
MISSION & VISION

UC ONLINE MISSION & VISION

MISSION

Version I (Spring 2024)

UC Online leads, stewards and facilitates the development, organization, assessment and iteration of online education initiatives and infrastructure spanning the University of California.

Version II (Summer 2024)

UC Online amplifies the educational mission, campus expertise, technology infrastructure, and University of California resources through advocacy, leadership, and strategy.

- We are grounded in campus partnerships and bolstered by UC-wide and external collaborations.
- We accelerate educational innovation, highlight effective pedagogy, and promote the development of exceptional online instruction.
- We ensure accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement of online education through assessment, evaluation and iteration.
- We advance access, equity, and inclusion so that diverse learners can achieve their educational goals.

VISION

UC Online engages with its community to partner in enabling and empowering the University of California to provide the best online education experience in the world.

GOALS

GOALS OVERVIEW

UCOP Strategic Objective	Academic Affairs Goal	UC Online Goal
Expand Opportunities in Learning & Research	Achieve Compact and Presidential Priority Goals for Systemwide Student Success	1) Collaborate with campuses to develop shared working agreements on the requirements and infrastructure for online instruction and degree programs that uphold UC quality standards and comply with regulation and accreditation. 2) Establish a systemwide online education Community of Practice.
	Shape the Academic Workforce of the Future through New Models of Higher Education	3) Collaborate with campuses to assess, amplify, and identify online education efforts that help students achieve their educational goals.
Deliver Operational Service Excellence	Improve Organizational Efficiency Across Academic Affairs	4) Develop and deliver a UC Online annual report to systemwide and campus stakeholders. 5) Review existing UC Online systems and procedures to ensure continuous improvement. 6) Develop and implement a process to evaluate central funding resourcing effectiveness and impact. 7) Prioritize and implement an advocacy plan targeting legislative, fundraising & development, and sustainable growth initiatives.
Strengthen an Inclusive UC Workforce and Community	Cultivate and Retain a Diverse, Talented, and Committed Academic Affairs Workforce	8) Equip, enable, and empower the UC Online unit with the knowledge and tools needed to be successful and satisfied in their job.

Goal 1: Collaborate with campuses to develop shared working agreements on the requirements and infrastructure for online instruction and degree programs that uphold UC quality standards and comply with regulation and accreditation.

Opportunity	UC Online can best align with campus priorities and system goals by serving as a convener/facilitator/partner for practices, policies, regulations and supports to develop/implement/assess online education. At present there is no connection or system support or guidance for campus development; establishing and embedding this work would alleviate staffing and logistical obstacles on campuses and allow for innovation to focus on program development, instruction and student support.
Solution	Convene working group of campus constituents to create several guiding documents for online instruction: common definitions of terminology, agreements on baseline modality parameters, a University of California Online Instruction Bill of Rights, defined expectations and baselines for curriculum, and metrics for measurement and success. This will require partnerships from all campuses.
Benefits	1. Clear definitions and guidance for a key obstacle in our space 2. Collaboration and communication across campuses 3. Understood metrics for measurement and signposts for successful online program development
Strategies	1. Identify constituents to participate in the working group (9/30/24) 2. Convene group for initial drafting & development (12/15/24) 3. Complete initial draft for criteria etc. (3/31/25) 4. Share final draft with constituencies (6/30/25)
Assumptions	1. A majority of campuses will need to actively wish to participate in this work 2. Synergy between administration and Academic Senate on development of goals etc.
Metrics & Targets	1. Percentage of campuses participating in the efforts 2. Compendium of resources developed during the process that will not only inform final documents but provide support for any amendments or additions campuses wish to make 3. Signatories on final document

Goal 2: Establish a complementary systemwide online education group (Community of Practice) that serves to: create a community of experts, accelerate educational innovation, share campus-specific contexts & issues around the system, and promote the development of exceptional online instruction across UC.

Opportunity	The UC System is not positioned as a leader or expert in the field of online education despite numerous faculty, administrators and staff having international expertise and renown for their work in the field. This leads to siloed initiatives that lack buy-in and funding necessary to replicate, meaning efforts to broaden the appeal and meet compact goals fail before they've even begun. Creating a CoP that will not only document these innovations but will connect the innovators is a key aspect of a successful rethinking of the role of online education in the UC system.
Solution	To begin the process of growing the culture, we will establish a Community of Practice (CoP) for interested parties as a place to share, record and develop artifacts. This will require participation from interested members and constituent groups
Benefits	1. Connection to like-minded individuals 2. Centralized resource to serve as hub for potential development of initiatives from the course level all the way to campus-wide projects. 3. Amplification of voices to assist in the development and proliferation of online education
Strategies	1. Assess campus and system needs, working with UC Online and the UC Online Advisory Council (4/30/25) 2. Develop CoP charter, define membership details: meeting cadence, resources, supports & roles (7/31/25) 3. Host inaugural CoP Convening (9/30/25) 4. Launch CoP website & comms plan (12/31/25)
Assumptions	1. Campuses must be interested in supporting this group at many levels: faculty, admin, and support staff participation 2. Participants must be willing to remain positive and focus on growth and development 3. Funding and/or in-kind staffing must be made available to develop direct and auxiliary resources for this program that, at least in the beginning, will primarily have indirect benefits
Metrics & Targets	1. # of participants and the staffing makeup of those participants (faculty, admin, support staff) 2. Website with functionality as an intracommunity resource and external reference for UC innovation 3. Identified synergy between CoP and working group for online degree programs

