

The Regents of the University of California

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

September 26, 2018

The Public Engagement and Development Committee met on the above date at the Luskin Conference Center, Los Angeles campus.

Members present: Regents Anderson, Graves, Guber, Lansing, Ortiz Oakley, and Sherman; Ex officio member Napolitano; Advisory members Bhavnani and Simmons; Chancellors Blumenthal, Christ, Hawgood, May, and Wilcox; Staff Advisor Klimow

In attendance: Regents Butler and Leib, Assistant Secretary Lyall, Chief Investment Officer Bachher, Provost Brown, Interim Senior Vice President Holmes, Chancellor Leland, Managing Counsel Shanle, and Recording Secretary McCarthy

The meeting convened at 11:00 a.m. with Committee Chair Ortiz Oakley presiding. He expressed appreciation for the leadership of Regent Lansing as former Committee Chair.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of July 18, 2018 were approved.

**2. 2019 SACRAMENTO ADVOCACY PLAN**

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Associate Vice President Kieran Flaherty reminded the Committee that UC's 2019 Sacramento advocacy strategy was to be inclusive, with refined roles for its diverse groups of advocates, focused, as one University with clear objectives, and proactive to activate UC's base and to increase third-party support. Campus and systemwide leadership, along with direction from the Regents, have achieved consensus on crucial objectives for 2019. Objectives were to advocate first and foremost for ongoing State funding and new capital outlay resources, to ensure student success and maintain UC's research excellence. UC had begun planning for multi-year enrollment to provide predictability and stability to UC campuses, and ways to increase degree production. UC would also pursue some legislative outcomes, after the new Legislature was elected. UC seeks a true partnership with the next gubernatorial administration and the 2019-20 Legislature around shared goals, marshalling UC's resources to the benefit of the state.

Mr. Flaherty displayed a list of planned advocacy activities to be undertaken by various UC stakeholders. The advocacy program would be largely campus-driven, with events in

Sacramento, on UC campuses, and in the community. In September, President Napolitano joined the California State University (CSU) and California Community College (CCC) chancellors at an event to meet with supporters of public higher education. UC systemwide and campus leaders had met with candidates for statewide office to share UC's perspectives.

The UC Office of State Government Relations (SGR) and UC systemwide leaders had consulted extensively with UC students to explore joint goals for coordinated advocacy. UC Student Association (UCSA) President Caroline Siegel-Singh discussed joint advocacy goals. UCSA planned advocacy in Washington, D.C. in February with CSU and CCC students for reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, and issues related to Title IX and immigration. UCSA would work with students to register at their on-campus addresses to vote, and then to support student voting. UCSA would participate in joint budget advocacy including support for students' non-tuition costs such as housing, additional support for undocumented students, and critical student services such as mental health and wellness, financial aid, and advising.

UC Advocacy Network (UCAN) Student Ambassador Jonathan Tsou said that UCAN was critical in helping UC students, alumni, and administration present a united effort in their Sacramento advocacy. The prior year UC had 14 student ambassadors and would have more in the current year. Mr. Flaherty added that the prior year's pilot Student Ambassador Program had proved effective in increasing UCAN participation.

Mr. Flaherty said SGR would take a fresh approach to some advocacy events. UC Day 2019 would be a series of individual UC Days in Sacramento hosted by the campuses. SGR planned UC Graduate Research Days on the campuses in an effort to bring legislators to UC campuses. The Grad Slam would be held in Sacramento so legislators could attend.

Chancellor Blumenthal asked Ms. Siegel-Singh if UCSA proposed making the prior year's one-time tuition buyout permanent and improving UC's student-faculty ratio. Ms. Siegel-Singh said UCSA supported permanent funding of the buyout to avoid any tuition increase. UCSA supports responsible growth. If enrollment is increased, those students need to be funded and have housing and other support services. Access should not be expanded at the cost of quality.

Committee Chair Ortiz Oakley asked if SGR's strategy was shared by campus advocacy teams. Mr. Flaherty reported that campuses supported the new plans for UC Day. Regents would be invited to attend many of these events, both on campuses and in the community. It would be important to advocate for common budget goals in Sacramento.

