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Office of the President

TO MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:

DISCUSSION ITEM

For Meeting of November 13, 2024

ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY SUB-REPORT ON DIVERSITY: UC 2030 – EQUITY IS EXCELLENCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item presents information from the recent *UC 2030: Equity is Excellence* report that synthesizes strategies and approaches in use across the system to meet 2030 goals. The item shares information on completed and planned efforts to promote intersegmental collaboration and systemwide support to leverage campus strengths, including a UC community of practice. The report also serves as the Accountability Sub-Report on Diversity, which has been presented annually since 2007 as part of an ongoing effort to ensure greater accountability across the University of California system in achieving the University's goals for diversity and equitable outcomes established in Regents policy.

The item is organized as follows:

- an update on progress toward 2030 goals, referencing two public-facing dashboards that track that progress,
- highlights from the report, including a review of strategies across campuses and two appendices to the report, which provide campus profiles (Appendix A) and a compendium of data tools (Appendix B) in use throughout the system,
- an update on activities that have been informed by this work, including collaboration with California State University (CSU) partners, the community of practice referenced above, and an emerging workgroup focused on student success in introductory-level calculus and chemistry.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the UC Office of the President (UCOP) presented its UC 2030 vision to the Board of Regents.[1] With that vision, the University set goals to produce 1.2 million undergraduate and graduate degrees, to achieve a 90 percent overall graduation rate and to increase on-time graduation. The system also set goals to eliminate disparities in graduation outcomes for low-income and first-generation students and for students from groups historically underrepresented in higher education—specifically Black, Latino(a) and Native American students.

[1] https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/nov18/b2.pdf

These UC 2030 goals align with a core mission of the University of California, as established in Regents Policy 4400: Policy on University of California Diversity Statement,[2] that to serve the interests of the State of California, UC must seek to achieve diversity and equitable outcomes among its various student bodies. This policy states, in part:

> *Because the core mission of the University of California is to serve the interests of the State of California, it must seek to achieve diversity among its student bodies and among its employees. The State of California has a compelling interest in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups…*
>
> *Therefore, the University of California renews its commitment to the full realization of its historic promise to recognize and nurture merit, talent, and achievement by supporting diversity and equal opportunity in its education, services, and administration, as well as research and creative activity. The University particularly acknowledges the acute need to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented.*

Work to meet the UC 2030 goals was already under way across the system at the time of their unveiling, and the University has remained focused on this vision even through the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, which upended education at all levels across the state.

In 2022, in a reaffirmation of its commitment to these goals, UC entered into a multi-year funding Compact with the Governor that set intermediate goals to achieve 50 percent of increases needed to meet 2030 graduation goals by the end of the 2025–26 academic year.[3] These intermediate goals also called for eliminating 50 percent of the disparities seen in graduation outcomes, moving the University halfway toward its 2030 goals of parity. UC submitted reports on progress toward Compact goals to the Governor's office in 2022 and 2023.

The current report

In preparation for 2023 Compact reporting, the UCOP Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP) conducted interviews with representatives from each of the nine undergraduate campuses to develop a deeper understanding of how campuses are making progress toward 2030 goals. Chancellors selected campus representatives to participate in these meetings. In most cases, the campus teams included a senior administrator with responsibility for equity in undergraduate education, a representative from the campus Institutional Research (IR) office, and additional senior personnel from a student success unit or from the campus teaching and learning center.

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[2] https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/policies/4400.html
[3] https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/Programs/Education/UC-Compact-May-2022.pdf

These interviews, initially planned as a mechanism for streamlining Compact reporting, yielded a wealth of detailed information about on-the-ground activities at each campus. The broad strategies in place across the campuses were in many cases parallel, with differences emerging only in specific local implementation. The information gained from these interviews was synthesized and then circulated to members of the campus teams and with a community of practice formed by IRAP during the same time period to address the equity goals of the Compact.

Both groups were receptive to this information and recommended integrating the findings into a report that could be shared more broadly, with a goal of disseminating to a wide range of constituents to promote and strengthen collaboration. For example, at least one campus taskforce and multiple IR offices are using the report to inform campus planning. On one campus, the report was shared with the academic senate, disciplinary deans, and department chairs who were asked by the campus provost to engage with its content. IRAP has also presented or will be presenting report findings to provosts, deans of undergraduate education, vice chancellors for equity and inclusion, and student affairs divisions.