Goal 3: To advance the quality of online education and improve student outcomes across the system, UC Online will pursue proofs of concept and prototypes of projects to be a national leader. The work will analyze scalability, address sustainability, and distribute & leverage expertise.

Opportunity	The most important bridge for UC Online to build is from thought to action. Recognizing that language from the system regarding the future of online education positions it as ‘the best in the world,’ there will need to be opportunity and resourcing to create such structures. Sandboxes of this size require longitudinal and cross-unit support, and even at smaller systems there are significant bureaucracies created for this level of support. The only entity positioned within the system to help lead/facilitate/develop/assess this work is UC Online. The group did this once before, creating one of the first cross-campus enrollment systems in the nation. It is time to do this again and to sustain both the incubator and the projects incubated.
Solution	We will refashion elements of UC Online to act as a catalyst/incubator for ideas and projects specifically relating to online education. This will require substantial partnership from: system campuses, GUEA, ITS, and other elements of UCOP. Initially this will start with guideline and boundary setting but will result in the development of a pilot program for the next generation of online education within the system.
Benefits	1. Codified partnership around R&D in the online space 2. An identified pilot project to support in development and implementation.
Strategies	1. Canvas campus stakeholders to gauge interest in participation (12/31/24) 2. Facilitate a discussion of existing online education efforts and identify candidates for new or pilot initiatives. (3/31/25) 3. Develop work plan for preliminary pilot (9/30/25) 4. Launch preliminary pilot(s) (6/30/26)
Assumptions	1. Campuses will be willing to partner with the system as well as with one another on this topic 2. All partners are willing to provide in-kind staffing for any work coming from this project 3. Shared governance bodies will need to accept the project and provide support and staffing
Metrics & Targets	1. Codified membership in project 2. Rubric for determining projects for partnership & development 3. Rationale for determination of project chosen 4. Impact on student outcomes, such as on-track/ time to degree

Goal 4: Develop and deliver an annual report that (1.) Articulates UC Online budget, operating model and outcomes, and (2.) Highlights UCOP, systemwide, and campus-level efforts and achievements in online education programming to campus stakeholders and engage in open dialogue to inform future priorities

Opportunity	UC Online has not produced an annual report throughout its decade plus in existence. This has limited opportunity for advocacy, budgeting, and accountability but also makes strategic planning and obstacle recognition difficult. We will develop annual reports to: highlight accomplishments, track projects, build a common understanding of our work for our constituents, and advocate for our role in the core university mission.
Solution	Data collection across IRAP and campuses. The key objectives are to identify topics for a report, determine process and workflow for participation and data collection, and to publish.
Benefits	1. Published and time-stamped record of work for UC Online 2. Increased organization for team 3. Foundational elements for future leaders in UC Online and across the system to reference
Strategies	1. Establish a cyclical annual report timeline (9/30/24) 2. Review existing Annual reports in GUEA and Acad. Affairs. (9/30/24) 3. Define: metrics, roles, and responsibilities for annual report data collection and validation, writing, and compilation (12/31/24) 4. Determine new systems, processes, or data points to facilitate and improve reporting (3/31/25) 5. Develop an internal and external report communication plan (6/30/25)
Assumptions	1. Data identified as essential is available 2. Team members bought into development of project 3. External support for publication & amplification
Metrics & Targets	1. Goals identified within the report 2. Amplification of report in settings external to UC Online (task force, Regents, etc.)

Goal 5: Conduct a review of existing systems and procedures (e.g. CCES, Award Funding, Credit Review) to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with new UC Online mission, vision, goals, and strategic priorities and initiatives.

