The Regents of the University of California

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON UC MERCED
November 19, 1998

The Special Committee on UC Merced met on the above date at Covel Commons, Los Angeles campus.

Members present: Regents Davies, Khachigian, Lee, Nakashima, and Parsky; Advisory members Espinoza, and Willmon and Faculty Representative Dorr

In attendance: Regents Bagley, Chandler, Clark, Hotchkis, Johnson, Kozberg, Miura, Montoya, Ochoa, and Preuss, Regents-designate Taylor and Vining, Faculty Representative Coleman, Secretary Trivette, Treasurer Small, Provost King, Senior Vice President Kennedy, Vice Presidents Broome, Darling, Gomes, Hershman, and Hopper, Chancellors Bishop, Carnesale, Cicerone, Dynes, Orbach, and Vanderhoef, Laboratory Director Browne, and Recording Secretary Nietfeld

The meeting convened at 4:25 p.m. with Special Committee Chair Parsky presiding.

UPDATE ON PLANNING FOR UC MERCED

Academic Planning

Vice Provost Tomlinson-Keasey noted that the final academic plan for UC Merced awaits the appointment of a chancellor and the founding faculty and will evolve with the campus. Prior to the development of this more detailed plan, there are several steps to be taken and several academic principles to be affirmed to set the stage for the new campus. Foremost among these principles is the expectation that UC Merced will take its place as a peer among the other nine University of California campuses by meeting the standards of excellence that are their hallmark. Building areas of academic distinction that complement and reinforce those at the existing campuses will assure that UC Merced achieves prominence in the areas of teaching, research, and public service. Developing focused areas of excellence in the academic program will also ensure that UC Merced will be able to attract the distinguished faculty essential to a research university. A corollary to the first principle calls for UC Merced's research programs to lay the groundwork for outstanding graduate and undergraduate programs. In keeping with the principles of shared governance, these academic programs will be developed with the oversight and approval of the Academic Senate.

UC's rich array of multicampus research organizations and its ties to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory offer pathways to a distinctive research identity. Multicampus research organizations bring the collective talents of the entire UC system to bear on important research issues. Livermore is home to unparalleled resources in engineering, science, and technology. By creating partnerships with these entities, UC Merced can build a base for attracting distinguished faculty members and building outstanding graduate and undergraduate programs.

Ms. Tomlinson-Keasey explained that a Sierra Nevada Research Institute at UC Merced would take advantage of the resources of seven multicampus research units and programs that currently exist within the University of California and that consider issues involving the Sierra Nevada Mountains: the Centers for Water and Wildland Resources, the Davis Institute for Transportation Studies, the White Mountain Research Station, the Natural Reserve System, the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, the Santa Barbara Institute for Computational Earth System Science, and the Institute for Geophysics and Planetary Physics.

Building from the research base of these groups, a Sierra Nevada Research Institute at UC Merced would acknowledge the campus' position at the juncture of the Central Valley and the Sierra Nevada and would examine issues such as water and watersheds, biodiversity, population growth and development, air quality, climate change, fire ecology, resource management and policy, and public recreation. Research in these areas would be supported by sophisticated technology, including remote sensing and laser technology. This partnership could be the beginning of an outstanding array of undergraduate and graduate biological, physical, and social science programs that address current national and international issues. This partnership would also seek advice from federal, State, and private agencies concerned with the Sierra, including the National Park Service, the U. S. Forest Service, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Another key to academic planning is represented by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Livermore's scientific mission capitalizes on interdisciplinary teams of scientists and engineers investigating an array of questions in areas from biology to engineering. UC Merced faculty will work in tandem with some of these interdisciplinary teams and focus on research that is of interest to both the campus and the laboratory. Initial discussions of possible curricula have focused on the Earth and Environmental Sciences Division, which applies ecological expertise to a wide array of environment questions. The laboratory also offers unparalleled computing power. This power will mesh well with UC Merced's technological focus and will allow complex environmental simulations such as atmospheric modeling, groundwater modeling, and climate prediction. In addition, the campus can draw on these resources to help develop state-of-the-art engineering and computer science areas.

