

# UC Academic Congress and Retreat Summary Report

UC as a Hispanic-Serving Research Institute System

Luskin Conference Center, UCLA

October 27–29, 2024

## Conference Overview

In October, UC leaders gathered at UCLA's Luskin Center to attend a systemwide academic congress and retreat on the theme of UC as a Hispanic-serving research institute (HSRI) system. Hosted by University of California Provost and Executive Vice President Katherine S. Newman and the Systemwide HSI Advisory Board, this three-day event began with dinner and a keynote address by UCLA Professor of Education Sylvia Hurtado on democratizing access to higher education by meeting the opportunities of a changing student body.

Day two featured a keynote presentation by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) President and CEO Antonio Flores on the current national landscape for Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), followed by panel discussions that offered a blueprint for becoming an HSRI system, described the impact of HSI research on students' success and suggested ways of improving leadership pathways in HSIs.

After attendees had a chance to break into thematic work-alike discussion groups, they reconvened for a leadership roundtable discussion that looked at HSRI as part of a 2030 education master plan.

And, finally, day three began with a keynote address from UC Regent John Pérez, who spoke with passion about the persistence of Hispanic underrepresentation at UC and the need to shift the way that is being addressed.

Attendees chose among four breakout discussions, and then split into campus-specific groups to synthesize all the information that had come before in order to focus on envisioning a collective HSRI identity.

The event closed with a plenary address describing a shared HSRI vision, followed by a meditative





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mural walk to view [Judy Baca's La Memoria de la Tierra](#).

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Merely achieving HSI status as a statistical milestone is insufficient. Significant systemwide transformation is needed to counteract the intrinsic and historical exclusivity of the institution and to instill cultural awareness, emphasize inclusivity and create a sense of belonging not only for Latinx students, but also for students from all underrepresented populations.

The path to becoming an HSRI system requires a “growing-our-own” approach, with access for undergraduate students to research opportunities, faculty mentors, study-abroad programs and early planning for graduate school and career paths. While pertinent campus-specific initiatives and programs abound, there needs to be systemwide coordination, adequate funding and top-down messaging from leadership at the highest levels to maintain focus, demand accountability and monitor progress toward this challenging yet achievable goal.

Share best campus practices across the system. Recruit, cultivate and incentivize leadership with longer terms or tenures, e.g., from the Academic Senate and the Regents, from UC alumni in government posts or in the private sector; remember that deans, chancellors and even presidents may change every few years, which could interrupt years-long efforts toward servingness and inclusivity. Include staff in these efforts, remembering their possible contributions toward creating a culture of belonging.

## Conference Presentations

### Sunday, October 27

**Keynote speaker:** Sylvia Hurtado, Professor of Education, UCLA

**Discussants:** G. Cristina Mora, Professor of Sociology, UC Berkeley; Deborah Santiago, Chief Executive Officer, Excelencia in Education

**Moderator:** Frances Contreras, Dean and Professor, School of Education, UC Irvine

Professor Hurtado, UCLA's special advisor to the chancellor on Latinx issues, set the tone of the discussion by citing the tension between the university's democratizing goals of equity in educational access and the institution's origins in exclusivity in favor of the elite. Within that context, she addressed the shifting demographics of California, emphasizing that Latinx students are no longer a minority and yet remain underrepresented in higher education, thus introducing a discussion of Hispanic-serving institutions: how are they defined, what benefits do they bring for **all** students, how do they spark creative innovations, etc

One theme mentioned by Professor Hurtado — and subsequently echoed throughout other's presentations — was that the mere achievement of HSI status, while an admirable goal, is not sufficient on its own. It must be part of a continuum of growth beyond UC's land-grant mission of reflecting California's demographics in its student body to true servingness, to the normalization of accessible pathways to higher ed for all who seek them and to the universally beneficial societal changes that result from a proliferation of research and inquiry.

A culminating point was that in order to grow the research component in HSRI, a long view of student success and retention was needed, nurturing undergraduate talent and providing incentive to continue on at UC to fuel research on all campuses and in all laboratories. This entails, in part, developing and diversifying faculty and staff to create a climate of cultural responsiveness, which takes time.

The discussants reinforced this long-view approach, each from their areas of expertise. Deborah Santiago spoke about policy on a national level, reminding attendees that UC is being looked at to lead in the HIS arena, and she emphasized the need for keeping up support for students all the way through graduate work, with an eye on having UC alums apply for faculty positions. Cristina Mora spoke from a social science perspective, noting demographic shifts in California that are outstripping wealth distribution and calling out the need for intersegmental collaboration.

## Monday, October 28

**Opening remarks:** Katherine S. Newman, Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, University of California

Provost Newman gave a brief speech over breakfast to set the first full day of the event in motion and to let attendees know what to expect from the congress and retreat.

It's really hard to overstate the importance of this community to our state and to our nation's future. We know that Latinx students have been enrolling in higher education at increasing rates, which is wonderful news; between 2002 and 2020 the proportion of the Latinx population with a bachelor's degree or higher doubled from 10 percent to 20 percent — that is an extraordinary rate of maintenance. And according to recent analyzes by Excelencia in Education, these students accounted for the vast majority — 79 percent of the total 4 percent increase in degree attainment in the United States over the last five years. Progress is being made. Suffice it to say, the world that we live in now is profoundly different from the 1990s when the federal HSI designation was introduced.

After this morning's opening remarks, we're going to have a robust conversation about the growing presence of HSRI within higher education and what an expanded vision for these universities should look like; we'll explore the impact of HSI research on student success as well as ways to improve leadership pathways in HSIs; then we'll have an opportunity to break out into separate disciplines for more specific conversations to dive more deeply into the implications of these discussions for fields like the arts, humanities, STEM and so on. At the end of the day, we'll come together again for a closing plenary discussion with our UC Merced Chancellor, Juan Sanchez Muñoz, along with Deborah Santiago of Escala; this will be moderated by Berkeley Professor of Education Gina Garcia.

And for those of you who will be around tomorrow, our HSI practitioner retreat will build on discussions about how this congress, with its focus on developing a unified HSRI mission for the UC system, can take next steps.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### The national landscape for Hispanic-serving institutions

**Keynote speaker:** Antonio Flores, President and Chief Executive Officer, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

HACU President Flores discussed the growth of HSIs on a national level, citing multiple statistics showing the steep growth of Hispanic people in the work force paired with a steady climb in undergraduate enrollment of Latinx students. He noted the opportunity that exists in this setting for encouraging these students to continue on to graduate school and possibly further, to become faculty, thus changing universities' cultural landscapes. (This "grow our own" theme was echoed throughout presentations over the two-day event.) And, too, he reminded attendees that California is seen as a leader in cultural change, so what happens in the state is of high importance on the national stage.

He went on to talk about a national decline in the number of Hispanic university presidents, even at schools and in regions where the demographics were showing growth in Hispanic populations, and he spoke about the need for representation at the highest levels of leadership, which for UC would mean at the levels of the UC Academic Senate and the Regents. (This theme recurred at multiple times over the event's presentations and discussions.)

After mentioning HACU's efforts to work with the White House and the Department of Education in the creation of an advisory board made up of HSI presidents — keeping in mind that this was the week before the U.S. election, and the assumption was still that there would be a receptive administration — Flores launched into a description of an innovative pilot planning to help American medical students train in fully accredited schools in Spanish-speaking countries such as Mexico, Costa Rica or the Dominican Republic. The benefits of this would be to foster bilingual and bicultural education for these students, save them money — the foreign schools are significantly less costly than their counterparts here — and ready them for work in high-need regions of the U.S. while they pay down their college debt. That eventual pool of health professionals would then consist of recruitable talent for teaching hospitals and medical research, feeding back into HSIs and HSRI's.

He ended by reiterating that California was seen nationally as a leader in HSI efforts and that UC was well-positioned to become the first successful HSRI system, thus setting standards for best practices and generating the literature that will inspire and guide other public university systems.

