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Five-year Leadership Review
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Introduction
As Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor (PEVC), I serve as chief academic and operating officer for the campus, providing leadership to the entire academic enterprise, managing day-to-day operations of the university, overseeing allocation of resources, and serving as a member of the campus leadership team. In the Chancellor's absence, I serve as UCR's chief executive officer. I have been honored to serve in this role at UCR since May 1, 2021.

For those who do not want to read all the way through this report, I begin with a brief bulleted list of some key accomplishments over the past five years. Following this "top ten" list, I write in greater detail about achievements made and challenges encountered in the following areas:
1. Campus engagement and shared governance
2. Strategic planning
3. Budget and financial management
4. Funding PhD and MFA students
5. Campus infrastructure
6. Campus leadership team
7. Faculty affairs
8. Student success
9. Diversity, equity, and inclusion
10. External engagement
11. Systemwide engagement
12. Extraordinary events

Most of the work behind the achievements I discuss in this self-study was done by others: staff and faculty across campus, led by leaders who report to me as well as leaders who report to the chancellor. So, what is my job as provost? I think of it as a braided set of three roles: collaborator, convener, and champion of the academic mission. First, I have developed effective collaborative partnerships with the deans and vice provosts, vice chancellors and associate vice chancellors, Academic Senate, Staff Assembly, and colleagues at the Office of the President. Second, with these collaborative relationships established, I am able as convener to bring people together for collective problem solving. It's easy for academic and administrative units to become siloed, because they have their own work to do and goals to achieve. I bring individuals and groups together to find common ground, avoid duplicative processes, and facilitate cross-disciplinary and cross-functional collaboration in scholarship and creative activities, in teaching and learning, and in administration. Third, as chief champion and cheerleader for the academic mission, I endeavor to keep the people who participate in that mission front and center. It is my job to make sure that faculty have what they need to make original contributions to knowledge in their fields of scholarship and to be effective teachers and mentors; to make sure that students have what they need to flourish in their studies, to complete their degrees in a timely manner, and to embark on careers that are meaningful and personally satisfying; and to make

sure that staff have what they need to do their jobs successfully: namely, financial resources, pleasant workspaces, professional development opportunities, and a collaborative and supportive environment.

Key Accomplishments

- Developed a new strategic plan, UCR 2030, with built-in accountability for leadership to demonstrate measurable improvement toward strategic goals. The plan will guide UCR toward an improved financial position; maximize the performance and elevate the experience of our students, faculty, and staff; and increase the visibility and impact of our university by 2030.

- Launched and funded UCR's first campus interdisciplinary research center, UC Riverside Artificial Intelligence Research and Education Institute (RAISE@UCR), with up to $800,000 invested each year for five years.

- Re-built my leadership team by hiring 11 of the 18 members of the provost's cabinet (six deans, two vice provosts, two associate vice chancellors, university librarian).

- Restructured financial governance at UCR to provide greater transparency of and accountability for the campus budget. The new Campus Finance Committee is more broadly representative, composed of all the deans; all the vice chancellors; the chairs of the Staff Assembly, the Academic Senate, and the Senate Committee on Planning and Budget; and a student representative.

- Identified and invested $25 million of accumulated one-time funds to address deferred educational needs in instructional equipment and resources for the colleges, schools, libraries, and the division of undergraduate education in support of student success.

- Committed to the support of graduate education by investing an additional $7 million in permanent funds and $22 million in one-time funds to meet the obligations of the UAW contracts and to maintain the competitiveness and excellence of UCR's PhD and MFA programs.

- Designed and executed a faculty salary equity program to address salary inequities that grew over the past decade and set in place a mechanism for biennial adjustments. In the first year, all Senate ladder-rank faculty were brought to within 3% of the expected median salary for their discipline, rank, and step.

- Empowered deans with greater authorization and agency to make strategic investments and operational decisions in running their schools/colleges. Deans now have final decision authority for faculty hiring, including composition of start-up packages, and for appointing associate deans, center directors, and department chairs. This

decentralization has led to more streamlined processes and to less competition among deans for central resources.

- Re-allocated space across campus to consolidate administrative office space, co-locate related units, and free up space for academic units. Our commitment to allowing staff to work hybrid schedules facilitated a more rationalized approach to efficient and productive use of space on campus to meet student and faculty needs.

- Established a [Threat Assessment Consultation Team](). This standing group is tasked with identification, assessment, intervention, prevention, and management of situations potentially threatening to the safety and well-being of the campus community. Also implemented periodic tabletop planning exercises for leadership to continuously improve readiness to respond to emergency situations.

Campus Engagement and Shared Governance

When I first arrived in Riverside, I met with as many groups and individuals as possible, to get to know people and to get them to know me. I have continued that engagement over the years. I've met with every academic department (multiple times for many of them), all major Senate committees, every faculty executive committee, every dean's leadership team, the leadership teams and all-staff gatherings of most of the administrative units, Staff Assembly, student leaders, the retirees and emeriti organization, UCR Faculty Association, UCR Women's Faculty Association, the UCR Foundation board and individual board members, and the chancellor's ethnic advisory committees. Once the campus re-opened after the pandemic, I went out and about to meet people where they work, rather than always having them come to me.

I also take every opportunity to engage with faculty, staff, and students at their events. I've guest-lectured in undergraduate classes and attended the presentations of the chancellor's undergraduate research fellows and MacREU fellows and Grad Slam competitors, welcomed scholarship recipients and their families at Highlander Day, met with president's and chancellor's postdoctoral fellows, given a talk for Osher Lifelong Learning, welcomed new faculty and new chairs and new staff at their respective orientations, keynoted at the staff professional development conference and at the meeting of Riverside Women in Technology (UCR WIT), gave out awards at the annual Staff Assembly award ceremony, and joined lots of different groups and programs at all sorts of gatherings and events to make remarks. I have attended sporting events to cheer on our athletics teams, student plays, musical concerts, dance recitals, staff milestone celebrations, groundbreakings and ribbon-cuttings for several new buildings, openings of art exhibitions at UCR ARTS, and lectures by our own faculty and invited external speakers.