Committee Chair Ortiz Oakley said the Regents want to be directly involved in advocacy. It would be a critical advocacy year with the transition to a new governor. UC should communicate its needs clearly. He noted the importance of regaining control of the UCOP budget and addressing students' total cost of attendance.

Regent Anderson applauded UC students' and SGR's advocacy efforts of the past year. He expressed his view that UCAN was a potentially powerful tool that could be more effective. He urged the campuses to encourage their alumni associations to support UCAN. Interim Senior Vice President Holmes said her office would work to further expand UCAN.

Regent-designate Simmons suggested formalizing UC's engagement in the community with legislators' constituents.

### 3. **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND IMPACTS, MERCED CAMPUS**

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Chancellor Leland observed that UC Merced was growing rapidly along with its community. Merced County's population was the fastest growing in California and UC Merced was the fastest growing public research university in the nation. UC Merced had already had a significant impact on its community's economics, education, health, and public service. Since UC Merced opened, it has had \$3 billion of economic impact on the region. The Merced 2020 Project had added more than \$1 billion to the local economy, with many new construction jobs over a four-year period and many new permanent jobs, both at UC Merced and in the community. Many UC Merced students volunteer in a variety of service projects, ranging from science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education days, to volunteering with local Boys and Girls Clubs. Applications to the UC system from San Joaquin Valley students had doubled since UC Merced's opening.

UC Merced Professor of Psychological Sciences and Interim Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts Jeffrey Gilger explained that his development of the UC Merced Alliance for Child and Family Health and Development was intended to encourage community involvement with UC Merced by having a presence in downtown Merced. The Center's broad mission is to promote the healthy development of Merced area children and their families in culturally sensitive ways through research and public outreach. Many UC Merced students volunteer at the Center. One of the Center's projects, called Help for My Child, funded by a California State grant through First 5 California, provides parents information on atypical child development. Part of the Center is devoted to laboratory research, which has helped familiarize community members with University research, of which some had been distrustful. Professor Gilger cited some research that would be conducted at the Center. Researchers from other UC campuses can make use of the Center's facilities free of charge. The Blum Center for Alleviating Poverty and Social Disparities at UC Merced helps fund the Center as does UC Merced. Professor Gilger's goal is to expand the Center and make it as self-supporting as possible.

Chancellor Leland added that the City of Merced and the San Joaquin Valley are critically medically underserved. Locating the Alliance for Child and Family Health and Development in the heart of the city had been very important.

UC Merced alumnus and Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Merced County Michael Pierick recalled how his experience as a UC Merced student and athlete afforded him opportunities to engage in leadership, such as being in the inaugural cohort of Central Valley Leaders, a student leadership group with the goal of creating an impact in the entire Central Valley through public service. His experience with other local student leaders led to the formation of Student Athletes Focusing on Education (S.A.F.E.) with the mission of helping to build confidence and leadership in local student athletes and K-12 students, to help them pursue and succeed in higher education.

In his current position as Director of the Boys and Girls Club, Mr. Pierick engages UC Merced students, faculty, campus leadership, and local community retirees to serve and mentor local youth. The Club currently had 15 staff, seven of whom are UC Merced undergraduate students, five of those through the federal Work Study program. A Merced Ph.D. student works with the Club on technology programs to encourage local youth in STEM careers.

Merced Mayor Michael Murphy affirmed the City's great interest in UC Merced since 1995, when the Regents selected Merced for the site of UC's tenth campus. Many Merced high school graduates have attended UC Merced. The economic benefit of UC Merced to the City is immense, starting with the campus' \$15.4 million monthly payroll, a large portion of which stays in Merced, with faculty, staff, and student employees living in the City. The Merced 2020 Project has been an enormous economic driver of development in the City, providing many jobs and supporting local businesses that provide services for the workers. The City and the campus have many mutually beneficial engagements and sharing of facilities. The City is proud of its involvement in UC Merced's Venture Labs in Merced and Modesto, which aim to turn great ideas into successful businesses. The City helps fund UC Merced's Summer STEM Academy for local middle- and high-school students, providing some of these students their first exposure to a University campus. Many UC Merced faculty and staff have deep ties to the community, with a number serving on City boards and commissions. UC Merced students volunteer at many local venues, such as the zoo and parks. Mr. Murphy affirmed that the City of Merced looks forward to growing alongside UC Merced. On behalf of the City of Merced, Mr. Murphy thanked the University and UC Merced for their significant contributions to the Merced community.

