Goals of 2022-23 Campus wide Strategic Planning

This is a defining moment in time for UC Santa Cruz. It has been 57 years since our founding in 1965 and we have matured into a preeminent student-centered research university, an HSI and AANAPISI, and member of the AAU. Over nearly six decades, we have continued to proudly embrace and advance our founding values of social justice and environmental sustainability.

The last campuswide strategic plan, Envision, was launched nine years ago in October 2013 around six goals: advance and support student success, allocate faculty resources strategically, support research excellence, make UC Santa Cruz a place where people enjoy working, address workload issues, and tell the world our story. In 2017-18 the campus launched a Strategic Academic Plan (SAP) with a focus on interdisciplinary research and faculty hiring, and reducing recognized barriers to collaborative and interdisciplinary activities.

The strategic planning we will undertake this year will build on these prior strategic planning efforts, but will be broader than the SAP and similar to Envision in addressing opportunities for improvement and transformation impacting a wide cross section of campus constituents and experiences. The strategic plan will chart a path for progress on our campus goals over the next decade and establish metrics by which success will be measured. The plan will be opportunity-focused, identifying new and emergent future dimensions of research, education and service to advance our global and regional impact, improve the experiences of our students, staff and faculty and strengthen the university in our efforts to lead at the intersection of innovation and social justice.

Charge - Inclusive and Thriving Campus Community Committee

UCSC has long been a voice for inclusion and forward thinking in all realms of the academic enterprise. Our campus has made significant strides in the past decade to support student access and success and to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty and staff. Yet like all institutions, UCSC has opportunities to improve the ways we address issues of structural racism, xenophobia, ableism, and other barriers that impact our members unequally, as recent events have demonstrated. Our students, staff, and faculty continued to advocate in the wake of Black Lives Matter and other social justice movements for campus to uphold its values. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about changes in how and why we work. And in the wake of the CZU Complex Fire, it is impossible to deny that the impending climate emergency has had salient and profound costs that have been unequally borne by low-income communities and communities of color. It is in this context that we must situate our strategic planning effort.

We seek to embed principles of diversity, equity and inclusion because we aspire to extraordinary outcomes in research, scholarship and creative activities, teaching, and other related pursuits. Excellence can only be achieved when the members of our campus community feel respected, valued, and welcomed. The committee will create opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to discuss how the campus should approach improving the diversity, equity, and inclusivity of our campus as reflected in its overall climate over the next decade. Venues for
discussion might include town hall meetings and open forums, both in-person and online, as well as focus groups and surveys. The cross-cutting themes of equity, social justice and academic excellence should be central to every aspect of the committee’s work and meaningfully integrated into all of the committee’s outputs.

The committee is asked to address the following areas but may choose to consider additional topics based on community input.

- Evaluate and learn from our UC peers, CSUs, community colleges, and other public education institutions in California and nationwide.
- Inventory the emerging campus ecosystem of units and leaders for equity, belonging, and inclusion, including the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Equity and Equal Protection; Academic Personnel Office; Hate/Bias Response Team; and the forthcoming Ombuds Office, and propose recommendations to address real and perceived institutional, programmatic, and other equity-related gaps as well as cultures of exclusion.
- Take stock of the DEI committees, positions, leaders and other initiatives (including grant-funded) that have developed outside of central campus offices. Evaluate effectiveness and make recommendations about how to leverage, amplify, and support this work.
- Review current required and optional DEI-related trainings for students, faculty, instructors, teaching assistants, and other academic and non-academic staff and make recommendations for improvements and needed resources.
- Review and recommend best practices to improve diversity (in all its facets) in faculty, staff and student hiring in consultation with the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, Faculty Equity Advocates, and Staff Human Resources, among others.
- Propose mechanisms to conduct larger campus conversations and action plans to ensure an inclusive campus community, recommend clearer pathways to support those experiencing non-inclusive behaviors, and hold each member of our community accountable to our values in the face of ruptures.
- Improve communication flows at departmental, divisional and campus levels on the importance of contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion and inclusive teaching, especially concerning the transparency of their value in the merit review process.

The outcome of the committee’s efforts will be goals, metrics, and a narrative for each area addressed summarized in a report that incorporates campus feedback on how to develop a more inclusive and thriving campus community over the next decade. The final version of the report will be integrated with the work of the other committees to form the campus strategic plan. The committee’s work will also serve as a foundation for the future development of a stand-alone DEI strategic plan.
Upon the completion of the strategic planning process, an implementation committee will be established to monitor progress toward achieving the goals laid out in the strategic plan using the metrics defined in the plan.