

**UCDAVIS**

# Institutional Report for the WSCUC Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation

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## Section 1:

# Introduction - Institutional Context and Response to Previous Commission Actions



# 1. Overview

The [University of California, Davis](#) (in this document, referred to interchangeably as UC Davis or the institution), was founded in 1908 and is one of 10 campuses in the [University of California System](#) (UC System). The mission of the University of California is to serve society as a center of higher learning through excellence in teaching, research, and service. One of the greatest strengths of UC Davis is the extraordinary breadth of disciplinary expertise that has flourished within the institution over the decades. UC Davis features an academic environment that is characterized by interdisciplinary ties across colleges, schools, and departments, and a culture of collaboration and cooperation in research and education. In keeping with this culture, the institution is grateful for the opportunity to conduct a self-study and critically examine how it can better fulfill its obligations to the students, faculty, and staff of UC Davis, to the people of California, and to the world beyond.

Over the last 15 years, UC Davis has, like institutions throughout the University of California (UC) and across the United States, experienced public disinvestment, resulting in financial crises. The UC System, including UC Davis, initially offset budgetary shortfalls by raising tuition precipitously. When that strategy proved politically fraught and fiscally insufficient, UC Davis embraced significant enrollment growth, linking that growth with efforts to improve quality and access. As a result, UC Davis's enrollment increased at the same time that it welcomed students with broader lived experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.

This self-study analyzes the institution's efforts to increase enrollment and generate revenue while simultaneously improving the quality of the educational experience. UC Davis has, in the years under review, endeavored to provide an outstanding education with consistent outcomes for all students. The institution is pleased to share this story in the pages that follow and looks forward to discussing these experiences in more detail with the evaluation team.

## 2. Quick Guide to the Self-Study Report

In accordance with the [Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation \(TPR\) Guidelines](#), this report uses institutionally selected themes to demonstrate that UC Davis meets the Commission's Standards of Accreditation. The report contains hyperlinks that provide information, such as web pages, data, policies, and other evidence that supports the narrative. When appropriate, the linked materials are also included in the appendices. Below are links to the worksheet, forms, and appendices:

- [WSCUC Standards Worksheet](#), with supporting documents in [Appendix I](#)
- [Federal Compliance Forms](#), with supporting documents in [Appendix II](#)
- Exhibits for this report in [Appendix III](#)

### 3. Brief Summary of the Self-Study Process

In September 2022, UC Davis's provost and its chair of the Academic Senate charged the [WSCUC Accreditation Steering Committee](#) to help lead the institution's reaffirmation efforts by engaging the campus community, collecting and analyzing relevant data, reviewing the final report, and interacting with the evaluation team. The Steering Committee includes a broad representation of institutional leaders, including elected representatives of the undergraduate and graduate student bodies.

In spring 2023, the institution's executive leadership chose the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation for its institutional review process. UC Davis selected two themes as the focus of its self-study: 1) Review of the 2020 Initiative; and 2) Student Success and Equitable Outcomes. Subsequently, WSCUC accepted those themes.

During fall 2023 and winter 2024, the Steering Committee developed a presentation that it shared with audiences across the institution. The presentation raised awareness of the Thematic Pathway for Reaffirmation process and the review timeline, while providing opportunities for dialogue related to the themes and accreditation.

Over the course of nine months, the interim accreditation liaison officer delivered the reaffirmation presentation approximately 20 times to more than 700 people, including representatives from the institution's four colleges, the Division of Student Affairs, the Davis Division of the Academic Senate, the UC Davis Academic Federation, and executive leadership groups such as the Chancellor's Leadership Council and the Provost's Leadership Council. In addition to in-person meetings, a [recorded version](#) of

the presentation and a [one-page summary](#) of the institution's reaffirmation process were posted on the accreditation website and were [sent to all faculty and staff via email](#). Data related to the 2020 Initiative and student success can be found on the [institution's accreditation website](#).

In spring 2024, members of the Steering Committee reviewed feedback and began preparing the self-study report. In summer 2024, the Steering Committee and other institutional leaders reviewed the self-study report. In August 2024, the complete report was submitted to WSCUC.

## 4. Institutional Context

The University of California is world-renowned for its celebrated faculty, groundbreaking research, life-changing innovations, and exceptional academic programs. The University of California, Davis shares in and actively works to fulfill the UC System's tripartite mission:

*...to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long-term societal benefits through transmitting advanced knowledge, discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active working repository of organized knowledge. That obligation, more specifically, includes undergraduate education, graduate and professional education, research, and other kinds of public service, which are shaped and bound by the central pervasive mission of discovering and advancing knowledge.*

A comprehensive review and assessment of UC Davis and its sibling institutions is available in the [2024 Accountability Report](#), which measures progress in teaching, research, and public service goals. This document also includes strategic planning, budgeting, and performance data related to WSCUC standards.

[To Boldly Go](#), UC Davis's strategic plan, details a comprehensive, long-term vision for the institution. The plan was based on extensive input and discussion with institutional constituents, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and donors. To Boldly Go outlines aspirations and methods for guiding UC Davis to new heights of distinction. More than 900 ideas were received, informing how UC Davis could grow stronger as a model of academic excellence, social mobility, diversity, and leadership while addressing the world's most pressing challenges. To Boldly Go's goals are to:

- Provide an educational experience that prepares all of UC Davis's students to address the needs and challenges of a diverse and changing world
- Enable and support research that matters at the frontiers of knowledge, across and between disciplines, in support of a healthy planet and the physical and societal well-being of its inhabitants
- Embrace diversity, practice inclusive excellence, and strive for equity. Make UC Davis a place of excellence for learning and working by supporting a culture that values the contributions and aspirations of all its students, faculty, and staff; promote wellness and a culture of sustainability; and cultivate the open interchange of ideas



- Support the UC Davis community, region, state, nation, and world through mutually beneficial and impactful partnerships that reflect a firm commitment to the University of California’s tripartite mission while increasing the visibility and reputation of the institution
- Create an intellectual and physical environment that supports the development of an innovative and entrepreneurial culture that extends the benefits of UC Davis’s research activities beyond the boundaries of the institution

The institution assesses its progress toward realizing the goals articulated in To Boldly Go during annual day-long retreats led by the chancellor. To date, each of these assessment retreats has focused on one of the plan’s five goals, bringing together the institution’s leaders to review and evaluate data related to that topic. Three weeks prior to UC Davis’s WSCUC site visit, the chancellor will lead the institution’s sixth annual assessment retreat, a retrospective and comprehensive discussion of efforts to achieve the five goals articulated in To Boldly Go.

Several task forces, listed on the [chancellor’s](#) and the [provost’s](#) webpages, are charged with moving activities forward and assessing the institution’s progress.

## **A. Overview**

As one of 10 campuses in the University of California, UC Davis is governed by the [University of California Board of Regents](#). The Davis campus, bordering the town of the same name, consists of approximately 5,300 acres. Nearly 3,000 acres of the institution's campus, including orchards, vineyards, croplands, and pastures, are used for agricultural research and education. UC Davis's Sacramento campus, located in the state's capital, is about 20 miles from the Davis campus and includes the School of Medicine, the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing, and the UC Davis Medical Center. The medical center is the region's primary safety-net hospital and its only teaching hospital. UC Davis has additional satellite locations, among them research facilities at [Lake Tahoe](#), [Bodega Bay](#), and [Tulare](#). Across all its locations, UC Davis enrolls more than 40,000 students and employs nearly 24,000 people.

UC Davis is organized into four colleges and six professional schools: the [College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences](#), [College of Biological Sciences](#), [College of Engineering](#), [College of Letters and Science](#), [Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing](#), [Graduate School of Management](#), [School of Education](#), [School of Law](#), [School of Medicine](#), and [School of Veterinary Medicine](#). The institution offers more than 120 undergraduate majors and more than 100 areas of study for graduate and professional degrees, including several distance, online, and part-time degree programs.

To support student success in its academic programs, UC Davis employs a holistic approach and provides an array of resources located in many units. These include, among others, [tutoring](#), [advising](#), [internship and career services](#). More than 15,000 students live in [on-campus housing](#), which is guaranteed for all incoming first-year students. The institution also provides housing resources specific to [graduate and professional students](#) and [transfer students](#). The Associated Students of UC Davis (ASUCD), the institution's undergraduate student government organization, provides [information related to off-campus housing](#). [The Aggie Compass Basic Needs Center](#) assists students facing issues of food insecurity and in need of emergency housing, mental health resources, and substance abuse services. UC Davis recently launched [Health 34](#), a leading-edge approach to free mental health care and basic medical care without full deployment of emergency services.

Students have a wide range of options to connect and engage with one another outside of classes, with [more than 800 clubs and organizations](#), including 68 sororities and fraternities. Additionally, students can stay active through [Campus Recreation's](#) programming, including aquatics, the craft center, the equestrian center, and outdoor recreation. The intercollegiate athletics program features [25 NCAA Division I sports](#) programs, including 16 women's sports and 9 men's sports, and is fully compliant with [Title IX](#) requirements.