I have held multiple town halls for faculty and for staff on the campus strategic plan, the campus budget, graduate student funding, and the university's responses to federal impacts.

I work closely with the Academic Senate. I meet monthly with the Senate chair 1:1; monthly with the chair, vice chair, and chancellor; and monthly with the committee on academic

personnel to review faculty merit and promotion files I also attend meetings of the executive council, graduate council, committee on faculty welfare, committee on planning and budget, committee on physical resources, and any other committees that invite me. When putting together a search committee for an academic leader (e.g., dean), I meet with the chair of the committee on committees and the respective chair of the faculty executive committee.

I have sought formal Senate consultation on a myriad of issues, including:
- Student evaluations of teaching
- Universal masking during the pandemic
- Life events policy for half-step merit advancement
- Modification of the Excellence Review process of Unit 18 Faculty
- New process for search committee formation for provost level searches
- Strategic plan UCR 2030
- Adding new initiative on diversity in faculty hiring to strategic plan
- Adding new initiative on enrollment of California resident undergraduates
- Review of academic research centers guidance document
- Faculty retention procedures
- Campus space policy
- Review of FLEAP (faculty-led education abroad programs) approval process
- Path to retirement for faculty

I have also appreciated the willingness of Senate committees to meet informally with me to discuss new ideas and approaches to existing challenges.

I maintain robust engagement with the Staff Assembly. I meet quarterly with leadership and, as noted above, regularly attend their events. In my first year, I doubled the permanent budget allocation to that organization. I funded their annual staff professional development conference and their pop-up food pantries for staff, until these events were folded into the HR budget. I also initiated and provided funding support for HR's reimagining of its new employee orientation. I was honored to receive a special award from Staff Assembly in 2022 "in appreciation for outstanding service and dedication to the UCR community."

In addition to the engagements with students noted above, I meet quarterly with the president of ASUCR and with the president of the Graduate Student Association.

Finally, I initiated office hours that rotate weekly for faculty, staff, and students, and have continued to offer these opportunities for 1:1 engagement every month during the academic year.

I mention these engagement activities to convey my strong belief that a leader must be visible and accessible. It is as important for me to get to know the students, faculty, and staff as it is for them to get to know me as a person. I hope then that the communications I send out with the goal of transparency and accountability will be read not as impersonal missives from a faceless administrator, but rather as reasoned and considered messages from someone they know.

Strategic Planning

One of my biggest achievements at UCR has been the successful launch of the strategic plan, UCR 2030. The significance of this achievement is two-fold: first, we now have a plan with initiatives, action items, and metrics to guide us toward an improved financial position; an explicit set of goals to maximize the performance and elevate the experience of our students, faculty, and staff; and greater visibility and impact of our university by 2030. Second, it completed the long process of strategic planning begun five years earlier and allowed the campus community to move on from planning to doing.

When I arrived in 2021, the campus had stalled in its efforts to develop a plan to replace the one that ended in 2020 and disagreed about a path forward. I met with many groups – the strategic plan steering committee, faculty Senate committees, the Staff Assembly executive board, the deans' council, the provost's and chancellor's cabinets, and community groups – and in May 2022, I submitted a completely revised proposal to the Academic Senate. I reconceived the plan as a dynamic website (instead of a traditional static document that would gather dust on a shelf) that would serve as a living document to state our intentions, hold ourselves accountable, and demonstrate measurable improvement toward our goals. We launched the UCR 2030 website – the central campus plan plus 18 academic and administrative unit-specific plans – in May 2023. Every year, I require campus leaders to link their annual goal setting to the priorities of the strategic plan, I formally report on our progress to the Academic Senate and Staff Assembly, and we update the website with evidence of that progress. In these ways, I aim for action, accountability, and transparency in fulfilling the ambitions outlined in our strategic plan.

In 2024, the Senate approved expansion of the objective under Strategic Goal II: Address Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Professional Growth to include a new initiative: Increase the number of Senate faculty from historically underrepresented backgrounds. In 2025-26, we are engaged in consultative exchange with the Senate about including an explicit initiative to increase the enrollment of California resident undergraduates.

We have made the greatest progress on Strategic Goal #3 (expand the visibility and scope of influence of UCR locally, nationally, and globally), achieving almost all the objectives set for ourselves. We were invited to join the Association of American Universities (AAU) in 2023; we achieved additional national recognition in 2024 with the Carnegie Classification in Community Engagement and the APLU Classification in Innovation and Economic Prosperity, and we advanced research and economic development in the Inland Empire by investing in UCR's first multi-college interdisciplinary research center (see more about RAISE in the section below on Faculty Affairs) and by securing full funding for and breaking ground on the building of the SoCal OASIS Park on University Avenue in 2025.