## PANEL DISCUSSION #1

### A blueprint for becoming a Hispanic-serving research institution (HSRI) system

**Moderator:** Pamela Padilla, Vice President of Research and Innovation, University of North Texas

**Panelists:** Frances Contreras, Dean and Professor, School of Education, UC Irvine  
Juan Poblete, Professor of Latin American Literature and Cultural Studies, UC Santa Cruz  
Marcela Cuellar, Associate Professor of Education and Chancellor's Fellow, UC Davis

#### Key takeaways of the first panel:

*What does HSI mean at a system level, in addition to our individual campus levels?*

*What does it mean for us to be a Hispanic-serving research institution system?*

*What does it mean for us to engage with that research identity?*

Vice President Padilla began by providing some context for creation of a blueprint:

- In 2022–23, 600 institutions were HSIs.
- 27 of those were HSRIIs, meaning they are both HSIs and research 1 (R1) institutions.
- The [Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Research Universities \(HSRU\)](#) is a group of 22 HSRIIs that:
  - Includes UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC Santa Barbara and UC Santa Cruz.
  - Has 2030 goals of doubling the national number of Latinx Ph.D. students.
  - Aims to increase the representation of Latinx faculty by 20 percent.

Professor Poblete spoke about “... the limitations and possibilities of what they call ‘new universities’ such as UC Merced and UC Riverside and ... Santa Cruz, ‘schools that bear high research ambitions with predominantly disadvantaged student populations.’” He highlighted the chronic underfunding of underrepresented populations and stressed that public education isn’t just access to a basic education but rather the gateway to access “high-level research possibilities ... in the context of ... democratization and diversification.” He referred to the “epistemic decolonization” of knowledge and research and repeated the call to “advanc[e] faculty and faculty promotion and cultivation.”

Professor Cuellar talked about the research that had already been occurring at HSIs or emerging HSIs now being perceived differently when an institution wanted to achieve R1 status; so much research that had been occurring in discrete programs or initiatives — “pockets of support that have been developed to support students” — now needed to be compiled and unified to serve the R1 goal. While that was happening, an awareness of larger communities, made up not only

of undergraduate students, but also of K–12 students and their families, graduate students, faculty and staff. She cited a 2002 study of Latinx eligibility in research and said that the needle had not moved much since then, which emphasizes the urgency to keep doing the work of transformation needed to reflect changing demographics.

Dean Contreras focused on how data can help define and describe the work of an HSI. She called out UC Santa Cruz and UC San Diego for their efforts in gathering, disaggregating and examining data to nourish understanding about servingness and the push beyond simply achieving HSI status. She noted that while systemwide Latinx representation grew to 33 percent in 2023, the percentage dwindles when you look specifically at graduate academic and graduate professional students, and it plummets when the focus moves to ladder-rank faculty, faculty lecturers, adjunct and clinical faculty, etc. Finally, she mentioned recommendations including providing funding for an HSI research center, designating institutional research staff for HSI analysis, and developing further the task force for faculty diversity.

During the Q&A that followed, topics included:

- HSIs are neither “one and done” nor “one size fits all.” Servingness dictates constant growth and adaptation beyond the achievement of HSI status.
- Campuses’ histories vary, and their stories of exclusion may dictate how a campus arrives at HSI status and how long it might take.
- Regional differences bring a variety of ways to serve communities; students often want to give back to the communities in which they grew up.
- Engaging students’ families is a crucial part of transformative community-building.
- Cultivating the next generation of faculty is an investment in our campuses.
- More funding and institutional support is needed to incentivize faculty mentoring of grad students.



## PANEL DISCUSSION #2

### The impact of HSI research on students' success

**Moderator:** Theresa Maldonado, Vice President for Research and Innovation, UC Office of the President

**Panelists:** Cynthia Larive, Chancellor, UC Santa Cruz  
Anne-Marie Nuñez, Executive Director, Diana Natalicio Institute for Hispanic Student Success and Distinguished Centennial Professor in Educational Leadership and Foundations, University of Texas, El Paso  
Melissa Salazar, Chief Executive Officer, ESCALA Educational Services, Inc.

#### Key takeaways of the second panel:

Vice President Maldonado began by reminding everyone of UC's responsibility to lead the nation in Latinx representation and by calling out UC Merced's meteoric rise to R2 status, before turning it over to the panelists.

Chancellor Larive spoke about UC Santa Cruz's experience receiving an HSI designation in 2014 and about joining the Alliance of Hispanic-serving Research Institutes (HSRU) in 2022 as a founding member. She talked about UC Santa Cruz's partnerships with CSU and community colleges, all with a long-view lens on connecting students to eventual graduate school and onward to careers, and mentioned a "receiving institution" at Santa Cruz that provides professional development for graduate students and an HSRU post-doc program that is in its first year.

Executive Director Nuñez discussed three aspects of HSIs/HSRIs: a systemwide identity as a diverse ecosystem, a focus on organizational culture and the importance of intersectionality. As part of the complex interplay of these three threads, she spoke about:

- Occurrences of multiple forms of discrimination at play, e.g., colorism, cultural racism, classism, academic subject-based biases (e.g., STEM versus social sciences — what counts as valid and valuable research?).
- The Computing Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (CAHSI), formed in 2004; its 2030 goal is that Hispanics will represent 20percent or more of those who earn credentials in computing.
- A proposal that students strong in math and computing concepts should be allowed to pursue computer science majors even while they're still taking developmental English.
- The recurring comment that universities struggle to find funding for undergraduate research opportunities.

- The NSF-funded Hispanic-serving Institution Center for Evaluation and Research Synthesis (HSI-CERS), which will build capacity for conducting evaluation and research to strengthen and document the effectiveness of NSF-HSI-funded programs.

ESCALA CEO Salazar cut a wide swath, referring to the many ways that ESCALA works with clients — the organization has worked with close to 100 HSIs — and to the insights they bring to trainings about teaching and about shaping culture in the context of HSIs. Some highlights:

“... Teacher identity is something that ... is very important as you embark on this community of R1 HSIs. ... We need to all be teachers. It doesn't matter if you're in the classroom officially ... [a]nd so what are we teaching and whose culture are we teaching is a big question for me ... .”

“... [A]s you enter the HSI world, [you start] to have discussions about white supremacy culture ... the elephant in the room. We need to be talk about what it means to be a predominantly white institution ... looking at ourselves as an HSI — it's not just language, and it's not just grants ... there's an institutional cultural climate that we need to talk about. Our big mission is to dismantle the systemic racism that we know is there, as well as cultural bias.”

“[M]ost HSIs are not R1s ... . These are the people [who] are going to be transferring students to you all, these are your regional partners, these are your community colleges that are preparing students for transfer to UC.”

“It's going to be a long time before we shift our teaching practices in the United States [to] ... where a student would walk in and feel cultural inclusion. [W]e feel like it really comes down to a person, to the daily level, the daily practice of how I greet a student, of how I actually put language on my syllabus or take it off of migrating policy. ... It grows from the middle. I love the middle kind of leadership models, because I think that really works better than top down. People feel forced. You know, faculty won't do things that are top down.”

“[E]very practitioner in your HSI should be looking at their own data, not just institutional data, but drilling down into how many students visit them per semester, how many students turned in this assignment, how many students didn't pass this exam? [We] have professors videotape themselves teaching, and we have them look very carefully at their grade books, disaggregated by race and ethnicity as well as gender, so that they can see who's passing which assignment and whether there are equity gaps in the way students are performing on even just down to the individual quiz.”

“[G]rading practices are really one of the areas that we all need to look at, how those are embedded in ranking and rating students and pushing people out, rather than engaging people to learn. [And] the discussion of rigor ... will come up ... [and] that's

racist. Notice that rigor will get brought up as a reason not to change. Why is rigor not possible in an HSI?”

The Q&A section for this panel brought up issues of:

- Data monitoring on equity-focused dashboards to target teaching and curricular interventions where needed (addressing some of Salazar’s comments about rigor).
- Disaggregating data to look at the experiences of women of color separately from those of women as a whole.
- The importance of Latinx staff in creating community and belonging.
- The need for top-level executive to be informed of departmental HIS efforts and to coordinate department-level leadership to leverage resources and approaches across campus.

## PANEL DISCUSSION #3

### Improving leadership pathways in HSIs

**Moderator:** Pablo Reguerín, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, UC Davis

**Panelists:** Leslie Gonzales, Professor and Director, Center for Studies in Higher Education, University of Arizona  
 Stephanie Reyes-Tuccio, Vice Provost for Educational and Community Partnerships, UC Irvine  
 Andrés Castro Samayoa, Director and Associate Professor, Ph.D. Program in Higher Education, Lynch School of Education and Human Development, Boston College and Director for Assessment and Strategy, Rutgers Center for Minority Serving Institutions

#### Key takeaways of the third panel:

Vice Chancellor Reguerín started out by asking “Who does the HSI work? Is it only the Latinos? Where do non-Latinos fit into this picture?” and “Are we doing enough and is it sufficient?”