UC Davis is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The third goal of To Boldly Go is to make the institution a place of excellence by supporting a culture that values the contributions and aspirations of all students, faculty, and staff. The [Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) is the unit that leads and strengthens these efforts. The division helps units in the institution embed DEI goals and values in their plans, including budget requests, professional development activities, and policies and practices. DEI resources for students, faculty, and staff are on the [division's website](#).

UC Davis expects every member of the institution to acknowledge, value, and practice its [Principles of Community](#), which were first adopted in 1990. The principles include affirming the dignity inherent in all, the right to freedom of expression, and confronting and rejecting all manifestations of discrimination. Everyone at the institution has an obligation to uphold its principles, and all members of UC Davis must strive to build and maintain a culture and climate based on mutual respect and caring. The Principles of Community are available in several languages, and the institution hosts a [Principles of Community Week](#) each year to celebrate and reaffirm its commitment to these shared values. Employees can participate in a [Living the Principles of Community course](#), in addition to [Dialogues on Diversity courses](#) that support the principles and furthers equity and inclusion at UC Davis.

The institution is committed to maintaining a welcoming and inclusive campus climate that supports the success and wellbeing of its more than 7,000 staff, nearly 13,000 clinical staff, nearly 4,500 faculty and academics, and nearly 10,000 student employees.

UC Davis measures campus climate through regular outreach to its community:

- Distributes the [UC Undergraduate Experience Survey](#), soliciting feedback from students about their experiences and perceptions, providing a comprehensive analysis of the institution's performance over time, and a benchmark against other UC campuses and peer institutions
- Conducts the [Staff Experience Survey](#), measuring satisfaction across more than 20 themes, including purpose, role, workplace flexibility, leadership, culture, communication, and sense of belonging
- Participates in the [Collaboration on Academic Careers in Higher Education \(COACHE\) Survey](#), assessing faculty satisfaction with their work, including research, teaching, and service activities; benefits; merit and promotion; shared governance; and collegiality in their department

The institution provides numerous resources to attract and support its diverse workforce, including but not limited to:

- [Activities and Recreation Center](#)
- [Employee Resource Groups](#)
- [Healthy UC Davis](#)
- [Learning and Organizational Development](#)
- [Staff and Faculty Health and Well-Being Program](#)
- [WorkLife and Wellness](#)

In 2024, *Forbes* recognized UC Davis as a [Best Employer for Diversity](#) and [Best Employer in California](#) and, in 2023, as a [Best Employer for Diversity](#) and [Best Employer for Women](#). UC Davis Health also was named a *Forbes* [Best Employer for Diversity](#), [Best Employer in the State](#), and [Best Employer for Women](#) in 2024, and is one of the [Greatest Workplaces for Families](#) in the nation according to *Newsweek*.

## Rankings and Memberships

UC Davis continues to be recognized for its excellence through [national and international rankings](#), including:

- 6th overall in the nation for public universities, 28th overall among public and private universities, and 19th for social mobility of its students - [U.S. News and World Report](#)
- 21st overall for universities in the United States - [Washington Monthly](#)
- 1st in the nation and 2nd worldwide for veterinary science, agriculture, and forestry programs - [Quacquarelli Symonds \(QS\) World Rankings](#)
- 1st in campus sustainability in the United States and 5th worldwide - [UI GreenMetric World University Ranking](#)
- Elected member of the [Association of American Universities](#) and a member of the [Association of Public and Land-grant Universities](#)

## Community Engagement

UC Davis maintains outstanding relations with its surrounding communities through ongoing town-gown engagement, events, partnerships, and services. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck the region, UC Davis applied its expertise and resources to safeguard the institution and the region. In partnership with the city of Davis, which is home to nearly 70,000 people and located approximately 20 miles west of the state capital, UC Davis launched [Healthy Davis Together](#). The program's goal was to prevent the spread of COVID-19, facilitate a coordinated return of operations and activities for the city, its businesses, and the institution. UC Davis led a communitywide coalition that implemented a fast, low-cost, saliva-based COVID-19 testing system, piloted air filter and surface testing, and enacted a wastewater monitoring program. Healthy Davis Together developed and managed a contact tracing operation conducted by dozens of graduate students and trained and deployed 275 undergraduate students as ambassadors who distributed free masks and educational materials that dispelled health disinformation. Healthy Davis Together also recruited apartment and hotel owners to provide free housing for isolation and quarantine for community members exposed to COVID-19.

During its 21 months in operation, Healthy Davis Together conducted more than 800,000 free COVID-19 tests, administered 16,000 COVID-19 vaccines, collected more than 10,000 air and wastewater samples, provided grants and other resources to help keep more than 400 Davis businesses open, and supported more than 50 K-12 schools in Yolo County through testing and education materials.

The collaborative response to the COVID-19 pandemic deepened a long-standing partnership between the city of Davis and UC Davis. Together, the city and the institution received several awards, including the inaugural Research Response to a Community Crisis Award from the [Association of Public and Land-grant Universities](#), the Presidential Leadership Award from the [International Town and Gown Association](#), and the Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award from the [Institute for Local Government](#). [The New York Times](#) wrote a feature story about the partnership between UC Davis and the city of Davis.

Additional notable community and statewide engagement includes:

- Building on Healthy Davis Together, the city of Davis, Yolo County, and UC Davis launched [Hate-Free Together](#) in 2024. The partnership is a call for action to foster a sense of safety, cultivate change, and condemn hate. Hate-Free Together helps community members identify and report hate crimes, access victim services, and seek mental health support.
- [Unitrans](#), founded in 1968 as the University Transport System, is a community-wide bus service that is funded by the Associated Students of UC Davis and the city of Davis and operated by the institution's students. Unitrans transports four million passengers per year.
- In 2018, UC Davis and the city of Davis collaborated on a [Long Range Development Plan](#) to increase student housing and address infrastructure, traffic, and transportation needs in the community.



- The institution participates in three [Regional K-16 Education Collaboratives](#) to enhance college preparedness, awareness, and readiness. UC Davis is partnering with California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt in the Redwood Coast region, Shasta College in the North State region, and Los Rios Community College District in the Sacramento region. The education collaboratives support underserved students in 23 of California’s 58 counties.
- The UC Davis School of Education’s [Resourcing Excellence in Education Center](#) administers college opportunity programs, including Educational Talent Search, GEAR UP, and Upward Bound, preparing students for postsecondary education through programming, advising, activities, and K-12 partnerships.
- Several on-campus museums, including the [Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum](#), [Gorman Museum of Native American Art](#), [Design Museum](#), and [Bohart Museum of Entomology](#), host public events and educational programs throughout the year.
- [UC Davis Health](#) is nationally ranked in [eight adult specialties and three children’s specialties](#), and provides outstanding care throughout the Sacramento region and beyond. Community engagement highlights are available on the [UC Davis Health website](#).
- UC Davis partners with peer universities, research institutions, and government agencies through the [Office of Research](#), [Global Affairs](#), and [Continuing and Professional Education](#).

- [Global Affairs](#) enhances and expands learning opportunities, including [Global Education for All](#), and engages in [more than 150 global partnerships](#). UC Davis welcomes more than 10,000 international students, scholars, and leaders to campus each year, and is consistently ranked among the top universities hosting and producing [Fulbright](#) scholars and students. Additionally, faculty are supported in their international activities through [Seed Grants](#) and funding for work that [advances the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (UN SDGs). In 2021, UC Davis completed a [Voluntary University Review](#) on the UN SDGs, highlighting successes and opportunities for additional engagement.
- The institution holds a variety of [public events](#) each year, the largest of which is [Picnic Day](#), organized and hosted by the Associated Students of UC Davis. Picnic Day [began in 1909](#) and continues to serve as an open house to showcase the outstanding research, teaching, and service activities of the institution's students, faculty, and staff. In April 2024, this signature event welcomed more than 70,000 people to participate in over 200 events.

## **Economic Impact**

UC Davis is one of the largest employers in Yolo County, where the Davis campus is located, and in Sacramento County, home to UC Davis Health. A [2022 economic impact analysis](#) found that UC Davis generated more than \$12.5 billion in statewide economic activity and supported nearly 70,000 jobs in 2019. In 2024, UC Davis hired its first chief innovation and economic development officer, reporting directly to the chancellor. This position will help enhance the institution's entrepreneurial efforts, creating lasting outcomes for the university and the community.

## Leadership

The University of California is governed by the [26-member Board of Regents](#), which has authority over university policies, financial affairs, tuition and fees. The board appoints the [university president](#). Reporting to the university president, each of the 10 campuses is led by a chancellor.

[Gary S. May](#) was appointed the seventh chancellor of UC Davis in August 2017. He joined the institution after three decades of service at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, where he was dean of its College of Engineering, the largest and most diverse school of its kind in the nation. Chancellor May serves on several national commissions and boards, including the [Boyer 2030 Commission](#) and the [American Council on Education](#). He is past-chair for the [Association of Public and Land-grant Universities board of directors](#) and the [Big West Conference](#) board of directors.

Chancellor May is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the American Society for Engineering Education.

