



**UC2019** ▶ *Accelerating Our Transformation*

# **Academic Master Plan**

## **Phase 1: Defining and Amplifying the Vision**



<http://www.uc.edu/uc2019/amp>

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Cincinnati**



March 2011

Dear University Community:

This document presents phase 1 of the University of Cincinnati (UC) **Academic Master Plan (AMP)**, one component of the university's strategic plan, **UC2019 ▶ Accelerating Our Transformation**, that was launched by President Gregory Williams at his investiture in September 2010. Our work to this point is intended to be visionary, seeking to understand and preserve the best of the University's past while also imagining new possibilities. It integrates the work of a host of University leaders and stakeholders to answer one overarching and recurring question: How can we be even greater in 2019 and meet the goals of **UC2019**? With **UC2019**, President Williams unveiled a plan for UC's future that commits and inspires all of us to transform lives, education, and knowledge — our Core Principles — and to do so, moreover, in multiple settings: our home colleges, the wider university community, our state, our nation, the world. The UC2019 document is guided by the following Vision statement:

We commit to the University of Cincinnati becoming a first-choice destination for students, patients, faculty and staff. Excellence pervades our research, learning, campus, collaborations, opportunities, athletics, support, health care and diversity. We stand ready to accomplish a transformation that achieves prominence.

- We will measure our success against the elite set of peers represented by the Association of American Universities and The Top American Research Universities.
- We will prioritize and target our resources on those areas in which we excel.

In addition, the plan's nine operational principles set out goals and expectations that can guide all of our academic work within **UC2019**. Further points of intersection within the network of these nine principles can serve as mutually reinforcing structures to produce the synergies that propel us forward even during a constrained resource environment.

We believe, as President Williams does, in the transformative power of education. Under the leadership of President Williams I then set in motion a two-phase process to implement an academic plan within **UC2019**. The first phase brought together four working groups — students, staff, and faculty, as well as deans and other administrators — to help define what we mean by transforming lives, to fashion an image of the University of Cincinnati at its best in 2019, and to plot a course that will get us there. These working groups were composed of a diverse mix of campus leaders, constituted both horizontally (across the University) and vertically (within colleges) in order to get the broadest and most representative set of voices and perspectives on UC's ambitions, concerns, barriers, strengths, and resources.

This Plan proposes to imagine through the visioning work (phase 1) — and then to make real through an action plan (phase 2) — our academic endeavors under **UC2019**. The Plan's second phase, accordingly, will include a business plan to bring that **UC2019** vision into being. In addition, special reports from the following initiatives will also need to be integrated into a final version of the Academic Master Plan: the five-year diversity plan, the report of the blue-ribbon committee on academic information technology, the distance learning report, and the report on the University Honors Program.

As we look forward towards the President's vision for UC's future, we can also look back towards those indications of our success that already exist. As a top 25 public research university, we have recently been labeled a "research heavyweight" by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and named one of the world's most beautiful campuses by *Forbes*. We have been



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pointed out as a model of a green university, a diverse one, a veteran-friendly one, and along the way (while serving a student population that now stands at over 40,000), we have become one of the region's largest employers. *US News* ranks UC not only as one of the Best National Universities but also as an "Up and Comer" by reason of "promising and innovative change" across academics, student and faculty life, and facilities.

All these are justifiable points of pride for our administrators and staff, our students, faculty, and alumni. But as President Williams has pointed out, while we should be pleased with our successes, "We know that change and growth are constants." Great organizations — great communities — don't rest on their laurels. If "vision" here is a meaningful word, it must become an active one, identifying clearly where we are and where we want to go. More than this, we must plan a road that leads us there. And then? Start paving that road with specifics: what happens when, who works in concert with whom, what are the necessary plans for targets and priorities, timetables and costs?

What follows, then, is the compilation and synthesis of a great deal of work by many enthusiastic stakeholders in our University's future, the talking points and recommendations of all four Academic Master Plan working groups as well as reports from every UC college and unit.