Progress has been more mixed on Strategic Goal #1 (build financial stability, resiliency, and sustainability) and Strategic Goal #2 (invest in the success of the people who teach, research, work, learn, and live at UCR). One of the biggest challenges I have faced over the past five years

is trying to stabilize our financial position. Expenditures, mostly mandated salary and benefit increases, far exceed new revenues each year. Many factors affecting our expenditures and revenues are beyond our control, i.e., the Regents determine whether to increase tuition, the State budget to the UC has not kept up with rising costs, our enrollment is affected by other UC campuses' enrollment decisions, the current federal administration has made it difficult to attract international students to come to UCR, and salary and benefit increases are set by union contracts and the Office of the President. That said, I have tried hard to move us forward on the action items that can bring in additional revenue. I've supported the increase in summer enrollment (30% from 2022 to 2025), which brings both tuition and state allocation revenue to campus; I've paid for market studies for the development of several new master's programs currently in the proposal process to bring in more students at that level; I've launched incentive programs for International Affairs and Undergraduate Admissions to reward their work in recruiting nonresident students who pay the nonresident supplemental tuition; and I've traveled to several countries to recruit international students.

For the original faculty initiatives under Strategic Goal #2, we achieved both action items: the implementation of a salary equity program and the implementation of a CORO faculty leadership program. These developments are discussed in the section below on Faculty Affairs. Challenges related to graduate student success are discussed in the section below on Budget and Financial Management in the subsection on funding PhD and MFA students. Despite the support for developing new master's programs, these have been slow to come to fruition. Undergraduate student success is discussed in the section below on Student Success.

We have increased the number of staff from 2928 in 2022 to 3300 in 2025, an increase of 12.7%. During the current system-mandated hiring "freeze", I have approved all exceptions so that university operations are not hindered by staff separations or the need for additional personnel.

We have been able to enhance campus space (initiative under Strategic Goal #2) by expanding new and improving existing teaching facilities and opening additional student housing. The following teaching labs have been or are in the midst of being renovated: Pierce Labs 3326, 3344, 3360, and 3341; Chapman Hall 109 Lab: Physics 2144; Entomology Museum; and Humanities 411.

New classroom buildings that have been opened since I arrived in 2021 are the Student Success Building, the School of Medicine Education II building, and the School of Business Building, and the Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Facility (UTLF) will open for fall 2026.

New student housing opened since 2021 includes North District I and North District II; North District III is currently in the planning phase. The new Student Health Center also opened during this period.

Obviously, all the accomplishments listed in this section were the result of the hard work and collaboration of many, many staff across campus. My role has been to develop the framework

for measuring progress toward our goals, holding leaders of the units accountable for working toward our shared objectives, and providing the settings (Academic Senate divisional meetings, campus town halls, the UCR 2030 website) for tracking and reporting that progress in a transparent fashion.

Budget and Financial Management

When I arrived in 2021, the chancellor delegated oversight of the budget to me, and I work in close collaboration with the VCPBA and budget director. The first thing I did was to restructure financial governance at UCR. I replaced the Budget Advisory Committee with the larger and more broadly representative Campus Finance Committee. The BAC had 10 members (4 permanent [provost, associate provost, VCPBA, and chair of Senate P&B committee] and 6 rotating [2 deans, 2 CFAOs, 1 non-academic org head, and 1 auxiliary unit rep]. The 24-member CFC is composed of all the deans; all the vice chancellors; the chairs of the Staff Assembly, the Academic Senate, and the Senate Committee on Planning and Budget; and a student rep. The group meets monthly. Through this new structure, we have been able to educate campus leaders about the campus core budget; my expectation is that the leaders will cascade this information down to the faculty and staff in their organizations and that they will receive input from their constituencies to bring back to inform our deliberations.

I am proud to have maintained a balanced operating budget at UCR. We undergo an annual process of tallying our projected revenues and expenses, starting in January with first announcement of governor's budget. In FY22 and FY23, we had a budget surplus and were able to allocate additional available perm funding. In FY24, we had to developed models for budget cuts, largely through salary savings, to meet our central financial obligations in FY25. We made the decision not to impose another round of budget cuts for FY26, but instead to cover the difference between revenues and expenses with cash reserves in anticipation of a greater state allocation because of our increased enrollment in FY27.

At least once a year, and sometimes more often, I communicate via email to campus to explain the rationales for decisions made about the budget. I also hold town halls for staff and faculty with opportunity for Q&A. These interactive sessions are recorded and posted for later viewing by those who cannot attend in real time.

What follows are key financial decisions by fiscal year:
FY22
- Disposition of institutional HEERF funds (>$26 million direct to students, faculty, and staff needs and exclusive of lost revenue reimbursement).
- Permanent allocation increase to ITS ($8 million): The single most common issue I heard in my first year at UCR was the inability of the existing ITS team to meet the service and infrastructure needs of the campus. The CFC voted unanimously to increase funding for this unit to address the deficit in this critical aspect of campus operations.
- Permanent allocation of 14% of central F&A back to schools and colleges for faculty start-up packages ($7 million in FY23): This move gave deans greater authority and

agency over their college/school budgets; they no longer have to apply for permission to the provost to make faculty hiring decisions.

- Shifted to tuition weighting for distribution of enrollment growth revenues: After several months of investigation and discussion, the CFC decided to adopt the recommendation from the joint faculty-admin report written in 2020 to weight tuition allocation for undergraduate enrollment growth (BCOE=1.5, CNAS=1.3, all others=1) to more accurately reflects the cost of education.