The materials presented in this item are drawn from that report, which is titled ***UC 2030: Equity is Excellence.***[4]

Update on UC 2030 goals

Graduation rates

UC graduation rates exceed those of Association of American Universities (AAU) public peers. For comparison, the four-year graduation rate for students entering UC as freshmen in 2016 was 71 percent. That rate was 65 percent for AAU public peers. [5] The UC graduation rate for freshmen entering in 2019 rose to 73 percent.

The UC 2030 initiative set a goal of increasing the overall systemwide four-year freshman graduation rate to 76 percent. The UC 2030 goal for the two-year transfer graduation rate is 70 percent. Compact goals seek half of those increases by the end of the 2025–26 academic year, calling for measurable progress at five campuses annually. Progress on these goals is tracked publicly on the UC Information Center 2030 Dashboard[6] and on the UC Equity and Student Success Goals Dashboard.[7]

- By the close of the 2022–23 academic year, four of nine campuses (UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC Merced) had seen increases in **freshman four-year graduation rates** above the 2021 baseline. Systemwide, the four-year graduation rate remained unchanged from 2021–22 to 2022–23, at 72.9 percent. However, with 1.5 percentage points to go, the 2026 goal of 74.4 percent is within reach.

[4] https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/uc-2030-equity-is-excellence.pdf
[5] https://accountability.universityofcalifornia.edu/2024/chapters/chapter-3.html#a3.1.1
[6] https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/uc-2030-dashboard
[7] https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/uc-equity-and-student-success-goals

- At the end of 2022–23, systemwide **two-year graduation rates for transfer students** reached 64 percent, just 2.5 percentage points from the 2026 goal of 66.5 percent. Campus-level gains were sizeable and widespread. Two UC campuses (UC Irvine and UCLA) have surpassed their 2030 goals already.

Table 1. Trends in freshman and transfer graduation rates

	2021	2022	2023	2026 goal	2030 goal
Freshman four-year graduation rates	72.7%	72.9%	72.9%	74.4%	76.0%
Transfer two-year graduation rates	63.0%	60.0%	64.0%	66.5%	70.0%

See more detail, including progress by campus, at the UC Information Center 2030 Dashboard.

Equity Goals

Key to achieving timely graduation goals, the UC 2030 vision also included the goal of eliminating disparities in freshman four-year and transfer two-year graduation rates. These equity goals call for parity between the overall graduation rates and rates for first-generation students, low-income students (Pell-eligible), and students from underrepresented minority groups (Black, Latino(a), and Native American) by 2030.

Achieving the 2030 equity goals and the intermediate Compact goals requires increases of roughly one percentage point per year in **freshman four-year graduation rates** for first-generation and Pell-eligible students and annual increases of 1.4 percentage points for students from underrepresented groups (Black, Latino(a), and Native American).

- From 2022 to 2023, overall four-year graduation rates for entering freshmen held steady at 72.9 percent.
- Rates increased for first-generation students, Pell-eligible students, and students from underrepresented groups: by 0.5 percentage points for first-generation, 0.6 percentage points for Pell-eligible, and by more than one percentage point (1.3) for students from underrepresented groups.

These gains follow a drop in graduation rates for first-generation and underrepresented groups in 2022. Therefore, the rebound is an important sign of recovery for the system post-pandemic. While the 2023 gains have not brought rates into alignment with projected increases that would bring the University to the goal of parity in 2030, continued progress at this rate or a slightly elevated one would bring that goal within reach.

Between 2022 and 2023, overall **two-year graduation rates for transfers** increased by four percentage points, reaching 64 percent. This increase marked a critical recovery from a steep drop of three percentage points seen the previous year.

- The 2023 increase has brought transfer two-year graduation rates above the 2021 baseline set at the start of the Compact, and it brings the overall rate back into alignment with projected growth needed to meet 2030 goals.
- Gains were shared across all groups, with increases from 2022 to 2023 of 3.1 percentage points for first-generation students, five percentage points for Pell-eligible students, and five points for students from underrepresented groups.