The report is organized using the **UC2019** ▶ Operational Principles that establish the framework for this Academic Master Plan:

**Learning**  
**Discovery**  
**Community**  
**Economy**  
**Sustainability**  
**Global Engagement**  
**Diversity**  
**Mission-Based Health Care**  
**Collaboration**

Taken together, this material constitutes the highlights of a long and in-depth conversation, infused with equal amounts of realism and idealism, serious but also excited about the future of the institution as we move toward the University of 2019.

Best wishes,



Santa J. Ono  
Senior Vice President and Provost for Academic Affairs



## ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN: DEFINING AND AMPLIFYING THE VISION

The following statement for the Academic Master Plan is organized around the nine Operational Principles of **UC2019** ▶ and reflects the voices of numerous University constituents, their thoughts and ideas about what will make UC even better in its bicentennial year. It provides the foundational underpinning that will guide the second phase of planning when we will establish priorities and a business plan, the roadmap that will result in a reality. The following also recognizes the need to further identify intersections that cross over the nine principles and that can move UC towards a more richly integrative planning structure.

### PRINCIPLE: LEARNING

The University must strengthen and extend its broad curricular offerings to provide an innovative curriculum for the 21st century, one that will help develop the minds of our students as active, critical-minded participants in the workforce and in civic life. We need to recognize that world-class learning both inside and outside the classroom, through a complex set of relationships and intersections, is critical to educating the whole student.

#### —Emphasizing learning and real-world problems

One recurring theme in our visioning discussions is UC's emphasis on **experiential learning** (sometimes also termed "applied learning") and an engagement with **real-world problems**. We view learning experiences such as co-op, internships, student research, study abroad, interdisciplinary collaboratives, clinical experiences, student teaching and service learning — with their common thread interweaving theory with practice — as essential to UC's identity. Not only serving as a considerable strength upon which to build, experiential learning must be reflected within all degree programs.

#### —Developing innovative pedagogical techniques

We can achieve transformative learning across the university's units through our interest in **innovative pedagogical techniques** and the instructional technologies that make them possible. And any serious resolve to meet learning goals requires an equally serious approach to assessment: measurement of student learning and progress, review of standards and metrics, and an awareness of the perspectives of employers, graduate schools, and other external constituencies.

#### —Providing students with 21st-century learning tools

It is essential that we give our students and faculty 21st-century learning tools. These include, on the student side, the structures of Integrated Core Learning (ICL), learning communities, effective use of new technologies, expanded opportunities for experiential and interdisciplinary learning, state-of-the-art research facilities for graduate students - and on the faculty side, incentives for excellent teaching, greater interdisciplinary approaches and support for faculty development programs.



For such learning tools to work most effectively, connection is key — both synergism among colleges, and clear connections between the classroom and the real world. Cross-disciplinary problems such as transportation (including issues such as design, safety, health care, or economic concerns) provide an opportunity for just such connections at the curricular level, with e-portfolios providing students with the tool to map such connections as individuals.

### **— *Making excellent teaching a priority***

Excellent teaching must be a university priority, backed up with significant incentives to teach (as measured by student learning) and supported by faculty-development programs. These might include additional training and advising resources for faculty, including knowledge about instructional technology through the Faculty Technology Resources Center (FTRC), pedagogy programs offered through the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning (CET&L), and incentives focused on criteria for reappointment, promotion, and tenure as well as merit. We also need to ensure that we have the learning environments and technological infrastructure to deliver and support innovative pedagogy, 21st-century learning tools, distance learning, and undergraduate research, including IT, classrooms, library facilities, and other collaborative spaces. Our online courses and programs must meet national standards — through such assessment as provided by Quality Matters, for instance — in ways that are as student oriented as we expect for face-to-face classes.

### **— *Improving the way we measure student learning***

We also need better ways to measure learning outcomes, particularly as guided by the Integrated Core Learning model at the undergraduate level and the Graduate Program Review process at the graduate level. In experiential learning, for example, we should build upon the use of authentic context assessment as is available through ILEAP and PAL. Our semester-conversion program eCurriculum allows us to do much more than simply count the number of courses or students involved, but we will also be able to gather information about opportunities and demand for such courses, so as to better understand where to focus or reallocate resources. As a further tool for capturing student learning outcomes, we should expand the use of e-portfolios so that students might archive the results of their learning, reporting on their learning experiences within the traditional classroom as well as through their experiential and co-curricular learning.

