

**Office of the President**  
**July 12, 2000**

**TO MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON UC MERCED:**

**ITEM FOR DISCUSSION**

**For Meeting of July 19, 2000**

**UPDATE ON PLANNING FOR UC MERCED**

This report summarizes significant developments in planning for UC Merced that have occurred since the January meeting of the Special Committee. While this report covers all phases of planning and programming at UC Merced, the oral presentation to be delivered at The Regents' meeting will focus on the environmental and regulatory issues.

**Academic Planning**

Recruitment of Academic Leadership

Appointment of Roderic B. Park as Senior Associate to the Chancellor for Academic Development has moved recruitment of UC Merced's academic leadership into high gear. The search for the founding Director of the Sierra Nevada Research Institute is underway. Notices have been placed for the positions of (a) Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost, who will be the chief academic officer for UC Merced, (b) Vice Chancellor for Administration, and (c) for the founding deans of the Divisions of Engineering, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences/ Humanities/Arts. Senior faculty and administrators from other UC campuses have joined search committees for these positions. They are seeking outstanding candidates from across the country. The goal is to have the Provost and Deans and located at UC Merced by July 2001. The Vice Chancellor for Administration and the Vice Chancellor for Physical Planning will be joining the campus leadership team as soon as possible. Recruitments for a Dean of Student Services and a University Librarian have been initiated.

Preparing for Students

The UC Merced Student Planning Committee will complete its work early this fall and will be making recommendations on the best options for supporting students and creating an exciting campus atmosphere for students. UC Merced has the chance to improve student success by fully integrating student support services with the academic enterprise.

UC Merced has two goals in serving undergraduate students: (1) expand UCs ability to accommodate eligible California high school graduates and (2) improve access to a UC education for students living in the San Joaquin Valley.

To help meet the latter goal, Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey and CSU Fresno President John Welty have organized a Central Valley Higher Education Consortium consisting of the CEOs of UCM,

the three CSU campuses in the Central Valley, and the twelve community colleges. The member institutions are considering a dual admissions program as one of many potential avenues to facilitate transfer. Eligible UC students who want to begin their education close to home would be admitted to both the local Community College and UC Merced. UC Merced's distributed learning centers from Modesto to Bakersfield will allow dual-admit students to take UC Merced courses while still at a community college. These UC Merced courses might be part of collaboratively designed general education programs, provide a head start on major requirements, or be courses that the community colleges are not able to offer.

### Library Planning

A focus group of UC University Librarians and other experienced library staff has outlined for UC Merced planners ways in which libraries are changing, both in terms of services and as a place. Libraries continue to be key academic centers for students, providing access not only to traditional collections but also to advanced computing. Evolving librarian roles include helping students navigate and evaluate the tremendous information resources now available on the Internet. The focus group applauded UC Merced's plan to integrate the University Librarian into the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost's academic planning team together with the divisional deans and chief student affairs officer. This will allow coordination of all library resource development with planning for degree programs.

### Academic Programs

UC Merced is continuing to expand its academic programs to serve Central Valley educational needs in advance of the campus site opening in Merced. The programs have three goals: (1) provide programs for teachers and K-12 students that will prepare a large number of students for the University of California; (2) expand educational opportunities for professionals in the valley; and (3) offer current and prospective UC students from the Valley other course options.

### Summer Sessions

UC Merced has launched its first summer session academic courses. In collaboration with UC Davis, undergraduate courses are being offered from June-September through the UC Center in Fresno. The courses include introductory psychology and an on-line bioscience course. Students who enroll in the courses will receive academic credit through UC Davis that is transferable to any of the campuses in the system. These courses will enable current UC students who return home for the summer, high school and community college graduates newly admitted to UC, and advanced high school students to move more quickly toward completing their undergraduate degree. UC Merced will expand both the number and variety of courses in future years. In 2001, summer session courses are planned for Modesto, Bakersfield, and the Tri-College Center in Merced.

### Division of Professional Studies

The UC Merced Division of Professional Studies continues to expand its presence in the region and serve a greater number of professional needs. In April, the Division held its inaugural Women's Leadership in Agriculture Conference. The Conference drew approximately 100 women involved in agriculture from throughout the region and the state. A core group of women leaders, including former Regent Carol Chandler, formed the steering committee to organize the event.

This summer, the Division is sponsoring two major events. The first is a summer program that is co-sponsored by Chevron for disadvantaged youth, largely children of farmworkers, in Fresno County. The program will give youth a safe place to spend their summer while arrangements are being made to relocate their homes away from a Superfund site. It will also provide a variety of recreational and academic activities four days each week and field trips to UC campuses, art museums, and national parks one day each week.