FY23
- Faculty salary equity program (see details in section below on Faculty Affairs).
- $25 million of accumulated lottery funds (one-time monies) to address deferred instructional needs. The Library received $4.5 million (for collections, compact shelving, and enhanced learning spaces), University Extension received $370,000 (for instructional technology and digital production), Undergraduate Education received $725,000 (for graduate student assistants in XCITE and for a customer relations management system as requested by the academic advisors), and $752,000 was allocated for a campus video production studio. Each college and school received an initial block grant (BCOE $650,000, CHASS $850,000, CNAS $850,000, Business $350,000, SOE $300,000, SOM $300,000, SPP $300,000). Then, in consultation with department chairs, the deans developed additional needs lists, which were funded up to the following amounts (BCOE $4.23 million, CHASS $4.522 million, CNAS $6.831 million, and Business $168,000). These allocations enabled us to address "deferred maintenance" of instructional equipment and resources that had accumulated over the years.
- $2.5 million of annual permanent revenue from the California Lottery allocated to support urgent campus-wide needs, rather than letting the funds accumulate. These funds supported:
    - four librarian positions to support quantitative and information literacy
    - five staff in Undergraduate Education (academic interventions; transfer student success; instructional design; and two in pre-professional advising)
    - academic student employees in the Academic Resource Center (to support tutoring, ARC 35, Writing Center, Supplemental Instruction, and Highlander Early Start Academy)
    - Supplemental Instruction in the Academic Resource Center to address both STEM and non-STEM needs
    - professional development for academic advisors
    - expansion of high-impact practices (e.g., undergraduate research projects).
- Other new campus investments supported:
    - establishment of an Occupational Health program
    - transportation services for mobility-impaired members of our community
    - increase in the annual budget for Staff Assembly
    - permanent Title IX officer
    - campus Fire Safety officer
    - new Preventive Maintenance program in Facilities Services (3 staff plus budget for materials)

    o three new Articulation Specialists in Enrollment Services who support college and school advising teams by reducing the advisors' workload burden by 7500 hours/year

    o support of Student Affairs staff and operations.

FY24
- As in all previous years, most new revenue went toward salaries and benefits.
- $7 million in new permanent funding went to support the new TA salary scales and graduate student fellowships.
- $2.25 million was invested in central Human Resources.
- $772,000 was allocated to the Student Disabilities Resource Center.

FY25
- Revenues were insufficient to cover the fixed costs of mandated salary and benefit increases and utility cost increases, so VCPBA and I implemented a salary savings program that returned $17 million to the central campus to maintain a balanced core budget. Encouraging org heads to spend down their accumulated carryforwards meant that the salary savings program (which amounted to a ~2-4% budget cut for each unit) resulted in minimal impact to staff and faculty hiring plans.

Funding PhD and MFA Students
I spent a great deal of time in AY23-24 working on a new funding model for PhD students in response to the UAW contracts. With support from the VCPBA and his teams in Institutional Research and Financial Planning & Analysis, and in active consultation with a PhD Funding Workgroup that consisted of deans, college CFAOs, and Senate leaders, we rationalized the allocation of funding for fellowships and TA-ships.

In figuring out how to meet the costs of the new UAW contracts for TAs and GSRs, it became clear the cohort model in place at UCR was neither sufficient nor equitable for our graduate students. In 2020-21, the average "per student average" funding level from the Graduate Division was $30,000. Of that, $17,000 went to pay for tuition (including health care), leaving the student with an average $13,000 stipend for living expenses. Some students received a $5000 "add-on" for merit or diversity from central funds (administered by the Graduate Division). Neither $18,000 or $13,000 was enough to live on, so some first-year students (20% in 2022-23) worked as TAs and others worked as GSRs during quarters when they also received fellowship support, either to make ends meet or because of their program's requirements. In addition, 5% of first year PhD students and 6.5% of continuing PhD students took out federal loans.

Also, the "per student average" varied among programs. In 2020-21, for example, it ranged from $28,000 to $35,000 (and these totals included the $17,000 for tuition and health insurance, so the average net stipend amount varied from $11,000 to $18,000). Furthermore, student stipends varied within programs. In 2018-19, the total stipend range for first-year students enrolled for fall/winter/spring was $3,273 to $32,821, and the range for just the amounts from

the central first-year fellowship allocated through the Graduate Division (without any add-ons) was $1,563 to $19,800. Thus, there was significant inequity across colleges, programs, and individuals in first-year stipends, beyond what might be expected given the differences in competition for students in different disciplines.

The UAW contract forced us to reckon not only with the insufficiency of salaries for TAs and GSRs in the UC system, but also with the insufficiency and inequity of our cohort model system at UCR. For this academic year, 2023-24, we dipped into one-time funds to be able to offer every first-year student three quarters of fellowship at $29,000 (exclusive of tuition, fees, and health insurance), the same amount as the first increment of the TA salary scale. From that point on, we made the decision offer our PhD students a multiyear funding package that includes a guaranteed annual minimum salary/stipend equal to the first increment of the TA salary scale. This minimum standard provided greater equity to our PhD students across campus.

All told, we invested $7 million in new permanent funds and $22 million in one-time funds to meet the obligations of the UAW contracts and to maintain the competitiveness and excellence of UCR's PhD and MFA programs. Adequate funding for PhD/MFA students remains a serious challenge for us at UCR. This challenge will only grow once the new contract is negotiated this spring, as no new money will come from either the state or the Office of the President to cover increased costs.

Campus Infrastructure
<u>Information Technology</u>
As noted above in the Budget section, I initiated discussion of an increase to the permanent funding for ITS to address severe deficiencies in the ability of that unit to meet the needs of the campus. CFC recommended, and the chancellor and I approved, an increase of $8 million in FY22.

After hiring a new CIO in 2022, I directed him to develop an IT governance structure that would be more consultative, collaborative, and responsive to the multiplicity of campus requests and needs. The existing IT Executive Committee (consisting of just 5 members – PEVC, VCPBA, VCRED, VCSA, and CIO – notably, no faculty representatives!) and two advisory committees (one academic, the other administrative, also with very few faculty participants) was replaced with a much more sophisticated and comprehensive structure of ten IT governance advisory boards, each populated with faculty, students, and staff whose subject matter expertise aligns with the board's domain. The co-chairs of these advisory boards then sit on the IT Strategy Council, along with the CIO, PEVC, chairs of the Academic Senate and the Senate's IT Committee, vice chancellors, representatives from the deans' offices, and student leaders. This more broadly representative structure provides effective management to ensure limited resources are effectively invested and aligned with campus priorities.