During his opening remarks, he spoke of:

- Collective action by multiracial coalitions as the key to transformation into an HSI
- Growing numbers of Latinx undergraduates do not translate to proportionate growth among graduate students, faculty or leadership (a recurring theme at this event)
- Two reports from The Campaign for College Opportunity: 2018’s “Left Out: How Exclusion in California’s Colleges and Universities Hurts Our Values, Our Students, and Our Economy” and 2024’s “Still Left Out: How Exclusion In California’s Colleges &

Universities Continues To Hurt Our Values, Students, and Democracy”

- Statistics to help illustrate his points:
  - In 2016–17:
    - Latinx undergrad student enrollment at UC was at 26 percent.
    - Tenured Latinx faculty comprised 7 percent.
    - Academic Senate committee Latinx leadership was at 5 percent.
    - Latinx senior leadership stood at 11 percent.
  - Five years later, in 2021–22:
    - Latinx undergrad student enrollment at UC was at 25 percent of undergrads.
    - Tenured Latinx faculty comprised 8 percent.
    - Academic Senate committee Latinx leadership was at 3 percent.
    - Latinx senior leadership stood at 7 percent.
  - In 2022, 49 percent of the Californians between the ages of 18 to 24 were Latinx.

To the panel, VC Reguerín posed this question: “What are some of the innovative efforts and strategies to prepare faculty and administrators for HSIs?”

Vice Provost Reyes-Tuccio spoke based on her viewpoint from within UC leadership for the past 25 years. She:

- Acknowledged the shepherding of initiatives by Claudia Martinez and her team at UC Office of the President.
- Opined that it is time to move away from cohort-based initiatives in favor of broader coordinated systemic efforts.
- Mentioned the formation of the Chicano-Latino Advisory Council (CLAC) in 2016.
- Touched on the recurring themes of (A) re-envisioning the graduate school pathway so as not to lose gains in Latinx undergraduate enrollment and (B) “growing our own” so that some of those graduate students return as UC faculty.

“One of the things that I figured out after I was exposed to some amazing programs by some colleagues at UC San Diego is that it's much easier for our students to find opportunities to find research [opportunities] halfway around the world than with our closest neighbor, our largest trading partner, the ancestral and cultural homeland of the majority of our Latinx students and the place where their linguistic resources really come

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into play, and where they can merge their academic and personal and familial identities and ways that don't make them feel like they have to have split personalities. So, lots of opportunities to advance on that part.”

- She cited the unique perspectives that minority leaders can bring to reimagining change in an institution.

“ ... [W]hen you ... change some individuals in key leadership positions, and they are people for whom the system was not set up, it did not facilitate their entry and their success, they are much more likely to take a very critical eye to that system and to be able to identify what in a system needs to be changed, much moreso than someone for whom the system easily facilitated their entry into these roles — it's very challenging for them to ... be motivated or to believe that those systems need to be changed.”

Director Samayoa stated his belief that it was “a critical theme for us to be thinking about this nationally, systemically and with an eye towards coalition.” He referred to minority-serving institutions as “as a point of entry to have race-aware conversations in educational spaces.” Samayoa went on to talk about Latinx people having internalized or adopted the logic of their respective insititutions to be able to succeed and accomplish there and about the imagination it takes to back out of those accomodations and reshape the place itself. He also spoke of a theme that has infused much of the event’s proceedings — growing our own:

“... [T]he way that we think about diversifying the professoriate is often to imagine bringing people in from elsewhere. ... [W]hat would it look like for us to imagine that we're actually building our own? ... Students who want to aspire to the professoriate [feel] that the sense of place is critically important for them, and if we're also asking folks to then go and diversify the professoriate, but then that comes at the expense of moving who knows where, then we have a structural tension. ... [H]ow is it that we imagine transforming the academy if we're not attending to that as one of the structural constraints?”

He went on to address the “future of higher education diversity”:

“[W]e're faced with a ... political reality at the federal level of not just tremendous disinvestment to education at large, but also of a rhetoric where ... higher education is the problem and that ... is going to be under sort of attack in the coming years. [I]t's important to have this explicit conversation that is ... not shying away from simply saying something like ‘diversity, equity, inclusion’ and [it’s] critically important how ... we steward resources and support others in this development.

The leadership that we need right now [must be] willing to face the vitriol the court of public opinion, to be able not just to withstand them, but then unapologetically to continue to steward that ... framework ... . [T]o ... support future faculty and administrators, I think it means that we continue to create these spaces ... I think that this is cannot be just a one-off.

[W]hat does it also mean if we're just investing resources in the development of tenure ladder faculty, but [at the same time] we recognize the reality of ... tenure [is] becoming something that seems to be disappearing ... ? [Perhaps we] need to fully [re]imagine the ecosystem of the faculty and the centrality of faculty governance of higher education as well. That, I think, means that we need to not just invest in these spaces, but also have some harder conversations about how we imagine the future of education at this particular moment.”

Director Gonzales called out the need for:

“ ... culturally responsive HSI leaders and faculty to learn about the history of U.S. higher education ... [to] know how deeply racialized the institution is. ... [W]e all know that these institutions are a colonial system ... [that] they were founded on a racialized system of slave labor. But we can draw connections to how our disciplines behave and [help] leadership, well-intentioned folks, understand those implications in their daily work and the practices that they've been ... taught.

[T]o prepare faculty and leaders to be culturally responsive, to engage in their work with an ethic of servingness, we have to ... understand the history of U.S. higher education, including the history of minority-serving institutions, ... because these interconnected histories will help us understand the ways in which MSI and HSIs ... have been limited historically ... . [I]t's incredibly important, as you think about what it means to create an HSRI system, [to embed intentional, historical learning for your community, for folks who want to engage in these roles.”

Building on the concept of graduate school pathways and “growing our own,” she offered:

“[O]ur graduate students ... will be the next generation of researchers, policy leaders who will lead community organizations. ... They are not [necessarily] think[ing] about their work, their research, in relation to servingness. Well, what does that look like?

Imagine an HSRI that's situated in a farming community that is largely held together and kept going by Latinx immigrant farm workers. Imagine what it might [be] for the environmental sciences lab ... to really take in what the needs, the interest, the priorities of that particular farmworking community are and how they could be served, how



research could be in service to that community.

[T]o Stephanie's point, students would oftentimes feel sort of split, like they're having to kind of navigate this dominant, disciplinary Department of Culture [at the same time as] their own ethnic culture and values. The research on graduate education shows that, for the most part, when students diverge too far from disciplinary departmental norms, they are very often going to face punitive results — a loss of funding or a lack of funding.

But what would it mean for faculty, lab leaders, research team leaders to validate [their students'] way of thinking about the world, about water preservation, about environmental science or about philosophy as informed by their [culture] in a way that is welcom[ing] and legitim[izing]... .”

After the panel spoke, Q&A yielded the following:

An attendee restated that merely becoming eligible for HSI status is not an immediate ticket to funding and that the value of being an HSI is reimagining and creating a cultural shift so that Latinx students feel that they belong on a campus.

**Q:** There are these people who don't regard themselves as leaders; how do we track those people? And I also want to know what brings you joy in this work ...

**A:** Earlier [we] talked about reframing institutions as talent development; I think that's really important for leadership, and also understanding that leadership shows up in different forms. ... We need to be thinking about those who are ready in our succession planning, those who are on the path, those who need to be inspired, or about where we can ... give opportunities for people to step in. You also have to tap people, even sometimes when they don't think they're ready ... . We don't do a lot of direct work ourselves, big secret, but it's about identifying talent and then finding talent for the issues that come up. I think breaking the mold from a traditional sense is critical to that aspect; there's not a single recipe, but you have to do it multiple ways.

Let me tell you the joy that comes from seeing someone who you have developed, or you have sent to a conference, or every time I've had the opportunity to invest in someone ... . It's not always easy, and it can cost money, but let me tell you the joy that comes from debriefing with those teams, from hearing what they learned, from seeing them present [and engaged]. The more you invest in people, the more it always comes back in a positive way... . And it has to be a continuous activity. It cannot be a once-a-year [thing], it has got to be ongoing.