The second major summer program is the inaugural San Joaquin School Leadership Institute, which will be held from July 31-August 4. The Institute will provide principals and assistant principals from K-12 schools throughout the Valley with an opportunity to expand their leadership skills in dealing with contemporary educational challenges. Faculty from UC Berkeley, UC Davis, Stanford, and University of Texas-El Paso will participate in the leadership institute.

#### K-12 Teachers and Students

UC Merced is providing many high-quality professional development programs for K-12 teachers to enhance their skills and enable them to teach advanced courses for students. The Great Explorations in Math and Science Program (GEMS) continues to provide valuable new skills in science and math to teachers in Merced, Fresno, Tulare, Kern, Mariposa, Kings, Mono, and Inyo Counties. A new program in Stanislaus County will open in Fall 2000. UC Merced is also a partner with the Central Valley Science Project in a summer institute at the UC Center in Fresno that will provide new teaching strategies for middle school science teachers who work with large numbers of English Language Learners.

UC Merced is also working on a proposal for a new California Writing Project site, to complement its extensive programming now in place to support professional development of Valley science and math teachers. The new project will join the California Writing Project sites at CSU Stanislaus, CSU Fresno, and CSU Bakersfield to create a Valley consortium focused on building student writing skills for college through expanding the Valley's network of teacher-leaders and fostering best classroom practices.

Last fall, UC Merced joined the UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science and the Challenger Learning Center in Merced County in bringing a major science exhibit, Chem-Mystery, to the Valley. The exhibit has been a great success, with 5,000 students and families projected to see it by the time it closes. Agreement has been reached with the Kern County Office of Education to house the exhibit in Bakersfield beginning in fall 2000. It is expected that thousands of students and their families from the southern part of the region will visit the exhibit.

### Yosemite Institute

In May, UC Merced sent 60 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and eight chaperones from local schools to participate in the Yosemite Institute's 4-day hands-on math and science program. The Yosemite Institute's Residential Field Science Program is designed to challenge students intellectually, personally, and physically. Learning is facilitated by teachers who lead students in explorations, investigations, discussions, and reflection. Learning takes place in Yosemite's natural "classrooms" where scientific and ecological concepts come alive. Students learn by direct observation of the local environments, and learning and living cooperatively with their classmates.

The majority of the students sent to the Yosemite Institute by UC Merced are students who have no experience with the National Parks and would not otherwise have the opportunity to visit them. Schools participating in the most recent Yosemite Institute program include La Joya Middle School (Visalia), Parlier Junior High School (Parlier), Mountain View Middle School (Lamont), and Steve Garvey Junior High School (Lindsay).

### Budget Planning

When Governor Davis suggested 2004 as the opening date for UC Merced, he invited UC to submit projections of costs in order to accomplish this goal. In response, a long-range budget plan was prepared which showed that additional operational funds were needed to accelerate planning and implementation of core academic, administrative, and student services beginning in 2000-01.

Funds needed for the 2001-2005 budget years will support many one-time needs, such as faculty recruitment, beginning a library collection, and establishing the technological base for the campus. To facilitate the construction of the first two buildings on the campus (Science and Engineering and Library/Information Technology Center), funds were accelerated in the recently approved state budget for working drawings in the amount of \$4.7 million.

### Information and Instructional Technologies

#### UC Merced Connections to CalREN-2

The North-South CalREN-2 communications link to Merced and Fresno will soon be completed. In the Merced area, connection of the Engineering Building at Castle AFB to the Merced CalREN-2 node is contemplated. Timing would depend on the completion of building renovations.

#### Distributed Learning Centers

A Request for Proposals for the installation and operation of interactive instruction technologies will be awarded this month. The RFP includes the proposed distributed learning center in Modesto, the Tri-College Center in Merced, and two interactive classrooms in the UC Center in Fresno. The technical specifications for the three sites have been designed to originate as well as receive online courses, and to receive courses originating from other UC campuses. These technologies will also enable

videoconference business meetings between Merced and Fresno. The implementation will occur during the summer, in time to support online courses in the second summer semester.

#### Other Infrastructure Projects

A new data infrastructure has been installed as part of the UC Center, Fresno renovations. This infrastructure was designed for high availability and is capable of supporting future instructional applications that use high-bandwidth data and video streaming.

#### Physical Planning

UC Merced is working to get two crucial projects underway -- the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Master Plan.

#### Environmental Impact Report

URS Greiner Woodward Clyde of Oakland has been selected as the firm to prepare the Environmental Impact Report for the University Long Range Development Plan (Master Plan). The firm is already familiar with the Merced area as it is under contract to Merced County for preparation of the campus parkway EIR.

The EIR process will commence with the issuance of a "Notice of Preparation." This will be followed by a public meeting or meetings referred to as "Scoping Sessions," where the public can obtain more information about the project which will be subject of the EIR.