<u>Space management</u>

As Provost, I oversee the allocation of all space on campus. In 2023-24, with the purchase of the property on Iowa Street and our commitment to allowing staff to work hybrid schedules, we were able to consolidate administrative office space, to co-locate related units, and to free up space for academic units:

- Hinderaker: HR, Compliance, and VPAR re-located into our central administrative building.
- Student Services Building: Enrollment Services consolidated its units on the 3rd floor of the Student Services Building, enabling Undergraduate Education and International Affairs to move onto the 2nd floor. I authorized space for Basic Needs and Underground Scholars on the 2nd floor as well.
- Skye: Space vacated on the 2nd and 3rd floors of Skye Hall was given to Mathematics, Engineering, and Education.
- Olmsted: The School of Public Policy expanded its footprint outside CHASS Interdisciplinary into the 3rd floor of Olmsted Hall. When the School of Business vacated the 2nd floor of Olmsted, that space was allocated to CNAS, enabling the college to consolidate its dean's office and administrative services and to provide additional space to Statistics.
- College Building North: Space was made for the Labor Center to be co-located with the Center for Ideas and Society.
- Webber: CNAS was assigned most of the space on the 1st and 2nd floors of Webber, allowing for faculty lab expansion.

<u>Campus safety</u>
During my first year, the chancellor asked me to chair the Campus Safety Workgroup, to complete the action items on the President's campus safety implementation plan. At the end of the year, we concluded this work by successfully facilitating the transition to the Police Accountability Board.

I was surprised when I arrived at UCR to find no clear plan for what do in the case of a situation that may pose a threat to the safety and well-being of the campus community. I directed the VCHWS to establish a Threat Assessment Consultation Team (TACT). Now UCR has a standing group tasked with identification, assessment, intervention, prevention, and management of these situations as soon as they arise.

I restructured the Emergency Management Planning Group (EMPG) for greater efficiency and re-started periodic EMPG tabletop planning exercises for continuous improvement of leadership's readiness to respond to emergency situations. We have held tabletop exercises on possible situations such as civil disturbance, bomb threat, internet hate speech, and active shooter.

I also brought together the director of the Office of Emergency Management and the director of the XCITE Center for Teaching and Learning to develop and communicate emergency classroom preparation materials to campus, including the updated UCR Safe app.

Sustainability

I meet regularly with the UCR Sustainability committee and its leadership. After several years of supporting the faculty director of that group with a course release, I elevated the position to Special Advisor on Sustainability with a larger compensation package. I moderate the panel of deans at the annual Academic Sustainability Retreat. I also moderated a faculty panel on sustainability for the UCR Foundation Board, to elevate their engagement with sustainability work on campus. I funded a graduate student to help the sustainability committee faculty director with our triennial submission to the AASHE STARS program and convened the deans to support that effort. In 2025, UCR earned top ratings along with an overall gold award.

When the student referendum on a fee to support the R'Garden failed because of insufficient voter participation, I arranged for temporary funding of the R'Garden to keep it going until another referendum could pass successfully.

Campus Leadership

Since 2021, I have run national searches for and hired 11 of the 18 members of the provost's cabinet (six deans, two vice provosts, two associate vice chancellors, university librarian). Having a stable leadership that works well together is critical for the smooth operation and ultimate success of our academic enterprise at UCR.

To ensure the success of executive level searches, I consulted with the Senate to develop a new process for search committee formation to provide for greater consultation and meaningful engagement from all stakeholders.

I've taken several steps to give the deans greater authorization and agency to make strategic investments and operational decisions in running their schools/colleges. This change has reduced competition among deans for resources, reduced arbitrary top-down decisions from the provost's office, and fostered greater synergies and collaborations among deans and their colleges/schools. These include:
- Converting all originally centrally funded faculty funding to permanent school/college funding
- Revising funding policy for faculty transfers between schools/colleges
- Moving research F&A into permanent budget allocations (part of core, with state funding and tuition)
- Revising allocation methodology for F&A from center to schools and colleges to give deans' full authority for start-up packages
- Giving deans full authority for regular faculty hiring
- Giving deans final authority on naming associate deans, center directors, and department chairs (CAP retains review over the latter).

Under Chancellor Wilcox, I planned and led the annual fall retreat for the chancellor's and provost's cabinets, on the following topics:

- 2021: Earning and spending (revenue generation and strategic investments)
- 2022: Enrollment planning and strategies to increase the average per student credit load
- 2023: Learning and working at UCR post-covid (addressing learning loss; navigating the hybrid world)
- 2024: Diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices (led by an outside facilitator, see more below in the section on DEI).

Faculty Affairs

In summer 2021, I directed $9 million from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to support junior faculty at UCR. All assistant professors and assistant professors of teaching were eligible to hire a GSR (PhD or MFA student) for one academic year, with the campus paying for tuition, fees, and salary. If the faculty member chose not to hire a graduate student to support their research, they instead received a one-time grant of $15,000 to fund research expenses. Unlike associate and full professors, assistant professors do not yet have security of employment. Many of them experienced disruptions to their research programs due to the pandemic. Graduate students also experienced disruptions in their research, delays in their progress toward completion, and increased challenges securing funding. This plan was designed to assist both groups.