- Office of the Chancellor organizational chart [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 1.4.1\]](#)

[Mary Croughan](#) joined UC Davis in July 2020 as its provost and executive vice chancellor. She has more than 35 years of experience within the University of California System, including as a professor in the UC San Francisco School of Medicine. Provost Croughan held several leadership roles, including chair of the system-wide Academic Senate from 2008-09. She was vice president for research and economic development at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas from 2017 to 2020. Provost Croughan is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a member of the [Lawrence Berkeley](#)

[National Laboratory Advisory Board](#), and an executive committee member of the [Association for Public and Land-grant Universities' Council on Academic Affairs](#).

- Office of the Provost organizational chart [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 1.4.2\]](#)

Faculty participate in the governance of the University of California via campus divisions of the Academic Senate, unifying and instilling a standard of excellence across all 10 UC campuses. UC Davis operates under a model of shared governance, providing faculty a voice in the institution's operations.

The [Davis Division of the Academic Senate](#) represents the Davis faculty in the shared governance of the University of California. Through the Academic Senate, faculty work with the administration to fulfill and govern the UC's teaching, research, and service mission. The Academic Senate is responsible for overseeing and approving courses and curricula, and establishing requirements for admissions, certificates, and degrees. The Academic Senate maintains UC's high-quality education, and faculty engage in deliberative processes through standing committees and a general assembly. The Academic Senate is active in its advisory role to the administration on budgetary, personnel, and other institutional operations. Additionally, the Academic Senate helps to safeguard academic freedom and ensures due process in academic personnel matters. Unique in the UC System, the [UC Davis Academic Federation](#) represents members of 17 academic titles, including instructors, researchers, health care practitioners, and librarians. The Academic Federation promotes the ideas and interests of its members to campus administration and other partners, often working closely with the Academic Senate on matters of mutual importance.



## **B. Teaching**

UC Davis is dedicated to providing an educational experience to its students that prepares them for the needs and challenges of a diverse and changing society.

As of October 2023, the institution employed almost 1,700 ladder-rank and equivalent faculty, more than 400 lecturers, and nearly 2,300 academic student employees. In a calendar year (including summer), UC Davis offers more than 20,000 classes, equating to almost 500,000 course registrations. The vast majority of the institution's courses are offered in person. The number of virtual and hybrid courses has, in recent years, increased and is currently about 7% of overall course offerings. UC Davis's School of Law and School of Veterinary Medicine operate on a semester system. The School of Medicine operates on a modified quarter system. All other academic programs operate on a quarter system.

## Enrollment

Educating students, from undergraduate to graduate and professional programs, UC Davis faculty impart knowledge and skills to Californians and students from around the nation and world. In fall 2023, UC Davis enrolled 40,848 students, including 31,797 undergraduate students, 4,753 master's and doctoral students, and 4,298 students pursuing professional degrees. Over the last 10 years, the institution's total enrollment has grown by nearly 6,700 students, an increase of approximately 20%. As will be discussed in more detail later in this report, the bulk of this growth was at the undergraduate level as a result of the 2020 Initiative.

UC Davis is committed to serving the people of California as an engine of social mobility. The fall 2023 cohort of new undergraduate students was 41% first generation in their family to attend college or university. In that same year, 35% of UC Davis students were Pell-grant-eligible. With more than 35% of its undergraduates identifying as Asian or Pacific Islander, UC Davis is federally recognized as an [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution](#). UC Davis is nearing the threshold for federal designation as a [Hispanic Serving Institution](#), with more than 24% of its undergraduates identifying as Hispanic/Latinx.

In addition to students who come directly to the University of California from high school, the UC System is dedicated to providing pathways to a bachelor's degree for students who attend community college. The UC System seeks to enroll one undergraduate transfer student from a California community college for every two incoming first-year students. Every UC campus is expected to meet this 2:1 ratio for

each incoming cohort of students. UC Davis has a long history of meeting this goal but, for the last few years, enrollment of incoming first-year undergraduates has outpaced incoming transfer students. In fall 2023, UC Davis enrolled 2.1 first-year students for every 1 transfer student. The institution attributes this to external circumstances, including the national decline in community college enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic. California community colleges were not exempt from this trend. That said, enrollment in California community colleges is beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels. UC Davis continues to recruit transfer students from local and regional community colleges with a goal of meeting the 2:1 ratio in future admission cycles.

Interdisciplinary education is woven into the DNA of UC Davis, and graduate education is no exception. For more than 50 years, many of the institution's graduate programs have operated as [graduate groups](#). Instead of being based in one academic department, faculty and students in graduate groups work collaboratively across the institution. More than half of the institution's graduate programs currently operate in this manner. For example, the [Integrative Genetics and Genomics Graduate Group](#), housed in the College of Biological Sciences, includes approximately 100 faculty members from more than 25 departments in the College of Biological Sciences, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the College of Letters and Science, the School of Medicine, and the School of Veterinary Medicine.



## C. Research

Researchers at UC Davis uncover insights and unlock solutions that improve lives and benefit the world. The institution's globally recognized research programs address the most complex challenges, bringing together experts from multiple disciplines to collaborate on [groundbreaking discoveries](#). UC Davis promotes a culture in which the highest standards of scientific rigor, reproducibility, and responsible conduct are advanced in supportive and inclusive research, clinical, and training environments.

UC Davis exceeded \$1 billion in extramural research awards in 2022-23 for a [second year in a row](#). In 2022-23, the federal government was the largest provider of research funding to UC Davis at \$527 million, followed by the state of California at \$161 million. The institution is expected to cross the \$1 billion threshold for 2023-24.

### Innovation and Impact

From life-saving medical treatments to critical environmental innovations, UC Davis is a leader in advancing solutions that mitigate the effects of climate change and protect human and animal health. In 2022-23, the [Office of Technology Transfer](#) received 122



records of invention, submitted 292 patent applications, and secured 88 patents and plant variety licensing certificates. The institution has more than 1,500 patents.

Innovations from UC Davis benefit communities in California, nationwide, and around the globe. Examples include:

- [West Village](#), launched in 2011 as the largest planned, net-zero energy community in the United States
- [The Jess S. Jackson Sustainable Winery Building](#), the world's first self-sustaining, zero-carbon teaching and research facility
- [The Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Sciences](#), a state-of-the-art teaching and research complex and a LEED Platinum winery, brewery, and food and milk processing laboratory
- Multiple sites in the [UC Natural Reserve System](#), including stewarding the land, ecosystems, and environment
- [EXPLORER](#), the world's first total-body PET scanner

### **Interdisciplinary Research Units**

The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research supports and promotes interdisciplinary research units and provides access to advanced expertise, technology, facilities, and other shared resources for researchers at UC Davis and beyond. Highlights include:

- [The California National Primate Research Center](#)
- [The Center For Reducing Health Disparities](#)
- [The Energy and Efficiency Institute](#)
- [The Feminist Research Institute](#)

- [The Innovation Institute for Food and Health](#)
- [The Institute for Global Nutrition](#)
- [The Institute of Transportation Studies](#)
- [The NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)

## **Undergraduate Research**

UC Davis encourages students to pursue their interests and original research. The [Undergraduate Research Center](#) serves as a hub for students to help identify their goals, explore research opportunities, and apply for financial support. More than 700 students present their work at an [annual conference](#) that highlights undergraduate research, scholarship, and other creative activities. The institution evaluates the impact of several of its initiatives, including the California Alliance for Minority Participation Program, which is funded by the National Science Foundation and assessed in partnership with [WestEd](#), a nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency. In addition, capstone and senior design courses provide crucial training and hands-on research experience, including, for example, utilizing the [Diane Bryant Engineering Student Design Center](#). The courses prepare students to enter the workforce or graduate programs. Students are also encouraged to think about practical implementations of their research through the UC Davis [Student Start-Up Center](#).



## D. Service

UC Davis engages with communities, policymakers, and private industry to achieve the institution's highest academic aspirations and make a positive difference in the world. In recent years, UC Davis has launched multiple initiatives, established offices and programs, and provided resources and funding to facilitate its public service mission.

### Aggie Square

In 2017, Chancellor May and Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg established a joint working group to create a framework for a new technology and innovation hub, known as [Aggie Square](#). The work group produced a plan that includes a lifelong learning office and classroom building, two science and technology buildings, student housing, community spaces, a parking structure, and public spaces in downtown Sacramento.

In May 2018, UC Davis, the city of Sacramento, and Aggie Square's developer, Wexford Technology & Science, LLC, conducted more than 90 community and partner meetings to raise awareness of Aggie Square's goals, solicit feedback and concerns, and answer

questions. In response to learning more about local needs, Aggie Square's partners drafted a [Community Benefits Partnership Agreement](#). The agreement outlines commitments for providing jobs and job training, affordable housing, transportation, youth education programs, and other benefits for local residents and communities of interest, especially those who have not historically benefited from economic development in the region. Construction on Aggie Square began in 2022 and the first research building will open in spring 2025. [Community engagement meetings](#) are held quarterly. Updates are distributed and [posted on the Aggie Square website](#).

