

## **INTRODUCTION: CONTEXT AND CONTENTS**

The University of California, Merced, is the tenth campus of the University of California and the first new UC campus to be opened since 1965. As part of the University of California, UC Merced shares the University's 137-year tradition of distinguished teaching, research and service. The new campus benefits from being governed by a host of Universitywide policies, procedures and practices that fully meet many expectations in the WASC Standards for Accreditation. At the same time, UC Merced faces the daunting challenge of translating the rich UC inheritance in order to build its own character and capacity as a unique place for higher education. The development of a new campus has stimulated the UC community as a whole to assess the University's history and tradition, to probe what has succeeded and what could be improved. This is both an advantage and a test for a new campus: how can lessons learned about effective institution-building at other UC campuses—and around the country—invigorate planning for educational effectiveness at a university that is being built from the ground up?

### **Context for UC Merced Planning**

Planning for UC Merced began in 1988, when the UC Board of Regents authorized President David Gardner to plan up to three new campuses to help accommodate predicted growth in student demand for enrollment. Undergraduate enrollment is governed by the California Master Plan for Higher Education [<http://www.ucop.edu/acadinit/mastplan/mp.htm>], which specifies that the University of California will select its undergraduates from the top 12.5% of the California high school graduates. By policy, UC has assured that all eligible students who apply will be offered a place somewhere in UC, though not necessarily at the applicant's campus of choice. Thus, University enrollment planning has a strong demographic driver. The Master Plan also designates UC as the State's primary public institution for research and doctoral education, with certain professions reserved exclusively to the University. Admission to UC graduate and professional programs is highly selective, and planning for such programs proceeds in tandem with undergraduate enrollment planning. Because the research and graduate education missions in UC are inseparably intertwined, UC has set a long-range target of 20% graduate students for its campuses.

While the Master Plan established a 12.5% statewide proportion for admission of California high school graduates, actual participation in UC varies by region. Each campus draws students from throughout California but also exerts a strong draw from its broad geographical region. In determining where to locate the tenth UC campus, the Regents considered that the San Joaquin Valley, one of the fastest growing regions of the State, has had an undergraduate participation rate that is about half the statewide average. In 1990, the Regents approved a site search in the San Joaquin Valley, with an academic goal of building a campus that would help improve Valley participation in UC. This goal is expected to be achieved in two ways. UC Merced itself will add the convenience of a regional location, bringing a UC education closer to home for prospective Valley students. At the same time, since a student who attains eligibility for admission to UC Merced is also eligible for admission to any UC campus, other UC campuses should

ultimately see an increase in Valley student enrollments. Student eligibility, that is, the measure of how many California high school graduates have satisfied UC entrance requirements, is another key concern with regard to the San Joaquin Valley. As with participation, Valley student eligibility for admission to UC is about half that of the State as a whole. Since 1986, UC has sponsored a number of recruitment, admission and outreach programs to support better preparation and increased eligibility among Valley students.

Based on a multi-year, multi-step analysis of over 80 potential University sites in the San Joaquin Valley, the Regents acted in 1995 to select a site located about six miles to the northeast of the City of Merced, donated by the Virginia Smith Educational Trust, which was established to give college scholarships to Merced high school graduates. At the time of final site selection, UC was beginning to recover from California's severe budgetary shortfalls of the early 1990's. Vigorous campus planning commenced in earnest in 1999, with appointment of Carol Tomlinson-Keasey as the Founding Chancellor.

Building a new public university campus in California means negotiating two intersecting and complex bureaucratic webs. The first consists of statewide requirements for new campus approval, including endorsement by the California Postsecondary Education Commission; in addition, the State capital and operating budget approval processes require negotiation. The second consists of the University's own highly detailed policies and processes, which implicitly assume a pre-existing infrastructure to carry them out. While one promise of a new institution is to see how those policies and procedures might be streamlined and applied more effectively, there are limitations in how much streamlining is possible. Even with the extra planning year afforded by Legislative postponement of UC Merced's opening from 2004 to 2005, the campus is under on-going construction, both literally, as the first three academic buildings are being finished during UC Merced's opening months and preparation is in progress for adding new buildings; and metaphorically, as basic campus policies, procedures and programs continue to be planned and put into place. Even as some parts of the new buildings continue to be "off limits" while finishing work is done, some policies and procedures presented in this application will be marked "draft" or "interim," slated for additional construction during the first years of campus life.

Academic planning, at the heart of a new university, has been particularly affected by the conundrum at the intersection of State and University policies. The UC Regents have entrusted UC faculty with primary responsibility for the interconnected issues of curriculum development and advising on faculty recruitment and budget planning. The faculty have organized a Universitywide Academic Senate, with Divisions on each campus, to carry out their responsibilities. However, the lead time needed for new campus approval by the State and, particularly, for initiation of the capital budget, creates a planning dilemma. The California Postsecondary Education Commission expects an academic plan as a key part of a proposal for a new campus. New building proposals represent the physical means to carry out the academic plan. Yet to receive State funding to hire the faculty who will be responsible for the academic plan, the new campus and

building proposals must be approved at least 4-5 years before the campus will open. Because the majority of the faculty cannot be hired until the campus opening date is near, most will arrive with the academic plan for which they are responsible already well-advanced. Substantial reorientation of the plan by in-coming faculty will necessarily be the result.

The early academic planning for UC Merced has relied on a series of ad hoc UC faculty committees, and on a formally established Senate Task Force on UC Merced, intended to act as a surrogate faculty in advising the new campus administration and taking action on those issues requiring faculty advice and involvement, including initial curriculum development, faculty hiring, campus budgets and academic building plans. The generosity of hundreds of UC faculty with their time, wisdom and ideas has been enormous, starting with the first faculty consultative group on academic planning appointed in the early 1990's. Nevertheless, all these faculty groups have had a degree of diffidence about their various charges, given their knowledge that not they, but the UC Merced faculty itself, would shape and put into effect the actual academic plan for the campus. As the second consultative faculty group in the mid-1990's observed in their final report, "Hiring a stellar faculty is the best academic plan."

The analysis of UC's own new campus history from the 1960's led to a series of conclusions, reaffirmed by multiple faculty advisory groups on academic planning. The Senate Task Force on UC Merced chose UC San Diego as a model for both strategic academic development and delivery of general education. UCSD was gifted with the opportunity to build a full-service university around a long-lived and distinguished research and graduate education entity, the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. As early as the deliberations of the first faculty consultative group for the tenth UC campus, there was a proposal for a "Scripps of the Land," a research and graduate education entity that would be attentive to the San Joaquin Valley's continuing need for problem-based research on soil, water and air. Also adopted was UC San Diego's strategy to build the curriculum in depth, a few fields at a time, until the full array of core science, social science, humanities and arts fields were in place. Finally, the UC San Diego solution to "make the big university small" through a residential college system responsible for general education was strongly advocated by the Senate Task Force on UC Merced.

The college agreement, however, was leavened by recognition that as successful as the residential college system has been at UC San Diego in supporting lower division student success and careful faculty attention to general education, it has not been as successful in incorporating transfer students into the culture of the university. UC Merced's planning for a college system has diverged in certain ways from the UC San Diego model, including its strong emphasis on finding ways to support transfer students in participating fully in the unique academic experience at UC Merced.

Additional trends in UC gave shape to the early outline of a tenth campus academic plan. For example, the engineering and computer science fields have taken their place as part of the core academic program array in UC. These fields also make vital contributions to regional economic development, an important role that the tenth UC campus has been

expected to play over the long run in the San Joaquin Valley. At UC Merced, a special goal was set to link engineering more closely with the traditional letters and sciences fields in the delivery of all facets of undergraduate education.

In order to select the first academic fields to be built in depth, campus planners asked the other campuses which majors were in high demand, leading to the necessity to restrict access. As a campus of UC, UC Merced had the potential to play an important statewide role in increasing access to high demand majors. From this inquiry, three impacted fields emerged as special candidates for early development: biological sciences, computer science and psychology; in addition, management/economics was observed to be a high-interest undergraduate field across UC.

Graduate education planning was also influenced by systemwide trends, particularly the growth in interdisciplinary research, a recognition that the world's compelling and interesting questions increasingly require the combined expertise of multiple disciplines. While the initial undergraduate program featured familiar fields—of special importance in recruiting first-generation college-goers from the San Joaquin Valley and elsewhere in California—graduate programs were slated to have a strong interdisciplinary emphasis, in keeping with the interdisciplinary character of leading-edge research. UC Davis's extensive experience with offering graduate education through interdisciplinary graduate groups supplied the model that UC Merced planners have used.

Without being able to replicate Scripps's long history, UC Merced planners nevertheless benefited from the creative thinking of a multi-campus faculty group who created a prospectus for a signature research enterprise, the Sierra Nevada Research Institute (SNRI). The purpose was to perform research on the constituent natural resources—earth, water and air--of the vast and varied region that comprehends the San Joaquin Valley and adjacent Coast Ranges and Sierra Nevada. Further, the SNRI would focus on issues of growth and sustainability, including policy and other social science issues. In the view of the proposing faculty, the SNRI would fill a UC gap. These faculty laid further groundwork that has allowed the SNRI to engage in a highly productive research and education relationship with the nearby Yosemite and Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks. Among the first programs under SNRI auspices were summer environmental academies in Yosemite and Sequoia, planned to encourage talented high school students in Merced and Parlier to prepare themselves for UC and for majors in the sciences.

A second signature research institute, proposed by faculty in the social sciences and humanities, was intended to take advantage of UC Merced's San Joaquin Valley location with its wealth of diverse cultures and traditions; thus, a special emphasis on cultural preservation and cultural intersections was proposed. The concept has evolved into the World Cultures Institute. The UC Merced Library's projects to create digital access to unique cultural resources, including the digitizing of the Ruth and Sherman Lee Collection of Japanese Art in the Valley town of Hanford, as well as planned projects with the National Parks, will enhance future research and education at the World Cultures Institute.