#### Master Plan

The Master Plan process will include preparation of a Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) for the campus as well as preparation of guidelines for urban design, landscape, and open space, particularly focused on the first phase of development. The LRDP and accompanying guidelines will be prepared in close collaboration with the EIR to insure that the campus plan takes into account environmental issues and is, to the maximum extent possible, "self mitigating" by incorporating policies within the plan which respond to environmental issues.

Skidmore Owings & Merrill of San Francisco has been selected to prepare the LRDP and related documents (campus planning/design, architecture, engineering). Craig Hartman, partner in charge of design for SOM's west coast region, has done extensive work for Stanford University and Southwestern University. He is joined by internationally acclaimed urban designer, John Kriken, whose work includes a master plan for UC San Diego and work at UC Santa Cruz, UC Davis, and UC Berkeley. Another team member is BMS Design Group of SF (land and site planning, landscape architecture). Barbara Malony is a veteran in urban design and planning who has done extensive projects with the University of California. Peter Walker and Partners of Berkeley (landscape architecture) will also be on the project.

Off Campus Facilities

Progress has been made in identifying locations and finalizing arrangements for distributed learning facilities and for space in the Merced area for use prior to the campus site being available.

The Tri-College distributed learning center at Merced College is fully operational. Renovations at the Fresno Center have been completed and UC Merced continues to utilize a portion of the building for its programs. Distributed learning activities are expected to commence in Bakersfield in August in interim space provided by the Kern County Board of Education. UC Merced is working with the Board to finalize arrangements to occupy a portion of a new building being completed by the Board in the spring of 2001.

Activities related to facilities in the Merced area are also moving forward. The renovations of the Castle Engineering Building, the lease of which was approved by The Regents at the May 2000 meeting are underway. Initial occupancy by the UC Merced administrative staff is expected prior to the end of this year. The founding deans of the Divisions of Engineering, Natural Sciences, and Social/Sciences/Humanities/Arts, as well as the Director of the Sierra Nevada Research Institute, will be located at Castle.

The founding faculty who join the staff prior to the opening of the campus will be housed in the building's 140 offices. UC Merced is also in discussion with the Merced Redevelopment Agency to lease space in a former Bank of America building in downtown Merced to be renovated by the Agency. Once the campus is opened, this 28,000 square foot space would continue to be utilized by UC Merced for outreach, professional studies, and advancement purposes.

Environmental Planning

The Lake Yosemite site in Merced was selected by the Board of Regents in 1995 following a lengthy site selection process. In the early stages, the process for evaluating potential sites followed the Evaluation of New Campus Sites, Task 1: Criteria and Methodology report adopted by The Regents in 1989. Seven of the 38 criteria were environmental in nature. After the potential sites were reduced to three, The Regents approved eight factors as the basis for selecting the final site:

- C Environmental Issues
- C Program Issues Related to Location
- C Community Profile
- C Community Support
- C Aesthetic Character of the Site
- C Costs of Site Development

C Status of Site Availability

C Status of Obtaining an Adequate Water Supply

A Selection Factors Report prepared by the executive staff to the Site Selection Task Force (SSTF) analyzed these factors. The summation of the report -- one with which the SSTF concurred -- is attached (attachment A). The report itself recognized that while the campus site itself has relatively few wetland resources, "development surrounding the campus could be substantially constrained by extensive wetlands resources."

In recognition of the need for a coordinated approach to protecting the region's ecologically significant resources, open space, and agricultural lands, and for compliance with various federal and state environmental laws, UC Merced and the County of Merced adopted a Joint Statement on October 4, 1999. The purpose of the Statement was to initiate, develop, and implement a conservation planning and permitting program for the University Community (including the campus), for infrastructure and support facilities related to the University Community, and for potential future development of other areas within a defined regional "Planning Area" in eastern Merced County.

This action was consistent with mitigation measures approved by The Regents in 1995 in certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report for site selection and adopting Findings as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). For example, mitigation measure 4.3-20 provided as follows:

The LRDP (Long Range Development Plan) shall include policies to require the University to participate with local and regional governments, as appropriate, in the development of a regional HMP (Habitat Management Plan) or HCP (Habitat Conservation Plan) for the purpose of conserving special-status species that would be affected by the cumulative impacts of campus development. The objective of the HMP/HCP shall be to prevent any net loss of special-status species or critical habitats in the region. The HMP/HCP should focus on species conservation through avoiding impacts and where impacts cannot be avoided, through implementation of fully compensatory conservation measures.