Opportunity	There have been multiple external audits of UC Online which have found stressors between system goals and organizational priorities or workflows; we need to do an internal version and, keeping in mind the external findings, apply identified interventions to projects as needed.
Solution	We will review our stack of projects and priorities and, from that assessment, reconsider our project list and prioritization based on the data provided and in concert with a recognition of other strategic priorities. This will be almost entirely internal
Benefits	1.Data-informed assessment of historical practices 2.Opportunity to identify and solidify common language internally and externally
Strategies	1. Create an inventory of UC Online systems, programs, and procedures (12/31/24) 2. Determine which systems, programs, and procedures need evaluation (6/30/25) 3. Identify opportunities to leverage systemwide scale in technology, procurement, and other contracts that support online education (9/30/25) 4. Identify external priorities for engagement, for example, NCSARA (9/30/25) 5. Define KPIs, success metrics. (12/31/25)
Assumptions	1. Agreement from team members on metrics for assessment 2. Agreement that findings of internal review will be utilized to rethink existing practice and policy
Metrics & Targets	1. The development of a prioritization rubric that can utilize the strategic plan to create and implement workflows 2. Cost-benefit ratio for projects that accounts for historically intangible cost benefits (education, satisfaction)

AA Goal: Improve Organizational Efficiency Across Academic Affairs

Goal 6: Develop and implement a process to evaluate effectiveness and impact of central funding resourcing for online education.

Opportunity	One of the greatest obstacles facing UC Online is the funding perception that money has not been wisely spent. By reviewing our practices and developing particular agreed-upon metrics for a cost-benefit analysis for programming, resourcing and special projects.
Solution	We will use data to track trends in spending and resourcing and, armed with that information, apply it to both the strategic prioritization as well as the reconsidered prioritizations.
Benefits	1. Published transparency for funding decisions 2. More developed storytelling to relate impact of projects
Strategies	1. Codify UC Online financial principles (9/30/24). 2. Create and assemble a representative task force (10/31/24) 3. Develop and communicate criteria and processes for centralized allocations (3/31/25)
Assumptions	1. Historical data on budgeting can be found and updated 2. Positive approach from campuses so that any obstacles found are recognized as learning from the past and not indicative of a future.
Metrics & Targets	1. Developed data flow to interconnect with prioritization and annual reporting

AA Goal: Improve Organizational Efficiency Across Academic Affairs

Goal 7: Prioritize and implement an advocacy plan targeting legislative, fundraising & development, and sustainable growth initiatives.

Opportunity	Online education has not been brought to the forefront for system conversations around funding, expertise or project development for more than a decade. Identifying a pinpointed approach to how to utilize the resources and artifacts developed by UC Online for further advocacy with particular constituents will help improve the odds to make the goals of these projects into realities.
Solution	We need to determine our audience and go over our information and tailor approaches for consideration with those particular groups. This will require partnership with MarCom and other external relationship people within the system (external affairs, research, SAC)
Benefits	1. Fortified alignment between goals, funding and strategies codified 2. Development of narratives to amplify message and impact 3. Introduction to new audiences or engagement with existing audiences in new ways
Strategies	1. Identify key constituent groups for advocacy campaign (10/31/2024) 2. Source data supporting benefits and effectiveness of online education, student outcomes, and other success stories (1/31/2025) 3. Source and craft stories of impact, testimonials, and impact data (1/31/2025) 4. Develop plan of action for material development in these campaigns (3/31/2025) 5. Provide initial artifacts and documents to support advocacy push for identified constituent groups (6/30/2025)
Assumptions	1. Buy-in and partnership across UCOP 2. Consideration and conversation with constituent groups external to UC but within CA 3. Agreement on the relationship of UC Online goals with systemwide goals and plans
Metrics & Targets	1. Artifacts developed to support advocacy and outreach (web & print articles, video, etc.) 2. Identification of new constituent groups engaged via outreach methods

AA Goal: Improve Organizational Efficiency Across Academic Affairs

Goal 8: Cultivate, retain, and recognize the expertise of its highly talented workforce, ensuring employees have access to the tools, resources, and professional development opportunities to deliver on the mission, vision, and goals of UC Online.

Opportunity	The staff at UC Online have a unique expertise on topics of academic innovation, technology and organization that has provided benefit to the system. Those skills should be harnessed, cultivated, and strengthened via further development.
Solution	Build into the ethos of UC Online a mechanism for continuous professional development and training to support the myriad of changes happening within our field
Benefits	1. Increased knowledge in key innovation sectors 2. Employee satisfaction 3. Ability to pivot and change as needed based on trends and strategies
Strategies	1. Conduct UC Online employee satisfaction survey (11/30/2024). 2. Conduct organizational assessment, including review of culture, structure, leadership, and operations (4/30/2025) 3. Develop professional development plan to upskill/reskill staff as necessary (6/30/25)
Assumptions	1. Financing available to support development
Metrics & Targets	1. Employee satisfaction 2. Increase in certifications and successful PD initiatives

AA Goal: Cultivate and Retain a Diverse, Talented, and Committed Academic Affairs Workforce