## **First Semester Profile of UC Merced**

UC Merced opened its doors on September 6, 2005. The first class includes 706 headcount freshmen, 132 transfers and 37 graduate students. (Because a small graduate class had been admitted and enrolled in 2004-05, 13 graduate students are entering their second year at UC Merced.) The student population is almost evenly divided between men and women. Among undergraduates, almost half are the first in their families to attend college; and 33% come from the eight-county San Joaquin Valley region. Ethnic origins include 6.3% African American, 25% Hispanic, 25% Asian, 8% Filipino, and almost 1% American Indian/Alaskan native. By virtue of meeting federal criteria for ethnic background and income, UC Merced has become the first UC campus recognized by the federal government as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Only two other U.S. research universities—University of Miami and University of New Mexico—have received this distinction.

UC Merced offers nine baccalaureate programs through three Schools—Engineering, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts; this number is increasing to 14 in 2006-07. General Education is under the authority of College One and all faculty and students are affiliated. The Graduate Division offers an Individual Graduate Program, leading to the master's and doctorate. Five faculty Graduate Groups, drawn from the three Schools, offer emphases within the umbrella program. The first UC Merced bachelor's degree is expected to be conferred in May, 2006; two master's candidates will tentatively finish their programs by Fall, 2006. The first full transfer class will graduate in May, 2007.

The campus opens with 57 Senate faculty, approximately evenly divided between tenured and non-tenured. Roughly two-thirds are men, one-third women. Among those reporting ethnic background, one is American Indian, 6 Asian and 9 Hispanic. Faculty numbers are augmented by 4 adjunct professors; and 24 lecturers, 15 full-time and nine part-time.

During the first semester all instruction is taking place in the Kolligian Library, commons room in student housing and UC Merced's Castle building in Atwater. By the Spring, 2006 semester, all instruction will be on campus, as the Classroom building and Engineering/Science building open their doors.

As the UC Merced faculty have taken up the reins of campus planning, the scope of inquiry on planning models, both inside and outside UC, has broadened from the models foregrounded by the predecessor planning groups. For example, elements of all three UC campuses opened in the 1960's have been adapted, particularly given the similarity in student profile with UC Santa Cruz and UC Irvine—that is, a large new undergraduate population, much smaller graduate population. The concept of a college system to take responsibility for general education has been influenced by UC Santa Cruz, as well as UC San Diego, particularly in the planning of the signature Core Course sequence. In addition to the three campuses opened in the 1960's, UC Merced has had the benefit of the six other UC campuses for academic models, particularly in developing policies and procedures. Importantly, these models are selectively used tools to expedite

establishment of the academic policy infrastructure. UC Merced faculty have risen to the UC challenge that each campus push the boundaries of knowledge and learning through innovation in curriculum and research. They are making the campus academic plan their own, revising earlier work and pioneering programming that has no precedent on any other campus. This creative process is on-going as new faculty arrive and new re-visioning of the academic life of UC Merced takes place.

## **UC Merced’s Case for Candidacy: Overview of Preparatory Review Report Contents**

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior Commission particularly asks, how has an institution built a culture of evidence in support of educational effectiveness and continuous improvement? As the UC Merced Institutional Portfolio will show, a culture of evidence is the essence of the University of California as a research university. The nature of the intertwined research and graduate education enterprise is to produce and evaluate evidence as it leads to the creation of new knowledge. Undergraduate degree programs introduce students to the ways in which the broad disciplinary realms define a problem, then collect and test evidence to grapple with the problem. In the student’s chosen major, he or she learns those disciplinary tools in depth both through studying and applying them. Reliance on extensive evidence permeates the primary academic decision-making processes. For example, the faculty personnel process—hiring, promotion and merit increases—is based on extensive evidence of accomplishments in all three areas of faculty responsibility: teaching, research and service. New program reviews require detailed indicators of strength and likely success (including, in the case of graduate programs, confidential reviews by field experts outside UC). Once established, programs undergo periodic review based on multiple measures and external review team assessment, leading to improvement plans and follow-up reviews. UC Merced’s Institutional Portfolio includes documentation of systemwide rules and procedures for gathering evidence and evaluating results to assure on-going improvement; and UC Merced’s own practices and policies to assure the highest level of educational effectiveness and continuous improvement.

This application will focus on UC Merced’s capacity for meeting all parts of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Standards for Accreditation. For each Standard and criterion, with associated guidelines, this application will present at least one supporting document as part of the Institutional Portfolio. In most cases, multiple documents will be brought to bear in showing UC Merced’s progress in meeting the expectations embodied in each Standard. A data profile of the campus will be followed by a series of reflective essays, discussing the documentary evidence being presented to demonstrate compliance with the letter and spirit of the Standards. The Data Displays, Institutional Portfolio and Additional Stipulated Policies sections are a repository that will live, change and grow as the campus matures. The UC Merced Accreditation website containing these documents is conceived as a permanent reference bank for people inside and outside UC Merced who want to understand the campus in all its aspects. Section 5 of the application offers responses to issues raised by the Commission’s Eligibility review, pointing to the documentary evidence within the application that demonstrates UC Merced’s solutions.

Appendix I is an annotated list of Stipulated Policies, connected to the document or documents that fulfill the requirement.

As a new university being built from the ground up, UC Merced represents a host of hopes and aspirations for what the outstanding student-centered research university of the 21<sup>st</sup> century can be. The campus community looks forward to the part that the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Candidacy and Initial Accreditation reviews will play in assuring that UC Merced is meeting the highest expectations for educational effectiveness in all its endeavors.

## STANDARD 1—INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

### a. Institutional Purposes

The educational objectives that express UC Merced's purposes and character are laid out through a series of formal documents and disseminated throughout the UC Merced student, faculty and staff community, as well as externally. Collectively, they give shape to UC Merced as a public, student-centered research university of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*1.1 Clear Purposes and Operational Practices:* The University of California mission statement, which appears in the 2004-06 UC Merced Inaugural Catalog and current 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog, places UC Merced in the context of the University of California's historic mission of instruction, research and service. The UC Merced Mission Statement, on the UC Merced Accreditation website, affirms the UC mission and establishes UC Merced's special character in carrying out that mission. The UC Merced mission statement reflects the broad academic planning expectations, described in the Introduction to this report, by underlining campus commitment to linking the research and teaching missions through interdisciplinary instruction and research. This close association of research and teaching informs all levels of the academic program, from research-infused undergraduate education through graduate education that prepares independent professionals. Related to the interdisciplinary theme is an emphasis on network, acknowledging the new ways of linking the university community to sources of knowledge and to external institutions and the community. This concept of network is a hallmark of a 21<sup>st</sup> century university. The mission statement also acknowledges the importance of place, of connecting the local with the global. As will be seen in this report, this aspect of the mission has many manifestations, from the Core Course sequence—The World at Home—required of all freshmen and juniors, through the UC Merced signature research organizations, the Sierra Nevada Research Institute and the World Cultures Institute. The curriculum that grows out of this mission will be described in detail in Standard 2—Teaching and Learning; peer review processes will be highlighted in Standard 4—Commitment to Learning and Improvement.

*1.2 Educational Objectives:* The Guiding Principles for General Education document was the product of an all-faculty retreat on general education in July 2003 and therefore represents one of the first faculty actions to translate UC Merced's mission into educational outcomes for undergraduates. Though the document title singles out just one segment of the baccalaureate curriculum, the 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog asserts that these outcomes will be realized throughout the entire four years, in preparatory and advanced courses, major programs, and planned activities outside the classroom, as well as through formally designated general education courses. As well as being published in the General Catalog, a copy of the Principles is contained in every new student packet; and all faculty and other instructional staff receive them as part of the College One Handbook (see Standard 2—Teaching and Learning). They also guide planning for the required Core Course sequence and School general education requirements. The use of the Principles as a guide for gathering evidence of educational effectiveness resides under

the aegis of the College One Executive Committee (see Standard 2—Teaching and Learning).

The Statements of Learning Outcomes for Academic Programs represent another important component in establishing the culture of evidence as it will apply to assuring educational effectiveness and continuous improvement of the curriculum. The outcomes statements for the School of Engineering majors--Bioengineering, Computer Science and Engineering, and Environmental Engineering--are influenced by the long-standing Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) emphasis on cumulative, measurable outcomes. UC Merced will be seeking ABET accreditation. All outcomes statements include the program mission, overview, outcomes and multiple measures of results. The Bioengineering statement is the most detailed of the group, adding an implementation section to the elements listed above and tying each outcome detail to applicable ABET standards.

The School of Natural Sciences outcomes statements for the major programs—Biological Sciences, Chemical Sciences, Earth Systems Science, Human Biology, Mathematical Sciences and Physics—follow a template that includes learning outcomes, assessment and program improvement steps. Multiple measures for assessment include the requirement in each Natural Sciences major, unique to the School of Natural Sciences, that students complete a cumulative undergraduate research course.

The School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts outcomes statements for Social and Behavioral Sciences major and World Cultures and History major offer a mission, list of educational objectives and program outcomes, and initial ideas on assessment tools. World Cultures and History has mapped learning outcomes to the Guiding Principles for General Education, with some modifications. Social and Cognitive Sciences has mapped program outcomes to related objectives and specific assessment tools. Management has yet to be fully developed, with the program faculty yet to be built up. At present, only freshmen are permitted to elect this major; only a preparatory curriculum is offered at this point. The statement of learning outcomes will be developed when the full faculty is in place.

