University of California, Merced

Capacity and Preparatory Review Report for Initial Accreditation

Submitted July 3, 2009

members (VP for Academic Personnel and VP for Undergraduate Education), and one vice provost (VP for Academic Planning and Resources) also has an interim split-appointment as acting dean. After an unsuccessful 2008 search for a SSHA dean, the University has hired a professional agency to help conduct this search.

Many senior administrators, including the deans, the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost, Vice Chancellor for Research, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Vice Provost for Academic Personnel, teach and hold faculty appointments. Biographical information about these senior administrators [407] demonstrates that they are well-qualified to serve the University. We also have sufficient numbers of administrators to enable all programs and services to function effectively as indicated by our student to administrator ratios, which are the lowest in the UC [408]. This administrative support is reflected in the organizational charts of our administrative units [396].

CFR 3.11 *The institution's faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of the institution's educational purposes and character.*

Through the UC Merced Division of the UC-system Academic Senate [409], the faculty establish and maintain high standards for academic quality throughout the campus. Through related committee [323] functions, the faculty also exercise effective leadership in developing, managing and evaluating our educational programs, services and mission.

All tenured and tenure-track faculty are members of the Academic Senate with collective responsibilities that are defined in its Division Bylaws [410]. Evidence of this engagement, and summary results of faculty attention to key issues of University academic governance, are published in the Annual Reports [411] of all standing Senate committees. Important "items under review" [412] are also posted for general access. Open forums [413], surveys [414], and website access [413] enable all faculty and, in some instances, all other University constituents to participate.

As defined in the Academic Personnel Manual (APM-238) [415] and the MOU [328], non-Senate instructors are hired as lecturers whose main responsibility is teaching. In that instructional role, lecturers have opportunity to help refine the University's educational mission, especially through their assessment of student learning. (See also CFR 3.2.)

STANDARD FOUR: Creating and Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement

CFR 4.1 *The institution periodically engages its multiple constituencies, including faculty, in institutional reflection and planning processes which assess its strategic position; articulate priorities; examine the alignment of its purposes, core functions and resources; and define the future direction of the campus. The institution monitors the effectiveness of its plans and planning processes, and revises them as appropriate.*

In 2002 UC Merced completed its first Long-Range Development Plan [416] laying the foundation for much of our existing campus infrastructure. Continuing this planning process, in 2008 the University revised its original plan for a 910 acre campus by resizing our "footprint" to 815 acres, a reduction intended to preserve wetlands and minimize the environmental impact of campus growth as we move towards total enrollment in 2035 of approximately 25,000 students. Students, faculty, staff, and the general public have been fully involved in this planning process, most recently updated in 2009 [375]. This updated LRDP was informed by enrollment planning and the campus' most recent Long Range Enrollment Plan [417], an effort that also involved multiple UCM constituents, including the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (CAPRA).

Extensive planning, with full participation of the faculty [418], has produced a Strategic Academic Vision [3]. In Chancellor Kang's "vision statement" [419] about this planning process, he identifies seven points of emphasis that scaffold the University's educational mission [419, p.2-3 highlighted].

With Chancellor Kang, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Keith Alley co-chaired this planning process to ensure that it was open and transparent. Faculty served as chairs and had majority membership on all three planning subcommittees: academic organizational structure [420], graduate and professional programs [421], and undergraduate programs [422]. News about the Strategic Academic Vision was routinely conveyed to the campus and general public through the University's online Panorama newsletter [423]. Through town hall forums [413] and surveys [424], all faculty were regularly consulted.

Each School (Engineering, Natural Sciences, and SSHA) [320], most graduate groups [195] (but not yet the entire graduate division), the Division of Student Affairs [274], the Division of Administration [359] and other major organizational units have developed their own strategic plans. These include plans for a medical school [425] and school of management. Development of the Gallo School of Management is in the proposal phase and is undergoing university-wide review.

The annual planning cycle is initiated in the fall of each year, and is characterized by three critical, distinct, yet interrelated components: the faculty recruitment plan, the instructional budgets, and the administrative/operating budgets. In the fall, the Schools receive essential data from Institutional Planning and Analysis to update their strategic plans. The annual review and updating of these plans assures that they remain aligned with educational objectives and are being appropriately implemented. All educational planning undergoes thorough review by the Academic Senate through its appropriate standing committees [323] including the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation which has established criteria [192] for evaluating these plans. A faculty recruitment plan is submitted to the EVC/Provost, generally in December. This review moves forward to the annual Campus Budget Process. A Call is released that includes specific details on submittals for both instructional budgets for the Schools, as well as operating budgets for all campus entities. The recently established Campus Budget Committee [360] begins the review of documents in early spring and develops recommendations regarding campus resources to be forwarded to the Chancellor for approval. The Committee serves to provide a comprehensive review of the overall investment of campus resources and ensure that these align with the university's mission and highest priorities. (See also CFR 3.5 for related information about the budgeting process.) In effect, institutional planning is coordinated at several levels: the Cabinet [426]; the Planning Workgroup [427], and relevant Faculty Senate Committees (DIVCO, CAPRA, UGC, and GRC).

CFR 4.2 *Planning processes at the institution define and, to the extent possible, align academic, personnel, fiscal, physical, and technological needs with the strategic objectives and priorities of the institution.*

As a shared responsibility of faculty and administrators, planning processes are aligned through the efforts of key committees that have broad campus representation, often including undergraduate and graduate students as well as staff. Routinely, the Chancellor's Cabinet [426] convenes senior campus administrators to discuss a broad range of strategic objectives for such matters as resource allocations that support educational initiatives and operational policies that sustain the campus infrastructure. Monthly, members of the Cabinet meet with all deans and directors in an intra-campus forum that allows multifaceted discussion of institutional needs and priorities [428]. Additionally, the Chancellor meets monthly, and the Provost biweekly, with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Academic Senate. At divisional levels, vice chancellors, deans, directors and other administrators conduct planning within their units based on the larger context of established or emerging strategic objectives for the campus. Appendix 4.2.1 provides examples of campus planning committees.

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,

Appendix 4.2.1 Examples of Campus Planning Committees

- Campus Physical Planning Committee [432]
- Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability [433]
- Administrative Information Technology Council [434]
- Information Technology Advisory Committee [435]
- Campus Budget Committee [360]
- Planning Workgroup [427]
- Integrated Resources Planning Group [436]
- UC Merced Academic Senate Committees: [323]
    - Committee on Academic Personnel [48]
    - Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation [151]
    - Committee on Committees [437]
    - Graduate and Research Council [117]
    - Undergraduate Council [116]