**Q:** I think about the University of California system that we have now, doing what it's designed to do, which is to exclude people. So what are some actions that we can take within our systems, on our campuses — because a lot of this work has to happen on our campuses — what are some examples

of things you've done that have helped to change and include, not exclude? The systems are made by people and can be changed. So how do we shift that and make it a system that's designed to include? That's the beginning of the open doorway of servingness. So what do we do to have that happen?

**A:** One template which I find helpful is to consistently ask this question: "At what moments are we talking about differentiation?" California's public education [system] is not as much a form of differentiation, but it's a form of stratification. That's something that shows up in the way that you think about the hiring of new colleagues and faculty, the opportunities that people are afforded. Instead of thinking about *differentiation* of opportunities for leadership enhancement for them, we end up *stratifying* what people are afforded, and I think that one sort of interruption is to invite that question in any process that we engage in.

And are we inviting ourselves to do something slightly differently? An example that I'll use is that when we think about a doctoral student receiving funding for the completion stage, what might it look like to instead offer that funding for in the proposal writing stage? That's a different way of thinking about structural support for students. And I think that that example, for me, is an important way of offering something very concrete.

There's sort of this assumption that our master's students will become our doctoral students, and so ... you invite the conversation to say, "When are you going to get your Ph.D.?" I know this works differently in different disciplines, but we could be assuming [that] maybe at the undergraduate level, they're going to become our master students. That can be really powerful to just sort of extend that invitation to happen locally, a very intentional practice to retain our students of color within our own system.

I'll also give a shout out to the postdoc program right here at the UC system. There's an alliance called The Rise Up Alliance, an NSF-funded initiative. We're working with five state systems across the U.S. to help look at the California postdoc program and model that for their own systems. Their driving rationale is that they want to retain that talent of color in their system, so they want to create a postdoc system.

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## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

## Gaby Barrios, Reimagining the University of California to serve Latinxs equitably

Artist Gaby Barrios, a recent UCLA alum with a doctoral degree, spoke to the crowd about the symbolism behind this image and answered questions.

“You see these kind of shadow figures. That’s the ... student activism that has been at the UC all along. We’re only here because of the work that others did in the past. So they’re not really gone, or they’re not really past. ... This is also why I chose this kind of circular format ...

Then the next layer are buildings ... to show ... this place, [where] we are now, ... and each of the places, campuses have their histories as well ... .

So I also wanted to draw on the history of Latinx as well, showing the central figure [wearing] a traditional ... garment which I think some of you might be familiar with, might have worn before. [B]ringing in our culture as a contemporary thing is really important to me, because indigen[eity], like our history, is not past, is actually present. ... So the central figure ... plays a lot with the role and iconography of Catholic[ism].

I know that the history of [the] Catholic Church [in] Latin America [is] complex, [but I] did feel the need to bring it in. ... I chose to use this iconography to ... exalt the Latina here, because I think that ... the future of our community is understanding ... the complexity and the richness of not only who we are, but what we look like as well. A lot of the time, our Afro-Latinx community members are not considered. ... So I thought it was important to show somebody ... of that identity coming forward and showing us what the future is like.

[T]he colors harken back ... the ... deep reds and blues common in a lot of [protest movement] pamphlets that I drew from. But the purple in the middle, that very clear[ly] targets the Latinx feminist movements that have made their way into the United States. The color purple is an international color of feminism, so I display that in the center.”

Q: What are other ways that we can be incorporating art so that our culture is not perceived as less serious, less academic, [when] we are having HSI research conversation, academic conversations that are as rigorous as the artwork that you just described and [with] the level of intentionality that you put into this?



A: I think ... we ma[ke art] in order to live, survive and understand ourselves as people. I think that goes as well for the Latinx community. A lot of identity that's been built up around Latin[idad] that has actually been ... built by national art projects. So has the concept of indigeneity in a lot of countries, right? ... I think that that therein lies the potential possibilities of trying to create artistic conversations, performances that come into the communities that we're trying to represent. ... So I think [of] art as something that helps us understand ourselves. ... [W]e are still influenced by art ... even if we don't understand it.

Q: I'm wondering if you could talk a little bit about the role of art as critical engagement. [W]e're talking about ... [and rethinking] what constitutes research ...

A: Yeah, it's something I wonder about a lot. ... I think that in a lot of ways, my creative work has helped my research to progress, specifically because the kind of work I do [depends on] conversation with the kind of community that I'm trying to work with, right? And so I think that that's one anatomy of marrying art [to research]. ... [T]here are also so many possibilities to understand research more broadly; ... [it's] something that a constitutional creativity could [contribute to] going forward. And it's not only about the art that's on campus. It's also about allowing or encouraging students to go out as artists in the community and to understand art as a living thing that's out there in the world. I think you know that, besides institutional encouragement, having access to Los Angeles or any community outside campus is super important for [art].

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM “WORK-ALIKE” BREAKOUT GROUPS

### HSI and STEM

**Facilitator:** Estela Ana Gavoso, Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Professor of Teaching

\*Significant work is already happening on campuses ... however, groups are overtaxed and understaffed, and gateway STEM courses are focal areas but are not always supported in the most effective ways possible, i.e., what if we rethought ‘C is average’ and instead looked at success as helping all meet our high expectations.

\*Mentorship continues and has found significant benefit, but it can be difficult to find faculty to mentor based on workload and current information.

\*We have to apply an HSI lens to the entire structure; you can't build an equitable implementation on an inequitable foundation. It will be important to, while recognizing local expertise, identify the historical areas where the culture doesn't align with the three pillars:

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- Students who are in need of support
- Faculty who are overtaxed and do not necessarily have pedagogical knowledge as a staple of their work
- Administrators/systems building measures around learning efficacy when neither faculty nor students may be receiving what they need

#### Establishing/advancing community-engaged research practice partnerships

1. When we think about how other disciplines engage with healthcare, it opens up a plethora of opportunities for non-health professionals who would be interested in that level of analytics and in health-related problems. This relates to the clinical warehouse that exists because of UC Health.
  - a. There are obstacles around pieces of technology (validity of health-related data, discriminatory technology subjugating particular peoples, nondescript way of validating LLMs).
2. Mentor programs are a key element of this work, helping people to understand what it is to be a STEM learner.
3. Work with particular Hispanic communities to have discussions and work directly with partnerships in the local community. Data that comes out is returned back to community to apply to other areas of work
4. There is a gap between the research that is happening and the thinking about how to ensure that students recognize the structures and scaffolds which exist to provide infrastructure so that they can fully engage with the research. We are losing students in heavy sequences because of those infrastructural elements. An examples of how this can work is at UC San Diego, where first-time researchers are in a group-based program with faculty mentors to help connect and communicate.
5. We need spaces in which funding creates the mechanism from which we connect research and communities, critical partnerships and cross-pollination where significant funds go to community partnerships, and investment in tech systems to be able to bolster communication.

#### Developing and preserving faculty engagement and mentorship for student success

1. A lot of the work being done requires guidelines for principal investigators to think about communication between faculty and community. We need to think about translation between the work/discipline expertise (faculty) and the on-the-ground work happening with the community. That can be exacerbated in a field like STEM where faculty can get heavily focused on their work.

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2. Faculty don't always have a lot of expertise in teaching and there is a lack of alignment between students (needing specific supports), faculty (likely not trained in teaching) and goals (very focused on the efficacy of teaching and teaching effectiveness).
3. What does it mean not just to work with faculty but to think about inclusion/exclusion for people who are being evaluated by research faculty?
4. How do you get to 'distinguished professor' without a mentorship pathway?
5. We need team mentorings for new faculty and for how to extend outside of our own campus and engage the greater HSI enclave. (If we are going to apply an HSI lens for mentoring students, we need to think about faculty in this regard, too.)