The learning outcomes statements will form part of the working documents for student advisors in the Schools, as well as advisors in the Advising and Learning Center. Each School is publishing the statements on their websites and they will also appear on the UC Merced Accreditation website, which is planned as a publicly accessible, living repository of campus policies, procedures and other documents.

*1.3 Institutional Leadership:* UC Merced opens with a highly experienced Senior Management Group (see Organization Charts and Brief Biographies and CV's). Founding Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey has been the source of leadership and vision for UC Merced since her appointment in 1999. Even before, as Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives in the UC Office of the President, she directed tenth campus planning from 1997-1999. As a UC Berkeley doctoral graduate, UC faculty member, and veteran of many academic administrative posts at UC Riverside, UC Davis and the Office

of the President, Chancellor Tomlinson-Keasey brings a deep understanding of the University and its most effective strategies for success.

Leadership of the academic enterprise depends on shared governance, with the faculty exercising its Regent-delegated responsibilities through a systemwide Academic Senate. The Academic Senate Bylaws govern Senate membership, structure and duties, while the Senate Regulations regulate student status, admission, the curriculum, scholarship requirements and withdrawal. A Division of the Academic Senate is established at each campus to carry out Senate responsibilities.

Standard 3—Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Process will provide additional documentation on performance, responsibility and accountability in the UC Merced leadership structure.

b. Integrity

UC Merced fully subscribes to the principles that assure integrity in a contemporary university. Evidence includes formal documentation of UC Merced's commitment to protecting academic freedom and providing due process, fostering diversity, maintaining independence from inappropriate interference in its academic mission and observing the requirements of regional accreditation as set forth by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

*1.4 Commitment to Academic Freedom:* Academic freedom is a bedrock principle of the University of California, expressed first and foremost in the systemwide Academic Personnel Manual—APM 010. Due process protection for faculty and other academic staff is published in APM 016, while Academic Senate Bylaws 334-337 spell out due process provisions further for Senate members. The UC Merced Privilege and Tenure Committee is the Senate Divisional Committee that carries out Senate responsibilities for due process. Due process and grievance procedures for students are compiled in Part VII of the Student Handbook. Staff protection appears in Complaint Resolution Process for Staff Personnel, which covers timelines, appeals, hearing and fact-finding and protection from reprisals. Protection against discrimination is also set forth in Resolution of Concerns—Managers and Senior Professionals and Senior Managers Group—Resolution of Concerns.

*1.5 Commitment to Diversity:* To assure that it serves the cultural kaleidoscope that is California—and the world--UC Merced is committed to building and fostering diversity among its students, faculty and staff. In many published forms, UC Merced's commitment to Diversity in Hiring appears in every job opening notice, on-line and in print. The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog carries a copy of the UC Diversity Policy. Even more important to the campus is its Principles of Community, also in the Catalog and on the campus website, spelling out UC Merced's own promise to welcome and celebrate the multiplicity of cultures, lifestyles and beliefs of its students, faculty and staff. Many other publications included as exhibits in this application, such as the College One Handbook, Academic Personnel Manual, and Personnel Policies for Staff Members,

include additional expressions of campus and University commitment to affirmative action and diversity.

*1.6 Appropriate Autonomy:* The University of California cherishes its autonomy under the Constitution of the State of California. Regents Bylaw 5.1(f) assures protection from political interference for faculty and staff.

*1.7 Published Information and Policies:* Clear and accurate information is essential to the success of UC Merced. The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog is primary in communicating UC Merced's academic goals, programs and services to students and to the public. As the exhibits for Standard 2—Achieving Educational Objectives will demonstrate, the Catalog is the first-stop source of readily accessible information for prospective and current students, for example, regarding the Refund Policy.

The Interim Student Handbook is a second key on-line publication informing students of campus expectations regarding conduct and academic honesty; grievance and disciplinary procedures; campus organizations, activities, and use of facilities; student government and elections; and related policies. The Handbook is Interim at present, needing advice and input from both faculty and the newly arrived students. The Regents expect campuses to seek student advice on matters such as student fees; and student participation is expected in many aspects of academic life, such as representative membership on certain Senate committees. Planning for these many forms of student participation is well under way with UC Merced's inaugural class. The Student Transcript will provide an accurate and complete academic record of achievement at UC Merced.

Integrity in research is assured through appropriate published policies and review. Additional published standards regarding research include the Human Subjects Policy. As an interim, until UC Merced's procedures are in place, human subjects review for UC Merced researchers is under the aegis of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

*1.8 Sound Business Policies and Practices:* The University of California Office of the President provides readily accessible on-line guidance for campus business policies and procedures. The UC Accounting Manual is a searchable compendium of policies and practices covering accounting structure, records and reports, cost accounting, cash and banking operations, accounts receivable and payable, payroll, student financial aid and fund accounting. The Financial Bulletins, which update the Accounting Manual, can be easily accessed on-line. Internal and external auditing is covered on-line in the following documents: UC Policy on External Audit, Other Financial Audit Requirements, University Audit Program and University Auditor.

Grievance procedures for students, faculty and staff are published and accessible, as described above in the Standard 1.4-2, 1.4-4 and 1.4-5 exhibits.

*1.9 Open Communication with Accrediting Commission:* UC Merced's Commitment to Accreditation presents the assurance of UC Merced's senior leaders to engage in open

and candid communication with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and to abide by the Accrediting Commission's policies and procedures, including those pertaining to off-campus and on-line instruction.

## STANDARD 2—ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES THROUGH CORE FUNCTIONS

### a. Teaching and Learning

The heart of UC Merced—its primary mission and springboard for distinction and service—is its curriculum and support for student learning, intertwined with the quest for new knowledge embodied in the research enterprise. A research university, unlike a research and development entity, performs research in the interests of education and professional training; one does not exist without the other. UC Merced opens with an interlocking structure to support student success at all levels, freshman through doctoral.

*2.1 Appropriate Educational Programs:* The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog and official campus website [www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu) offer students and the public complete and accurate information about the undergraduate curriculum, including Programs, Requirements, Sample Student Programs; and Graduate Programs, including the slate of faculty supervising each graduate emphasis. In keeping with the planning decision to build programs in depth, a few at a time, the Schools offer the following undergraduate programs and emphases:

#### **Bioengineering, B.S.**

*Emphasis:* Nanobioengineering

#### **Biological Sciences, B.S.**

*Emphases:* Bioinformatics and Computational Biology  
Cell Biology and Development  
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology  
Microbiology and Immunology  
Molecular Biology and Biochemistry

#### **Computer Science and Engineering, B.S.**

#### **Earth Systems Science, B.S.**

*Emphases:* Atmosphere and Climate Sciences  
Ecosystem Sciences  
Geochemistry and Biogeochemistry  
Hydrologic and Climate Sciences

#### **Environmental Engineering, B.S.**

*Emphases:* Air Pollution Hydrology  
Energy and Environmental Sustainability  
Environmental Quality

#### **Human Biology, B.A.**

*Emphases:* Economics  
Psychology and Cognitive Sciences

#### **Management, B.A.**

#### **Social and Cognitive Sciences, B.A., B.S.**

*Emphases:* Economics  
Psychology  
Public Policy

## **World Cultures and History, B.A.**

*Emphases:* History

Literature

Each has undergone faculty review and approval, as described in Standard 4.4—Quality Assurance Processes, and meets commonly accepted standards for baccalaureate degrees in higher education. In keeping with one UC Merced objective, to be especially welcoming and supportive of first-generation college-goers, the majors themselves or constituent emphases are familiar traditional letters, arts, sciences and engineering disciplines. The selection of biological sciences, computer science and engineering, management and psychology among the first majors and emphases adds capacity to the University of California as a whole in fields in high demand on other UC campuses in recent years. As UC Merced grows, it will continue to add core humanities, arts, social sciences, sciences and engineering fields, building each additional program in depth to ensure excellence.

The strategy for developing master's and doctoral education has been to open with a single Individual Graduate Program, with a series of interdisciplinary emphases supervised by Graduate Groups of faculty from multiple disciplines.

## **Individual Graduate Program M.A., M.S., Ph.D.**

*Graduate Group Emphases include:*

Environmental Systems

Atomic and Molecular Science and Engineering

Quantitative Systems Biology

Social and Cognitive Sciences

World Cultures

As will be seen in the Standard 4.4 exhibit, graduate program approval is under the aegis of the systemwide Academic Senate Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA). This body has served in an advisory capacity to UC Merced, working with the Dean of Graduate Studies to formulate a growth strategy in graduate education. Each Graduate Group is adding faculty as the campus grows, working toward free-standing degree programs that will meet CCGA's demanding review criteria.

*2.2 Degree Requirements Clearly Defined:* The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog and [www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu) website are primary locations for informing students of Requirements for Baccalaureate Degree, General Education Requirements for the University and Campus, Degree Requirements for Each Major (including School general education requirements) and Graduate Programs, Requirements, Faculty. The Catalog includes clear language on admission requirements at the undergraduate and graduate level, as will be seen below in Standard 2.3—Clear Expectations for Learning and Attainment; and on preparatory courses required to undertake each major.

The Guiding Principles for General Education, contained in the Standard 1.2-2 exhibit, inform a curricular program which is designed to assure that students complete at least 45

semester credit hours of general education. At the heart of the program is the 8-credit Core Course sequence, *The World at Home—Planning for the Future in a Complex World*, required of all freshman and juniors. A unique set of goals, as described in the [Core Course Powerpoint](#), sets UC Merced's Core Course sequence apart in several ways from core courses at other UC campuses. In particular,

- all three Schools contribute to development and teaching, including Engineering;
- the courses emphasize the varying ways in which different disciplines define and tackle a problem, encouraging students to start seeing the links among the disciplines;
- as juniors, students build on what they have learned throughout their first two years of general education, whether as Community College transfer students or “native” UC Merced students, by participating in team-based, problem-oriented learning.