Another important accomplishment in the realm of faculty affairs was the implementation of a biennial salary equity program for Senate ladder-rank faculty members that 1) addressed salary inequities that had grown over the past decade and 2) established a mechanism for biennial adjustments. This program identifies faculty whose professorial academic-year salaries are below expectations relative to comparable UCR peers and for which there is no explanation that would offer justification, and, subject to budget availability, makes adjustments to bring those salaries closer to expectations. The equity adjustments implemented October 1, 2022, brought 213 faculty members to within 3% of their projected median and represented a campus investment of $1.3 million. I set the expectation that APO would conduct the salary equity review every two years and that deans would fund the salary increases to the agreed-upon level. In 2024, all Senate ladder-rank faculty were brought up to within 5% of their projected median, in spite of the budget cut imposed during that fiscal year.

In 2023, I announced the implementation of a faculty leadership development program. UCR Faculty Leadership training is conducted by the Academic Personnel Office in collaboration with Coro Northern California, a nationally known leadership training organization. Each cohort of about 20 faculty members participates in seminars, intersession assignments, and a group project. Coro facilitators serve as individual coaches and group guides in the leadership development process. Participants are introduced to Coro tools and apply them to real life challenges within the UCR community. Of the first cohort, five out of 20 moved into leadership positions on campus.

During consultation with the Senate on the new strategic plan, I heard a consistent request for central campus investment in interdisciplinary research. After many discussions with faculty in 2023 and 2024 (think-tank lunches, individual meetings, presentations to Academic Senate) and

deans, Rodolfo Torres and I wrote and promoted a call for proposals for UCR's first centrally supported interdisciplinary research center. Sixteen applications were submitted by teams of faculty from at least three colleges each. VCRED and I led the selection committee (the deans plus the chair of the academic Senate Committee on Research), and the winning team was announced in June 2024 (UC Riverside Artificial Intelligence Research and Education Institute (RAISE@UCR). I developed a plan to provide five years of central funding (a total of $4 million) to the RAISE center by re-allocating permanent budget from the underperforming Palm Desert Campus and by re-directing the Presidential Chair endowment (the annual payout and accumulated unspent funds) to support the center and its co-directors.

The VPAP and I used the very successful thinktank luncheon format (that had been used to generate ideas for the campus interdisciplinary research center competition) in 2024-25 to explore the topic of Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARO) in the merit and promotion process. Six sessions were held, two each for groups of full professors, associate professors, and assistant professors. The primary objectives of these sessions were to explore the motivations behind ARO, to communicate the necessity for campus-wide conversations on the topic, and to evaluate alternative approaches for its implementation. The resulting report, shared with campus in my fall 2025 campus update and posted on the APO website, consolidated the discussions and highlighted key ideas regarding the future direction of ARO at UCR. It is now being used by the systemwide committee on academic personnel evaluations that is considering guidelines and best practices in ARO.

VPAP and I have already championed the campus adoption of several accommodations based on ARO principles, namely:
- Covid retroactive promotion pay: Permits (by vote) retroactive salary increases for faculty whose promotions were clearly delayed due to pandemic-related challenges.
- Life event outcome: Recognizes partial progress toward merit advances during qualifying life events that interrupted normal progression. This new type of outcome ensures support and empathy for faculty facing personal or professional adversities.
- Federal impact merit half-step: Modeled on the covid-impact merit half-step, to account for challenges resulting from federal actions.

Regarding faculty advancement, I read and review every merit and promotion file (about 300-350 each year) as well as appointment files at the level of associate professor and above and all retention files. I've supported and publicized several data analyses conducted by the Vice Provost of Academic Personnel Office on:
- Year-end reviews of merit and promotion outcomes, including agreement rate between merit and promotion review entities.
- Faculty salary equity adjustments: as noted above, these analyses are used to bring faculty salaries to within a few percentage points of their expected median salary.
- Progression rate of faculty: This analysis examined each faculty member's career trajectory and was disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and STEMM versus non-STEMM fields. The findings showed that, while there are occasional differences in the time spent

at various steps, the magnitude of those differences was small, and the differences were not biased toward any gender or ethnicity group.

- Equity in chair compensation: As a result of this study, deans adjusted compensation structures for chairs to promote fairness and consistency.
- Transparency in associate/divisional dean compensation: Here, too, the study resulted in adjustments to compensation packages for associate deans in the colleges and schools.
- Stop the clock usage: This analysis found that faculty members, regardless of gender or ethnicity, utilized the policy at similar rates when they faced eligible circumstances, indicating equitable access to this option within the tenure review process.

Student Success

I believe that fostering student success has to be a team sport. It can't be the sole responsibility of a single office on campus. It's not just the purview of academic affairs or just the purview of student affairs: the two have to work hand in hand. At UCR, I've brought together the vice provost and dean of undergraduate education (VPDUE), the vice chancellor of student affairs (VCSA), the vice chancellor of health, well-being, and safety (VCHWS), the associate vice chancellor of enrollment services (AVC-ES), and the college deans to work on several collaborative ventures to knit a tightly woven safety net to prevent students from falling through cracks.

Some of those efforts included:

- Increasing participation in summer sessions by 30% from 2022 to 2025
- Funding faculty learning communities to redesign courses for more equitable, active, and inclusive learning (Rethinking Instructional Design for Learning Engagement, equitable and inclusive pedagogy, active learning, lowering failure fates in high DFW courses)
- Redesigning orientation for first years and transfers to build community and foster greater student engagement
- Working with colleges to expand their use of data to identify interventions to improve retention and reduce equity gaps and to track metrics
- Supporting the redesign of the math curriculum to eliminate the need for non-credit ARC 035
- Identifying and implementing the Global Career Accelerator internship program, which has enrolled over 1000 students in the first year
- Bringing academic advisers into closer contact with by providing these professional staff with the tools to communicate with each other, such as CRM software, for holistic advising.