UC Merced and the County are committed to meeting both the spirit and letter of regulations related to the Clear Water Act (re: wetland protection) and the Endangered Species Act (re: listed species such as vernal pool fairy shrimp) and have been conferring extensively with federal and state regulatory agencies in developing a protocol and program for doing so. Since the site includes vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, and other aquatic features, as well as plant and animal species, several permits must be obtained before development of the site can commence. In conferring with the agencies, the objective is to assure an efficient, effective and coordinated process for addressing environmental issues, be they related to preserving wetlands, prime agricultural land, or endangered species. Such discussions are a part of the process of satisfying regulatory requirements.

Meetings and site visits with members of the faculty and staff of the University's existing campuses and other scientists, and with The Nature Conservancy, East Merced Resource Conservation District, and

other environmental organizations have also been held in the interest of sharing information and perspectives. Many of these individuals and groups have expressed concern about plans for the siting of the campus. In response, Chancellor Tomlinson-Keasey has written an Opinion Editorial entitled Shaping Growth in the Central Valley that has been widely distributed. A copy is attached (attachment B).

The recently enacted State Budget includes a \$43.8 million supplement to the Wildlife Conservation Board and the Department of Fish and Game to acquire conservation easements on approximately 60,000 acres of wetlands in Eastern Merced County and to fund the above-described conservation planning and permitting program. One of the expected outcomes of the program is a regional reserve based upon conservation biology. Another expected outcome is issuance of the necessary permits for full build-out of the campus.

#### University Advancement

##### Foundation Board of Trustees

On March 22, 2000, Chancellor Tomlinson-Keasey unveiled the University's Foundation Board of Trustees composed of some of the most prominent individuals in the San Joaquin Valley and beyond. This prestigious Board has already been extremely helpful in providing counsel and direction to the Chancellor and her Vice Chancellors. A list of the full membership is attached (attachment C).

##### Endowed Chairs

UC Merced has now received commitments for three endowed chairs which are being reviewed by the Universitywide Academic Senate Task Force on UC Merced. The confirmed chairs have been offered by the late Vincent Hillyer of Los Banos in Early Literature, by Wallace and Isabel Coats of Merced in the Arts, and by Keith and Elinor Shaffer, formerly of Merced, in Engineering. Requests for additional chairs to facilitate the Chancellor's effort to attract nationally prominent senior professors to the new campus are pending.

##### PG&E Donates \$100,000

Pacific Gas and Electric Company made a \$100,000 contribution to enhance UC Merced's outreach efforts. Funds will launch the PG&E Academic Math Academy, part of the UC Scholars' program for 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

PG&E CEO Gordon R. Smith said, "It is our hope that Pacific Gas and Electric Company's donation is just the first of many from the business community. The private sector will benefit greatly when UC Merced opens and we have an obligation to help the campus succeed. With that in mind, we at Pacific Gas and Electric Company issue a challenge to our colleagues in the business community: Be part of the support network that will help ensure success for students valleywide through UC Merced."

##### Foundation Grant

The Mary Stuart Rogers Foundation has made a \$500,000 commitment to UC Merced for use in establishing a distributed learning center in Modesto.

#### Visit of Education Secretary Richard Riley

Secretary Riley visited Merced in February to learn more about the partnerships that strengthen UC's outreach efforts throughout the Central San Joaquin Valley. An educational forum at the Tri-College Center in Merced addressed the impact of outreach to valley students. To see the outreach programs in action, Secretary Riley visited the Challenger Center where 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students were participating in the Chem-Mystery Exhibit. UC Kids Around the University made a presentation. Finally, high school students from throughout the county who participated in the summer Sierra Nevada Research Institute program in the Yosemite National Park shared their experiences conducting research and the meaning of those experiences.

#### Community Mentorship Program

As part of the UC Scholars' project, UC Merced has begun a Community Mentorship program in which members of service, business and education organizations serve as mentors for students from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade through their senior year of high school. The first cohort included Southeast Asian students whose mentors are leaders from the Japanese American Citizen's League and Southeast Asian community.

#### UC Merced Mascot

Livingston Middle School 5<sup>th</sup> grader Lisa Lopez of Delhi won a four-year scholarship to cover student fees to UC Merced for her participation in the UC Merced Name the Mascot Contest. UC Merced named the Golden Bobcat as its mascot and Lisa was one of 25 finalists who submitted bobcat as their entry. More than 2,500 kindergarten through 9<sup>th</sup> grade students from throughout Central California entered the contest and approximately a third of the entrants were submitted over the Internet. In addition, a \$1,000 textbook scholarship was presented by the Great Valley Center, Modesto, a co-sponsor of the contest.

#### Community Forum

As an example of UC Merced's involvement in programs to strengthen the community, the campus worked collaboratively with Merced Community College, local and regional organizations to co-sponsor the *Merced County Community Forum: Creating Our Future*. Regents Odessa Johnson, Sherry Lansing and Judith Hopkinson participated in two thought provoking and inspiring roundtable sessions.