Because the Core Course sequence is expeditionary, on-going feedback from the writing instructor/discussion section leaders and a mid-term evaluation by students are feeding on-going refining and revision of the courses. Thus, the [Core Course Syllabi](#) continue to be works in progress.

The general education curriculum is rounded out with campuswide writing and quantitative reasoning requirements plus School requirements, which include both preparation and breadth. The [Fall 2005 General Education list](#), for use by advisors helping students select courses for registration, illustrates that the large majority of general education courses are being taught by ladder faculty. The [Course Schedule](#) for Fall 2005 lists all offerings and faculty. All lower division students complete a writing course; see a sample [WRI 10 syllabus](#) for content and learning outcomes. [Sample Syllabi from the Majors](#) show a variety of ways in which student competences required for graduation are developed. Learning outcomes for the majors can be found in the Standard 1.2-2 exhibit.

*2.3 Clear Expectations for Learning and Attainment:* UC Merced communicates its expectations for student preparation, learning and achievement in many forms. The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog is the primary document for informing current and prospective students, as well as the public at large, about requirements for [Undergraduate Admission](#) and [Graduate Admission](#). The Catalog also offers detailed information on the organization and content of UC Merced's undergraduate and graduate programs, as detailed above in Standard 2.1—Appropriate Educational Programs. Catalog information on student advisement appears below in Standard 2.5—Feedback to Students on Achievement/Improvement. Students can also learn about the many ways UC Merced will support their educational experience, through [Co-curricular Opportunities](#), the [Library and Information Technology](#). Catalog entries also appear on [www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu)

Beyond the Catalog, information appears in a range of publications. To provide an in-depth reference on how general education and related educational experiences are organized at UC Merced, all instructional staff, academic administrators and student advisors receive a copy of the College One Handbook. All faculty and students are members of College One, by virtue of its responsibility to oversee over a third of the undergraduate program—that is, general education. The Handbook lays out the roles and responsibilities of College One, including championing the Guiding Principles for General Education; and details its programs, such as the Core Course sequence, Freshman Seminar Program and Undergraduate Research Opportunities. College One is guided by an elected faculty Executive Committee, representing the three Schools, and a Dean, currently interim. The Freshman Seminar Program Fall Schedule illustrates the successful kick-off of a College One program intended to give small-group learning experiences to freshmen and a chance for faculty to introduce new students to an aspect of their research or to explore with students an academic topic within or outside their field. As is the case at other UC campuses, freshman seminars will provide a starting point for students to get to know faculty and their fields close up. The seminars often affect student choice of major and provide a faculty relationship to draw on for career advice and letters of recommendation. As with other College One programs, the Freshman Seminar Program is sponsored in collaboration with the three Schools. The Updated School General Education Requirements result from the College One Executive Committee exercising its Senate-delegated responsibility to assure that UC Merced's program fully meets the Guiding Principles for General Education and specifics of WASC Standard 2.2—Degree Requirements Clearly Defined.

More detailed information on learning resources can be found in the Standard 3.6-1 UC Merced Library Overview exhibit and Information Technology Report, and WRI 10 and other sample course syllabi in the Standard 2.2-9 and 2.2-10 exhibits. As will be evident in looking through the syllabi, student learning resources are expanded beyond textbooks, whether through hands-on laboratory exercises, web-based publications or course powerpoint slides and lecture notes posted on the course website. The Sakai section of the Information Technology Report describes the course website learning tool, which is used for all courses at UC Merced.

*2.4 Faculty Responsibility for Setting Attainment Expectations:* Faculty Grading Policy, found in the 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog, manifests just one aspect of the collective responsibility for assuring that students understand what is expected for educational attainment at UC Merced. Expectations are expressed throughout the Catalog, as described in Standard 2.2—Degree Requirements Clearly Defined, above.

*2.5 Feedback to Students on Achievement/Improvement:* UC Merced provides critical policies and services to support student success in meeting the high expectations of the faculty. The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog description of the Student Advising and Learning Center introduces this key service to prospective students and their parents. The Overview of the Center details its responsibilities for the following: advice to students who have yet to declare a major, new student orientation, support for students wishing to compete for prestigious scholarships, advice on preparation for professional

programs such as law and medicine, and improvement of learning through peer tutoring and skills workshops. An important example of Center service during the crucial freshman year is its follow-up to the Midterm Grading Policy. Freshman students receive a grade report from each class that alerts them to how they are performing. If they receive a D or F in any course, they must complete a small-group Student Success Workshop, designed for self-assessment and creation of a personal success plan. Completion of this workshop is a prerequisite to registering for the next semester.

Complementing the work of the Advising and Learning Center are the School Advising Services, with which the Center works closely. School advisors help students choose majors and courses, as well as assuring that they are meeting all graduation requirements and connecting with any other campus services that they need. Student Progress is also supported by the Registrar's Office, which monitors satisfactory progress toward a degree and uses data on midterm and final grades plus time-to-degree to inform faculty and Deans' discussions of how to improve student performance.

A proven means to foster student success in academic programs is inclusion of opportunities for hands-on applications of cumulative learning. Beyond individual course assignments to apply learning through such familiar means as original term papers and laboratory assignments, many UC Merced programs include requirements for more global applications of learning. The Standard 2.6-1, 2.6-2 and 2.6-3 exhibits, described in the next section of this application, will give examples of the hands-on experiences in the Natural Sciences, Engineering and World Cultures and History. Through general education requirements, too, all juniors will participate in the problem-based team learning course Core 100, as described in the Standard 2.2-8 exhibit, in which they will draw on what they have learned in their first two years of general education.

*2.6 Graduates Achieve Stated Levels of Attainment:* In addition to the grading policy described in the Standard 2.4-1 exhibit, most UC Merced majors have courses in which students demonstrate the skills they have developed through their program, though the demonstrations take very disparate forms. In the Engineering Service Learning Program, student teams, under the guidance of faculty members, develop engineering projects for clients and practice a variety of advanced communication and leadership skills. The minimum requirement for all Engineering students is one credit during the freshman year (though students may opt to substitute a Freshman Seminar in Engineering); Bioengineering requires a minimum of seven Service Learning credits. Students may take up to two credits per semester—10 credits over the four years—in this program. The Natural Sciences Senior Research Requirement features student presentations of current topics and independent research. The World Cultures and History Senior Research and Thesis Requirement takes two semesters and leads to an original senior thesis. This major also guides students in demonstrating their ability to communicate with non-specialist audiences, through the World Cultures and History Public Research Requirement. For all programs, the program review process, described in the Standard 2.7-2 exhibit below, features a judgment of how well students are meeting the published learning outcomes for each major.

Students at UC Merced also have access to “junior year abroad”-style programs, which allow students from any UC campus to participate and in which students can apply their education in a variety of ways. The UC Education Abroad Program gives student access to study at 150 universities in 35 countries. The University of California program in Washington, DC and UC Program in Sacramento offer educational experiences in the centers for national and state policy-making. All three programs include options for internships and other applied experiences in the field.

The Service Learning Program in Engineering brings a remarkable pedagogical approach to UC Merced that is worth a closer look, through the Service Learning e-Notebook. Students offer service to non-profit clients through interdisciplinary teams composed of freshmen through seniors. As a freshman requirement, the program involves students in engineering applications in their first year—an important introduction to the doing of engineering during a year dominated by preparatory mathematics and science courses. Over the four years, students practice their professional skills, including communication and leadership, experiencing the societal context in which engineers practice. The e-Notebook includes a program overview, course description and syllabus, instructions on how to present a proposal and schedule of skills-development sessions.

*2.7 Assessment of Educational Objectives:* UC Merced has developed Program Review guidance, central to assuring that its academic programs remain current and effective in fulfilling campus and School objectives for learning outcomes. A joint effort of academic administration and the UC Merced Division of the Academic Senate, on-going program review will engage program faculty in a thorough evaluation of diverse evidence of student learning. Among these sources will be student learning as gauged through capstone and other cumulative requirements; data on program completion and student placement in jobs or advanced degree programs; student and alumni exit interviews and surveys; and employer evaluations and student performance on graduate or professional school entry examinations. Program Review includes a self-study by program faculty, followed by a visit and review by an external peer team. Procedures for following up, in order to assure program improvements, are included in the guidance document. The initial review of programs is anticipated to begin in 2009-10, after the first students have graduated. It is expected that the intermediate review of graduate programs will be achieved through the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) review of proposed stand-alone graduate degree programs, growing out of the current Individual Graduate Program emphases. CCGA review includes confidential assessments by reviewers external to UC.

In establishing the Outcomes for Academic Programs, found in the Standard 1.1-2 exhibit, faculty have begun to lay out the kinds of evidence they expect to gather. As will be seen in Standard 4.4--Quality Assurance Processes, the College One Executive Committee has begun deliberations on an assessment plan designed to encourage alignment and mutual reinforcement among all campus curriculum improvement activities.

As noted in Standard 1.2—Educational Objectives Consistent with Purposes, UC Merced will be seeking accreditation for its engineering programs from the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, upon WASC approval of Initial Accreditation for UC Merced.

b. Scholarship and Creative Activity

The University of California academic personnel system codifies a complex and thoroughgoing set of policies and procedures, designed to evaluate achievement in the tripartite faculty responsibilities of teaching, research and service. Faculty candidates are judged on their cumulative record to date. Once they join the UC faculty, they continue to be evaluated: at the time of tenure and promotion; and once tenured, periodically throughout their careers--for example, during three-year merit reviews and when they move to a higher salary step within rank. External letters from peer evaluators, both those recommended by the candidate or faculty member and those solicited by the unit responsible for the personnel action, play a significant role in appraisals. In determining strength in the classroom, records of student evaluation results are added to peer judgments.