Identifying and supporting expanded pathways for Latinx graduate students to the professoriate

1. How do we help students succeed and not drown in lack of resources? Offices are overtaxed by high-need students; how do we lead people into STEM fields if they've struggled into these places?
2. Post-baccalaureate programs are vital for these populations. But they are expensive and people need to provide for their families, need to get into the workforce and are struggling to find that space.
3. We don't think about masters programs when we think about graduate school. We keep thinking about the professoriate. How many people actually get to be professors?
4. Is it exposure that is key, or is there something else? Where do we want to place people, in industry or in education? What is most persuasive?
5. We get the students we design for, and we have designed to not move students through the system very well. So we get into this idea of designed systems and what are the units we could design around. It may seem obvious, but what if we designed around the students, the idea of what students want to get out of this. Couldn't we produce to help more students not get Cs?
6. Graduate school in STEM is often free, so being able to do this without cost is important. But that's on the doctoral level ... so the masters is a profit-making machine. The Ph.D. model was originally set up for affluent white men, and even with the changes for the grad students, the number of people coming in has been cut by 50 percent to work for six years, not be guaranteed a job and go into significant debt. The model must change.



7. How can funding for graduate studies be directed to the student so there is independence for project selection, rather than a top-down advisory relationship? For example fellowship programs, etc. There's an example of UCOP postdoc mentorship; could we scale that out to other graduate years? It seems a natural extension of the pipeline ...
8. How we can bring alumni in to serve as mentors or role models? It could be taxing on the individual; how can the system encourage the opportunities that exist to be able to bring more along?
9. Security in a field is pretty important to what we do, so how do we work together on this kind of work and ensure that the investment aligns with the desire? This can come from advisement that is helpful not because of money/funding but rather because of the person who is there (again thinking about designing around the student).

#### Implementing instructional innovations informed by HSI research and scholarship

1. We hear lots of talk about community engagement, but we need a cultural understanding on what it means to develop and cultivate the young people who are moving through this space.
2. There are examples of finding students who are historically left out of talent culls and then using funding to support them. We need different ways of considering outreach and ensuring that students recognize the opportunities available to them. So much research shows the importance of solving community problems, etc., in having buy-in for the work.
3. Gender and racial obstacles are prevalent in STEM — thinking about doctors (2/3 male), nurses (90 percent female) — and there are so many gendered and racialized documents within our system until leadership and policy development/audit can shift the conversation.
4. A frustration throughout the day: How do we rebuild an inclusive structure for students? We have directors who are doing the service right now and a lot of the thought experiment is maybe not the most beneficial because we need to prioritize the voices that can push this forward. There's a lot of information about research but action may need to move faster than could be research-informed.
5. We need to recognize that there are lots of people who are regularly tapped and don't have the space to take this on; a faculty member who has 25 other obligations may not engage.

## HSI and the humanities

**Facilitator:** Jody Greene, Associate Campus Provost and Professor of Literature, UC Santa Cruz

### 1. **Community-engaged research and getting support from faculty and the Academic Senate**

- Because of the varying interest across disciplines, it has been difficult to establish support for community-engaged research among all campuses. Pursuing this idea of developing and providing guidelines for our faculty and administrators across the system will be helpful in validating this type of research as significant and meaningful and will give credit to faculty and students who engage with it.
- Underrepresented scholars conduct this type of research with more prevalence because many of them pursue inquiries that serve/give back to their communities. Sharing anecdotal/qualitative and quantitative data on the surge/increase of faculty and students using these research methodologies, along with increases in grant funding and publishing, can help relay the importance of this research for the Senate's consideration and use in policy changes and decision making.
- Showcasing this type of research across the system, relaying both the outcomes and opportunities that come with it and employing more participatory-based inquiry can help increase the perception of its validity and rigor. Also, faculty who mentor students who want to conduct research using these types of methodologies need to receive appropriate acknowledgement for their efforts.
- We have antiquated systems, and we have an opportunity to look at research across disciplines, interdisciplinary work, and lead in cutting edge research approaches. What are we willing to give up as a system to be a student-centered MSRI? We need to be equity-minded not only in the participation of students and faculty, but also in how we approach research, teaching and service.

### 2. **Expanding pathways and support for Latinx students to the professoriate**

- How can UC make humanities more attractive to current and prospective students?
  - Campus administrators, staff and faculty could do a better job of communicating post-degree job opportunities, salary ranges and uses for a humanities degree among students and their families—especially those from underrepresented communities and transfers.
  - How can students understand the use of this particular degree and area of study, how and what types of study can they pursue in graduate school, how can they use their experience in the humanities to give back to their

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communities and engage in informing and cultivating discussions around this discipline/area of study; these are all conversations that can generate an opportunity for being more mindful and intentional about marketing the humanities, especially to transfers and undecided students.

- We need a more robust pool of humanities scholars in programs such as the President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program to build a diverse future faculty pool for UC.
- How can we train faculty and administrators to use dashboard analytics in a meaningful and useful way? The data is powerful and should be used to take a “departmental selfie” and “equity snapshot” to help groups be more proactive and strategic about their equity and inclusion efforts and about making actionable and measurable plans towards advances in DEI areas.
- Faculty and administrators can work more strategically with local CSUs to partner on pathways efforts that support CSU students pursuing UC graduate school in order to build the pool of potential/future faculty as a way to diversify the professoriate.
- Can we be more specific across the system about requiring mentorship requirements for students, such as those who are Cota-Robles scholars?

## HSI and the arts

**Facilitator:** Tiffany Lopéz, Dean, Claire Trevor School for the Arts, UC Irvine

This casual discussion among only two participants hit many similar notes as the other discipline-specific groups:

- Mentorship is key to retention.
- ALL disciplines — not just STEM — have valid pathways into research.
- A higher proportion of underrepresented students in the arts offers opportunities for unique perspectives into the nature of minority servingness.
- Innovations in teaching are nothing new to the arts; keep artists in the conversation!

## HSI and the social sciences

**Facilitator:** Zulema Valdez, Associate Vice Chancellor and Professor of Sociology, UC Merced

*Where does the “HSI-part” happen?*

*What does it mean to serve, what is the mission and how do we serve the students?*

*What is the research R? How are we thinking about the R that is being introduced at this event?*

- It can be done and we would like to think it is being engaged in all departments, but we know it probably isn't being done. Let's look at our Ethnic Studies Departments, for example — I think they are doing the R. How do we make sure it permeates across the campus disciplines? In addition, some departments have no Latino/a faculty.
- Centering the historically focused programs to support C/L students seems obvious — only 90 Latino studies programs; it should be an anchor program for HSI efforts. No core faculty in many of these; at UC Berkeley there are only two Chicano/Latino faculty! Systemwide the 7 percent of C/L faculty is too low and has been for a long time.
- We need to have vision about how we approach the structure of hiring; it varies greatly across the campuses, including who is making the decisions.
- There is a position open for the VP for Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs — this role is an opportunity.

Goals:

- Establishing/advancing **community-engaged** research-practice partnerships
- Developing and preserving **faculty engagement and mentorship** for student success
- Identifying and supporting expanded pathways for **Latinx graduate students** to the professoriate
- Implementing **instructional innovations** informed by HSI research and scholarship

## HSI and university administration

**Facilitator:** Renetta Garrison Tull, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, UC Davis

Takeaways fall within the following topics:

- Establishing/advancing community-engaged research practice partnerships
- Developing and preserving faculty engagement and mentorship for student success
- Identifying and supporting expanded pathways for Latinx graduate students to the professoriate
- Implementing instructional innovations informed by HSI research and scholarship

Campuses should thoughtfully engage communities to help construct community engagement partnerships that support Latino pipelines to undergraduate education. These efforts should be mindful of families and of existing Latino community resources. Examples include work at UC Merced K–12 equity access programs, UC Irvine research-practice partnership with Santa Ana elementary schools, and UC San Diego partnership with Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE).

Teaching and Learning Centers can be allies in helping train faculty in thoughtful ways to close equity gaps. This is helpful for new faculty and can be supported by department chairs and senior faculty in the department. Faculty should also be supported in professional development that is focused on student success and they should be working with student affairs departments that regularly attend these types of conferences or trainings. The more engaged faculty are with the success outcomes they position themselves to be mentors.

Support existing programs like the HSI Doctoral Diversity Initiative to get more students in the pipeline for the professoriate. Encourage undergraduate research in areas that support Latino issues so that they may be interested in these fields and pursue the professoriate. Leverage Latino staff with advanced degrees who can also help lead students into the professoriate or in other fields to help student retention and success.