Table 2. Trends in disaggregated freshman and transfer graduation rates

Freshman four-year graduation rates

	2021	2022	2023	2026 goal	2030 goal
All	72.7%	72.9%	72.9%	74.4%	76.0%
First gen.	66.1%	65.8%	66.3%	71.0%	76.0%
Pell	67.0%	67.5%	68.1%	71.5%	76.0%
Underrepresented groups	62.5%	61.7%	63.0%	69.2%	76.0%

Transfer two-year graduation rates

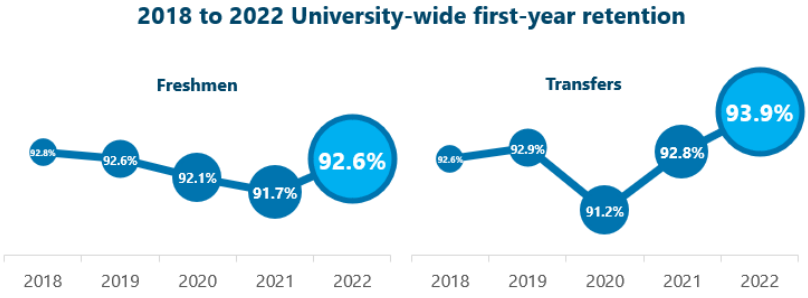
	2021	2022	2023	2026 goal	2030 goal
All	63.0%	60.0%	64.0%	66.5%	70.0%
First gen.	62.3%	59.2%	62.3%	66.1%	70.0%
Pell	57.4%	56.3%	61.3%	63.7%	70.0%
Underrepresented groups	59.4%	55.5%	60.5%	64.7%	70.0%

Underrepresented groups include Black, Latino(a), and Native American.

Retention

In a further sign of post-pandemic recovery, **first-year retention rates** were up for freshmen and for transfers who entered the University in 2022. For transfers, this was the second year in a row that retention rates increased by more than one percentage point.

Figure 1. Trends in first-year retention



Year shown is year of entry.

These gains in retention were shared across groups. For freshmen entering 2022, first-year retention rates increased by one percentage point overall and more than double that

(2.2 percentage points) for underrepresented groups (Black, Latino(a), and Native American). Retention rates for transfers entering 2022 exceeded 93 percent for all students, including students who are low-income, first generation, or members of underrepresented groups, for the first time since the pandemic. See the UC Information Center 2030 Dashboard[8] for detailed results.

UC 2030 Strategies in action

As the world's leading public research university system, the University of California has been at the forefront of transformations in undergraduate education, most recently in devising new models for supporting student academic success and holistic well-being as the system emerges from the pandemic. As the University pursues its work, UC campuses offer leadership and collaboration through multi-system initiatives.

- The **Association of Undergraduate Research Universities** (UERU) is a network of public and private research universities serving more than 2.5 million undergraduate students each year. UC alone enrolls nearly 235,000 students. All nine UC campuses are members, and UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Irvine, UCLA, and UC Santa Cruz are charter members.
- The **American Talent Initiative** (ATI) is a project to graduate 50,000 new students from low- and middle-income backgrounds. The initiative brings together 135 institutions with a record of expanding opportunity. All nine UC undergraduate campuses are members.
- UC Riverside is one of 11 founding members of the **University Innovation Alliance** (UIA), launched in 2014 with a goal of awarding 68,000 additional undergraduate degrees. Member institutions are distinguished as research universities that serve large numbers of first-generation and low-income students.
- The **Fulbright HSI Leaders Initiative** recognizes strong engagement of select Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) within the Fulbright Program, the U.S. government's flagship international academic exchange program. UC Merced was designated a 'Leader for 2023' by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The practices at work on UC campuses are rooted in evidence and align with the strategies recognized by the UERU as critical to meeting the "equity imperative" in higher education.[9] What follows is a description of how those strategies are put to work throughout the system.