### **Anchor Institution Mission (AIM) for Community Health**

In addition to Aggie Square, UC Davis Health launched its [Anchor Institution Mission \(AIM\) for Community Health](#) in 2020. Anchor institutions are nonprofit or public entities such as universities and hospitals that are rooted in a local community by their mission, invested capital, or relationships to customers, employees, residents, and vendors. The AIM communities include 13 geographic areas around UC Davis Health. As one of the leading institutions in higher education and health care in the region, UC Davis Health is committed to leveraging its resources to increase the economic vitality of the surrounding communities and improve the health, welfare, and wellbeing of local and regional residents. Since the start of the AIM initiative, UC Davis Health has nearly doubled its hiring of residents from AIM communities.

## **Advancing University Public and Economic Impact**

Beginning in fall 2017, UC Davis engaged in a participatory and collaborative planning process to learn from diverse community members about how to improve outreach activities and the public impact of university scholarship. An initial listening phase included a survey of research centers and institutes, a university-wide workshop, and focus groups with more than 100 non-university constituents representing 60 organizations. An implementation plan was completed in 2018 and served as the basis for the creation of the [Office of Public Scholarship and Engagement](#). The office matches university scholars and community organizations to develop partnerships, oversees a [nationally recognized grants program](#) to support these partnerships, and administers cohort-based training programs to improve the public impact of student and faculty research. In 2015, UC Davis earned the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification, held by some 400 universities nationwide.

UC Davis is a major economic driver for California, generating more than \$12.5 billion in statewide economic activity. Every dollar that the institution spends in California generates an additional \$1.10 of economic activity in the state. UC Davis leadership participates in a wide range of organizations that contribute to economic prosperity, including the [Greater Sacramento Economic Council](#), [Valley Vision](#), [Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce](#), [Solano Economic Development Corporation](#), and [Davis Chamber of Commerce](#).

## **Advancing Opportunities for Students**

In 2022, UC Davis was selected as one of the inaugural institutions to host [College Corps](#), a program that connects undergraduates with paid internships in local community organizations. This work began with a \$16 million grant from the state of California to recruit, train, and place more than 1,000 fellows from regional educational organizations. In its first two years, the College Corps program at UC Davis accounted for more than 110,000 hours of paid internship experience for students and provided a valuable community service to local organizations. In 2024, UC Davis received an additional \$6.4 million to continue supporting its undergraduates in paid internships.

## **5. Response to WSCUC Recommendations**

In April 2018, WSCUC conducted a Special Visit to review issues cited in the Accreditation Visit Report [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 1.5.1\]](#) from four years prior. The pages that follow include recommendations from the Special Visit [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 1.5.2\]](#) and the institution's progress.

### ***A. Assessment of General Education (GE). WSCUC recommended that UC Davis strengthen the assessment of general education by:***

#### ***1. Establishing a rigorous process of GE course approval***

General Education (GE) courses are approved by the Davis Division of the Academic Senate's [Committee on Courses of Instruction](#) based on evidence provided by the department or instructor that the course will meet each [Minimum Element](#) for each

requested General Education attribute. Justifications of GE attributes are required for each new course, and each modification to an existing course requires review by the Committee on Courses of Instruction. The Minimum Elements are approved by the Davis Division of the Academic Senate's [General Education Committee](#) and its [Undergraduate Council](#).

## ***2. Ensuring that GE courses meet and maintain the standards for the GE literacies for which they were approved***

The GE assessment program follows a seven-year review cycle, matching the review cycle used for undergraduate programs. The GE assessment program consists of two parts: 1) In-depth assessment of a selection of specific courses by the General Education Committee; and 2) Program self-assessment of all GE courses.

1) In-depth assessment of a selection of specific courses by the General Education Committee includes surveying the list of GE courses offered by each department or program undergoing review. The committee selects several courses to be given an in-depth assessment. The department or program submits specific documents in support of the assessment. The committee's assessment considers if the minimum elements of each [literacy](#) are clearly demonstrated by the submitted materials. The requested documents include:

- A course syllabus
- An explanation of how the course addresses the literacy under consideration
- An assignment that reflects the literacy under consideration
- Three pieces of anonymous, graded student work

2) Program self-assessment of GE courses tests the degree to which these courses address the GE literacies for which they have been approved and, if necessary, creates a plan of action. The program identifies one instructor for each course approved for GE literacies to review the minimum elements and indicate whether the course meets the minimum elements for all literacies for which it was approved. If the course does not meet the minimum elements of a literacy, the program indicates a plan of action, including adjusting the course curriculum to bring it in line with the minimum elements, or submitting a modification request to remove the GE literacy from the course.

The GE Committee follows up by reviewing all submitted materials and writing a letter to each program, noting observations, suggesting improvements, and assessing each course. These letters are reviewed by the Undergraduate Council and sent to the programs and the provost. If the GE Committee and the self-assessment found that all reviewed courses met the minimum elements of the approved literacies, no follow-up would be necessary until the next assessment cycle. If the GE Committee or the self-assessment found that one or more of the reviewed courses did not demonstrate the minimum elements of the approved literacies, the GE Committee would then request a letter of response. If a letter of response were not received, or if the letter of response did not adequately address the GE Committee's concerns, the documents would be forwarded to the Davis Division of the Academic Senate's Committee on Courses of Instruction for further action. The Committee on Courses of Instruction has the authority to remove GE attributes from courses.



**3. Making certain that all GE instructors understand these goals and that courses deliver promised outcomes**

In addition to the assessments outlined in Part 2, another section of the self-assessment requires program leadership to demonstrate how instructors are alerted about the minimum elements and GE literacies. If this step is not taken, program leadership must outline a plan of remediation for the future. Inadequate responses to this section are noted in the final letter from the GE Committee.

***B. Determine and provide the type and level of support needed to keep the assessment workload manageable and meaningful. More specifically, provide appropriate resources to the colleges for assessment activities and personnel.***

[The Center for Educational Effectiveness](#) (CEE) in the Office of Undergraduate Education provides resources and staffing to support the institution's colleges in assessing the efficacy of teaching and learning. CEE offers instructors a variety of resources, including training and confidential consultation and feedback, to help them achieve their pedagogical goals. CEE also develops and runs quarterly workshops and annual assessment events. It hosts the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference](#) each year and will host the [UC Assessment Conference](#) in 2025.

CEE created [Program-level Assessment Capacity Enrichment for Equity](#) (PACE4Equity), which leads small, departmental teams of faculty through in-depth, systematic evaluation of academic program learning outcomes using direct and

embedded evidence of student learning. The assessment inquiry project informs instructors of actions for promoting equity in student learning outcomes and program improvement. Since the pilot workshop series in 2020, more than 15 academic programs have participated in PACE4Equity activities. In 2022, CEE hired an additional Assessment Specialist to focus on this program and, in the last fiscal year, the institution provided \$160,000 to support academic programs that participated in PACE4Equity.

Financial support from the provost and partnership with Academic Senate leadership have helped advance CEE's work of assessing student learning.

***C. Enhance the reviews of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental undergraduate programs by:***

***1. Establishing a responsible point of contact for each program among senior leadership***

At UC Davis, the point person for a program's review is the department chair or program director. For example, the interdisciplinary and interdepartmental [Cognitive Science program](#) is housed in the College of Letters and Science. The primary point of contact is the [program director](#). After the program director, the [dean of the college](#) is designated as the lead. This lead dean model also identifies a point of contact among senior leaders for interdisciplinary graduate groups.

## ***2. Clarifying what the program should expect from the process***

Extensive documentation about the program review process is published on the website of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate's [Undergraduate Instruction and Program Review Committee](#) (UIPR). Examples include:

- UIPR Program Review Process [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 1.5.3\]](#)
- Undergraduate Council Program Review Closure Process [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 1.5.4\]](#)

Department chairs, program directors, and additional faculty and staff attend a two-hour orientation meeting that takes place annually before their program review process begins. During that meeting, the committee chairs of Undergraduate Council, the Undergraduate Instruction and Program Review Committee, and the General Education Committee describe the review process and timelines. The slides from those presentations are [posted on the Davis Division of the Academic Senate's website](#). The analyst for the Undergraduate Instruction and Program Review Committee follows up with reminders to the program contacts about review deadlines and provides an additional overview of next steps during the last meeting of the review visit.

## ***3. Defining resources available to support assessment in this context***

Documentation of assessment of Program Learning Outcomes is provided to the Undergraduate Instruction and Program Review Committee via Section 8 of the program's [self-review template](#). This committee provides a [Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Resource](#) document, which is available on the

[Undergraduate Instruction and Program Review Committee's webpage](#). In the Program Review Orientation Meeting, representatives from the [Office of Undergraduate Education's Assessment Team](#) share the services and assistance they provide to programs undergoing review.

***D. Clarify Lecturer with Potential Security of Employment (LPSOE) appointments by:***

***1. Defining more clearly the role that LPSOEs should play in carrying out research into disciplinary pedagogy and introducing pedagogic assessment innovations into the community at large***

In May 2024, the University of California changed the LPSOE title series to [Professor of Teaching](#). The revised title for the series is reflective of the professional and scholarly achievements required for promotion in the series and aligns with the naming convention of Academic Senate titles. The titles within the new series are Assistant Professor of Teaching, Associate Professor of Teaching, and Professor of Teaching. At UC Davis, there are approximately 60 faculty members in this series.