In 2022-23, I worked with the Interim VPDUE to reorganize the Division of Undergraduate Education for improved functionality and greater connection with colleges/schools.

- Associate deans were appointed to provide faculty leadership within the unit.

- The Honors Program was returned to UE to foster synergies with other UE departments, such as the Center for Undergraduate Research and Engaged Learning and the XCITE Center for Teaching and Learning.
- Identified a more appropriate administrative home for Summer Sessions and moved that group into Enrollment Services.
- Identified a more appropriate administrative home for the First Gen program and moved that group into Student Affairs.
- Completed a successful search for VPDUE.

Starting in 2023, I have worked very closely with the new VPDUE and with the Associate Provost to advance several important efforts:
- Comprehensive advising initiative. My role here has been to approve the adoption of a CRM (customer relations management) system to facilitate communications among academic advisors and also between academic advisers and financial aid advisers, basic needs advisers, career counselors, and mental health counselors. I funded travel for a team of nine advisers to visit the University of South Carolina, to learn from their nationally recognized advising system. I provided start-up funds for CHASS and CNAS to hire assistant deans for student success and bridge funds to support peer academic advising in BCOE. I also worked with CFC to approve new funding for three articulation specialists to be hired in the Registrar's Office to relieve 7500 hours of annual work from the academic advisers in the colleges/schools.
- Commissioned a report on undergraduate student retention (2024). Led by the Associate Provost and the VPDUE, this paper analyzed student retention and progression data to understand why students left UCR, to identify predictors of non-persistence, and concrete recommendations for implementing strategies to improve retention. These strategies are now being implemented by central units in UE and within the colleges and schools
- Commissioned a white paper on career and professional development (2025), also authored by the Associate Provost, to assess the existing landscape of career and professional development opportunities for undergraduates at UCR and to identify promising strategies for UCR to expand this work in support of student career readiness post-graduation. This report was used to bring together deans and faculty leaders to discuss implementation strategies; it is currently being used as a blueprint for collaborative work between UE and the Career Center.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
To address the troubling widening of equity gaps in achievement since the pandemic, especially for our Black students, I encouraged and authorized the hiring of a Black Student Success coordinator, who reports jointly to Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs, who works to foster an inclusive climate for our Black students and improve their retention at UCR. I also encouraged and offered funding support for African Student Programs to pilot a summer bridge program for new Black students. The program was minimally successful, which might have had

something to do with the limited time to plan and advertise. The Black Student Success coordinator is now working more closely with HESA to expand summer programming.

To diversity the faculty at UCR, I shepherded the proposal to expand the objective under Strategic Goal #2: Address Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Professional Growth to include the new initiative: "increase the number of Senate faculty from historically underrepresented backgrounds" through numerous consultations with chancellor's cabinet, provost's cabinet, Legal Affairs, and the Academic Senate. Since its adoption, I have included in my annual performance appraisal the objective for the coming year to increase the number of Senate faculty from historically underrepresented backgrounds. I measure that progress each year in terms of whether the percentage of faculty from historically underrepresented backgrounds hired in that academic year will exceed the percentages from those groups among current faculty. For AY24-25, new faculty hires were 16.9% URM as compared to 13.5% of the current faculty. [URM = Black/Afro-American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Hispanic/Latin American/Latino/Mex/Mex-Amer/Chicano, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.] Similarly, I have encouraged deans to diversify their leadership teams: in AY23 for example, the percentage of women and persons from underrepresented groups among the 22 chairs and associate deans newly appointed was higher compared to the 57 reappointments. To accelerate diversification of faculty, I provide financial support from the strategic initiative fund every year to pay for as many chancellor's postdoctoral fellows (the parallel program to UC-wide president's postdocs, for scholars underrepresented in their disciplines) as can be recruited to UCR with the expectation that departments endeavor to hire these individuals into tenure-track positions.

As noted above in the section on Faculty Affairs, I've supported and publicized several data analyses out of the Academic Personnel Office to evaluate equity by gender and race/ethnicity in a) merits and promotions, b) faculty progression through the rank and step structure, c) use of stop-the-clocks to extend the pre-tenure period, and d) hiring of Senate faculty. Note: none of these studies has revealed systemic inequity by gender or race/ethnicity.

Also, as noted above in the section on Campus leadership, I planned the first leadership retreat on DEI to be held in many years. I hired Dr. Carlos Hoyt to facilitate the September 2024 retreat and then collaborated with the vice chancellor of diversity, equity, and inclusion (VCDEI) on planning for the day-long leadership retreat. The work began in March 2024, when VCDEI and I brought Dr. Hoyt to campus for two days of one-on-one meetings with campus leaders to develop materials for the retreat. Over the summer, retreat participants read and reviewed a set of written and video materials, and each wrote a two-page reflection that they discussed individually with Dr. Hoyt. The reflections were shared with the whole group and served as the basis for the opening discussion at the in-person retreat in September. The remainder of the day was dedicated to the practical application of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles to real-life situations encountered by senior administrators, and discussions resulted in consensus around two follow-up action items: 1) to share the materials within their organizations and develop opportunities for facilitated conversations among staff to improve relationships across differences and 2) to redouble efforts to increase enrollment, retention, and graduation of underrepresented students, especially in the STEM fields, which historically have been less

diverse than the humanities and social sciences. Unfortunately, after January 20, 2025, we were forced to turn our attention to staving off the existential threat to our DEI programs and efforts across campus.

