

SNS Phase I Planning Report

February 28, 2020

The School of Natural Sciences kicked off Phase I planning with a series of eight facilitated sessions on December 4-6 to explore UC Quality Research, UC Quality Academic Programs, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We added two School-specific categories, Global and Regional Impact and Staff Experience. One large open forum welcomed all faculty, staff, graduate students, and postdocs. One session engaged only staff, and the remaining six engaged faculty. An on-line survey was available for those who could not attend. The sessions were facilitated by experienced facilitators from UC Davis (Laura Ceruti and Tom O'Donnell). Jessica Duffy from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Efficiency was also on-hand to record responses in real-time.

Records of the sessions were shared with the SNS Leadership Council (Department, Graduate Group, and the Biology Program Chairs) and Executive Committee prior to a joint meeting on January 15th. The focus of that meeting was a facilitated discussion of goals and values. Goals were separated from objectives and ranked at another meeting of the group on January 22. SNS mid-level managers and the SNS staff council reviewed and refined the list of goals in separate facilitated sessions (February 7th and 14th, respectively). Revisions to goals based on staff feedback were sent to the SNS Leadership Council (Department, Graduate Group, and the Biology Program Chairs) and Executive Committee for consideration and action.

Based on these interactions, below is a PRELIMINARY DRAFT of SNS aspirational goals as of February 28, 2020. These will undergo several more iterations within the School before and following feedback from the campus. A full accounting of SNS activities related to long range planning can be found at <https://naturalsciences.ucmerced.edu/about/about-school/dean/sns-long-range-planning>

Campus Criteria and Indices

UC Quality Scholarship

UC Quality Scholarly and Creative Activity

- Establish innovative interdisciplinary research, programs, and centers with global recognition.
- Establish collaborative research-intensive culture.
- Achieve higher recognition of research.

Research and Development Expenditures - Achieving the goals above will lead to increased R&D expenditures.

Research Staff

- Ensure professional success of alumni, including undergraduate and graduate students and post-docs.

UC Quality Academic Programs

UC Quality Education

- Make positive impact in society.
- Develop students who are critical, inquisitive, and open minded.
- Increase graduate program ranking and name recognition.

Student Success

- Enhance graduate student training experience.
- Identify successful and diverse career paths.
Nurture student growth toward diverse and successful career paths.
- Advocate for inclusion and diversity in STEM education.
- Increase retention in STEM Majors.
- Increase undergraduate international exchange opportunities.

Diversity

Breadth in Research and Teaching Programs

- Support diverse research and academic programs.

Diversity of Faculty and Staff

- Improve faculty and staff diversity.
- Maintain and encourage a culture of equity and inclusion.

SNS-specific Criteria and Indices

Global and Regional Impact

- Increase international and regional recognition of faculty.
- Increase global and regional reputation of educational programs
- Enhance regional and community interactions.
- Communicate achievements to outside world.

Staff Experience

- Highly satisfied staff trained in innovative technologies who have opportunities for advancement.
- Mutually respectful and productive working environment among staff.
- Mutually respectful and productive working environment between staff and faculty.
- Staff can articulate the tangible impact of their work in achieving the vision and mission of the school.
- Managers fully understand responsibilities of their staff.