Other assessment measures might capture the academic success of our transfer students (from within UC or from other institutions); program-specific measures emerging out of board licensure processes; or student awards and post- baccalaureate awards, e.g. scholarships to attend graduate school.

### **— *Optimizing enrollment targets to enhance quality and access***

Out of fiscal necessity, UC has focused on growing enrollment for the last decade. In doing so, however, we have replaced student populations demonstrating limited success with those more likely to be retained and graduated. Simple numbers (of students, faculty, or staff) are not the only metric; enrollment targets must also attend to issues of appropriate mix and profile. High performing students increase rank, improve retention numbers, and improve profitability; they also come with high expectations. Optimizing the size of our graduate enrollments in research-based programs, especially at the doctoral level, is yet another important calculation. To optimize enrollment targets, then, we must consider conventional growth and new physical spaces alongside less traditional methods, including satellite campuses, technology to link remote program enrollments, and joint ventures with other institutions both nationally and internationally. While size is certainly a factor, quality and mix are our goals.

## **PRINCIPLE: DISCOVERY**

If transformational research output is our goal (a term that also applies to creative work), then we must measure that goal more effectively and comprehensively, through results as well as research dollars.

### **—Solving real-world problems through world-class research**

World-class research, and an emphasis on the real-world problems that research can take on and solve, is a hallmark of UC intellectual life. Many faculty seek out this sort of interaction on their own, and we can help to make it happen more often across campus, and in a more directed and supported manner, by establishing cross-disciplinary research teams and facilitating retreats and workshops to create the energy and inspiration for interdisciplinarity that is not currently part of our university culture.

### **—Building on current Centers of Excellence and expanding to identify other areas of strength and critical need to solve real-world problems**

We need to build on existing **OBR Centers for Excellence** to see if these eleven centers truly establish our excellence, and determine what new centers might be critical for the future. We should hire strategically to support those areas, as well as identifying other sources of potential strength in the effort to solve real-world problems. The discussion should focus on what we have now that is world-class, and also about what will make us world-class. In particular, our Centers of Excellence must help us to connect interdisciplinary models and teams to solve social problems as well as environmental, medical, biological, and physical ones.

As we identify the centers of excellence that characterize UC and make us unique as well as move us forward, we might pay particular attention to over-the-horizon trends in research opportunities and related curricular opportunities, especially ones that lend themselves to multi- and interdisciplinary approaches. Such interdisciplinary collaborations should be guided by an advisory board and must also be captured in RPT, merit, workload, and other faculty assessment documents and processes.

### **—Hiring strategically to support developing areas of excellence, interdisciplinary research projects, and other areas of critical need**

Appropriate and **targeted faculty** hires are essential to an ongoing, accelerating research agenda across the disciplines. We should ask hard questions when hiring faculty, to gauge their readiness to participate in the culture defined above, and whenever possible try to link real-world research with inquiry-based learning. We also need to develop strategies for cross-college and cross-department hires, including those that can be self sufficient.

### **—Maintaining and enhancing resources and support for faculty research**

World-class research relies on world-class **methods and materials**. Thus it is essential that our library collections, both electronic and print, as well as our laboratory and other core facilities critical for research programs, be maintained at appropriate levels. In these ways, we can support research in all disciplines and enable faculty to compete successfully for federal and other funding that is critical for conducting their research.

### **—Rewarding Innovation**

We should develop ways to reward and promote faculty for being entrepreneurial (licensing income, patents, etc.) through the RPT process as well as through a range of both external and internal faculty awards, and other means of recognition that also raise UC's reputation with national and international audiences. **Review and assessment** of our progress in attracting productive researchers and engaged students is equally important, as is attracting external **research funding**.

### **—Partnering with the community to solve real-world problems**

We need to partner with our community through relationships that enhance our research and scholarship and that value the strengths and resources that businesses, community agencies, schools, and other community partners bring to UC. Research partnerships with business and industry can also help us to contribute towards the development of new technologies and services. By tying research to learning in a community context, we can enhance discovery for both students and faculty as well as for the community.

We also need to consider collaborative research involving students as well as community partners, to include University Libraries personnel in research review and counting, and to capture data about performing arts exhibitions, service to journals, hosted symposia, and presentations at national/international venues.