Faculty are supported in multiple ways to create and disseminate knowledge through professional presentations and publications; through the classroom; and to the public at large. The responsibilities of teaching, research and service are interconnected and mutually supportive throughout a faculty member's career.

2.8 Active Promotion of Scholarship and Instructional Innovation: The UC Academic Personnel Manual (APM) is the key source of policies on academic appointments, recruitment, promotion, salary administration and benefits and privileges, including sabbaticals. The scope of the APM should be evident in this application from the many citations of its provisions as documentary evidence of such matters as academic freedom, affirmative action and due process protection. The University of California Faculty Handbook provides general guidance on University policies and expectations of faculty, as well as on implementation of the APM policies.

In recommending faculty and other instructional appointments to the Executive Vice Chancellor, the UC Merced Division of the Academic Senate acts through the Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP), whose Criteria and Process are central to academic appointments. The CAP's on each campus and systemwide share responsibility for assuring that all faculty and other academic appointments meet a UC standard of quality. The UC Merced CAP is still in transition, with six out of its 11 members from other UC campuses, a means of bringing UC Merced faculty to a complete understanding of CAP expectations for faculty personnel actions.

2.9 Promotion of Linkages among Scholarship, Teaching, Learning and Service: The Research section of the 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog introduces the way that research is intertwined with all parts of the UC Merced teaching and service mission. From freshman seminars in which many faculty introduce an aspect of their research, through

undergraduate research opportunities, available for credit through the 195 series courses in each discipline, the research mission informs the undergraduate experience. Graduate students experience the research mission as apprentice scholars who will become practitioners, at the intermediate—master’s—and advanced—doctoral—levels.

UC Merced’s first signature research organizations, the Sierra Nevada Research Institute (SNRI) and World Cultures Institute, embody the UC Merced Mission Statement themes of discovering new knowledge through interdisciplinary collaboration and place-based inquiry with global application. Both Institutes foreground ways in which undergraduates can participate. The SNRI in particular anticipates use of its Wawona Field Station in Yosemite National Park for both undergraduate and graduate courses, and has facilitated training for San Joaquin Valley K-12 teachers on Sierra hydrology.

Organized research units have the advantage of demonstrating through prospectuses and reports their contributions to the teaching/learning mission. Less visible may be the linkages that individual faculty make among teaching, research and service. An example of a Faculty Member Website illustrates his current and planned research initiatives; undergraduate research openings in his group and the syllabus for a current freshman seminar; and other currently offered courses at all levels; as well as links to his research group, publications and talks.

Organizationally, UC Merced also fills staff positions designed to support faculty in linking their responsibilities. School Curriculum Assistants support faculty, lecturers and teaching assistants of each School in curriculum planning, database management and assurance that all instructional materials are available, among other responsibilities.

Two previously-described examples of linking the teaching mission to problem-based learning and community service have been Core 100, in the Standard 2.2-8 exhibit, and the Engineering Service Learning Program, detailed in the Standard 2.6-7 exhibit.

c. Support for Student Learning

Among the many ambitious goals set by UC Merced has been a commitment to attract talented students who will be the first in their families to attend college and to draw in regional students who, though meeting UC eligibility requirements, may come with less-than-ideal school preparation. UC Merced also strives to set a new benchmark for excellent service to transfers from California Community Colleges, connecting them fully with UC Merced’s unique educational culture. A third goal, recently achieved by UC Merced, has been federal recognition as the first University of California campus to be a Hispanic Serving Institution. Federal criteria require that at least 25% of the undergraduate class be Hispanic and that at least 50% of those have financial need. UC Merced has enrolled Hispanic students as 25.06% of its undergraduate class. Of those, 57% are financially needy. These special goals are in addition to the overall goal of fostering the success of all students. Beginning many years before the opening of the campus, UC Merced has been contributing to the common goal of San Joaquin Valley higher education institutions to increase the aspirations and achievement of Valley

students—for example, through the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, with membership from all higher education segments in the Valley. As a result, UC Merced has opened with a robust array of services, personnel and activities dedicated to helping UC Merced students succeed.

*2.10 Regular Assessment of Student Needs, Experience and Satisfaction:* The Interim Student Handbook, contained in the 1.7-2 exhibit, is the primary source of policy information concerning student academic conduct. This is supplemented by the Grading Policy/Appeals, under development by the UC Merced Senate Undergraduate Council. See the 2.4-1 exhibit for the published grading policy. Plans for Grading Analysis, to assure that evaluation polices are applied with rigor, are in development.

As the data displays demonstrate, UC Merced collects comprehensive demographic data on its students. As a new institution, UC Merced is seeking multiple sources of evidence concerning the student experience and needs, with a view to midcourse refinements of services and programs. Following an in-house student survey this fall, UC Merced will participate in the Spring 2006 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and begin to use its wealth of reports as a basis for institutional improvement. The Spring 2006 University of California Student Experience Survey (UCUES) represents another source of data which can ultimately be compared with parallel data from other UC campuses. Because UC Merced's opening year class is primarily freshmen, with only a modest number of transfer students, truly comparable data for benchmarking applications will not be available until the campus has grown and filled out its classes.

*2.11 Integrated Co-curricular Programs:* UC Merced has opened with an unusual set of adventures for its students through its Co-curricular Programs—unusual in that UC Merced's pioneer class, working with staff and faculty advisors, will be establishing the first campus clubs and interest groups, community service initiatives, student government and outdoors activities. The Office of Student Life, described in detail in the 2.13-7 exhibit below, supports student growth, on campus and in society, through leadership development, intercultural programs, community service, student government and student clubs and organizations. Also described in 2.13-7 are the Campus Recreation intramural sports, fitness and outdoor recreation; and Student Health Center health education programs, contributing to students' physical education and well-being. Residence Life, too, supports residence hall leadership and related personal development among students. The co-curriculum plays a significant part in helping students meet several of the Guiding Principles for General Education, presented in the Standard 1.2-1 exhibit, including Leadership and Teamwork, and Development of Personal Potential.

*2.12 Timely Information on Academic Requirements:* The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog is the most widely available source of timely and accurate information on program requirements. The academic Calendar is published in the Catalog, as well as information described in other exhibits: 2.1-1 Undergraduate Programs. 2.1-2 Graduate Programs, 2.4-1 Grading Policy and 2.2-3 Co-curricular Opportunities. Other Recruitment Publications include illustrated campus promotional brochures and systemwide

publications that have sections on UC Merced, including *Introducing the University*, *Quick References for Counselors*, and *Answers for Transfers*.

2.13 Student Support Services: The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog gives students their first introduction to the comprehensive array of services designed to meet their needs on campus. The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships, which also supports Graduate Financial Aid; Office of the Registrar; the Career Services Center and Disability Services appear, as well as services described in exhibits elsewhere in this application, including 2.5-1 Student Advising and Learning Center; 2.3-5 Information Technology, which provides computer laboratories as detailed in exhibit 2.3-10; and 2.3-4 Library.

The Student Services Organizational Chart and Overview present a more detailed look at the purposes and programs for each student service. A glimpse of how multi-faceted they are, even while the campus is very small, should be evident from the exhibit above, 2.11 Co-curriculum. The Overview features Admission, Campus Recreation, Career Service Center, Counseling Services, Disability Services, Financial Aid and Scholarships, Registrar, Student Life, Student Advising and Learning, Student Health and Wellness, and Student Housing and Residence Life. The Student First Center on the first floor of the Kolligian Library aids students, parents and visitors in finding information and connecting with the services they need.

2.14 Clear Information for Transfer Students: In keeping with UC Merced's goal of being especially welcoming and supportive of transfer students, clear and accurate information on Transfer Requirements can be found in the 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog. As well as laying out admission criteria, the Catalog introduces students to Transfer Admission Guarantee contracts between California Community College students and UC Merced; the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), which meets general education requirements at both California State University and University of California campuses; and the Concurrent Enrollment Program with three San Joaquin Valley community colleges and UC Merced. This information is supplemented by on-line resources, including UC Merced's Web Advice for Transfer Preparation, which advises students on preparatory courses for each UC Merced major; and the statewide Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum website.

As described in the Standard 2.2-8 exhibit, Core 100 represents a special initiative to bring transfer students into the unique UC Merced educational culture. During the inaugural year, only transfer students will be enrolled. However, when the campus fills out, both "native" and transfer students will be part of problem-based teams, applying what they have learned during their first two years.

**STANDARD 3—DEVELOPING AND APPLYING RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES TO ASSURE SUSTAINABILITY**

a. Faculty and Staff

UC Merced’s purposes and educational objectives are sustained through highly developed processes to assure the presence of outstanding faculty and staff; sufficient resources to meet fiscal, capital and information needs; and decision-making structures and processes to support institutional progress in an atmosphere of shared governance. As a campus of the University of California, UC Merced shares in sophisticated resources and structures designed to attract and support faculty and staff of the highest quality.

3.1 Sufficient Professional Personnel to Maintain Operations/Support Academic Programs:

As can be seen in the Overview of UC Merced Staff, the campus employs 391 staff, including 10 Senior Management, 60 Manager and Senior Professionals, and 321 Professional and Support Staff. Of the 321 staff, 180 are men and 211 are women; and 52% are White (non-Hispanic), 26% are Hispanic, 15% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% are Black (non-Hispanic). Job openings are posted in appropriate print and on-line venues (campus, local, statewide, national/international), depending on the scope of the position. The UC Merced Jobs/Opportunities Website includes detailed information on required and desirable qualifications and experience.