Optical sciences and technology is a rapidly growing field that feeds the computer industry directly. The underlying technology of the Silicon Valley is optics, and remote sensing technology is based in part on optics. Computer chips are fabricated using optical procedures. New medical procedures to treat diabetes, strokes, and cancer use ultra-fast x-ray pulses. Currently this subdiscipline is not well served in California. Optical sciences combine education in optics, mathematics, physics, electronics, and holography. Pursuing such a small but critical area could help build UC Merced's academic reputation.

UC Merced planners have begun to work with a coalition of social science, humanities, and arts multicampus research organizations to examine research strengths that capitalize on the San Joaquin Valley's diversity of peoples and cultures. Although still in the early planning stages, this

partnership, when developed, might serve as a standard for understanding diverse peoples and cultures around the world.

Academic planning for the campus depends on the review and approval of the Academic Senate. Prior to the hiring of faculty and the formation of a UC Merced Division of the Academic Senate, the Senate has named a UC Merced Task Force as a means for on-going Senate consultation and participation as the campus is developed. The task force is chaired by former Academic Council Chair Fred Spiess, Professor Emeritus of Oceanography at the San Diego campus. This committee will help guide the academic planning for the new campus.

The initial academic structure for UC Merced is designed to foster a high degree of collegiality among faculty, reflecting the fact that the number of faculty will be relatively small when the campus opens. The campus will be initially organized into divisions--a Division of Science and Technology, a Division of Social Science and Public Policy, and a Division of Arts and Cultures--but faculty might focus on issues that incorporate strands from all three divisions. For example, the issue of climate change might draw most heavily on faculty from Science and Technology, but social scientists might investigate the economic or policy aspects of climate change. As the campus grows, a departmental structure is expected to emerge. Professional programs will be incorporated into one of the three divisions until the campus has grown large enough to support separate schools.

Following the advice of the Academic Senate, the principal strategy for curriculum development will be to target a limited number of areas for hiring faculty. Disciplines selected for inclusion in the initial curriculum will reinforce one another with the goal of building research distinction. Current plans call for a staging of the campus with the Division of Science and Technology being the first to be developed. Early majors will likely grow out of the partnerships described above. Other letters and science core programs will be phased in as the campus grows in enrollments and resources.

UC Merced's undergraduate and graduate courses and degree programs will be developed by faculty. The current goal is to develop a Central Valley network of learning opportunities and to provide off-site locations for UC Merced courses. The 1998-1999 State budget includes $1.5 million to help develop the distributed learning centers that are part of the vision of UC Merced as a networked campus. The UC Center in Fresno, which opened in September 1997, is the first center in the network, and it continues to expand its programs to serve residents throughout the Central Valley. The establishment of the Tri College Center at Merced College in February 1999 will enable the campus to enhance its programmatic linkages with CSU Stanislaus and Merced College. Programs at the center will be aimed at increasing the number of transfer students from Merced College to CSU Stanislaus and UC.

By summer 1999, UC Merced will begin offering programs at Stanislaus County's new Agricultural Center in Modesto. The center houses all of the major governmental agencies involved in agriculture, including UC Cooperative Extension. Finally, a fourth distributed learning center in Bakersfield is planned to open late in 1999.

The distributed learning centers will allow UC Merced to provide academic programs, UC Extension courses, and certificate programs throughout the Central Valley. The courses offered to date have focused on the following post-baccalaureate areas: agriculture, education, business, health, land use, environmental management, and computer training. By early 1999, more than 1,000 students will have enrolled in UC Merced-sponsored courses.

The early success with extension programs imported from other UC campuses has provided the base to develop a UC Merced Division of Professional Studies during the 1998-1999 academic year. This version of extended studies will enable UC Merced to increase its offerings significantly throughout the region. Other efforts are under way at the distributed learning centers to increase the eligibility of Valley students for UC through new school partnerships involving both student development and teacher professional development programs.