Chancellor Leland reported that the prior month UC Merced celebrated the opening of the first phase of 2020 Project. She thanked those Regents who planned to visit the campus. She emphasized that UC Merced was a unique UC campus, in an extremely important, but historically underserved, region of California. She expressed great pride in the campus' accomplishments in its initial 13 years.

President Napolitano congratulated UC Merced and commended it for its deep relationship with the community. She affirmed the University's full support.

Regent Lansing said she had been among those who shoveled the first dirt for UC Merced. She congratulated Chancellor Leland for her leadership of the campus' remarkable development.

Regent Leib commended UC Merced. He noted the economic development that the presence of UC San Diego had fostered in that area and foresaw UC Merced having a similar effect on its community.

Committee Chair Ortiz Oakley asked Mr. Murphy how the City of Merced intended to fulfill ever-growing housing needs. Mr. Murphy noted the importance the City places on planning for housing. He commented that Merced presented an excellent opportunity for developers of housing, since the City has a vacancy rate of just one percent and demand would be increasing.

#### 4. **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA MARKET RESEARCH STUDY**

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Interim Senior Vice President Holmes recalled that the Committee had asked her office to conduct market research to gain an understanding and recognition of the current perception of UC, the intended audience for communications, and how to best expand UC's advocacy base to support UC in new and unique ways. One objective was to assess UC's current image and reputation. Market research had been conducted in the past, and there was a desire to obtain an updated view. A second objective was to identify potential new advocates in California and find new ways to communicate with them.

Ms. Holmes reported on the study's methodology. Workshops were held to determine the project's scope, objectives, and audiences. Internal and external focus groups were held. Online qualitative and quantitative studies were conducted. The scope was exclusively in California and involved parents, voters, business leaders, informed members of the public, and California policy influencers. Oakland and San Diego were areas studied, in addition to California statewide. The study would provide a starting point for communication efforts by showing current attitudes toward UC.

The study revealed that California voters are concerned that the state is heading in the wrong direction and that social mobility is becoming more difficult because of the high cost of living. Voters are also concerned about the cost of putting a child through college. Voters said their top concerns were the cost of living and affordable housing; higher education was cited by only four percent of voters as a top concern.

Managing Partner Graeme Trayner of Glover Park Group, contracted to perform the market research study, discussed the perceptions of UC the study revealed. UC's favorability is high across audiences, consistent with results of prior market research surveys commissioned by UC. UC's key perceived strengths are its prestige and global recognition, its breadth and diversity, and its history. Favorability scores were even higher among alumni and informed audiences. There was strong agreement that UC was an important part of California's history. UC was rated well for its perceived impact on the state by sparking innovations and is viewed as a critical part of California's future.

Mr. Trayner said UC's top negative quality was its perceived cost and its lowest-scoring positive attribute was its affordability. UC alumni were the most likely to identify affordability as their top concern. In Sacramento, surveyed State policy makers expressed concern about UC's stewardship of public money. Encouragingly, even though people felt that UC was more expensive than they would like, they still regard UC as a good value compared with many private colleges and universities. The survey was run just after the Regents decided to reduce tuition and that was reflected in responses to the open-ended question about what people had heard about UC recently in the news.

Mr. Trayner reported that UC was perceived to be neglecting California. There was a perception in focus groups that UC was prioritizing international and domestic nonresident students because their tuition rates are higher than California students'. However, even though people want more California students to come to UC and they want fees to be reduced, they are often unwilling to pay for it themselves, particularly in view of their concern about the high cost of living.

Mr. Trayner concluded by stating that the study clearly showed that UC cannot simply rely on putting out facts and statistics, as people are often quite skeptical of communications from all kinds of institutions. People's personal experiences or what they had heard anecdotally about UC admissions, often jarred with UC's statistics. In the future, UC should think more broadly about communications, engagement, and strategy.