While ladder-rank professorial appointees are expected to fulfill UC Davis's mission of teaching, research, and service, the expectations of faculty in the Professor of Teaching series are subtly different. For appointees in this series, primacy is assigned to teaching excellence, which underlies the motivation for departments and colleges to hire faculty as Professors of Teaching. Departments and colleges hire such faculty with a higher teaching load than ladder-rank professorial appointees and a lower teaching load than

instructors in the Lecturer series. Faculty in the Professor of Teaching series are expected to have an impact beyond the classroom, including professional or scholarly achievement and activity in the areas of instruction and pedagogy.

## ***2. Clarifying expectations for LPSOE merit reviews and promotions***

The only distinction between faculty in the Professor of Teaching series and those in the ladder-rank professorial series are three review criteria:

- Teaching excellence
- Professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity
- University or public service

While peer-reviewed publications in the sciences, a book in the humanities, or creative activities in the arts and cultural studies disciplines are expected in the ladder-rank professorial series for promotion to associate professor and tenure, Assistant Professors of Teaching are not required to have peer-reviewed publications for promotion and to receive security of employment. They can instead focus their efforts on superior intellectual attainment, as evidenced particularly in excellent teaching and secondarily in professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity. As recognized leaders in educational methods, innovation, and pedagogy, their impact should include helping to encourage faculty outside this series to become better educators and mentors by sharing innovative teaching practices and research. Promotion to Professor of Teaching requires further evidence of consistent and sustained professional and/or scholarly achievement and activity, and a profile of continuing excellent teaching that has made the candidate a leader in the professional field and/or in education.

### ***3. Explicitly considering the appropriate balance between lecturer and ladder-rank appointments***

The process of proposing new faculty positions typically begins at the departmental level, where faculty can evaluate and prioritize the college's needs based on factors such as strategic plans or visions, undergraduate program review recommendations, anticipated reforms or design of majors, specific curricular needs, course enrollment, and vacancies from resignations or retirement. Departments and deans also consider the need for innovative instructional strategies and delivery of the curriculum to an increasingly diverse student body, particularly in high-enrollment courses. Professors of Teaching build capacity and elevate the skills and effectiveness of instruction. There are no predetermined ratios of ladder-rank faculty to Professor of Teaching faculty in the colleges because programmatic needs are multidimensional and evolve over time. Currently the faculty in the Professor of Teaching series constitute approximately 4% of the non-clinical Academic Senate faculty at UC Davis.

Once department chairs and program directors within a college establish their priorities for the coming academic year, they forward their requests to their dean who, in turn, submits a request to the provost. The provost decides the number of faculty searches that can be deployed in each college annually.

***E. Derive the full benefits of the 2020 Initiative by:***

- 1. Completing the faculty hiring component***
- 2. Securing faculty office and research space***
- 3. Enhancing teaching facilities***

An analysis of the 2020 Initiative was selected as one of our themes. A full review, including the items listed above, are included in Sections 2 and 3 of this report.

## Section 2:

# Essays on Self-Selected Themes





# 1. 2020 Initiative

The Great Recession had a profound impact on many institutions of higher education, including the University of California. Between 2008 and 2012, UC Davis saw a 33% reduction in unrestricted state funding, dropping from \$450 million to \$300 million.

During this time, the institution attempted to balance its budget by relying on furloughs, layoffs, and increases to student tuition. Tuition rose nearly 100% over five years, increasing from \$5,850 in 2008 to \$11,220 in 2012, resulting in a significant burden on students and their support networks. At the same time, costs continued to rise for UC Davis. Although the institution decreased the size of its workforce, salary and benefit costs increased from \$490 million in 2008 to \$530 million in 2012. In 2010-11, for the first time in its history, UC Davis received more revenue via tuition and fees than it did from the state of California in unrestricted support. This remains true today.

In 2011, the institution's senior leadership formed a [task force](#) that included faculty, staff, and students focused on academic resources, enrollment, and facilities planning. The task force was charged with developing a plan to sustain and enhance excellence at UC Davis, building on existing strengths and resources to become a more active partner with the state in supporting higher education. After 16 months of study and consultation, the institution adopted the [2020 Initiative](#) to enable UC Davis to sustain its core mission of research, teaching, and public service through the year 2020 and beyond.

The 2020 Initiative sought to “create a university that can sustain its upward trajectory through its own best efforts, leveraging support from the state but rising above current fiscal limitations.” Rather than cut its way out of a budget shortfall, the institution planned to grow its way to sustainability and greater accessibility and excellence.

The 2020 Initiative’s goals included increasing enrollment by adding 4,500 nonresident undergraduate students, 500 resident undergraduate students, and commensurate growth in graduate students. In addition, the institution committed to diversifying its student body and improving access and quality. Given the need to provide instruction for so many new students, the 2020 Initiative also included among its goals adding 200 net new faculty and 100 net new lecturers. The institution would also have to build new facilities and provide student services, necessitating improvements of existing capital and other support infrastructure.

Several assumptions undergirded UC Davis’s modeling of the 2020 Initiative. First, the institution assumed that the UC System would be allowed to increase tuition modestly over the coming years. In fact, across the nine years after the rollout of the 2020 Initiative, tuition only increased by 2%. To be clear, not 2% annually, but 2% over nearly a decade. Second, UC Davis assumed state support would stabilize and keep pace with the rate of inflation. Unfortunately, state support fluctuated annually and did not keep pace with inflation. Third, and perhaps most important, the institution assumed that it would be able to increase its percentage of nonresident students from 3% to 22-24%. In this case as well, reality did not match expectations. In 2017, the University of California Board of Regents capped nonresident student enrollment at 18% for UC Davis.

UC Davis more than met the 2020 Initiative’s enrollment goals, adding 4,300 nonresident undergraduate students and 1,800 resident undergraduate students. The institution also increased its graduate and professional enrollment by 1,200 students.

<b>Student-Faculty Ratio for Ladder Faculty</b>			
<b>COLLEGE</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
<b>Average</b>	19.8	19.4	-2%
<b>Ag &amp; Env Sciences</b>	25.7	26.7	4%
<b>Biological Sciences</b>	20.8	22.9	10%
<b>Engineering</b>	15.0	15.5	3%
<b>Letters &amp; Science</b>	19.7	18.0	-8%

\*Ladder includes Lecturers with Security of Employment and Lecturers with Potential for Security of Employment.

\*\*The student-faculty ratio = full-time equivalent students/full-time equivalent instructors.  
FTE students = total student credit hours/45 for UG and 36 for Grad.

[\[Appendix III, Exhibit 2.1\]](#)

To accommodate student enrollment growth, UC Davis increased its number of faculty. As noted above, the institution intended to add 200 net new faculty. The size of the faculty actually increased by 138. Nevertheless, during the same period, the student-faculty (SFR) ratio decreased by 2% overall. When the numbers are disaggregated, the story becomes more complex. The College of Letters and Science, which has by far the largest enrollment of the four colleges at UC Davis, experienced an 8% decrease in SFR. The College of Biological Sciences, by contrast, experienced a 10% increase in SFR over the same period. The Colleges of Engineering and Agricultural and Environmental Sciences fell between those two numbers, with SFR increases of 3% and 4% respectively.

At the same time, UC Davis hired 91 net new lecturers, nearing its goal of 100. Again, overall SFR decreased: by 9% in this case. As with faculty, though, the numbers, when disaggregated, showed increases in some colleges and decreases in others. (Please note that the large increase in the College of Engineering is a small numbers problem. The College of Engineering has comparatively few lecturers, so larger teaching loads in their classes appear as significant increases in SFR college-wide.)

<b>Student-Faculty Ratio for Lecturers</b>			
<b>COLLEGE</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>% CHANGE</b>
<b>Average</b>	41.6	37.7	-9%
<b>Ag &amp; Env Sciences</b>	44.6	55.7	25%
<b>Biological Sciences</b>	76.6	63.0	-18%
<b>Engineering</b>	44.7	75.2	68%
<b>Letters &amp; Science</b>	38.5	33.6	-13%

[\[Appendix III, Exhibit 2.1\]](#)

The 2020 Initiative also focused on improving and increasing teaching, research, and office space to meet the needs of a larger student body and faculty. The institution, using its own resources, rather than funding from the state, renovated more than 130 classrooms and lecture halls and built several new, state-of-the art facilities.

New construction projects, funded by the institution, included:

- [The Teaching and Learning Complex](#), a 101,663-square-foot, [\\$86 million project](#) completed in 2022. The Teaching and Learning Complex houses more than 20 classrooms and an auditorium that can accommodate more than 400 students. The building also features a teaching and learning lab, the University Writing Center, modern space for tutors and peer educators, and in-person tech support for students and faculty.
- [The International Center](#), a 61,700-square-foot, [\\$29.8 million](#) project completed in 2016. The building contains classrooms, administrative offices, and a large multipurpose room. Units from the [Office of Global Affairs](#) and [Continuing and Professional Education, International](#) use the space. The International Center welcomes domestic and international students and scholars to share experiences, engage in dialogue, and be a part of community events.
- [California Hall](#), a 16,652-square-foot, \$22 million project completed in 2019, the first significant new classroom space built at UC Davis in a decade. This LEED Gold certified building includes a lecture hall large enough to accommodate approximately 600 students.
- [The Ann E. Pitzer Center](#), a 17,500-square-foot, [\\$16.8 million](#) project completed in 2016 paid for by campus funds and gifts. The Pitzer Center includes a 399-seat recital hall, practice rooms, and classrooms. In addition to being a place for music majors to rehearse and perform, UC Davis students take classes in the building. The Pitzer Center also hosts concerts open to members of the institution and the broader community.