3.2 Sufficient Faculty to Achieve Educational Objectives: The instructional workforce at UC Merced includes the following categories: ladder-rank faculty (assistant, associate, full professor); lecturers on the security of employment track (PSOE, SOE), who are members of the Academic Senate; adjunct professors, who are not Senate members; and lecturers, who hold teaching-only appointments in such areas as writing and foreign languages, and are not Senate members. As of 1/1/06, UC Merced’s Senate faculty includes the following:

	Assistant	Associate	Full	Lecturer (PSOE)	Total
Engineering	7	1	6	0	14
Natural Sci	12	0	11	0	23
SSHA	9	0	9	2	20

*Note: this count includes seven administrative appointees and one faculty member who will start on 7/1/06.*

These numbers include 36 men and 21 women; and of those reporting ethnicity, 37 are white, 6 Asian, one American Indian, and 9 Hispanic. A more detailed breakdown can be found in the Data Displays.

There are an additional four Adjunct Professors, all male, two white, two of unknown ethnicity.

UC Merced also employs 24 lecturers, primarily on one-year contracts. They are evenly divided between men and women. Two are of Asian ethnicity, one Latino, the rest white or unknown. Fifteen are on full-time contracts and nine are part-time (five of the nine are teaching a single course during the fall only).

As the Faculty Overview, with Brief CV's shows, UC Merced's goal of hiring a stellar and diverse faculty is being realized. The first thirteen faculty hired for the 2003-04 academic year were almost exclusively tenured full professors, responsible for development of the initial academic programs, recruitment of sufficient faculty to staff those programs, creation of the initial research programs and associated applications for extramural funding, and initiation of faculty governance structures. To these campus-building endeavors, the first UC Merced faculty continued to be active in their professions, while giving special service to UC, California and the San Joaquin Valley: for example, through offering professional presentations for colleagues and for the public; visiting regional schools to encourage young people to prepare for UC, particularly in science and engineering; and making connections with faculty counterparts in other public and private universities and community colleges. Given the large burden of planning for rapid growth while teaching the first students, UC Merced has been funded for an enriched student-faculty ratio, that will move to the UC systemwide norm as the campus grows to a critical mass of students—approximately 5000.

The Schools are the Academic Senate Bylaw 55 units, that is, the locus of faculty voting rights; they are responsible for faculty recruitment. The Strategic Plans for Engineering, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts represent the growth plans, with associated plans for adding faculty.

*3.3 Faculty and Staff Policies Aligned with Institutional Purposes:* The three exhibits for 2.8 Active Promotion of Scholarship and Instructional Innovation—the Academic Personnel Manual (APM), UC Faculty Handbook and Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP): Criteria and Process—constitute the primary library documenting that faculty policies and procedures are in line with institutional purposes and educational goals. The APM sections on Faculty/Other Instructional Recruitment and Appointment and Promotion (All Instructional Titles) demonstrate alignment of faculty recruitment and appointment with educational objectives. Workload Policies are set by each School and take into account types of instruction and equivalences for types of courses. At present, workload policies are still under development by the Schools, with approvals required by the Deans and Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost.

Evaluation of non-ladder rank instructional appointees is covered in the 3.3-3 Appointment and Promotion exhibit. The provisions of APM 220-80 on review of appointees in the professor series are also applied for Evaluation: Adjunct Faculty in the Adjunct Professor series.

Teaching effectiveness is a crucial component of the evaluation process for all instructional staff. UC Merced Senate policy, nearing final approval, lays out a series of sources and methods for Evaluation of Teaching, including student evaluation of teaching. The draft policy puts teaching in the context of criteria for advancement and promotion, and lists aspects of teaching to be evaluated. The document concludes with advice to the Schools on administering and evaluating student course evaluations.

UC Systemwide Policy on Staff Recruitment speaks to the scope, exceptions and waivers governing recruitment.

*3.4 Appropriate Faculty Development Activities:* UC Merced supports faculty development in a variety of ways. The University of California Faculty Sabbatical Policy makes periodic research leaves available to faculty, based on years of service. As noted in the Evaluation of Teaching draft policy, presented in the 3.3-5 Evaluation of Teaching exhibit, "...the University community believes that excellence in teaching and excellence in scholarship go hand in hand." Periodic sabbatical research leaves are expected to refresh and invigorate what is taught in the classroom as well.

In addition, for faculty seeking assistance with specific aspects of teaching and learning, UC Merced is establishing a Teaching and Learning Center. The Position Description: Director of Teaching and Learning Center outlines a few of the services to be provided for faculty. The Director and Center staff will provide key support for planned assessment activities; will aid all instructional staff in advancing pedagogical innovation and scholarship; and through a variety of services, will sustain the goal of effective student learning. Other forms of assistance currently available have been noted in the 2.9-5 School Curriculum Advisors and 2.3-10 Information Technology Report exhibits. The latter includes an extended overview of the Sakai Course Support System, which creates a course management website for every offering, integrated with the student information system. Technical staff assist faculty with their course sites, which can be used in a great many ways: to post syllabi, course assignments, lecture notes and powerpoints; course readings; student questions and comments; software necessary to do course assignments; and many other uses.

b. Fiscal, Physical and Information Resources

UC Merced has continued to receive steady support in State and other sources of funding sufficient to build and sustain an operating, capital and information budget to achieve its institutional purposes and educational objectives. Budget planning and growth strategies will support UC Merced development into the foreseeable future.

*3.5 Fiscal and Physical Resources Aligned with Institutional Purposes:* Because of heightened interest among elected officials in Sacramento in UC progress in building California's first public research university in more than 35 years, there is a year-by-year record of operating budget growth aligned with institutional purposes. This record can be viewed in the UC Merced State Legislative Budget Reports of 2002, 2003, 2004 and

2005. The campus building program has been detailed as part of several systemwide reports. The State Budget for Capital Improvements for 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07 and UC Merced Combined State and Non-State Capital Improvement Programs for 2005-2006 to 2009-2010 trace the planning and construction of the first five academic buildings and associated campus infrastructure: the library and student services center, the classroom building and the science/engineering building, nearing completion; and the social sciences/management and science/engineering 2 buildings, funded and being planned. The Non-State Capital Improvement Reports for 2003-2004 to 2007-2008 and 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 are specific to UC Merced and trace development of such essential facilities as student housing, the dining commons, the Joseph Edward Gallo Recreation and Wellness Center, parking and the early childhood care and education center. UC Merced is also included in the Summary of UC Non-State Capital Projects-Systemwide Tables for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. Documents that show how capital planning is done include UC Required Materials for Capital Budget Approval (Non-State) and UC Merced Capital Projects Process-Capital Project Development.

The overall UC operating budget, including special allocations that have funded the planning and opening of UC Merced, can be found in the UC Budget for Current Operations for 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. The 2002 UC Merced Long Range Development Plan charts land use and physical development from the detail of Phase 1, now in progress, through campus buildout at 25,000 students.

UC Merced operates under systemwide audit and accountability controls and procedures, which can be reviewed in UCOP Controls and Accountability, Regents Committee on Audit and the Contracts and Grants manual.

*3.6 Sufficient Information Resources:* The UC Merced Library Overview surveys the state of on-site and on-line information resources available to UC Merced students, faculty and staff, illustrating the Library motto: “Not what other research libraries are...what they will be.” In an era of instantaneous electronic access to information and speedy delivery of remotely-stored materials, information resources available to the UC Merced community go far beyond the 30,297 print monographs, 28,684 on-line electronic books and other information resources immediately at hand. The UC mandate of “One University, One Library” manifests itself through one- to three-day delivery of books to students and faculty on campus from UC’s 33,541,584 volumes and through California Digital Library access to 10,763 on-line serials. A digital reference service allows the UC Merced community on-line access 24 hours per day. An annual allocation of \$1,514,700 for information resources will support continued growth and development of the immediate campus collection.

The UC Merced Library Website is both the user’s gateway to this intellectual wealth and a source of additional information about the Leo and Dottie Kolligian Library. For instance, the website introduces the University Librarian and his staff of 11, including two Instructional Librarians. The 2005-06 UC Merced Catalog, as seen in the 2.3-4 exhibit, also introduces students and the public to the Kolligian Library.

3.7 Information Technology in Support of Learning: The 2.3-9 Information Technology Report offers a thorough introduction to UC Merced’s integrated approach to administrative and academic computing, on campus and via remote access. The special learning resource represented by the Sakai Course Support System is summarized above in Standard 3.4 Appropriate Faculty Development Activities. MyUCMerced portal technology connects UC Merced students with all aspects of the campus, from student services to the library to enriched on-line resources for their courses. Information Technology staff work at a Student Help Desk to provide walk-in, on-line and telephone assistance.

The on-line Information Technology Organization Chart provides a convenient visual display of the multiple functions and staffing under the Chief Information Officer. Information Technology Policies also can be reviewed on-line.

c. Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

UC Merced’s robust organization and administrative leadership to support decision-making have been introduced in 1.3 Institutional Leadership; and will be illustrated in greater detail through documents showing decision-making processes in support of institutional purposes and educational objectives, together with strong administrative and faculty leadership.

3.8 Clear Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes: As seen in the 1.3-1 Organization Charts exhibit, the Chancellor and her senior managers have created and staffed organizations with clear functions and lines of authority to carry out University operations. Charts show 1) the overall management organization under the Chancellor; 2) the functions and staff for the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, with associated units, including Academic Personnel; College One; Research and Graduate Studies; Schools of Engineering, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts; in the Standard 2.13-5 exhibit, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; and 3) University Relations. The 4.4-1 Chancellor’s Cabinet exhibit presents the membership and charge of the Chancellor’s primary decision-making body. A central shared governance decision-making body is the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA), presented in the 4.2-1 exhibit.

