

Enrollment Principles to Guide Long-Range Enrollment Planning

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Preamble. The University of California, from its inception, had a responsibility to serve California by enrolling its residents as students. The 1868 Organic Act creating UC stated that the duty of the Regents is to apportion the representation of students according to population so “that all portions of the State shall enjoy equal privilege therein.” The 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education in California and subsequent Regents and state policy are built on a number of principles relevant to developing enrollment plans. Some of those key principles are:

- Differentiation of function among the higher education segments gives UC a particular responsibility for research and advanced graduate and professional education. Much of the success of California higher education is a result of this differentiation whereby each segment is to achieve excellence within its own sphere and costs associated with duplication are reduced. The result is that UC has a particular responsibility for advanced graduate and professional education and the research mission. Inherent in this notion is the concept that a smaller proportion of California undergraduates would be educated at UC, the most expensive segment of public higher education.
- Undergraduate eligibility for a particular segment is clearly defined and access is guaranteed to all eligible students who apply. The Master Plan and [Regents Policy 2102](#) establish that UC shall make eligible California resident students in the top one-eighth of their high school graduating class (as defined by the faculty) as well as community college transfer students who complete specific requirements. It then guarantees a place to all eligible students who apply on-time, though not necessarily at the campus or in the major of first choice.¹
- The state has a responsibility to fund access. The Master Plan is a compact between the state and higher education. It gives the institutions the responsibility for reducing costs and eliminating unnecessary duplication, but the state agreed to adequately fund the enrollment necessary to accommodate all eligible students.²
- The transfer function is essential for the California higher education model to operate efficiently. Since access is limited at UC and CSU (to the top 1/8th and top 1/3rd, respectively), the ability to attend a community college and then complete a baccalaureate degree at UC or CSU is critical for California. UC and CSU need to preserve upper division spaces for CCC transfer students.

¹ “Mindful of its mission as a public institution, the University of California has an historic commitment to provide places within the University for all eligible applicants who are residents of California.” Excerpt from [Regents Policy 2102](#). [Regents Policy 2101](#) states that UC shall “administer admissions policy in such a manner as to admit the largest possible number of qualified students consistent with the maintenance of the quality of instruction.”

² [Section 66202.5](#) of the California Education Code makes clear this state responsibility to fund access: “The State of California reaffirms its historic commitment to ensure adequate resources to support enrollment growth...” and then the section describe the enrollment categories that should be accommodated.

UC needs to have a long-range enrollment plan. The University of California needs to have an explicit long-range enrollment plan that balances its many demands and is consistent with the principles discussed in this document. The President is responsible for approving and articulating any such plan and the Regents need to be kept fully apprised of its details. It should clarify which decisions belong fully to the campuses and what aspects of enrollment are managed centrally either as recommendations or with enforcement mechanisms. Any such plan shall address freshman, transfer, and graduate enrollment numbers, determine conditions for continuation of a referral pool, consider levels of nonresident enrollment, and address financial issues such as funding streams, rebenching, and outreach as they relate to enrollment. Ample consultation and flexible interpretation of targets (e.g., rolling averages) should characterize the process and the final plan.

Principles recommended by the Academic Planning Council. Along with the principles described above, the Academic Planning Council recommends the following principles to guide UC long-range enrollment planning:

1. UC remains committed to offering admission to all eligible California residents at the undergraduate level. UC will seek to continue to adhere to the Master Plan access guarantee and provide space for all eligible resident California freshman and California Community College transfer students. Doing so requires the state to meet its obligations and provide sufficient state funding to UC to support these students. Campuses cannot be obligated to take a growing number of students absent adequate funding from the State.

Operational guidelines:

- Operational and physical capacity needs to be funded and provided.
- Absent funding, enrollment growth needs to be constrained.
- Adequate upper division spaces for CCC transfer students are required. Reaching and maintaining the goal of enrolling one CCC transfer student for every two California resident freshmen (1:2 ratio) accomplishes this.
- Eligibility for freshmen and transfers is defined by the faculty. Eligibility standards need to be adjusted periodically to align with the 12.5 percent target.
- The access guarantee requires a mechanism to (a) identify eligible students who are not offered a place at any of the campuses to which they apply and (b) refer those students to a campus which has available spaces.

2. UC should continue to expand opportunity to populations historically underserved by higher education in California. California's changing demographics make it imperative that UC be accessible to California students that better reflect the characteristics of the state's population by race, ethnicity, gender, geography, and income.