### **—Increasing our emphasis on student research**

Enhancing discovery also means increasing our emphasis on student research, and we must create more research opportunities for all students, not only those in University Honors. Student research also must be envisioned and pursued broadly, not just within STEM disciplines. We should make research centers, and research itself, more interdisciplinary, with more cross-listed courses on the model of the NSF-funded nanotechnology course. We might also create social science, science, and humanities certification programs that prepare students for research opportunities.

Information is vital, so UC also needs to better advertise its landscape of research opportunities to incoming freshmen. An office of student research needs to support the development of classes, the training of instructors, and the certification of students, also serving as a hub of information. Expanding the Undergraduate Research web site (at <http://www.uc.edu/ucResearch/UndergraduateResearch.html>) can help to expand the Honors gateway approach to serve all students. Pairing students with trained researchers, and encouraging faculty to include student travel (as well as co-op/internship student salaries) on every research proposal, would be another way of establishing an undergraduate research culture. Research mentoring programs could link first-year students with seniors or graduate students, and research fairs could be open to all students.

Hardcore methodological courses are vital for graduate students to conduct research. And the graduate curriculum might need to be carefully reviewed or redesigned to enable students to produce widely recognized publications.



## **PRINCIPLE: COMMUNITY**

Active involvement in the community — defined broadly and variously as comprising the UC culture and branch campuses, the Cincinnati area, the state and region, the nation, the world — is a central part of UC's identity and of the aspirations of **UC2019** ▶. Community is one of our richest resources and one of the top five reasons students come here. **It is a distinguishing UC characteristic** — and an important marketing tool for both students and faculty. With our Just Community Principles as one driver of community building, we must envision other ways to leverage our urban setting and commitment to community. We must ensure that community remains important for students as a resource for their own learning and discovery and areas to which they can contribute.

### **— Building on our urban location and resources in Cincinnati toward greater connection and involvement in the national and international community**

The University of Cincinnati's presence in the **local community** has always been strong, since the days of Herman Schneider and the founding of co-op in 1906, and it is still growing. It has been said about UC that a university is rarely as directly involved in its community as we are, a characteristic that we can publicize more widely and that will lead to growing relationships. We should capitalize on these connections and bring **external experts (from business, industry, other universities) to campus for extended academic experiences** benefiting both faculty and students. We ought to begin thinking of UC as both within and beyond its boundaries, as bringing the best through Cincinnati — as an epicenter for business as well as academics, something like an intellectual chamber of commerce. **Faculty co-op opportunities** might take advantage of our urban location and resources to facilitate even larger and greater **connections: with the region, the nation and the world.**

Community begins at home, though, so promoting a sense of **University community** is an important step in extending UC's impact and identity farther afield. Thus, a sense of inclusion and partnership can easily expand to incorporate the **global community**, particularly in these days of global transport, knowledge transfer, and communications. The challenge may be to highlight our global reach without destroying what is mutually nourishing about **community connections.**

### **— Breaking down barriers that inhibit cross-college conversations**

Community must also focus on **enhancing connections between our main campus and regional campuses for the purpose of articulation and transfer.** We need to continue to promote the cross-college conversations begun as part of the semester conversion process. Collaborations among colleges, appropriate academic service units, and student affairs units facilitate mutually supportive goals and directly relate to student learning and life skill development. Our organizational structure must streamline communication so that collaborative, cross-college teams might eliminate duplication of resources and services, develop common timelines for administrative and program tasks, and provide high levels of service for all members of the UC community.

## **PRINCIPLE: ECONOMY**

The financial health of the university depends partly, of course, on state and federal funding, as well as on tuition and fees. But the former is limited (and not, in any case, under our direct control) while the latter also has limits. While increased efficiency can significantly enhance financial stewardship, UC must explore still other avenues and sources of support. Of these, development is perhaps the most obvious and traditional source.

### **— Enhancing support from alumni, faculty, and staff**

**Alumni support** plays a particularly crucial role in any campaign, and we might involve students and faculty more often in meaningful conversation with alumni, especially those alumni who have not given in a long time. We might seek to engage alumni in more institutional activities, as well, and look for ways to leverage our relationships with co-op employers. For instance, we might investigate the possibilities of a college scholarship ceremony, career mentoring, or a senior class gift related to graduation year. We should invite key alumni to present, teach, and otherwise contribute to students and faculty in areas of their expertise and our need. In other words, we should give alumni jobs to do, not merely campaign goals and updates: let them participate in the planning process, so that they can get more fully involved in the process of giving.

We will need to look across students and faculty in all colleges to see who has the skill-set to interact with donors, and develop and work with those who want to help. Involving faculty more fully in the Capital Campaign is another approach, especially as they often maintain extensive networks that are not always connected with the development process.

Enhanced alumni support might well be accompanied by enhanced **faculty and staff giving**, and several schools report encouraging news from that front. Economy in a larger sense encompasses more than fundraising, of course. By giving back in the form of **community development**, UC can improve the quality of life across our city and region, which in turn makes both the city and university more attractive to prospective residents, students, and businesses. **Business partnerships**, especially in research and development, provide one more route to economic impact and stability.

### **— Educating key constituents about the value of UC**

We also need to **educate legislators** about the value of higher education for promoting economic development in the state. An annual Higher Education Appreciation Day would help lay the foundations for education legislation on the full complement of issues relating to campus life. Legislatures view us as work force development, and we need to demonstrate that we are a critical part of promoting Southwest Ohio as a regional and national economic driver. This might involve faculty-industry exchanges, IUC discussions as a way to define and emphasize statewide agendas and priorities, and dynamic presentations, including videos, to communicate who our students and faculty are and what we're prepared to bring to the work force of the future.

We also need more intentional and strategic communications to brand us and make our impact public. An annual economic impact report, for example, would show how we create wealth in the area, how we affect communities near and far, and thus what economic impact we have on our city, state and country.

### **— Establishing UC as an economic driver through intellectual activity**

We need to be purposeful, too, about our role as an institution in facilitating the change from a manufacturing to a knowledge-based economy. This is strongly related to innovation, one key to a strong economy, so we must capitalize on UC's expertise in innovation to impact economic development. Often, innovation requires transcending conventional academic

areas, and so our administration needs to be flexible in allowing for funding and support of these kinds of programs.

Since student innovation also plays an important role, offering courses in which students are involved in creating intellectual property and innovative content is one way for us to distinguish ourselves as a great university. Courses might encourage or even require interdisciplinary teams to solve real-world problems in order to promote this sort of innovation. As examples, the Live Well Collaborative Studios and the UC Forward Initiative incorporate sponsored research into coursework by way of such interdisciplinary teams.

## **PRINCIPLE: SUSTAINABILITY**

All units of the university recognize the importance of sustainability and are addressing that broad issue in varied ways. **Recycling** is part of the daily maintenance and operation of many UC colleges, and students have expressed an interest in more (and more conveniently located) recycling bins near classrooms to allow them to recycle more conveniently. **Sustainable design** is another way in which units are addressing this problem, both by renovating so as to reduce their facilities' carbon footprint and also by choosing such designs for new buildings. **Programs and curricula**, finally, can strongly affect the imprint that UC and its students, faculty and staff have on our shared environment.

### **— Creating a culture in which sustainability is integral**

Emphasizing sustainability is one undeniable way to bring UC people and programs to bear to have real impact on the world. We should tie environmental thinking into real world problem solving within and across our colleges. And we must create a culture in which sustainability is integral, not peripheral, in which not only environmental matters are considered, but also how the university moves forward responsibly and responsively.

### **— Embedding sustainability in the curriculum**

We have recommended that all students have a basic level of global engagement. We ought to do the same for sustainability, making it an educational objective so as to embed sustainability in the curriculum and develop service learning classes focused on improving the sustainability of UC.

We can also influence business processes and our physical plant by capitalizing on our talent pool here, harnessing faculty and student expertise in solving sustainability issues — which we will add to with on-campus training.

### **— Promoting more fully our existing efforts and strengths**

Traditional systems and emerging systems compete for sustainability, and there are many levels to look at. What is appropriate to sustain a culture? In the face of global change, what should a contemporary university look like?