Continue supporting campus HSI showcases that highlight exemplary practices to support Latino and other underrepresented student success interventions. Partner with graduate students to examine the data, review the literature and design studies that validate intervention efficacy.

## CLOSING PLENARY

### Leadership roundtable: Toward a 2030 education master plan that centers HSRIIs in California and beyond

**Moderator:** Gina Garcia, Professor of Education, UC Berkeley

*Participants*

Deborah Santiago, Chief Executive Officer, Excelencia in Education

Juan Sánchez Muñoz, Chancellor, UC Merced

Professor Garcia set the stage with two broad questions:

Many of the people in this room have been building a strong research agenda, and now ... how do we put that research into practice?

We're ... thinking about a national sort of perspective, and how the UC system can lead that ... work. ... So how do we engage with external influences and help to enact servingness with support?

She then followed up with a more specific question for Chancellor Muñoz:

As a system, we have the opportunity to collectively lead HSI conversations in the state and [intersegmentally] in collaboration with the other two state systems — what opportunities do our individual UC campuses have to lead the way and operate as examples?

Chancellor Muñoz responded:

I think what differentiates UC from the CSU and the community colleges is the deliberate legislative Donahue Act signed by Governor Pat Brown in 1960, focus[ed on] knowledge generation, research, etc. I certainly think that UC has an outsized role in what it can offer in terms of leadership in this area, [given] the recognition all over the world of the stature, the immensity, the impact, the influence of the research enterprise within the University of California.

I think you have leaders who feel differently about adhering to strict separations of [California's intersegmental] institutions. How we think about sort of working with [them] is morphing, is changing. You have leaders in these roles ... who [are] cooperating and working with each other honestly, authentically, respectfully as peers, introducing excellence from different sort of pathways that will change in the future. ... We need to be cognizant of how we work with them, and how we work with the 116



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community colleges [in that] system.

... [T]he largest EDA grant awarded in the United States of America — \$65.1 million for the future food initiative — wouldn't have happened without CSU Fresno, without Fresno State, without UC Merced or without Merced College, and it wouldn't have happened without the Central Area Foundation. And so my point is, working together, we landed the largest such grant awarded in the United States of America. That is an example of what could happen when we are a little bit less severe about the separation between our various systems and work together ... in the ... service of the state.

CEO Santiago was asked “What are the implications for the broader, higher education community of the UC system becoming an HSI system?”

[There's] a lot of positioning to have a system embrace this political construct because they decide to imbue it with meaning and to be a place where people can point overtly and say, “This is how it's done to incorporate research, access, practice, public research, not just research for its own sake.” I think [this] will change some of the discourse we have at the national level.

We don't see it yet. Right now, each institution is there talking about itself or systems, talking about ... needing more money, or ... being recognized. So [it is important] to have concrete examples of institutions that ... have research that has an impact for the community, that adds value, and that is willing to take the responsibility for [intending] to be an HSI so that others can understand that [this] that doesn't yet exist with a research lens, and then to have it as a system even moreso ...

... [T]he challenges of integrating between an institution and its role within a system, and the role of the system versus the role of the institution ... that tension of figuring out who's got what, who owns what, how do we speak with a more common voice, even if we are authentically our own institutions, THAT can feed a national dialog that's way overdue. That's the potential of an HSR1 system that UC could represent, ... not just the tension, but [also] the hard decisions that you are going to have to make about what representation looks like.

[T]he potential is ... that you're also in the limelight, and you're going to be the first ones to get stone[s thrown] at you for either not doing anything or trying to do it all for others. And this is the good and bad of trying to be a leader at the national level ... [But] just imagine that you have arguably the most revered, recognized, awarded, accoladed, grant-funded, research enterprise on the planet, the University of California ... not just the nine campuses and the medical schools, but the labs, [observatories], etc., and you say that this system that is creating Nobel laureates and life-changing medicine and ...

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helping land things on other planetary objects, and that this research of the absolute and indisputable highest caliber is also informed by Hispanics.

That changes [the conversation] because we can achieve this ... highest-standard world-altering research, and yet the minds that are contributing to that come from those neighborhoods and pueblos and have accents, so then you can come from any circumstance and be part of something that helps change history within the University of California, and any campus or system will then have to recognize that that level of excellence is also achieved and enhanced and improved and made more excellent by the faculty, staff and students who help enable that discovery, including the Hispanics who are part of that campus and that system.

And that is a very exciting proposition, not just for research, not just for higher ed, but for our country and for our world.”

The next question was for Chancellor Muñoz: “How does becoming an HSI align with the original master plan?”

I think if you look at the language of the ... master plan, the idea was to create some kind of structure that didn't yet exist, to facilitate access in each of the intersegmental elements and broad access. What could be more consistent with the principle of excellence than how we incorporate this growing population of students into the most revered system of research higher education on the planet to maintain excellence?

I'm gonna get this wrong — but only by a couple years: From 1972 or '76 to now, Latinos have grown by around 450 percent. Latinos are projected to grow by about 26 to 30 percent by 2060 ... . So if you're in higher ed, you have to be thinking about this population that continues to grow — 20 percent of the country, Latino; 40 percent of California, Latino — and we're now thinking about how they will enhance and improve the research enterprise at the University of California.

There is no viable pathway to the maintenance of this effort to create, maintain and extend excellence and broad access WITHOUT consideration of how to do it with this population. I fully believe that it is consistent with the hope of the master plan to create this excellence, whether you start at an East LA, West LA College or Merced college and move to Fresno State or move to UC Irvine or UC Santa Barbara and then move to get your Ph.D. at UCLA.

You have to think about how Latinos, both residential Californians and beyond, are part of that. And not apologetically. But how do we do it? How do we prepare for the excellence that these students and their families and their backgrounds and their

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language and their epistemology will introduce into the enterprise and introduce innovations and prosperity and progress and discovery that we can't even imagine because it's in their young minds and they're still in the seventh grade?

Professor Garcia directed the next question to CEO Santiago: “In what ways do you think that becoming an HSI aligns with the original, distinctive mission of the university: to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long term societal benefits, transmitting advanced knowledge, discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active, working repository of organized knowledge. And more specifically including undergraduate education, graduate professional education, research, and other kinds of public service, which are shaped and bounded by the central pervasive mission of discovering and advancing knowledge — How do we get HSI into that?”

The element of service and community [is an] implicit part of our land grant institutions, and ... the work we do is for public benefit and a public good. This is the knowledge that advances society and our community. ... But there's this perception that ... institutions are doing it for their own self interest and not for the good of community. And what I appreciate about the HSI construct, the potential of it, is the focus on serving community and not just knowledge. And these do not have to be mutually exclusive, so we can fit within that.

The onus is how we show that through our leadership, that our research and our faculty and our administrators and our staff and the students who are part of it have a community goal as well as advancing the work. ... What difference am I making to those whose lives I touch or who are surrounding me — that is a fundamental framing that can guide our mission. I think it's implicit, but ... how can we be explicit about this? ...

It's the intentionality we bring to it, and it's being explicit about the good we provide to the community in the field. I don't know that we do a lot of that. We can talk about our trademarks and the money we bring in, and all those are wonderful things; that's how many of us are measured. Are we adding value at the end of the day to the students, the families, the communities, and do we articulate that as part of our value, as well as all the money we bring in and the research, all the Nobel laureates ... How do we talk about the vaccine that was provided by a faculty member that has touched all these young people's lives and made a difference? ... There's no doubt you're doing critical work to the field, but it's not understood that way, and that ends up putting you in a corner somewhere, not making you core leaders, which I think you can be.

Chancellor Muñoz added:

HSI, it's a Hispanic identity because that's what it's called, ... it's a political construct. If

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we become an HSI, what about everybody else? We want to serve everybody else? ... If you really want to educate all, then you have to be Hispanic-serving, because then you won't see gaps in attainment. So for those who think "I'm educating all, therefore I don't differentiate," you're not looking at your data, and you are not including us in that data. HSI is not exclusion, it's about inclusion.

A lot of these things we've been talking about for a couple of decades, and so I would challenge this group to make sure that 20 years from now, they don't say, "Did that group at UCLA in 2024 [do anything]; what happened?" There might be a moment here ... for UC [to] become the perennial research system in the world that is also a Hispanic-serving research system.