The ten strategies in use are grouped into four themes: excellence in teaching and learning, on-time graduation, student experience, and leadership. **Appendix A** of the *UC 2030 Equity is Excellence* report includes a profile of each campus with example efforts in each of these areas.

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[8] https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/uc-2030-dashboard

[9] See: *The Equity/Excellence Imperative: A 2030 Blueprint for Undergraduate Education at U.S. Research Universities*. The Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities (UERU). https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/boyer2030/report.pdf
UC Davis Chancellor Gary S. May is a member of the commission that drafted the report.

UC 2030 Strategies

Excellence in teaching and learning
1. Leverage equitable and inclusive pedagogies
2. Invest in advising
3. Broaden access to experiential learning

On-time graduation
4. Start with success in year one
5. Remove institutional barriers
6. Expand credit opportunities

Student experience
7. Promote wellness and belonging
8. Set the standard for a minority-serving system

Leadership
9. Model new forms of accountability
10. Leverage information technology

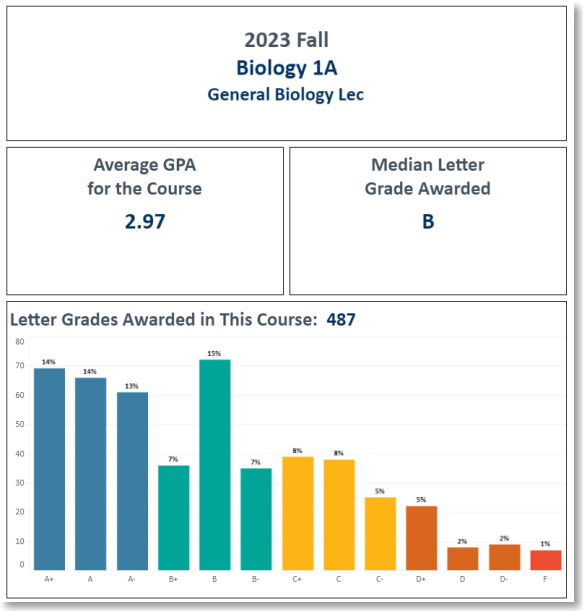
Excellence in teaching and learning

Inclusive pedagogy improves teaching and learning through evidence-based practice to promote more welcoming and sustaining learning environments and more equitable student outcomes. It is characterized by instructional practices like drafting more accessible syllabi, restructuring assessments to reduce reliance on high-stakes exams, leveraging peer-engaged learning, or directing students to supports for mental health, well-being, and basic needs.

- At **UC Santa Barbara,** the Office of Teaching and Learning is a comprehensive unit that encompasses faculty professional learning, student academic belonging, institutional assessment, pedagogical innovations, and high-impact educational practices. The unit serves as a hub for the campus's comprehensive approach to supporting teaching excellence, and its faculty partnerships are informed by a suite of comprehensive analytics tools.
- **UC Davis, UC Irvine,** and **UC Santa Barbara** are all member institutions of the Sloan Foundation–funded SEISMIC Collaborative. Team members lead course and curriculum redesign efforts in their home departments and conduct research that explores the deeper structural problems that can limit courses and curricula from generating equitable outcomes. Of the ten SEISMIC member campuses, three are UC campuses.
- **UC Berkeley** has a dedicated unit to ensure consistent student experience across multiple student services and touchpoints. The Advising Training and Strategy unit offers professional development for advising staff. Advisors learn how to understand and identify practices which may introduce stereotype threat, deficit thinking, or other mindsets—of student or advisors—that can undermine a student's potential.
- At **UC Merced,** course analytics dashboards show information about grades and repeat enrollments for affected courses that help faculty and administrators focus their efforts to

improve student outcomes. Each of the nine undergraduate campuses has a tool of this sort that was locally developed to meet the specific needs of faculty and administrators. For example, **UC Riverside** makes use of an internal equity gaps dashboard and **UC Berkeley** publishes course profiles that are available to the public as a part of its "Our Berkeley" suite of dashboards.

Figure 2. Detail from the "Our Berkeley" dashboard



On-time graduation

The road to on-time graduation begins as soon as students enter the University, and first-year milestones are critical. These include declaring a major, passing preliminary coursework, and holding initial meetings with an academic advisor. Each campus has programs in place to help students take full advantage of their first year, supporting them as they learn about campus resources, develop a peer group, and start learning about study abroad, research, or other opportunities outside of the classroom.