We have a good reputation in the area of sustainability. We are the only Ohio institution to be identified as a green university, for example, and we should expand on our designation as an OBR **Center of Excellence in Sustaining the Urban Environment**. A good deal is going on already, and we are leading in some areas, such as the **Climate 101 lecture series**, where we offer a larger number of lectures than many schools. But we should try to make our series even more prominent and build further on our existing efforts - Sustainable Design Policy, six LEED buildings, energy projects and upgrades, storm water management master plan, the first bike-share program in the region — to expand our overall educational outreach and programming. Efforts would be further enhanced by **creating lists from colleges of sustainability opportunities and activities** and identifying opportunities for collaboration with the city and peer institutions.

### **— Reducing waste and expanding recycling**

We should reduce waste, expand recycling, implement a composting program, and aim to go paperless (as with electronic submission of RPT files) for all administrative functions by 2019. Technology can facilitate better communication among faculty, students and the larger community, a more fluid access to data for assessment and decision-making, and increased staff readiness through professional development opportunities distributed via technology.



## — ***Using the faculty-staff committee effectively***

The President's Advisory Council for Environment and Sustainability (PACES) is an All University Committee that serves as the hub for individuals and groups at UC who are involved in a wide variety of issues focused on sustainability. The committee needs to have more buy-in from all colleges and units, and it might hold a series of seminars with thought leaders to educate the UC community on what a sustainable university might be and what issues might need to be addressed towards that goal.

## **PRINCIPLE: GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT**

Global engagement coheres around multiple issues such as expanding and internationalizing the student experience (by engaging with people and cultures on campus as well as off); the role of international students; global projects; education abroad; and an internationally focused curriculum. **UC2019** must find a way to engage and harness the potential of the international community that is part of our own, and we should leverage our city's broad, culturally diverse community and experiences toward this end.

### **— Expanding international partnerships and faculty engagement**

Expanding **international partnerships**, including research collaborations abroad, is critical to meeting the objectives of this goal. Some of these partnerships are direct **relationships with overseas universities**, but many are also personal relationships between faculty members. We should engage faculty to expand and leverage their personal international connections, and be strategic about our relationships with other institutions, partnering with like-minded, similarly scaled partners with common interests. We should encourage all faculty members engaged in international projects and activities to report those to the community through UCosmic.

### **— Increasing the number of international students**

Here at home, University of Cincinnati **programs, courses, and majors** can have the same effect of broadening student learning, faculty research, and general international awareness. Meeting the 2019 goal of **increasing international student enrollment to 8%** of the overall student population is inherently broadening as well, enriching programs and courses with a global perspective while also providing substantial financial resources to the university.

### **— Expanding Education Abroad**

The exposure works to the same effect, and even more directly, by way of **student exchange and education abroad**. Integrating research, internationalism and the student experience is a challenge. Study abroad could be both expanded and streamlined to ensure consistency across programs. Faculty need to be encouraged and trained to develop and lead study abroad programs. Because many students have constraints, academically and financially, with traveling abroad to study, and it is difficult for many to apply and be eligible for foreign work permits, we need to be creative in thinking about developing the international dimension of a UC education through internships, international co-op, and service-learning alongside traditional classroom-based study abroad.

### **— Encouraging more foreign-language skills**

Encouraging more foreign-language skills among our students will encourage global thinking, as will lectures and other events with a global focus. This might be accomplished by better language training, more exchange across student organizations, increased financial support for cultural events and organized cultural/language mixings, or the expansion of international educational experiences focused on language study. Increasing and formalizing "language exchange" by partnering American students with international students should be encouraged by all of the colleges.

### **— Developing a minimum global requirement for each degree program**

In the curriculum, we might develop a minimum global requirement for each degree program (beyond the existing cultural competence expectation), and strive to create learning scenarios — whether through study abroad or a sub-set of courses — that focus on international problem-solving.

— ***Leveraging UCosmic to the fullest extent possible to expand international opportunities***

We need to leverage UCosmic to the fullest extent possible, both in order to expand international opportunities, and also to serve as an information nexus concerning international agreements, contracts, and possibilities: Improved evaluation and assessment would be useful here as well. With strong encouragement from Deans and Department Heads, faculty involvement in international activities could be captured more comprehensively, tracking academic-leave activities in international settings, Fulbright awards, participation in international conferences and programs, and teaching and research abroad. We might also benefit from knowing whether our graduates go to foreign countries upon graduation, including our international students returning to their home countries.