3.9 Independent Governing Board—Board of Regents: The University of California is an autonomous public corporation under the California State Constitution. The UC Board of Regents exercises oversight over institutional integrity; policies and on-going operations for the University; and its systemwide administration and constituent ten campuses, including UC Merced. The Regents Bylaws present the authority and organization of the Board, including its meetings, procedures, officers and their duties. The Standing Orders spell out the authority delegated to the President and include sections on Officers of the University, including Chancellors; faculty and other employees; the authority of the Academic Senate; academic units; retirement systems; and amendments to the Bylaws. The President recommends and the Regents consider and take final action on the Hiring of Chancellors. Evaluation of Chancellors is delegated to the President of the University.

3.10 Full-time Chief Executive and Qualified Administrators: Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey serves full-time as the chief executive of UC Merced. As the Chancellor's Brief Biography and CV demonstrate, she brings a wealth of faculty and administrative experience to bear on leading the building of UC's tenth campus. As shown in the 1.3-2 Brief Biographies and CV's of Senior Administration exhibit, she has assembled a senior leadership team exceptionally well-qualified to provide effective educational leadership and management at all levels. Further review of the 1.3-1 Senior Management Organization Charts, 2.13-5 Student Affairs Organization Chart and 4.5 Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis exhibits will show a well-developed professional and analytic staff to support campus administrative functions.

3.11 Faculty Exercise of Effective Academic Leadership: As highlighted elsewhere in this application, the Regents have delegated substantial academic authority to the faculty who, in turn, have organized a systemwide and divisional Academic Senate to exercise that authority. UC Merced faculty have established the organizational mechanisms to exercise effective academic leadership.

As can be seen in the UC Merced Division Approval Letter, the Academic Senate established the UC Merced Division in May of 2005. The Merced Senate Division Bylaws establish the functions, membership, officers, organization, meetings, committees, faculties, degrees, legislative business and budget process for the Division. Faculty Senate Committees and Membership show the charges and membership of the Committees on Academic Personnel, Privilege and Tenure, and Academic Planning and Resource Allocation; and the Undergraduate Council and Graduate and Research Council. There is also a Committee on Committees that identifies Senate committee members. As indicated in the Bylaws, the Divisional Council acts as the Division's executive committee. UC Merced faculty are represented on the systemwide Senate committees, Academic Council and Academic Assembly.

## STANDARD 4—CREATING AN ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

### a. Strategic Thinking and Planning

UC Merced has constructed the scaffolding that will allow the faculty and administration to engage in regular review and assessment of how well the campus fulfills its institutional purposes and meets its educational objectives. The institutional assessment and improvement mechanisms are built in and will be applied on a regular basis, depending on the specific review function and target.

*4.1 Multiple Constituencies Engaged in Institutional Planning:* Planning for a new research university that has set a host of ambitious teaching, research and service goals for itself is complex and necessarily brings to bear a number of campus units and organizations. The Chancellor's Cabinet serves as the primary administrative decision-making and coordinating entity for campus planning endeavors. The Cabinet meets weekly. As the primary organizations for drafting the academic plan, the Schools are governed by deans working with UC Merced Senate executive committees within each School. (Senate voting rights are defined in Academic Senate Bylaw 55, which addresses a key aspect of faculty rights and authority. Thus, the Schools, as well as College One, have been designated "Senate Bylaw 55 units.") The School Deans and Executive Committees can be seen in the organization charts for each of the three Schools. The School Strategic Plans appear in the 3.2-2 Engineering, 3.2-3 Natural Sciences and 3.2-4 Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts exhibits.

In addition, the Dean of Graduate Studies has worked closely with the faculty Graduate Groups to create a Graduate Division Strategic Plan, which includes targets for growth, stand-alone master's and doctoral programs, and resource needs in support of that growth. The collective plans for academic growth and new directions can be found in the UCM Five-Year Perspectives, a report to the UC Office of the President that is submitted by the Provost and updated and extended annually.

The College One Handbook, found in the 2.3-1 exhibit, points out directions for a strategic plan for general education, which is under on-going discussion by the Senate College One Executive Committee. The College One First Year Budget Request is a concrete manifestation of planning directions for general education.

The annual campus budget review process, initiated by the Budget Request Letter from the Provost, stimulates an annual review and updating of these plans and assures that they remain aligned with educational objectives and are being appropriately implemented.

The Campus Physical Planning Committee reviews long range capital projects planning and land use issues. The committee meets 3-4 times per year and has broad representation from academics, administration and a student representative. It is co-chaired by the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost and the Vice Chancellor for

Administration. The committee is advisory to the Chancellor.

The Committee helps to establish priorities for construction projects and new buildings proposed for both State and Non State Five-Year Capital Improvement Programs. It reviews broader physical planning issues, such as the status of Long Range Development Plan (reviews and recommends updates as needed); the campus design standard; and the design review process for major projects.

4.2 Planning Processes Align Academic, Personnel, Fiscal, Physical, Technological Needs with Priorities: The exhibits for 4.1 Multiple Constituencies Engaged in Institutional Planning document the complex network of planning bodies and their most recent products. Two additional bodies support coordination and careful alignment of resources to objectives. The Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA) is the Senate's voice in conferring with campus administration on campus planning, especially long-term objectives and needs, including academic resource allocation. An example of their involvement in decisions on resource alignment can be seen in the 2.7-1 Program Review exhibit, which outlines in some detail the review process that potentially will lead to resource reallocation to assure program improvement and educational effectiveness. The Deans and School/College One Executive Committees present academic resource plans, tied to the Strategic Plans, as can be seen in the Standard 4.1-6 exhibit.

Within the Provost's domain, the Academic Planning Group brings together senior administration and staff from the Schools, Graduate Division, College One, Research, Student Affairs, Library and Information Technology, in addition to the Chair of the Divisional Council of the Senate, to exchange information and provide coordination where their activities and needs intersect. The Group meets every two weeks.

4.3 Planning Processes Informed by Appropriate Data: Good data delivered in readily understandable and usable forms in a timely way is the stratum on which effective planning is built. Throughout this application, arguments for having met accreditation criteria and guidelines have rested on data-enriched planning documents and reports. Now that UC Merced has officially opened its doors, good quantitative and qualitative data to support the host of planning and growth activities that will lead to achievement of UC Merced's educational objectives need to be put in the hands of administration, faculty and staff dependably and predictably. Analytic support for Faculty Senate committees will be needed to carry out their shared governance responsibilities. As well, the campus needs leadership in developing a suitable enrollment planning model for UC Merced. The Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (OIPA), described in detail in the exhibit for 4.5, will serve these functions for the campus.

OIPA is collaborating with the Information Technology staff to create a decision-support database. Its purpose is to house and integrate the currently separate student information, payroll/personnel, and financial/budget systems, as well as incorporating historical data and new data from sources such as surveys. The goal is to expedite campus reporting and improve data access for campus managers.

The UC Merced approach to gathering evidence for and evaluating effectiveness of its educational programs and outcomes as gauged by student learning will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

b. Commitment to Learning and Improvement

*4.4 Quality Assurance Processes:* UC Merced has created a variety of processes to assure quality as a prerequisite to the approval of new programs, and a process of on-going review to assure that educational effectiveness in the curriculum is sustained. Procedures include the application of review findings to improve programs. Special assessment plans have been created for experimental parts of the curriculum. Additional quality improvement plans will be highlighted in the 4.6 Culture of Evidence and Improvement exhibits.

New undergraduate courses and degree programs, including substantive changes in the undergraduate curriculum, are under the authority of the UC Merced Senate Undergraduate Council. The New Program Review Guidelines include the submission and approval or endorsement steps and details of what should be included in the proposal. Approval of undergraduate programs is completed at the campus level, with information forwarded to the UC Office of the President.

Graduate degree programs are under the authority of the systemwide Senate Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA), whose Handbook gives detailed directions on what proposals must include, which review steps and criteria will be applied, and in cases of special review issues, what steps will be followed. CCGA review begins upon receiving a campus proposal that has been approved by the Divisional Graduate Council and endorsed by the Provost. CCGA review typically takes four to six months to complete and includes CCGA discussion; solicitation of independent, confidential evaluations of the proposal by outside experts in the field; an on-site visit by the lead reviewer; resolution of quality issues raised during the review, which may include requiring a formal administrative commitment to assure sufficient resources to support a high quality program; and final approval. If quality issues are not resolved by the campus to CCGA's satisfaction, the proposal is returned. The campus may work further on it or abandon it. There is no appeal for a proposal turned back to a campus. There are additional steps for a degree title new to the campus and in all cases, the President gives a final endorsement to the program.

Once degree programs are in operation, they fall under the UC Merced Program Review Procedures, illustrated in the 2.7-1 exhibit. All programs will be reviewed every 5-6 years, with follow-up reviews to ascertain that improvements are in place. The 4.6 Culture of Evidence and Improvement exhibits foreground quality assurance processes that will support on-going evaluation, based on multiple sources of data.

Because UC Merced is incorporating experimental pedagogy in its curriculum, special assessments are being instituted for Engineering's Service Learning program and the Core Course sequence required of all freshmen and juniors. For the Service Learning program, pre- and post-learning surveys and multiple faculty and student assessments are being solicited. Clients are surveyed both mid-term and at the end of the semester. Since teams will work with clients over time, longitudinal data will be collected for program improvements.

The assessment specialist who has developed the instruments and plans for Service Learning will also assist College One and the Schools with coordinated assessment of learning in both general education and the majors, for which the Schools have created initial approaches to assessing learning outcomes. Core Course assessment is currently being planned and applied, under the aegis of the Core Course Committee and College One Executive Committee. Core One conducted a mid-term student survey as the basis for fine-tuning the first offering of the course and revising it for the second offering in the Spring 2006 semester. An end of semester survey will also be conducted.