Ms. Holmes summarized what was learned from the market research study. UC needs to focus on supporting California's future, particularly on how UC solves long-term problems. Promoting the five medical centers and people's personal experiences with life-altering medical innovations and jobs in those areas would be important areas to promote. UC should build on people's affinity for UC and its historic contributions to the state, by showing how it is moving the state into the future. Another positive area was UC's importance to communities across the state, by creating jobs and creating businesses. The economic argument is compelling.

Survey results indicated that UC should focus communications on outcomes. UC should talk less about itself and more about the University's impact on people's lives, and the return on investment in UC both to the individual and the state. Generally, the public questions whether a four-year college degree is worth the cost. Focus groups indicated that often people simply do not believe UC's data about its graduation rates and other successes. UC should continue to communicate its success in creating jobs and businesses, enabling California to become a national leader. Even Sacramento policy makers often do not understand the return on the investment in UC. This area presents a big opportunity.

Ms. Holmes reported that three main areas evoked surprise and positive reactions among those surveyed. Voters surveyed thought it was most compelling that 50 percent of UC's undergraduates come from the poorest families in the state, that they graduate within five years, and surpass the income of their parents within five years of graduating. UC's success with transfer students and the fact that more than 26,000 California Community College transfer students were admitted each year to UC generated a strong positive reaction.

Another top compelling fact about UC was that 83 percent of its undergraduates are from California. Ms. Holmes said a focus on these three facts has the potential to make a difference in the public perception of UC.

Chief Marketing Officer Vanessa Correa discussed audience opportunities the market research discovered. She emphasized that these would not be the only constituencies UC's communications efforts would address. The survey indicated that UC alumni are willing to vote for candidates who support UC; alumni are proud of the University and their degrees. The current level of alumni engagement at 39 percent is not high, but 64 percent indicated a desire to be engaged, a clear opportunity for the campuses. Alumni want to have clear and focused guidance on how to engage; they feel uninformed about issues and what they are being asked to do. There is an opportunity to arm UC alumni with the information they need to make a compelling case to legislators.

Ms. Correa said the study revealed that UC's strongest supporters are college degree holders and urban voters. These groups believe UC is important to California and want to see its funding increased. However, higher education was not their top concern. UC should engage with these supporters and clarify ways they could support the University. Other persuadable targets are those open to asking legislators to pay more for UC and who care about higher education. These include parents, Hispanic, and millennial voters. UC should address these groups more directly.

Ms. Holmes summarized the insights gained from the study. UC's brand is strong, notably for its breadth, prestige, and global recognition, but it faces challenges around its cost and perceived lack of commitment to California. Information alone will not convince the public. Personal experience and word of mouth are more powerful. UC should seek to demonstrate its role in addressing large-scale challenges, through deeds as much as words. UC should show it is part of the answer to maintaining California's national leadership, and addressing increasing inequality and lack of social mobility, and demonstrating the value of a college education.

Ms. Holmes said these findings would be shared with the chancellors in the coming weeks. The prior Boldly Californian platform would be reintroduced. Her office would integrate these messages into UC's admissions website, advocacy materials, and executive communications.

Regent Lansing asked that the report of the market research study be provided to the Committee. Ms. Holmes said she would provide the report.

Student Advisor Huang asked if current student perceptions of UC were surveyed and if students were considered as a potential audience for communication efforts to develop future alumni advocates. Ms. Holmes said students had not been surveyed because of budget limitations and other studies had supplied data about students.

Regent Graves inquired about plans for a follow-up study to gauge the success of subsequent advocacy. Ms. Holmes said an advocacy plan would be developed using these

results and building on existing efforts in coordination with campus efforts. Potentially, another study could be done in a year or two to determine if perceptions about UC had been changed.

Committee Chair Ortiz Oakley suggested a future presentation about implementation plans. He also asked that the Regents be provided with a summary of the public perceptions about UC revealed by the market research.

Committee Chair Ortiz Oakley said the Committee would have an off-cycle meeting in the spring at one of the campuses, as part of the Committee's advocacy efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff