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Strategic Academic Planning Surveys Draw Heavy Faculty Participation

Faculty members care deeply about UC Merced's academic direction and have hundreds of ideas for making the future as bright as possible, judging by the volume of responses to three recent surveys conducted by the Strategic Academic Planning Committee.

Fielded during the first and second weeks of March, the surveys generated response rates ranging from 67 percent to 83 percent. Faculty members were asked to consider questions and make suggestions related to the university's future academic organizational structure, its undergraduate programs and core disciplines, and its graduate, research and professional programs.

Survey results were presented at follow-up faculty forums held March 11, 14 and 18. They will become a major element in the SAP Committee's deliberations as it prepares the university's first-ever Strategic Academic Plan this spring.

"It is a pleasure to see such widespread engagement and thoughtful contributions from our dedicated faculty," said Chancellor Steve Kang, co-chair of the SAP Planning Committee. "This is an extremely rare opportunity to imagine and plan a strategic course that will lead UC Merced to future distinction. It is very gratifying that so many faculty members want to be part of this process, despite the many other demands on their time."

Begun in September, the SAP process remains on track to produce an academic vision statement and supporting action plans by June 30 of this year. Subcommittees of the SAP Committee are currently considering a wide range of issues related to undergraduate and graduate education, research programs and professional schools, as well as the academic organizational structure that can best deliver them over time.

Six faculty forums have been held since February to solicit ideas and generate debate. Summaries of the forums are available at http://strategicplanning.ucmerced.edu, under the heading "Updates and Documents." Comments and questions may be directed to the Planning Committee through the "feedback" button provided.

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