Major renovations, funded by the institution, included:

- [Walker Hall](#), built in 1927, which underwent a \$33.4 million renovation after sitting vacant for a decade. Renovations addressed accessibility, infrastructure, and seismic safety as well as upgrades to general classroom space. A wing of the building houses the [Graduate Center](#), serving some 8,000 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows with resources for academic, professional, and personal well-being. The building is now certified LEED Platinum.
- [Cruess Hall](#), built in 1951, underwent [\\$24 million in renovations](#) to create new multimedia classrooms, a wood shop, metal shop, a 200-seat screening and lecture hall, and a 90-seat screening and lecture hall. Modifications brought the building up to LEED Silver.
- [Briggs Hall](#), built in 1971, with modernization of 14,000 square feet of laboratory space on the first floor. This \$15.5 million renovation expanded lab configuration to accommodate eight Principal Investigators and earned the building a LEED Gold certification.

Even as UC Davis experienced significant growth in a very short period of time, the institution remained committed to its relationship with the city of Davis. The institution added more than 5,000 beds to on-campus housing to accommodate enrollment growth over the last decade. This number surpasses the commitment UC Davis made in a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the city of Davis in 2018, which stated that the institution would expand housing to accommodate 15,000 students by 2023.

The [Long Range Development Plan](#) reflects ongoing collaborations between the city of Davis and UC Davis, including shared commitments, goals, and activities that meet transportation, traffic, and infrastructure needs resulting from increased student enrollment. In addition to the collaboration that took place through Healthy Davis Together, town-gown relations during and after the period of the 2020 Initiative have improved.

The 2020 Initiative transformed UC Davis. Following the initiative, the institution is much larger, much more dynamic, and much more diverse. UC Davis added more than 7,000 students as a result of the 2020 Initiative. The institution also added more than 200 faculty. Research productivity reached \$1 billion in annual expenditures.

It is important to note that the institution's growth did not come at the expense of access for Californians. Instead of replacing California residents with out-of-state students, UC Davis provided more access for in-state students while also admitting more students from around the United States and the world.

In fall 2011, 3% of UC Davis undergraduates were international students. By fall 2020, the percentage of undergraduates from outside the United States had risen to 14%. Over this same time period, the percentage of domestic undergraduates who identified as underrepresented minorities (URM), including African American, Native American, and Hispanic/Latinx, increased from 20% to 27%. The percentage of students who identified as non-underrepresented minorities (non-URM) decreased from 77% to 56%.

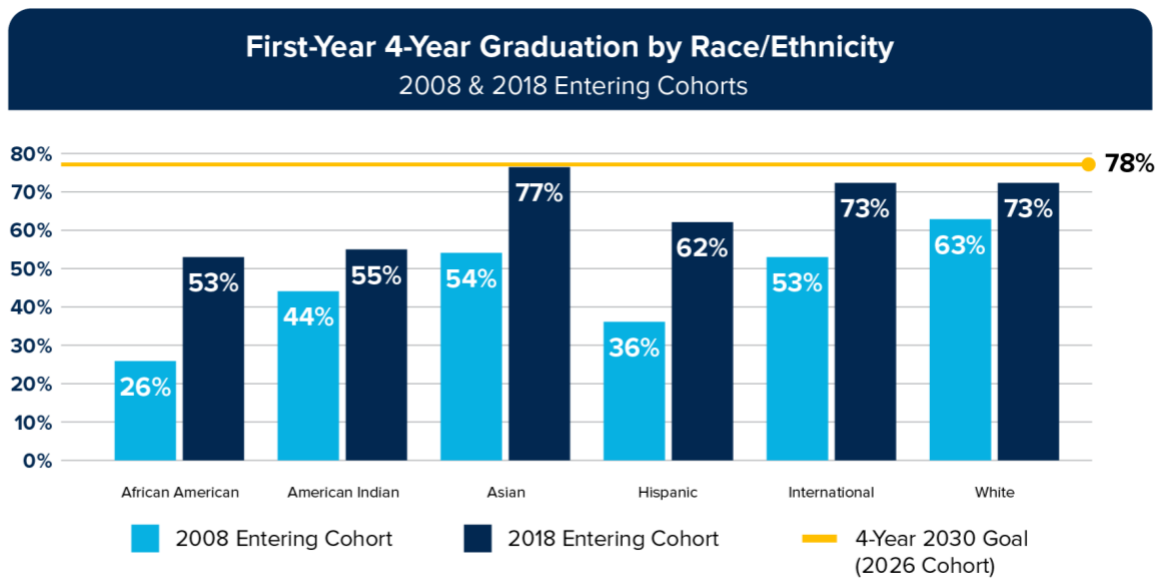
From classrooms to residence halls to dining commons to the institution's recreation center, in the wake of the 2020 Initiative, UC Davis students, faculty, and staff are able to share a broader diversity of cultures, languages, and experiences with one another than 20, or even 10, years ago. More than ever before, diversity is UC Davis's strength.

## 2. Student Success and Equitable Outcomes

UC Davis employs many different measures of student success, including supporting students in achieving their educational, professional, and personal goals, and successfully completing their degree programs in a timely fashion. [To Boldly Go](#), UC Davis's strategic plan, states that the institution should provide an educational experience that prepares its students to address the needs and challenges of a diverse and changing world. The institution achieves this goal through academic learning and preparedness; experiential learning outside the classroom through fellowships, internships, and international experiences; and engagement in hands-on research opportunities. [To Boldly Go](#) also states that UC Davis will "take bold steps to close gaps in academic outcomes for students from underrepresented, first-generation, and socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds." This statement represents a commitment that is shared across the UC System. In 2018, the University of California adopted the [2030 Goals](#) for each UC campus to increase graduation rates and ensure timely progress toward degree for all undergraduates.



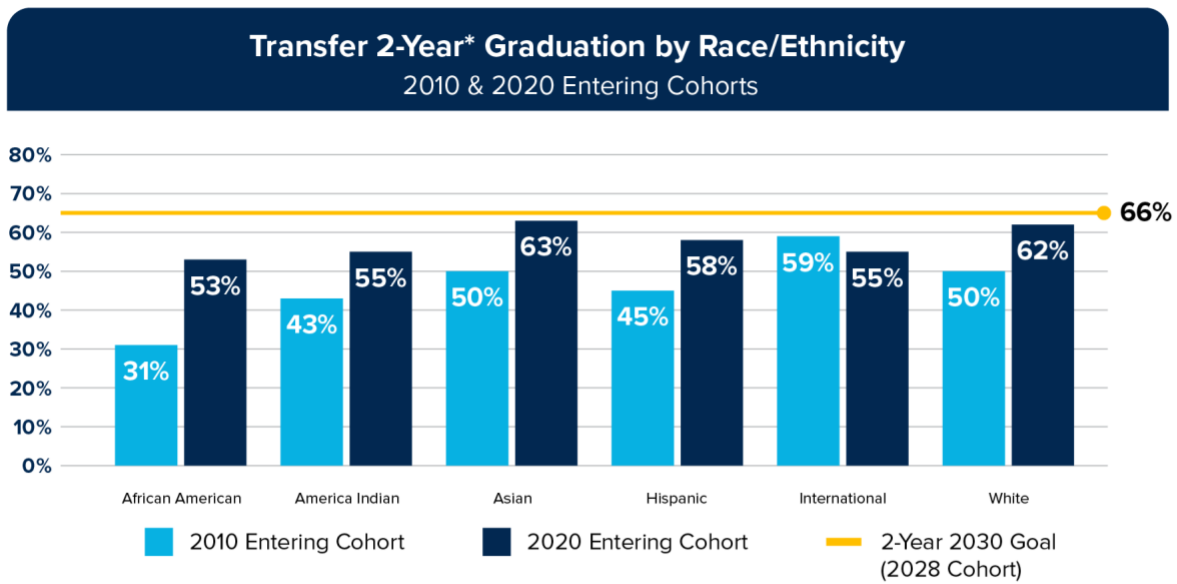
The chart that follows shows the four-year graduation rates for students enrolling at UC Davis directly from high school, disaggregated using categories of race and ethnicity as identified by the [UC Office of the President](#). The graph compares the 2008 entering cohort with the 2018 entering cohort. Over this 10-year period, UC Davis saw across-the-board improvements in four-year graduation rates for incoming first-year students. Nevertheless, the institution continues to challenge itself to keep improving. In 2018, the [University of California Office of the President](#) asked all of the system’s campuses that serve undergraduates to set goals for graduation rates for incoming first-year students and transfer students to achieve by 2030. In evaluating its current rates and 10-year trajectory based on recent history, UC Davis set an ambitious goal of a 78% graduation rate for all incoming first-year students by 2030.