Operational guidelines:

- Admissions policies that broaden participation by underserved groups (e.g. ELC, ETR, comprehensive review).
- Academic preparation, outreach, and recruitment programs, policies, and strategies that diversify the applicant pool need to be pursued.

3. Graduate academic education and graduate professional education are integral parts of UC's mission and excellence. Any enrollment framework needs to strive for an appropriate balance of graduate and undergraduate students. Graduate academic and graduate professional education are core functions of the University. As a public research university dedicated to the creation, advancement, dissemination, and application of new knowledge, graduate academic and graduate professional students are essential to UC achieving excellence in its mission. Graduate academic and graduate professional students undertake vital research and apply that research in efforts to address critical problems facing the state and society. The California economy is dependent both on innovation arising from the research of UC faculty and graduate students and on having a qualified workforce that can operate the high-skill and high-tech industries created by that innovation. UC's graduate academic and graduate professional education programs produce the teachers, artists, thinkers, innovators, engineers, scientists, inventors, doctors, professionals, and leaders of the future. In addition, graduate academic and graduate professional students contribute to the quality of undergraduate education at UC in numerous ways.

Operational guidelines:

- UC needs to assure an adequate proportion of graduate academic/professional students in comparison to undergraduate students.

4. Any UC enrollment strategy needs to be financially sustainable in order to preserve UC's excellence. As a public institution, UC has an obligation to be administratively efficient, to contain costs, and to make best use of the resources it is provided. However, the University's tripartite mission of teaching, research, and public service means that UC cannot take unlimited numbers of students absent financial resources. UC's excellence depends on a careful balance and symbiosis between its teaching responsibilities and its research and service missions. Without consistent, predictable, sustainable, and sufficient resources, enrollment growth will result in a decline in the University's quality and excellence.

5. UC has comparable standards of excellence across its campuses and all campuses participate in meeting UC's overall goals. UC has comparable standards of excellence across its 10 campuses. Even as campuses pursue excellence in different spheres, all campuses are striving for a high level of excellence and meeting the system's high standards. A student's choice of campus to attend should not be hindered by resource allocation formulas that disadvantage one campus compared to another. In addition, all campuses have an obligation to participate in achieving the system's overall goals.

Operational guidelines:

- The state funding per student should not depend on the campus a student attends. Thus, the amount of state General Funds allocated per student should be the same for each type of student across all of the campuses.³ Rebenching and the budget allocation process are methods for implementing this.
- All campuses participate in admitting a fair share of California residents as defined by the President's enrollment plan.
- All campuses implement BOARS⁴ approved admissions processes.

6. Campuses have different academic priorities and goals. Each campus should set and pursue its own strategic academic goals within the larger context of systemwide goals and objectives. Thus, enrollment planning assumes that the detailed academic planning about what kinds of programs and degrees are to be offered occurs at the campus level. The system and the campuses both need the flexibility and the ability to regularly adjust their enrollment plans to adapt to changes in demand forecasts and resources.

Operational guidelines:

- The system long-range enrollment plan does not make decisions about growth in disciplines/subject areas.
- In some cases (usually at the request of state government), the system will create an initiative that does address state or workforce needs in specific areas. However, these initiatives should provide an opportunity for campuses to contribute based on their particular strengths and mix of disciplines and, where necessary, should be accompanied by support for enrollment growth.

³ "Type of student" here refers to the categories used in the rebenching budget allocation process: undergraduate, graduate academic master's, graduate academic doctoral, professional, and health sciences.

⁴ The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools, a committee of the UC Academic Senate.

7. UC needs to enroll qualified students from other states and other nations. Historically, UC has always had highly qualified students from other states and nations for both academic and financial reasons. The increasingly global nature of higher education makes it even more imperative that UC enroll students from outside of California. The demands of graduate education are such that UC seeks the best and brightest students from all over the world in order to ensure that UC remains on the leading edge of new knowledge and innovation. At the undergraduate level, each UC campus maintains its responsibilities to California residents (as described above) while also ensuring that there are sufficient students from other states and other countries consistent with that campus's academic and financial needs.

Operational guidelines:

- Each UC campus, based on their disciplinary mix and campus priorities, needs to set enrollment targets for national and international students which fulfill this principle while remaining consistent with UC's responsibilities to California.
- Undergraduate admissions policies require that nonresident students compare favorably with California residents.

The Academic Planning Council recommends that the above principles guide and inform the development of every UC long-range enrollment plan. All of these principles should be kept in mind simultaneously during the planning process.