- At **UCLA,** the First Year Experience project welcomes new Bruins and introduces them to the importance of milestones through informal and accessible tools. The First Year Experience website hosts guides for incoming students written by UCLA students. This is one of a variety of strategies that UCLA and other campuses are employing to ensure the "hidden curriculum"[10] is explained, so that students can navigate their first year.
- **UC Riverside** Living-Learning Communities (LLCs) are small cohorts of roughly twenty-five first-year students who share a common major or interests. Communities are designed to help transition students to the university experience. Initial research found

[10] https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/may22/a5.pdf

positive results in first-year retention for those living in LLCs,[11] which are led by dynamic faculty and advising professionals who introduce students to academic values, research opportunities, and university resources.

- **UC Irvine** revised its change of major policy in response to a study which found that students who did not graduate within six years overwhelmingly did not change their major, an anomaly for a campus where more than half of students switch majors at least once. The revised change of major policy did away with a minimum GPA requirement that blocked students from switching. Removing this barrier helps students improve their GPAs while staying on track for timely graduation—all in their preferred major.
- The **UC Santa Cruz** Major Migration dashboard is used by faculty and administrators to make sense of patterns of movement between majors, information that can help inform interventions that target retention. Similar tools for examining curricular pathways and student progress through them are in use across several campuses, including **UC Santa Barbara** (structural challenges dashboard), **UC San Diego** (curricular complexity analysis), and **UC Davis** ("ribbon tool").

Figure 3. Detail from the UC Davis ribbon tool dashboard which visualizes student change of major

Student experience

As it pursues its UC 2030 goals, the University aspires to become the model of a minority-serving research system. Building on its success in expanding access, the system is focusing efforts on student experience, which means support all the way to graduation. From validation and connection to financial assistance and fulfilling basic needs, UC campuses are committed to wellness and to ensuring every student feels valued at UC.

[11] https://assess.ucr.edu/sites/default/files/2019-02/fylc2011report.pdf

- Today, with 26.2 percent Latino(a) undergraduate enrollment systemwide, five UC campuses—UC Merced, UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, UC Irvine, and UC Santa Barbara—have already been designated **Hispanic-Serving Institutions** (HSIs). The four remaining undergraduate campuses are emerging HSIs. UC Merced, UC Riverside, and UC Santa Cruz have also received the **Seal of Excelencia** for campus efforts to intentionally serve Latino(a) students and demonstrate positive student outcomes.
- Eight UC campuses are **Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions** (AA-NAPI-SIs): UC Berkeley, UC Davis UC Irvine, UC Merced, UC Riverside, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara, and UC Santa Cruz.
- UC Merced is the fastest institution to become a research institution with R2 designation, which denotes high research activity, and is now leading a consortium of R2 institutions already designated as HSIs that are moving toward R1 (very high research activity) status. The campus was recently recognized as an **American Talent Initiative High-Flyer** because of its access and success for low-income students.
- At UC San Diego, as part of its Collective Impact initiative, partners across campus have tripled the size of **Summer Bridge**, a five-week transition program that provides students with the opportunity to earn college credit online and in person, develop skills for academic success, connect with University resources, and receive support throughout their first academic year at UC San Diego.