Professor Garcia's final question was for both panelists: Which type of advocacy groups obviously work with a lot of advocacy groups in DC, which advocacy groups should we be thinking about reaching out to here in California? And [if] not specifically, [then] how do we gain statewide support for HSI, in the largest state with the most HSIs?

CEO Santiago had this to say:

It starts here. It starts with all of you. ... What are the two or three policy goals that you can all get behind? Then to your question: Who do you go to? I think your governmental relations team is strong and capable, so don't count them out. I think, too, that you will find much in common with your CSU colleagues, who have a preponderance of HSIs, and who also have to work to get their messaging organized. ... And the leadership of the community college system. So advocacy doesn't work without the three [segments] finding what you all have in common. That means figuring out what this system has in common and what you guys want to advocate for... . Start with two or three things; you've got to prioritize. And then when you [decide on] those, you go for the next five.

So you start with your system, [then] you go across the [various] systems and there you have some of the strongest advocates. And because so many of your elected officials are your alumni, you make sure to activate them. They are in their positions because of you, and that is core leadership right there. ... That's political power.

... What is clear is that demography is not destiny on its own. It's what we choose to do with that and embracing this population rather than seeing it as a threat. ... People say "The way California goes, so does the rest of the country." There's a lot of resistance to that, because they're seeing only the broad messaging. ... So having two or three things makes the difference. ... That's something that you can't break even if you have divisions ... . For all our differences, we have things in common. ... This is strength, I think.

Chancellor Muñoz followed up:

... What we need to do in Sacramento — and then it will sort of translate to a national conversation — is [recognize that] UC is an engine for good and change and discovery and benefit and prosperity ... . And the same for the CSU ... . With the dollars invested in higher ed in California, the return on investment is 10 times. Every dollar ... gets housing and clinics and nurses and doctors and anesthesiologists and vaccines, and there's nothing like it in the world, and certainly nothing like it in the United States of America. ... The preservation of this enterprise must be forefront among state leaders [for] the preservation of the prosperity that it engenders.

And, finally, an attendee had a question for Professor Garcia: “We’ve heard about HBCUs and partnering alliances, and we have found that there's sometimes competition about who gets the centering. And we don't want to be at odds with multiple designations. So I'm just wondering how can we bridge and ally ourselves together? Especially since many of our students hold multiple, intersectional identities — Afro Latinx is a key identity for many students.”

One thing that we can bring into the conversation is that we have a [more recent] Black-serving institution identity, which is only going to be in California. It'll be an opportunity for us to think about how HSI, AANAPISI and Black-serving institutions work together, because UC campuses can be all three. ... But there's a lack of solidarity, even within the Latinx community, so there's a lot of work to be done as far as solidarity, building cross collaboration.

When you're invested in talking about how you're different, you start with the position of competition and otherness. And yet we [need to] come together as community. For the longest time, we were always pitted against each other, and we had to stop and find a way forward together. Rather than dividing the same small piece of pie between us, ... let's increase the piece of the pie and create an alliance for a while. This has to be a guiding principle.

**Tuesday, October 29**

## OPENING REMARKS

Yolanda Gorman, Senior Advisor and Chief of Staff to the Chancellor, UCLA

Senior Advisor Gorman started the morning by clarifying the purpose of the retreat:

Today's sessions have five goals.

- Learning from one another and to share what works and perhaps what doesn't work.
- Focusing on how to leverage each campus's unique contributions and approaches to develop a shared vision for University of California as the premier HSRI system in the nation
- Identifying new frameworks, developing programs and interventions, and setting systems in place that can be shared beyond our university to support Latinx students across all of higher education.
- Discussing how to craft a compelling story: How will becoming an HSRI system positively influence not just UC, but the nation and the world.
- Begin mapping a clear path forward for UC to reach systemwide HSRI status

UC President Drake sent a recorded message:

“Hello, and welcome to the final day of this systemwide academic congress and retreat focused on the University of California as an Hispanic-serving research institution. I'm grateful to all those who made this important gathering possible, and I want to thank each of you for bringing your ideas, energy and expertise to this effort.

As you know, at the University of California, five of our nine undergraduate campuses have already achieved Hispanic-serving institution status. The remaining four campuses are on track to achieve this milestone by 2030, and this wouldn't be possible without your commitment to pushing the university forward in serving our Latinx students with equity and excellence.

We're helping to propel the next generation of scholars and to put into practice policies that help Latinx students — and all of our students — excel systemwide. This congress is a fine example of the kind of innovation and inclusiveness that defines the University of California. I appreciate all of you for your deep commitment to student success. and for bringing your best selves to this important work. Thank you, and Fiat Lux.”



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

UC Regent John Pérez

Regent Pérez gave an impassioned speech, offering historical context, current statistics and exhortations for insistence and persistence in the perpetual and ongoing work toward equity.

Some highlights included:

“I’m reminded that the UC system itself came together in many ways thanks to a Latino — Francisco del Valle was a Latino legislator born in Los Angeles four years after California became a state. Del Valle was the principal proponent of establishing an institution of higher education in his hometown of Los Angeles; that campus, of course, evolved into becoming UCLA. So all these years later, what would we say to the assembly member about UC and its mission to serve the people of California, especially people who might look like him.”

Re: the undergraduate pipeline; In California, Latinos make up:

- 55 percent of the ninth-grade cohort
- 53 percent of high school graduates
- 45 percent of high school graduates who complete A-G requirements
- 42 percent of applicants for admission to UC
- 40 percent of students admitted to UC
- 35 percent of UC enrollees
- 32 percent of students who persist one year at UC

“I believe that there are artificial elitist barriers ... in the guise of predictive indicators that we use for admissions, keeping potentially successful Latino students and others out of the University of California ... . We did away with requiring the SAT as a requirement for admissions consideration. We understood that the predictive value of the SAT was overestimated, that in fact, it had ... a higher correlation to socioeconomic status, and in fact that is a huge impediment, the proponents of the SAT discounted the role of test prep and economic barriers that also affected not just Latino students, but working-class students in general, in the ability to navigate that system. ... UC can provide an elite education without being an elitist institution.”

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“I think we have to look at ... UC Merced, our newest campus, which now is second only to Berkeley, our oldest campus, in the proportion of its graduates who go into Ph.D. programs. ... It is also the fastest campus to get to R2 status in the country and well on its way to R1 status. What's the secret sauce?

I have a theory — Merced, which is new and underresourced and has an insufficient number of graduate students, responds by having faculty engage undergraduate students in hands-on research in greater proportion than any other campus, and now a group of students who are disproportionately first-generation, disproportionately Latino, disproportionately Pell Grant recipients are succeeding in getting into Ph.D. programs and thriving because they had an undergraduate experience that deepened their relationship with ... research and opened up a sense of possibility that wouldn't have existed in another environment.

Now, how do campuses that are better-resourced learn from this? How do we engage more undergraduate students in hands-on research, in more direct contact with their faculty? Providing that spark of possibility is really an amazing tool that we underutilize. I believe that adding that as a priority will help in so much of the work that we have to do.”

“We still have challenges of equitable pay for too many of our blue collar workers. We have 250,000 employees at the University of California, half of whom are in jobs that don't require a bachelor's degree. I have proposed — and nobody has taken me up on it — that for the half that are in jobs that don't require a bachelor's degree, we should do two things. One, we should look at being better-paying employers than the market at large, and two, that we should implement parent academies where we help our employees prepare their children to be the next generation of UC students.”

“When I reflect on my impatience, I'm reminded of the legendary civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer. She was ... co-chair of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, which intended to integrate the delegation from the state of Mississippi. There were efforts to thwart that integration, ... and she appeared before a Credentials Committee of the Democratic Party ... with folks like MLK and other key leaders, but she had a realness that cut through everything else, and ... the White House took note. Because they were worried of the pushback of her testimony, President Johnson quickly took to the White House lawn and had an impromptu press conference to draw all the cameras away from Fannie Lou to distract from the message of inclusion, but that made the nightly news recaps focused on Hamer, but I'm also reminded because she was very clear [and direct]. There will always be something to divert our attention from our efforts. You have to help maintain the focus.”