External Engagement
Although the role of the provost is to focus on running the campus so that the chancellor may focus their attention on external stakeholders (office of the president; local, state, and federal elected officials; philanthropic donors; the business community; etc.), I have been able to participate in many interactions with these external stakeholders and to represent UCR both nationally and internationally.

In Riverside, I spent three years as a member of the executive board of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce. I also participate in meetings of and make presentations to meetings of the chancellor's community advisory committees (Grier Concerned Citizens of UCR, Native American Advisory Committee, Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Chicano/Latino Affairs).

I have attended on behalf of the chancellor the annual Presidential Summit of the American Talent Initiative and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences annual Higher Education Forum (twice). I was a panel participant at a session on "Equity-&-Excellence at Hispanic-Serving Institutions" at the annual UERU conference, and I was proud to travel to Washington, DC, to receive the renewal of UCR's Seal of Excelencia.

I also represented UCR at two annual president's meetings of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (Hong Kong, Auckland). In Auckland, I moderated a panel of international presidents on climate change. I also spoke on the role of partnerships at a time of crisis at the Times Higher Ed Asia Summit in Hong Kong. I attended the QS Back to School Summit and the Times Higher Ed US Universities Summit, and I am scheduled to speak at the QS Middle East Higher Ed summit this spring. These engagement activities are intended to raise the international visibility of UCR. To that same end, I have met with universities and government officials in South Korea, China, and Taiwan, and I have hosted yield events for accepted students and alumni reunion events in China, India, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Systemwide Work
Being part of the UC system means that I spend a fair amount of time in systemwide work. The PEVCs' group is called COVC (council of vice chancellors) and we meet biweekly (alternating between one-hour and three-hour Zooms, plus three two-day in-person meetings each year).

I serve on the following system-wide standing committees:
- Executive Budget Committee: review, advise, and make recommendations to the President on the development of the UC Office of the President annual budget.
- Labor Strategy Group: advise systemwide labor relations and bargaining teams on principles and strategies during labor negotiations with all unions.

I have served on the following limited-term committees and workgroups:

- Earmarks Review Committee: reviewed the University's practice of earmarking a portion of its annual State General Fund appropriation for specific campus or systemwide programs.
- UC Academic Planning Council's Senate-Admin Workgroup on master's programs (co-chair).
- Search committee for the system-wide Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs (chair).
- University Committee on Academic Disruption (UCAD) Plus sub-committee on Academic Personnel Evaluations (co-chair).

Extraordinary Events

It seems like every year has brought an unusual challenge on top of the usual business of running our academic enterprise.

1. Return to campus from covid (2021-22)

One of the very first challenges I faced was preparing for the return to campus in September 2021, after it had been closed for 18 months. Working in collaboration with senior leadership and the Academic Senate, I developed FAQs for instructors for return to campus and what we called "compassionate criteria" for faculty to move courses from in-person to remote. In January 2022, I had to make the difficult decision to extend remote instruction from 2 to 4 weeks. I felt it was important to explain the rationale for this decision to campus, which I did in my winter quarterly update. I also sent a second communication in advance of the resumption of in-person instruction on January 31st, along with a third communication reminding faculty and staff about the compassionate clause. In May, I communicated with campus about our decision to re-mask for finals and commencements at the end of spring quarter. All of these decisions were informed by the best public health evidence available to us at the time. Through direct emails, updated websites, and cascaded information via unit leaders, I strived to communicate not just the "what" of these decisions but also the "why."

2. UAW strike and new contract implementation (2022-24)

The nearly six-week strike of TAs, GSRs, postdocs, and academic researchers required my full attention, as it disrupted instruction and research across campus, interfered with business operations, and delayed progress on several other projects. That said, the new contract for TAs and GSRs catalyzed an important reckoning about PhD training that was long overdue. My role was to steer three campus committees (emergency management policy group; campus strike management group; contract negotiation and implementation group), to interface with the UCOP bargaining team and other UCOP personnel, and to manage campus communications through to the conclusion of the strike. In early 2023, I led the PhD student funding workgroup that developed new models of distributing existing central funds ($12 million) as well as new funds (both $7 million in permanent and $22 million in one-time that I allocated for graduate student support) to ensure that we not only met the requirements of the contract but also implemented equity in fellowship stipends. I communicated these changes in multiple ways: emails to campus, meetings with the Graduate Council, and open forum town halls.

3. Encampment (2024)

The Chancellor, VCSA, and I successfully negotiated the end of the encampment in May 2024 (four days after it was erected on campus), without having to enlist the support of the police and without having to make any arrests. The encampment was removed the night before our second Highlander Day, which meant 8000 admitted students and their families could experience the campus without distraction. There was also minimal damage at UCR as compared to other campus encampments. The settlement terms focused on educational opportunities, including a task force to study endowment investment strategies and an improved approval process for faculty-led study abroad programs. The VCSA and I began meeting quarterly with Hillel students and the Hillel director to check in with them on climate, and we also continue to meet regularly with Jewish community leaders.

4. Federal actions (2025-)

The second Trump administration has threatened higher education in unprecedented ways. I won't rehash the moment in which we currently live and work because it will be all too familiar to readers of this report. I spend a lot of time behind the scenes working with the chancellor, VCRED, VCSA, chief counsel, and other campus leaders to ensure the safety of our students, faculty, and staff; to preserve our fundamental commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and all of the programming in support of that effort; and to protect our research enterprise from cuts to its funding. I know that some in our community want more frequent and more public written communications, but I hope they understand that such communications could put our people and our funding in real danger. While we have expanded channels of communication and direct outreach and support to specifically targeted groups (i.e., international, undocumented), I have opted for in-person town halls as a way to share information with the broader community, and I remain committed to holding such sessions whenever requested by faculty and staff.