An important step in the development of the campus is endorsement by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC). In 1997, CPEC reviewed and approved a UC letter of intent to build a new campus. Earlier this month, the UC Merced administrative team submitted information establishing the need for the new campus and asking for formal CPEC endorsement to build the campus. As part of this needs study, the University prepared an enrollment estimate for UC Merced for the first ten years, building from Department of Finance 1997 projections of public high school graduates. Key features include:

- A total enrollment of 1,000 undergraduate and graduate students in fall 2005, growing to 7,000 students in 2014-15.

- An enrollment of 100 graduate students in 2005, growing to approximately 1,000 graduate students by 2014-15. The initial graduate programs may well be in conjunction with other UC campuses or reflect a graduate group composed of UC faculty from several campuses.

- On opening day, 30 percent of the students are expected to be transfer students. The campus is expected to reach the standard 40:60 ratio of lower division to upper division undergraduate students by 2014-15.

The study also chronicles the site selection process, projects the economic impact of UC Merced on the Central Valley, examines funding strategies for the campus, provides information about the Student Planning Advisory Committee which is examining student recruitment and support services for UC Merced, and offers a preview of the academic planning process.

Physical Planning

Preparation of a development concept for the 10,300-acre University Community which encompasses the UC Merced campus has been under way since April 1998. A major public outreach event was held in Merced in late September. Approximately 450 speakers provided opinions about the design and character of the proposed new community. Three alternative development concepts have been

outlined which are being assessed to determine the costs of infrastructure, transportation, and public service elements; the environmental impacts of each alternative and associated mitigation costs; the market feasibility of each option; and consistency with the vision statement and development principles. A second public workshop will be held in early December to present these alternative concepts for public review. The concept planning process is scheduled to be completed in March 1999.

Funding

The 1998-99 State budget includes $9.9 million in core operating support for UC Merced programs and planning activities, an increase of $5 million over the level provided in 1997-98. An additional one-time appropriation of $1.5 million was made in 1998-99 to support the development of the network of distributed learning centers. Increased funding is available for outreach programs in the San Joaquin Valley in 1998-99 as well, with $1.5 million in State funds targeted for this purpose. Academic program staff for UC Merced are also involved with the Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz campuses in the development of expanded outreach programs in the Valley.

Proposition 1A, approved by the voters on November 3, 1998, provides more than $830 million in general obligation bond funding for the University's capital program over the four-year period 1998-99 to 2001-02. Of this, $55 million is designated for development of UC Merced, beginning in 2000-01.

In response to a comment by Regent Lee regarding the vision for UC Merced, President Atkinson pointed out that there is a clear expectation that, as a campus of the University of California, UC Merced will be a research university. He noted that the first faculty who are hired will set the quality of the institution for the next fifty years. The University will focus on putting together an outstanding cadre of faculty, with a clear focus on the opportunities that the region offers.

Regent Nakashima pointed out that currently only 2,000 acres are planned for the development of the campus and expressed concern that the University should be obtaining options to buy adjacent parcels for development as the campus grows.

Vice Provost Tomlinson-Keasey explained that the 2,000 acres which the University has designated for the campus are surrounded by approximately 9,000 additional acres which are owned by educational trusts. The University's administration has been working closely with the trusts to plan how the 11,000 acres will look. The University hopes that the physical planning and the Memorandum of Understanding to be entered into with the trusts will yield a concept of how the land will be developed.

Regent Nakashima asked that the administration provide information on the establishment of the Irvine campus, including how much land has been acquired by the University since the campus was founded, what the cost of the land was, and what the price of land surrounding the Irvine campus is

now. Vice Provost Tomlinson-Keasey indicated that she would provide that information prior to the March meeting.

Regent Johnson pointed out that the proximity of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory should be beneficial to the new campus in its recruiting of faculty.

Regent Chandler observed that the people of the Central Valley would be heartened to hear that the University is proceeding with its intention to open UC Merced by 2005.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Attest:

Secretary