduate curriculum. The focus of the following actions is to bring to fruition in-progress initiatives related to academic aspects of the undergraduate experience.

### **Educational effectiveness/academic engagement**

This effort will help increase the quality and diversity of the undergraduate class, will provide additional opportunities for undergraduates to engage with faculty early in their careers—including through challenge/honors sections of lower division courses, and help establish clearly-articulated educational objectives and learning goals for each component of the undergraduate curriculum.

**Actions**

Under the leadership of the **Vice Provost/Dean for Undergraduate Education**, the campus will:

- Assess the effectiveness of CEP's clarification and revision of the objectives of the general education program, and modify college course offerings as appropriate;
- In consultation with the Academic Senate, formalize an honors program;
- In consultation with the Deans, increase the availability of lower division seminars;
- Work with Deans to increase ladder faculty participation in undergraduate courses, lower division seminars and honors sections;
- Work with the Deans, the Vice Chancellor for Research and faculty to increase undergraduate participation in research;
- Working with CEP and the Council of College Provosts, assess the effectiveness of courses in the first year experience and explore the development of new options for first-year experience/college core courses; and
- Implement a system of on-line course evaluation.

**Retention and graduation rates**

It is anticipated that retention and graduation rates will improve as the campus builds a sustainable academic advising and support network, strengthens campuswide programs for learning support and peer tutoring, and enhances the undergraduate learning experience. Initiatives to improve retention and graduation rates will build upon the campus's distinguishing features—such as the opportunity for undergraduates will be exposed to world-class research in a setting that combines the best aspects of college and the research university.

**Actions**

Under the leadership of the **Vice Provost/Dean for Undergraduate Education**, the campus will:

- Develop a plan, including time line, to improve undergraduate advising;
- Provide a roadmap to increase participation of graduate students in mentoring, joint research and teaching of undergraduates; and
- Provide data to departments on time-to-degree and retention of students in their majors.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs**, in consultation with the Vice Provost/Dean for Undergraduate Education, the campus will:

- Develop an approach to co-curricular activities to enhance student success; and
- Modify processes, as appropriate, to facilitate and improve communication between students and the campus administration.

### Curriculum capacity

Through this effort, students will be able to enroll in the classes that allow them to continue to make timely progress toward graduation; department chairs will have the tools to effectively evaluate and plan curricula; student growth will be accommodated without sacrificing quality; and programs will be able to balance student needs with available resources without negative impacts on retention and graduation.

### Actions

Under the leadership of the **Vice Provost/Dean for Undergraduate Education**, the campus will:

- In consultation with Deans and Department Chairs, determine the data necessary to inform curricular planning at the departmental level;
- Working with Institutional Research, provide data (and analysis) to Department Chairs and Deans;
- Provide divisions with clear expectations about projected enrollments; and
- Provide divisions with clear expectations for general education, inter-departmental, and service courses.

## FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

The *Strategic Academic Plan* provides the framework for developing and growing the academic enterprise—as well as informing near-term investments in support of campus goals with respect to research, graduate education, and the undergraduate experience. The campus will also make near-term investments in three foundational elements—human, financial, and physical—to sustain forward movement toward academic goals.

### Actions

Under the leadership of the **Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor**, the campus will:

- Increase affordability of employee housing through the expansion of on/off campus employee housing and options such as MOP loans, supplemental loans, and other mechanisms; and
- Work with OP/Regents to address faculty and staff compensation.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs**, the campus will:

- Stabilize the license agreement for existing campus child care services;
- Present alternatives and a clear assessment of issues and options related to the provision of child care services; and
- Finalize a master plan for employee housing.

### Diversify campus resources

The campus has made significant progress to increase extramural support and private giving—none-the-less, its \$522 million annual budget is heavily dependent upon State funding and student fees. Most of the campus's portfolio of private funding is targeted to specific initiatives and discretionary funds—those that often provide that added investment that enables excellence—are made up predominately of small allocation of University Opportunity Funds (from contracts and grants overhead), most of which is committed to on-going expenses. This situation places the campus at a competitive disadvantage.

UC Santa Cruz's resource portfolio should reflect the reality of the State's fiscal situation and move to being less reliant on State funds and student fees.

To achieve this resource diversity, campus strategies will involve:

- Understanding the nature of our resource portfolio relative to that of our peers and comparators;
- Establishing external partnerships with industry, education, and government to increase private giving, increase scholarship funding, and increase the numbers of endowed chairs); and
- Moving forward with the campus's comprehensive campaign.

**Actions**

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for University Relations**, the campus will:

- Initiate comprehensive campaign;
- Work with the Chancellor to set priorities for comprehensive campaign;
- Build the staffing and administrative infrastructure to support the campus's fund-raising goals; and
- Provide appropriate training for fund-raising staff.

Under the leadership of the **Vice Chancellor for Research**, and in consultation with the Chancellor, the EVC, and the Vice Chancellor for University Relations the campus will:

- Work with faculty to identify opportunities to successfully compete for private gifts.