*4.5 Institutional Research Capacity:* The Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis Overview (OIPA) introduces the Office leadership, reporting to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost; professional staffing; and services to be provided by a unit that is at the heart of continuous institutional improvement. Databases that are now being brought together from existing offices or will be newly created will be used to meet external federal, state and UC reporting needs as well as internal self-study and research. Longer term plans include website development to support ready access to campus data; special studies of student admissions, retention, progress and satisfaction; and development of Key Performance Indicators for strategic planning. The Overview offers details of OIPA activities to gather suitable data on how well student learning accords with UC Merced's educational objectives. Establishment of an OIPA Advisory Committee will assist the Director in on-going assessment of the usefulness of data being collected and advice on creating more effective indicators, as needed.

*4.6 Culture of Evidence and Improvement:* The commitment to continuous improvement is manifested across the leadership spectrum at UC Merced. The College One Assessment Plan, under construction by the Senate College One Executive Committee, will draw together the curricular assessment threads that determine how well student learning is meeting the Guiding Principles for General Education. This effort will complement the School faculty plans to assess the Outcomes of Academic Programs described in the 1.2-2 exhibit. The Student Affairs Assessment plan is a thoroughgoing set of documents for each student service area, including tasks and data gathering, use of information and frequency of assessment.

Other exhibits have illustrated the breadth of the involvement of campus leadership in participating in a culture of evidence and improvement. The Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP) review process, illustrated in the 2.8-3 exhibit, assures peer attention to individual faculty success in fostering student learning. Faculty reviews are done periodically, usually at least once every three years. The teaching portion of the review is

based on evidence from the Evaluation of Teaching process, presented in the 3.3-5 exhibit. Two surveys of student experience—described in the 2.10-4 National Survey of Student Experience exhibit and 2.10-5 UC Survey of Undergraduate Experience exhibit—will supply national and UC data for evaluating the effectiveness of the campus environment in support of academic and co-curricular objectives.

*4.7 Inquiry into Processes of Teaching and Learning:* UC Merced faculty are thinking and talking about what they observe among their students, given the unusual experience of the opening year, in which freshmen dominate. They will be using student evaluation results as an important piece of information in adjusting their pedagogy. Mid-term grading of freshmen and special mid-term surveys, such as the CORE 1 student survey, give faculty a basis for making mid-course corrections during the first year.

A formal locus of support for faculty seeking to expand their understanding of their own pedagogy and to learn about research on pedagogy in their fields was introduced in the 3.4-2 Director, Teaching and Learning Center exhibit.

*4.8 Stakeholders Involved in Assessment:* As is evident from the 2.7-1 Program Review exhibit, the campus will be soliciting evaluations of UC Merced graduates in the workplace from such external stakeholders as employers; and alumni surveys will provide data on how well-served graduates think they have been by UC Merced's educational programs and campus experiences. The views of field practitioners are especially important for professional education. For this reason, Engineering has nearly completed assembling an advisory board which will give the industry perspective on workforce needs that might be addressed through the curriculum.

## **CONCLUDING ESSAY: UC MERCED'S COMMITMENT TO CAPACITY AND PREPARATION FOR THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

### **Commitment to Capacity**

This application has presented the details of construction in progress at UC Merced, both on-going and completed, in building its capacity to satisfy every particular of the WASC Standards for Accreditation. For every part of the Standards, Criteria and Guidelines, at least one, often more than one, exhibit or citation has been offered to demonstrate that a framework is in place to support UC Merced in achieving its institutional purposes and educational goals. There will be a series of early tests of how well this framework assures stability and gauges success or need for improvement in meeting UC Merced's goals for student learning and campus life.

Budget and capital planning processes, as well as business and financial operations, are in place, benefiting from the existence of extensive systemwide policies and procedures that have been directly applied or adapted to a new campus environment. UC Merced's growing capacity has been augmented by cooperative arrangements with other campuses when needed, for example, initial payroll and accounting through UCLA and student financial aid administration through UC Davis. Seamless transfer of these functions is made when appropriate; for example, financial aid will be wholly administered by UC Merced after the Commission approves the campus application for Candidacy and final federal approval is received.

Student support services are also in place and being put to the test during the first full year of instruction. A vigorous campus life program has engaged students in creating organizations, activities and traditions that will make UC Merced an inviting and dynamic place for generations of students to come. Multiple offices in Student Affairs have been proactive in supporting students' goals for success and achievement. Because of the very large proportion of freshmen during the first year, these efforts have been critical: new students, particularly those arriving with less-than-ideal school preparation or as the first in their families to attend college, have been learning what it means to make the transition to college and become successful college students. Assessment plans for the constituent offices in Student Affairs will be put into operation at the end of the 2005-06 academic year, to fine-tune or reorient services on behalf of students.

Academic programs and policies remain the largest active construction zone, as faculty carry a full load of teaching, research and service in tandem with erecting new programs, engaging in faculty recruitment, and hammering out academic policies and procedures. While there is considerable systemwide scaffolding to undergird faculty efforts, realization of the unique teaching, research and service programs is the most creative part of the enterprise and can be accomplished by no one but the UC Merced faculty, with institutional support in the form of resources and staff. UC Merced's distinctiveness and distinction as a place for higher education will grow out of the creativity of the faculty. The academic realm will continue to see the most transformation over time, particularly reflecting the experimental nature of some features of the curriculum.

As is evident from an examination of the exhibits, particularly for Standard 2 and Standard 4, a few policies and procedures remain to be completed, for example, School faculty workload policies, student appeals of grades and the College One assessment plan. That initial construction should be well-advanced or finished by the Preparatory Review Team visit on March 19-20. In several other cases, policies and procedures are “interim” or in draft. Such designations signal the expectation of future modifications, once the policy or procedures have been “test driven” and the needs for improvement identified. Faculty administrative and shared governance processes are necessarily deliberative and therefore are not intrinsically designed to reach conclusion quickly. UC Merced faculty carry an unusually high administrative load as they establish the Academic Senate framework for shared governance and complete the array of policies and procedures requiring Senate action.

### **Preparation for the Educational Effectiveness Review**

Based on UC Merced’s growing capacity to engage in assessment and improvement of programming for students, the campus is prepared to enter the Educational Effectiveness phase of Candidacy review with a report that features results of several initial assessments. UC Merced expects that the Comprehensive Report model will be best suited to presenting results to date. The campus envisions submitting its Educational Effectiveness Report in Summer, 2006 and receiving the Team visit in Fall, 2006.

While many policies and procedures, such as review of on-going programs, will not yet have been applied, several assessment initiatives will be completed by the end of the 2005-06 academic year. The results and their application to improvement will be observable from these initiatives. They will also permit an initial meta-analysis of UC Merced’s approach to assessment and will set the stage for any needed modifications. UC Merced foresees that the following reviews will provide the heart of the Educational Effectiveness report:

Core Course Sequence: As the most expeditious component of the undergraduate curriculum, CORE 1 and CORE 100 are subject to both mid-term and end-of-semester reviews, with on-going adjustments in light of faculty, lecturer and student feedback. The student outcomes to be judged are nothing less than the full set of Guiding Principles for General Education.

Engineering Service Learning Program: As was seen in the Service Learning Assessment exhibit, a comprehensive plan is currently being applied using pre- and post-surveys of both students (individually and as part of a team) and faculty, and client surveys of how they view the results. Evaluation of students is pegged to a clear set of course learning outcomes. Because this is an experimental program, assessment will be intensive; because the program is intended to draw in students from all four undergraduate years, assessment and revision will be continuous. Lessons learned from this assessment effort are expected to help flesh out assessment plans across the Schools and College One.

Select Graduate Program Reviews: Because UC Merced is building its Graduate Group masters and doctoral programs on the basis of emphases within the Individual Graduate Program, systemwide review of stand-alone degree programs growing out of those emphases will serve as de facto mid-course scrutiny of what is in place and planned. The systemwide Senate Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) will examine in depth how well the stand-alone programs conform to the UC standard of quality and how adequate resources and resource expansion plans are, including current and future faculty, to sustain an outstanding program over time. Part of CCGA review includes comments from kindred programs in UC and a confidential critique by at least two field experts from outside UC. It is expected that at least one, possibly more, graduate program proposals will undergo CCGA review during Spring 2006.

Student Services Assessments: Given the especially important role of the student services units in helping the campus provide the best support and experience for UC Merced's pioneer students, each office has a plan for gathering data and determining student satisfaction, as a basis for continuous improvements, beginning with the 2005-06 academic year. The results of these efforts will set the stage for service improvements in 2006-07.

National Survey of Student Experience and UC Survey of Undergraduate Experience : UC Merced will participate in the Spring 2006 rounds of these surveys, tailor-making participation to current campus needs for feedback and the unusual nature of the first-year class. Results will give faculty extensive information on student experience during the first year and comparative data from kindred institutions.

A variety of faculty bodies will assume lead roles in steering report preparation and meeting with the Educational Effectiveness Review Team. Extensive consultation with the UC Merced Division of the Academic Senate will determine specific faculty leadership roles and committees to be involved; it is expected that the Preparatory Review Team's visit and report will be an important contributor to helping UC Merced shape the plans for the Educational Effectiveness review. Both Undergraduate Council and Graduate Council will likely play important roles in applying what is learned from certain assessment activities described above. The Executive Committee of College One and Core Course Committee have lead roles in general education assessment, including assessment of the Core Course sequence. Engineering faculty engaged in the Service Learning Program will guide application of assessment results to program improvement. While outcomes assessment of the degree programs necessarily lies in the future, when the first cohort of students has graduated and the effectiveness of the full four years can be assessed through program review, it would be appropriate to engage the curriculum committees in Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts, as well as Engineering faculty, in review of the Educational Effectiveness report and discussions with the Educational Effectiveness Team during the campus visit.

In conclusion, UC Merced invites questions on this Preparatory Review Report from the Preparatory Review Team and all others participating in the review. The campus looks forward to the Team visit and discussions in March.