Based on essential, relevant planning documents, such as the Strategic Academic Vision [3] and the Strategic Plan for the Division of Administration [359], the campus is preparing an outline for the development of a comprehensive business plan to support long-term planning efforts and to provide structure for the investment of campus resources in support of overarching goals and highest priorities. This business plan will support the alignment of funding with the agreed-upon campus funding priorities, the allocation of annual increases and new funding, and annual budgeting recommendations made to the Chancellor by the Campus Budget Committee [360]. By promoting the identification of performance metrics that are used to review prior year allocations, use of funds, and expenditure patterns, this document also ensures that future planning and budgeting efforts will be shaped by analysis and reporting.

The Academic Senate also engages in campus planning and implementation of policy through several of its standing committees. With faculty representation from each School, as well as the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, the Undergraduate Council [116] oversees the academic quality and coherence of the undergraduate curriculum as reflected in its 2007-2008 Year-end Report [429]. Working with the Dean of the Graduate Division, faculty on the Graduate and Research Council [117] provide similar oversight for the integrity of all graduate programs. This work is exemplified in its 2007-2008 annual report [430]. Among other responsibilities, the Committee on Academic Personnel [48] ensures that all faculty undergoing review for tenure and promotion are productive scholars and qualified teachers [431], consistent with our mission as a student-centered research university. The Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation [151] scrutinizes resource requests and educational plans of all academic programs. Annually, the chairs of these Senate committees submit reports [411] to the Academic Senate that summarize and, when possible, integrate academic planning and objectives with institutional planning.

CFR 4.3 *Planning processes are informed by appropriately defined and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data, and include consideration of evidence of educational effectiveness, including student learning.*

Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA) also coordinates University data collection from many campus sources [486], analyzes that evidence, and prepares summary reports for University administrators and planning committees as well as UC-system, state and federal agencies. This information includes our participation in UC-system and national surveys of student learning. Results of the University of California Undergraduate Experience Surveys (UCUES) [438], the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) [450], the Common Data Set (CDS) [41], retention [439] and graduation statistics [440], and other qualitative/quantitative measures [42, p.6] provide evidence of educational effectiveness. Consideration of this evidence and similar educational data informs University decision-making on a broad range of matters including enrollment management [321]; curricular [441] and co-curricular planning [442], and instructional training [443].

Our University assessment plan at the course and program levels attends directly to evidence of student learning, as described in CFR 1.2, 2.4 and 4.6. We are now developing a plan for institutional-level assessment that is built atop the course and program levels of assessment (see CFRs 1.2 and 4.6).

CFR 4.4 *The institution employs a deliberate set of quality assurance processes at each level of institutional functioning, including new curriculum and program approval processes, periodic program review, ongoing evaluation, and data collection. These processes include assessing effectiveness, tracking results over time, using comparative data from external sources, and improving structures, processes, curricula, and pedagogy.*

As outlined in the Undergraduate Council policies and procedures for review of new undergraduate courses [150] and programs [141], new course and program review begins within each Bylaw 55 unit [444]. In consultation with their School dean, faculty consider the merits of new course proposals which, if approved, are then submitted to the School's curriculum committee. At this stage of review, all University faculty can access,

follow the status of, and offer comments on a proposed course via the Course Request Form Management System [445] website. Approved courses and programs are forwarded to the Undergraduate Council for final consideration. Substantive changes in existing programs are flagged for WASC Substantive Change review as stipulated in curriculum committee policy [143].

Review of new majors undergoes further quality assurance by the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation and the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost who attend to institutional issues of campus mission and resource allocations. All program proposals provide comparative data with other UC campuses and comparable research universities as exemplified by the recently approved (05/2009) Anthropology proposal [446] featuring past and projected longitudinal enrollment data.

Graduate degree programs are under the authority of the system-wide Senate Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) [447]. Review of new UC Merced graduate courses [26] and programs [142] begins within a graduate group. Endorsed proposals are submitted to the Graduate and Research Council and, for new programs, the Committee on Academic Personnel and Resource Allocation, with parallel review by the Graduate Dean and EVC/Provost. Once approved, new program proposals are submitted to the CCGA for system-wide approval leading to a degree conferring status.

Program Review policies for established undergraduate [29] and graduate programs [30] have been developed and are pending implementation. As described more thoroughly in CFR 2.7, these policies require programs to conduct learning assessment annually, summarize these results during program review, benchmark comparable programs, and use results of assessment to inform instructional practice. Our campus has not proceeded sooner with program review because no data have previously been available about the four-year cycle of degree completion for undergraduates. Now that our first class of Fall 2005 freshmen has graduated in Spring 2009, we can proceed with program review.

As previously noted, the Division of Student Affairs has developed its own Program Review Process [245] and will begin administering it with three units in the summer of 2009. The University has also initiated planning for review of administrative units. Since 2005, the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis has collected information and summarized data about all UC Merced students. Using these data, IPA has also conducted numerous comparative analyses with other universities that will inform program review and guide curricular changes for student learning.

CFR 4.5 *The institution has institutional research capacity consistent with its purposes and objectives. Institutional research addresses strategic data needs, is disseminated in a timely manner, and is incorporated in institutional review and decision-making processes. Included in the institutional research function is the collection of appropriate data to support the assessment of student learning. Periodic reviews are conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the research function and the suitability and usefulness of data.*

The mission [448] of the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA) is to support campus planning and decision-making and to help advance the educational mission and effectiveness of the institution. In fulfilling this mission, IPA has developed reporting systems and processes to support the analysis and use of institutional data/information in areas of enrollment management [449], resource allocation, campus performance/benchmarking, UCM compared to other UCs [487], UCM Peer comparisons [488], and assessment of academic and co-curricular environments [450, 252].

Integrating the campus' administrative data systems to support effective and efficient decision-making is a high priority, as evidenced by the leadership's support of the data warehousing initiative [451, 452]. This initiative will expand on IPA's student and personnel snapshot processes [453] that were implemented in Fall 2005.