— ***Creating global lectures***

If we can't take students to a country, we can bring other countries to them. We can link people in courses and projects across the globe through technology, at least some of it through conference calls or video conferences, as one way to increase global engagement (as well as sustainability). Outstanding technology and careful planning will be required if we are to synchronize multinational classrooms.

## **PRINCIPLE: DIVERSITY**

As emphasized in UC's 2011 Five-Year Diversity Plan (a full copy of which is forthcoming) "Diversity envelops culture, inclusion and the creation of an environment that supports differences and affirms each individual's value, potential and contribution to the UC community." As detailed in this section, the concept of diversity has multiple exemplars. Crucial goals such as fair and broadly representative **hiring practices** as well as **student recruitment and retention** (with associated issues like financial aid and on-campus support groups), thus hold a prominent place in virtually every unit's self-assessment and will prove essential to inculcating diversity on campus. **Programs, centers, and curricula** form another front on which diversity issues may be addressed and supported by each office and program of the university.

### **— Embedding the principles of diversity throughout all of UC**

Diversity is excellence: it enriches the educational experience, bringing a richer perspective to everything we do. A list of related attributes might emphasize inclusiveness, openness, respect, a place where everyone can feel welcome and able to do their best work. As much as possible, education should be accessible to all. Access without support is not opportunity.

### **— Clarifying the outcomes in the balance of access and support**

As a university, as a community, we need to continue conversations about this conflicted term, "What is diversity?" (If it is everything, it risks being nothing.) The diversity task force has recognized "a very broad and inclusive concept of diversity that included commonly recognized considerations such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability status, socioeconomic status, sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, and regional or national origin." It relates to all aspects of campus life, including recruitment, retention, teaching and learning. We must define our terms and goals precisely enough to make the pursuit of diversity meaningful, and to commit our resources in an intelligent way.

### **— Redesigning existing programs to provide common diversity experiences**

There are a variety of ways to approach diversity for students. We might redesign Welcome Week to ensure that all freshmen have a common diversity learning experience; offer financial support for cultural activities; encourage pedagogies that support student mixing and group work around a range of student characteristics (major, race, background, age, gender, etc); resuscitate activities around the Just Community principles; or create a student leadership diversity council.

New faculty receptions and orientation might be other opportunities for enhanced diversity training, centering on course design and openness to varied learning styles.

### **— Striving for excellence: A plan for achieving diversity**

In tough funding times, programs related to diversity can be among the first to go. Diversity awareness, like multicultural competence, should be expected of all faculty, staff, and students, because diversity is a component crucial to institutional excellence.



## **PRINCIPLE: MISSION-BASED HEALTH CARE**

Many colleges at UC are major partners in the health-care mission, both within the University of Cincinnati and across our region. In particular, our colleges of Allied Health Sciences, Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy are all part of the Academic Health Center, one of the most innovative health research complexes in the nation. Other schools and units, while they may not conduct research or teach in health care fields, still contribute to high-quality regional health care — in the case of the Colleges of Business and Engineering and Applied Science, for example. Education and Law are two others which might not at first glance appear to be linked to mission-based health care, but which make signal contributions nonetheless. And undergraduate students, as well, through research projects, can also be involved in important ways with supporting our health-care goals.

### **— Promoting scholarship in key health areas and engaging students in research**

At UC our faculty physicians also do scholarly work, which differentiates us from many other health care systems. We need to keep promoting this as part of our identity, expanding and linking such relationships across the institution to develop a comprehensive, integrated health care delivery system for the UC community and beyond. A key part of this is identifying health issues in our region and targeting research in those areas, highlighting our twin strengths in scholarship and patient care.

### **— Educating students about health care and creating incentives for wellness**

Since many of our students are health care poor, we have an obligation to make sure they have easy access to health care and to create incentives for wellness. Promotion of and education about health care will also help us to stay engaged and provide essential services for the poor and underserved groups in our region, as well. We have to look both at direct service and at those things we do to educate the providers of the future, for this region and beyond. While cross-institutional collaboration can help make the most of our resources, we must engage community partners in this effort, and look for other academic partners as well.