\*6-Year first-year graduation rates by race/ethnicity available in the Box folder.  
Race/ethnicity categories align with standard UCOP reporting.

[\[Appendix III, Exhibit 2.2\]](#)

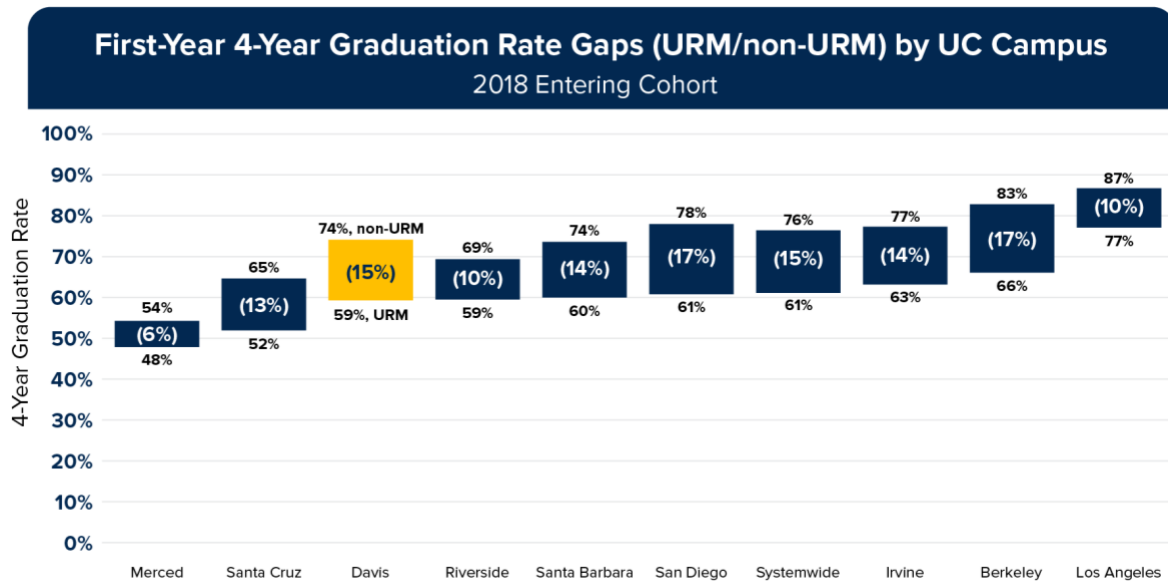
The story for transfer students is similar. Transfer students typically enter UC Davis after attending a California community college for two years, and often matriculate at UC Davis with junior standing. The expectation is that transfer students will complete their degree after two years at UC Davis. The chart that follows compares the 2010 entering cohort to the 2020 entering cohort, again disaggregated using categories of race and ethnicity as identified by the UC Office of the President. The institution made progress in every category other than international students. That said, more recent data indicates that this group of students has improved as well. That data can be found in [Appendix III, Exhibit 2.2](#). As with its four-year graduation rates, the institution is challenging itself to continue improving. Again, in evaluating its current rates and 10-year trajectory based on recent history, UC Davis set a goal of a 66% two-year graduation rate for transfer students by 2030.



\*4-Year transfer graduation rates by race/ethnicity available in the Box folder.  
Race/ethnicity categories align with standard UCOP reporting.

[\[Appendix III, Exhibit 2.2\]](#)

UC Davis also analyzes equity gaps among different populations of undergraduate students. For the 2018 cohort, the four-year graduation rate for URM students was 59%. For this same cohort, the graduation rate for non-URM students was 74%. In this case, the equity gap is 15%. Although identical to the equity gap for the UC system overall, one of UC Davis’s 2030 Goals is to eliminate this gap.

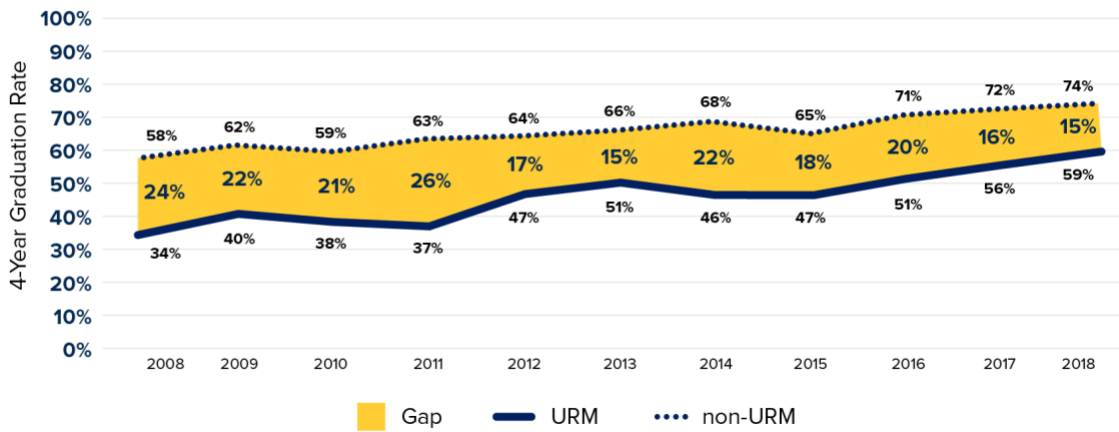


[\[Appendix III, Exhibit 2.2\]](#)

UC Davis’s improved graduation rates and reduced equity gaps can be attributed, in part, to the institution’s dedication to fostering student success and equitable outcomes. In 2017, the [Student Retention Advisory Committee’s report](#) recommended [investing in advising](#), [redesigning orientation](#), and [providing broader access to student outcomes data](#). The institution has since implemented all of these recommendations and continuously assesses its efforts. For example, after the redesign of orientation, the institution introduced a new survey instrument to gather feedback that is used to modify

programming, scheduling, and information. Additionally, advising is periodically examined through the [UC Undergraduate Experience Survey](#) and the survey of graduating seniors. Student outcomes data are now more broadly available through the [UC Davis Aggie Data website](#).

### UC Davis First-Year 4-Year URM and non-URM Graduation Rates



#### [\[Appendix III, Exhibit 2.2\]](#)

In 2019, the institution’s [Closing the Preparation Gap Committee](#), charged by the provost, recommended [expanding pre-matriculation programs](#), [redesigning the writing placement mechanism](#), [eliminating non-credit-bearing writing courses](#), and [creating a writing center](#). Again, UC Davis implemented all of these recommendations. The Center for Student Affairs Assessment, the University Writing Program, and the Office of Undergraduate Education assess the effectiveness of these efforts.

In addition to implementing the recommendations from these committees, UC Davis employs many other mechanisms to support student success. These resources exist across the institution, including in the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Undergraduate Education, all four colleges, and beyond. A few examples include:

- The Division of Student Affairs fosters student success by creating a sense of belonging and connection through several units that support students from marginalized communities, such as the [Center for African Diaspora Student Success](#), [Center for Chicanx and Latinx Academic Student Success](#), [Women’s Resource and Research Center](#), and [LGBTQIA Resource Center](#).
- The Office of Undergraduate Education advances equity and inclusion in the learning environment, providing students with meaningful experiences and championing evidence-based practices for instructors. Among its initiatives are the [First Year Seminars](#), [University Honors Program](#), and [Center for Educational Effectiveness](#).
- The four colleges provide their students with resources that promote inclusive academic excellence, including [Aggie Jump Start](#) in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, [BioLaunch](#) in the College of Biological Sciences, [AvenueE](#) in the College of Engineering, and [Peer MAP: Mentorship for Achievement Program](#) in the College of Letters and Science.

UC Davis recognizes that it still has work to do to meet its 2030 Goals for student success and equitable outcomes. The institution continues to dedicate resources and staffing toward implementing and evaluating these efforts. In 2021, the chancellor and the provost commissioned a report on equity gaps and existing opportunities to improve student outcomes, resulting in a report, [Strategies for Building Inclusive Excellence](#). Among the report's recommendations are expanding and better connecting advising services across the institution, improving curriculum consistency in high-demand, first-year courses, and helping students track their degree progress.

The [Strategies for Building Inclusive Excellence](#) report served as the starting point for the [Student Success and Equitable Outcomes Task Force \(SSEO\)](#). Launched in 2023, SSEO focused on curricular issues, advising and student support, summer and pre-matriculation programs, employment and financial aid, and post-graduate success. SSEO's efforts resulted in funding for more advisors and advising staff and forming a standing Advising Executive Workgroup to continue assessing and improving advising structures and practices across the institution.

In the years following the implementation of the 2020 Initiative, UC Davis became larger, more diverse, and more dynamic. In these years, the institution became more focused than ever before on student success and equitable outcomes. Through concerted effort, UC Davis managed to decrease equity gaps and improve time to degree across the board.

## Section 3:

# Reflections - Synthesis of Insights as a Result of the Reaffirmation Process



# 1. Reflections on the 2020 Initiative

Institutional conversations in preparation for the reaffirmation process identified no courses of action other than the 2020 Initiative that would have enabled UC Davis to achieve its goals. The institution allocated the revenue generated as a result of the 2020 Initiative to hiring additional faculty, improving student support services, and building the infrastructure necessary to accommodate more students and employees.