Leadership and accountability

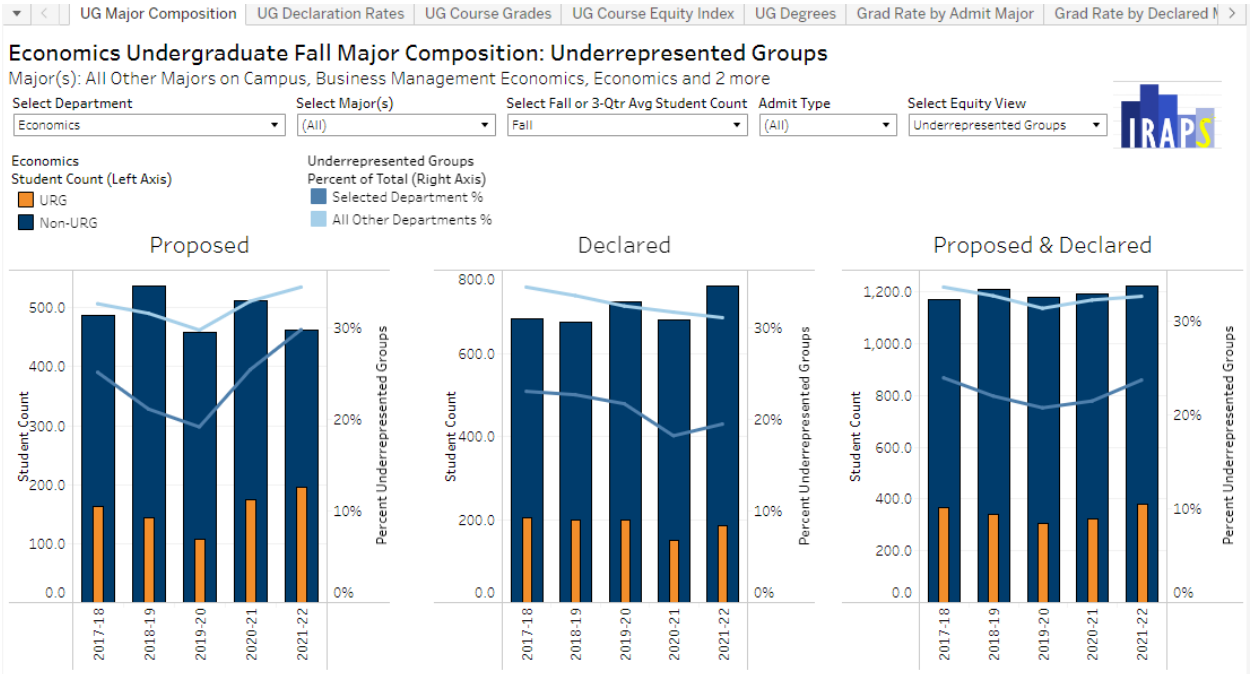
Many of the campus leaders who were interviewed for the report described new models of leadership emerging at their campuses. Across multiple campuses, administrative roles focused on student success have been newly created or reimagined. Each campus has in place a task force or workgroup that is charged with student success. These changes are driving new models of accountability to ensure that efforts lead to outcomes.

These models rely heavily on a steady flow of information, and campuses are increasing investments in tools and systems to ensure that faculty, administrators, and professional staff throughout the system are equipped with the information they need to support students.

- The **UC Davis** Student Success and Equitable Outcomes Task Force was charged in 2023 to prioritize existing work and to generate specific action plans to improve student success and equitable outcomes. The initiative is informed by a comprehensive suite of data tools known on campus as "Aggie Metrics".
- The **UC San Diego** Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence offers a roadmap for shaping the future of equity, diversity, and inclusion at UC San Diego. The initiative combines comprehensive data and analysis with an accountability structure for senior leaders.
- At **UCLA,** the inaugural Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning is working closely with faculty to improve student success and reduce opportunity gaps in bottleneck courses. These efforts include evaluating, on a course-by-course basis, where intervention should be prioritized.
- At **UC Santa Cruz,** the Associate Campus Provost for Academic Success fills a newly created role that works with academic units to help them identify opportunities to

improve student learning, retention, and progress through the major. The Associate Provost and the departments both have access to a Departmental Equity Profile dashboard that provides a wealth of information about student progress at critical points in the curriculum. The dashboard comes with a "playbook" to inform action.