### **— Thinking outside the box**

We need to think in an innovative fashion and on a global scale, with such projects as medical advances in engineering and architecture, research in topics such as obesity and diabetes that crosses many colleges and disciplines, or relationships between engineers and physicians towards the development of minimally invasive devices. Such projects give us the kinds of models that can enhance and accelerate our capacity to be transformative.

### **— Choosing campus-wide global health themes**

To foster collaboration and interdisciplinary partnerships, we might periodically choose a topic that could be broadly based across colleges — perhaps not just around regional but global themes — and focus on that as a university. For example, a new state law requires that all kindergarteners, 4th and 5th graders have their body mass indexes measured. Could this be an entryway to get involved with Cincinnati Public Schools, do pre- and post-studies with grants, change lunch programs, teach reading, and treat obesity and nutrition more generally?

## **PRINCIPLE: COLLABORATION**

Collaboration is at the heart of much that we do at UC. As a campus embedded in local, state and regional economies, we have a responsibility to act in accordance with the best interests of those communities. And we frequently have the opportunity to leverage our practical and intellectual work to the betterment of much larger communities. UC schools and units express this knowledge and this responsibility in myriad ways: business and industrial partnerships, internships and co-ops, service and experiential learning courses, curricular and interdisciplinary work linking UC colleges, and collaborative projects to facilitate work with local, regional, and national employers, schools, state and federal agencies, and non-profit organizations. The UC Research Institute should serve as a portal for corporate relationships as they relate to research.

### **— Expanding our definition of collaboration to include our students**

Like other broad terms, collaboration can mean many things, but one metric in our context is co-op and internships. When we convert to semesters, we will have course-based data on collaboration and innovations for experiential learning built into the system and new ways for our students to develop new knowledge through course-based learning outcomes that cross disciplinary boundaries.

### **— Creating structures for collaborative work with our community partners**

We might look for examples of community partnerships to our cohort programs with Cincinnati Public Schools, the Cincinnati police, and others, building a pipeline of students to meet their needs for training. Internal collaboration through increased interdisciplinary work can also open doors to external collaboration with industry partners, as in the areas of sustainability and energy. We might also look at needs-based opportunities around the hospital and then further engage graduate students and faculty in healthcare as well as meeting the hospital's needs. Through such developments, it is essential that we build the databases such as ILEAP and PAL that allow us to track these new efforts as well as the assessment that allows us better to understand and improve them.

### **— Managing the challenges of Performance-Based Budgeting and RPT processes**

We must also ensure that we prevent barriers to collaborative work among faculty arising because of responses to aspects of Performance-Based Budgeting that are perceived as discouraging interdisciplinary efforts. Such collaborative efforts also need recognition within annual reviews and RPT processes. In this latter regard it would be most useful to develop a database and assessment process for collecting and evaluating collaborative work, including projects involving alumni and the community.

We will be better served if we think first within and across colleges, rather than just externally. While we do not have a great many interdisciplinary degree programs, we are already collaborating on many projects in ways not measured by student FTEs and degree programs. As we engage in more creative collaborative relationships, we can also more effectively articulate the end results and develop appropriate metrics. For student skills in collaboration, for example, one metric would be feedback from employers to see whether graduates have been adequately prepared. Establishing and promoting annual themes to unify research, curriculum, or teaching, and to cross multiple disciplinary lines while remaining linked to mission-based activities would be one more way to foster a culture of useful, rather than superficial, collaboration.

**— Recognizing the benefits of collaboration**

Collaboration in the final analysis is a vehicle, a means. If done well, it can be a powerful tool towards the goal of creating and developing new knowledge that students gain by experience (in industry, research, etc.) There is a real need to catalogue specific research activities that students can choose, and to align those activities so that student research helps them solve real-world problems. We may need a mechanism to direct students to the most strategic projects, and we may need other ways to recognize and celebrate collaboration, such as through hosting collaboration fairs and industry symposia on campus as well as identifying yearly themes that cross college lines to shape curricula, research, and other mission-based activities.