As shown earlier, the combined student-faculty ratio for the four colleges improved over the course of the 2020 Initiative. Yet, there are significant differences at the level of individual colleges, departments, and instructors, resulting in some dissatisfaction.

Conversations during outreach efforts openly acknowledged that, with respect to teaching load and the size of classes, it is possible for experiences to vary considerably from department to department, instructor to instructor, and college to college.

Classroom and instructional laboratory space remains a challenge for the institution.

The construction of California Hall and the Teaching and Learning Complex increased the number of classroom seats, but scheduling classes during peak hours of instruction remains difficult. The scarcity of instructional laboratory space is even more acute. UC Davis consistently has high enrollments in its science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors, and STEM majors are more likely to take courses in chemistry and biology that require a laboratory component. In fall 2022, nearly 17,000 UC Davis undergraduate students, 54% of the undergraduate population, majored in STEM programs. In the future, if UC Davis's STEM majors maintain their popularity, the institution will need to increase its capacity of instructional laboratory space.



The COVID-19 pandemic helped alleviate, while also complicating, the institution's allocation of office space. UC Davis is evaluating its resources and needs related to classes, research, and office space. The institution also struggles with the condition of its facilities, with 8% of UC Davis's buildings less than 10 years old, while 54% are more than 50 years old. With almost 1,000 buildings of varying age and condition, the estimate of the institution's [deferred maintenance](#) backlog is more than \$1 billion. UC Davis will continue to strive for more efficient use of its facilities and while making strategic improvements to existing facilities whenever feasible.

Because of these and other challenges facing the institution, in spring 2023, the provost charged the [Sustaining Teaching and Research Task Force \(START\)](#) with assessing challenges, prioritizing strategies, and recommending specific actions for transformative improvements to UC Davis's education, research, and service models. Members of START are developing initiatives and action plans that will include new operating models that will maintain or increase the institution's commitment to excellence.

START's membership includes academic, administrative, and staff members. START has six committees, each with up to 20 members, focused on key areas:

- Assuring Faculty Equity and a Sustainable Workload
- The Future of Graduate Education
- The Future of Undergraduate Education
- Improving Campus Support Services
- Increasing Our Research Excellence
- Optimizing Our Facilities

Within each committee are multiple working groups investigating specific issues. Committee co-chairs have presented updates to the institution in virtual town halls and, as recommendations are made to the provost, additional input is solicited as appropriate via the Academic Senate's Request for Consultation process. More information is available on the [START webpage](#).

## 2. Reflections on Student Success and Equitable Outcomes

In January 2023, the provost charged the [Student Success and Equitable Outcomes Task Force \(SSEO\)](#) to develop plans for recommended programs and initiatives specific to the needs of UC Davis students. More than 30 people, including faculty, staff and students, served on SSEO.

Over the course of 18 months, SSEO met 12 times and divided into subcommittees:

- Advising and Academic Support
- Curricular Coherence
- Employment and Financial Barriers
- Post-Baccalaureate Success
- Summer and Transition to UC Davis

In June 2024, SSEO completed its work, delivering a number of recommendations to the provost for review. Other recommendations were transferred for further development to START's Future of Undergraduate Education Committee.

Examples of SSEO's recommendations include:

## **Advising**

Advising at UC Davis is highly decentralized and administered by six units:

- The four colleges manage advising for the majors in their respective units.
- The Division of Student Affairs is responsible for the [Academic Retention Initiatives](#), which help students from marginalized backgrounds achieve their goals while building resilience and experiencing a sense of belonging.
- The Office of Undergraduate Education manages [Academic Advising Enrichment](#), which engages and supports the academic advising community by building capacity to implement comprehensive advising practices.

SSEO proposed a variety of investments for improving advising. The provost allocated \$2.3 million annually to support hiring additional advisors, with other units allocating \$570,000 annually, to add a total of 24 new advisors.

In addition to increasing the number of advisors, the provost created the Advising Executive Workgroup, including one college dean, the vice chancellor of Student Affairs, the vice provost of Enrollment Management, the vice provost and dean of Undergraduate Education, the director of Institutional Analysis, and the faculty advisor to the chancellor and provost. The Advising Executive Workgroup will help ensure that advising efforts are strategic and interconnected, including determining work to be done by the various advising groups and, when appropriate, what work should be moved or closed. This group has been meeting weekly since February 2024.

## Departmental Metrics

Students from more vulnerable social, economic, and racial backgrounds may succeed more slowly and less reliably than their relatively privileged peers. To combat this challenge and help meet the UC System's 2030 Goals, SSEO recommended that the institution compile key data on undergraduate student success and distribute this data to deans, departments, and academic units. This data should be presented clearly and concisely, with five key metrics for departments, colleges, and the university. The metrics include:

- Retention rates for first-year students and transfer students
- On-time graduation rates (four-year rates for incoming first-year students and two-year rates for incoming transfer students)
- Overall graduation rates (six-year rates for first-year students and four-year rates for transfer students)
- Percentage of students graded with a D or F, or who withdrew (W) from the department's three largest courses
- For a particular major, the DFW rates for the three most common courses taken by students in their first year, regardless of the home department of the courses

Each of these metrics will be disaggregated by student populations in order to highlight disparities in achievement for students who are first generation, from an underrepresented background, or from a low-income family. These metrics will help serve as early indicators to allow the institution to assist students most at risk of falling behind, dropping out, or being placed on academic notice.

## **Sample Four-year Degree Plans**

Approximately one-half of undergraduate students change their major during their time at UC Davis. It is important, therefore, for students to have access to information showing pathways for completing a degree in the institution's majors. Many programs post sample degree plans on departmental web pages. But not all programs publish a degree plan, and there is no central location for students to access this information.

SSEO's work resulted in a data visualization that shows the most common pathway to a degree for any given major at the institution. This visualization will be especially helpful for programs that do not have a sample plan, allowing the Office of Institutional Analysis to draft sample plans for departments to review. While still pending review by the provost, implementing this recommendation may institute a consistent degree plan format for all majors.

Additionally, the institution is investing in [uAchieve](#), a student-facing software program that tracks real-time progress toward degree and enables advisors to provide better and more efficient student support services.

## **Course units**

At UC Davis, more than 60% of undergraduate course registrations are in four-unit courses, and only 15% of undergraduate course registrations are in five-unit courses. Four-unit courses usually have two components: a lecture section and a discussion section. Several other UC campuses award five units for undergraduate courses that

are identical and articulated with UC Davis courses that carry only four units. These campuses have determined that the overall effort by the student to prepare for and attend the lecture and discussion sections should be valued at five units, instead of four.

Discussion of this topic began with the Student Success and Equitable Outcomes Task Force. Because of the timing of that task force and the far-reaching implications of such a change, START's Future of Undergraduate Education Committee will take on this topic for further discussion and potential action.

### **Common Goods Framework**

In their first two years at UC Davis, thousands of students take courses that are required for their major but taught outside of the student's major department and often their home college. Departments and colleges that require these "common goods" courses taught outside of the student's major department typically do not have input into these courses or a means of redress if the courses are not serving students well. Often, these common goods courses have the effect of weeding students out of degree programs without input from affected departments.

SSEO recommended creating a faculty committee, composed of instructors who teach the course and faculty representing the departments or colleges that require the course, for each common goods course. The faculty committee would review course outcome data for specific majors and make requests for investments in materials and facilities in response to student needs.

While approval by the provost is pending, the College of Biological Sciences is already piloting this approach with a revised year-long introductory biology course. Almost 80% of the students who enroll in the current introductory biology course sequence are from majors outside the College of Biological Sciences, including two of the institution's largest undergraduate majors: animal science, in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and psychology, in the College of Letters and Science. START's Future of Undergraduate Education Committee will review the results of this effort and may choose to analyze other common goods courses.

### 3. Looking Forward

The 2020 Initiative significantly expanded opportunities and access for a diverse student population. UC Davis is now on the cusp of earning federal designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution while also diversifying the undergraduate student population more broadly. Overall, the university regards the 2020 Initiative as successful. Equity gaps at UC Davis are smaller, graduation rates are higher, and the student population is more diverse. Nevertheless, much work remains and challenges persist.

The University of California continues to face fiscal instability as the state again grapples with budget shortfalls. The funding UC Davis generated through the 2020 Initiative bridged the institution through a difficult time. Still, as you have read in this report, state support and tuition are not sufficient to keep up with inflation and rising costs, including employee compensation and benefits, and the construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities. While UC Davis has just completed

[Expect Greater](#), a \$2 billion fundraising campaign, the institution's continued growth, coupled with rising costs and increasing demand for student services, requires ongoing innovation and investment.

UC Davis will continue exploring recommendations from a variety of initiatives, including the [Revenue Generation and Institutional Savings Task Force](#), [Student Success and Equitable Outcomes Task Force](#), and [Sustaining Teaching and Research Task Force](#), to maintain its upward trajectory while fulfilling the UC's mission of teaching, research, and public service. Even in times of darkness, UC Davis embraces the motto of the University of California: Let There Be Light.