Figure 4. Screenshot from the UC Santa Cruz departmental equity profile dashboard



Major Status	Department	Demographic Group	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Proposed	Economics	URG	163.0	143.0	108.0	174.0	195.0
			25.0%	21.0%	19.1%	25.3%	29.7%
		Non-URG	488.0	537.0	458.0	513.0	462.0
			75.0%	79.0%	80.9%	74.7%	70.3%
		Total	651.0	680.0	566.0	687.0	657.0
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	All Other Departments	URG	2,299.0	2,106.0	1,786.0	2,185.0	2,473.0
			32.5%	31.5%	29.6%	32.8%	34.3%
		Non-URG	4,773.0	4,588.0	4,240.0	4,480.0	4,732.0
			67.5%	68.5%	70.4%	67.2%	65.7%
		Total	7,072.0	6,694.0	6,026.0	6,665.0	7,205.0
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Updates on activities and planned efforts

In addition to Compact funding that has provided stability to efforts already under way, one of the greatest systemwide opportunities for continued progress involves the diffusion of innovative practices. UC is pursuing this approach by offering system-level support for campus collaboration and by developing opportunities to share knowledge with intersegmental partners.

Community of practice

In summer 2023, in preparation for reporting on Compact progress to the Governor, IRAP recognized an opportunity to leverage communication across campuses. Building on participation and interest in a 2022 summer IR talk series which focused on data tools, IRAP launched in 2023 a community of practice that would focus specifically on the equity goals of

UC 2030 and be open to a broader range of practitioners. This community brings together UC stakeholders from a variety of roles, including deans, advisors, institutional researchers, teaching and learning specialists, as well as other campus administrators, through regular meetings and resource sharing.

- The first community meeting addressed "the data-informed faculty" sharing models for supporting faculty in equity-driven pedagogy through the use of course outcomes data and student demographics.
- The community has also developed an inventory of campus data tools[12] and has shared best practices around deployment of these tools, including training and other scaffolded support for faculty data users.
- The kick-off meeting for the 2024–25 academic year featured colleagues from the California State University system as guest presenters, sharing their perspective on telling stories with data.

Continued intersegmental collaboration

As a part of the Compact and central to its overall strategy to better serve the students of California, UC is committed to collaborating with intersegmental partners. As the CSU has pursued its Graduation 2025 initiative and UC its 2030 vision, both systems have placed a premium on the use of institutional data to advance strategic priorities.

Personnel from the system-level offices of institutional research at UC and CSU are in regular contact, updating one another on recent and ongoing work and sharing work at professional conferences. UC has in the past invited CSU to join in a summer learning series hosted by its local IR offices. In summer 2024, CSU was the guest presenter at the 2024–25 kickoff for the UC equity-focused community of practice, referenced above.

Calculus and chemistry workgroup

In producing the UC 2030 Equity is Excellence report, IRAP set a goal to facilitate nascent collaborations across UC campuses and to spark conversation where parallel efforts may inform progress. The development of this report and the community of practice are thus focused on the same end.

One area of focus to have emerged from the report is the importance of collaborative design in improved student success for STEM gateway courses, particularly in chemistry and calculus. This topic has already been the subject of two meetings of campus provosts, and IRAP is beginning a new round of informational interviews with campuses and is in early stages of planning a series of meetings on this topic.

[12] This inventory is included as Appendix B of the UC 2030: Equity is Excellence report. https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/uc-2030-equity-is-excellence.pdf

CONCLUSION

The UC 2030 vision and the Compact with the Governor both set ambitious goals for charting the future at UC, and the University continues to make progress. To better understand the change behind that progress, IRAP interviewed campus leaders who described the strategies and innovations at work on each campus. A synthesis of that information has been published in the *UC 2030: Equity is Excellence* report. The report offers detailed information for all stakeholders in the University, and it is being used to inform new models of collaboration, including cross-system dialogue with the California State University, a UC community of practice, and nascent workgroups.

KEY TO ACRONYMS

AA-NAPI-SI	Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution
AAU	Association of American Universities
ATI	American Talent Initiative
CSU	California State University
HSI	Hispanic-Serving Institution
IR	Institutional Research office (campuses)
IRAP	Institutional Research and Academic Planning (UC Office of the President)
R1	Doctoral university with very high research activity (Carnegie classification)
R2	Doctoral university with high research activity (Carnegie classification)
SEISMIC	Sloan Equity and Inclusion in STEM Introductory Courses (collaborative)
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and math
UERU	Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities
UIA	University Innovation Alliance

ATTACHMENT

UC 2030: Equity is Excellence, May 2024 University of California Office of the President Institutional Research and Academic Planning