## CLOSING PLENARY

### A shared HSRI vision

Moderator: Delia Saenz, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence and Chief Diversity Officer, UC Merced

Vice Chancellor Saenz started by suggesting a clear, strategic approach:

We must craft a framework with 3 or 4 core dimensions that every campus prioritizes and is committed to pursuing. We cannot settle for independent, campus-specific efforts; these are both valuable and necessary but not sufficient. Imagine, however, if all of us knew the systemwide north star, if we had a framework for operationalizing 3 or 4 priorities, and we activated it across the system. Our accomplishments would be potent, sustainable and transformational.

In many ways, our goal is ACTIVATION. We desire ACTIVATION in the service of being the best, the model, the epitome of excellence and inclusion in our identity as an HSRI.

When I think of ACTIVATION, I also think of three essential A's that help to frame collective action.

#### **The first essential A is Aspirational.**

As we consider our trajectory and our shared efforts, let's be bold. Our collective expertise and creativity is unbounded and it can yield outstanding results for our students, our employees (both faculty and staff) and for our great state.

Servingness, as the central element of HSI cannot be embodied merely by proclamations. Tangible actions and investments are needed. Let's be aspirational about outcomes we seek to achieve and about functional processes needed to achieve them.

#### **The second essential A is Alignment.**

Alignment in our people, policies and practices. Every single person on campus must be aware of our aspiration and understand how their role can contribute to the success of Latinx students, staff and faculty, whether their role involves:

- Keeping facilities functional/clean
- Serving up nourishment
- Delivering instruction
- Providing advice/guidance

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- Hiring new employees
- Getting hired/admitted
- Creating/revising policy

### **The third essential A is Assessment.**

Assessment is continuous and includes multiple metrics from creating a timeline to delineating next steps and/or approving funding allocations, and beyond. We need to have regular report-outs from the Chancellor on down on key metrics. Show me the progress!

Next, some of the UC campuses shared their practices, goals and concerns:

#### UC Berkeley

Although we are not there yet (i.e., at 25 percent for HSI eligibility) with enrollment, we are doing a lot of servingness work at our campus, and some of that includes having a great financial aid and scholarships office. And culturally responsive programming — in Chicana/Latina student development and also the Latina student resource center — including orientation, Chicana/Latina graduation, Dia de los Muertos, etc.

We also talked about the lack in graduate diversity ... Efforts to amend this include an undocumented research cohort, which is a collaboration between the Undocumented Student Program, the Department of Ethnic Studies and the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, as well as the Firebaugh Scholars Program through the Office for Graduate Diversity, where students get to do their own research and are supported in different ways by faculty.

Our school of business has fellows who are working not just with UC Berkeley students, but also some from Cal State East Bay to teach them about applying for an MBA and to provide them with resources to either take the MCAT or GRE.

#### UC Davis

We hosted a Bienvenida on a Saturday afternoon. Traditionally it's mostly student services, all the different clubs and organizations ... But this year, we added a faculty table. We want to connect our Latina faculty and our students, and it was very well received. (There were lots of questions about graduate school.) It was great to have that informal level of engagement, because many of our Latina students have a really hard time getting letters of recommendation when they're applying to graduate school.

We convened a group of our graduate students, so we have a graduate student advisory group to hear about their concerns and what we can do to increase those numbers. And

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part of our overall plan is, can we develop a graduate recruitment strategy?

When we were in graduate school, we knew that the very last week was going to be Diversity Week ... there was no discussion about diversity anywhere until Diversity Week. We cannot no longer function like that; it has got to be integrated into the entire curriculum.

#### UC Irvine

We've been looking at connecting professionals with students — an alliance of professionals, community leaders, education leaders ... ways to connect them in mentorships or networking opportunities with students.

Our Paul Merage School of Business has an Alexa initiative, an annual business summit conference, to get students engaged with the professional community. They have quarterly *cafecitos* and updates throughout the year.

Although we do have parent engagement, [we need] to center parents in a different way. How do we broaden that and create more programming that is parent-centric?

We feel like we need mandates from Office of the President to make sure that all of our campuses are situated the same way. This is a bold initiative, and it's a deserved initiative, but where's the investment coming from? You put money where you think there is value —you measure what you treasure — or on what you think is important, and if it is a systemwide imperative, then ... it gets that level of attention and investment.

#### UC Merced

We have the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center (UROC) — students get paid internships during the summer. We also highlight faculty who get training grants that are specifically focused on underrepresented students. We have STEM resource centers, and students come there for supplemental instruction, for guidance, for career planning, etc. We're trying to do things to just send the message “You belong here. This is your place, and we want you to succeed.”

My division also supports all sorts of employee resource groups, including the staff and faculty of color association we have at UC Merced, a defined mechanism for retention of our top faculty, so as they get offers, and many of them do get poached, but we try to be very effortful and conscientious in retaining them, especially for those faculty who are contributing to student success. We have a lot of stars in terms of the research world, and we value them. But when you combine research excellence and mentoring excellence, it's quite a powerful and potent configuration. So we're interested in keeping these types of faculty.

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We reach out to families, including them in orientation. We have programs specifically for the families and their younger children at orientation. And this past cycle, we brought out a program called TeleLingo, a big bilingual promotion program founded by two Latinas, and the excitement in the young children and the families was just unparalleled.

#### UC Riverside

Our School of Education dean created a junior high school partnership grant and we have elementary school kids coming to Dia de los Muertos festivities, so that they see Riverside as a hospitable and accessible space in the future.

A lot of campuses aren't capturing drop-fail-withdrawal gaps; on our campus, there are wider gaps for Latinx students, especially women, interestingly, and so getting deans to share this data and educate their chairs on the importance of sharing out that data with their faculty would help with retention interventions.

Our School of Education has a new partnership with our HSI advisory committee to analyze issues across the board for further improvements across the campus. As you can imagine, our School of Education feels like it often takes the burden or brunt of the work around servingness for the entire campus. We're talking a lot about different kinds of faculty resistance, and they often will act like they don't understand inequity when we know that they do understand inequity when it applies to themselves and their own salaries. They can be taught to understand inequity as it applies to our students as well.

One of our new faculty is creating a new Ed.D. program, which could be tied to a minority-serving institution initiative where we'll have one faculty representative from each college trained in inclusive pedagogy. And then THEY will be reviewing departmental curricula, and across the three-year cohort model, each of the reps makes recommendations to their departmental undergraduate committees. And then the HSI Advisory Committee and Chicax student programs are in an advisory capacity to those fellows or representatives, so that they can make curricular and pedagogical change improvements in their departments, and then potentially add graduate fellowships the second year ...

#### UC San Diego

In the Raza Resource Centro, we have a classroom, and we encourage faculty to have office hours. We also lead research teams for faculty within the Centro and we work with them to launch our scholars who present at national conferences.

We work with parents in terms of developing their advocacy and their leadership, and



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also for them to be aware of the A-G requirements and the ways in which they can make sure that their scholar is taking all the right classes so that they're eligible to apply to the UC system. We have an orientation in Spanish for Latinx parents—we house the parents and the students, and we orient the parent to help them support their scholar by connecting them to all the right resources on campus.

We have a UC Insights program for high school seniors, working with over 200 high school scholars to help them prepare for the UC application. Sixty percent of the scholars who go through UC Insights end up getting into UC San Diego.

How do we focus on the research component, and in particular, within the context of developing more scholars, working with them intentionally. How can we be more effective in intentionally developing a pipeline to graduate school? One of our work groups will develop this concept of how we can evaluate UC San Diego as an HSR1.

## CLOSING REMARKS

Elizabeth Gonzalez, Director of HSI Initiatives, UCLA

Arnold Sanchez Ordaz, Assistant Director of Educator Programs, UC Office of the President

“Equity in higher education isn't just a moral ideal, it's a strategic imperative. ... To thrive in a society, every member needs access to opportunities for learning, growth and contribution.”

“The HSI community ... draws from its strength — from educators, families, business leaders, policy makers, etc. — and it invests in students, it invests in the prosperity of entire communities.”

“The goals we're building on today ... aren't just aspirations, they're shared commitments, backed by a robust network of advocates and brilliant minds and lots and lots of knowledge and ability.”

## ABOUT THIS EVENT

Nearly 300 distinguished guests from across the university attended this event, about 65 percent in person and 35 percent streaming online.

[Learn more about the event and its organizers.](#) | [Learn more about HSIs.](#)

[Learn more about UC's HSI Initiative](#) or [join UC HSI efforts.](#)

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