Preamble

The School of Social Ecology’s strategic plan supports the UCI campus-wide ten year strategic plan released in February 2016. The School, through initiatives already underway and aspirational endeavors yet to be launched, supports each specific goal identified in the campus plan. Through shared vision, the School and larger campus community are committed to achieving recognition as a globally preeminent institution.

Vision

Our vision is to be one of the very best interdisciplinary schools in the nation and internationally, where the brightest scholars and students study and conduct solutions-focused research on pressing social and environmental problems across diverse cultures and communities.

Mission

Our mission is to produce transformative research addressing real world needs, provide exceptional learning environments for students, and translate our work to serve stakeholders beyond campus. Our three departments emphasize high impact research that strengthens communities and improves human lives regionally, nationally, and globally.
Pillar #1: Growth That Makes a Difference

Campus Goal 1.1: Expand the number and impact of UCI faculty

Maintaining and growing a robust faculty is key to producing world-class scholarship, translating work to serve communities near and far, and providing exceptional and comprehensive education to students. We will hire faculty with outstanding research trajectories, while continuing to build an environment that amplifies scholarly impact and embraces inclusive excellence. The internal goal for Social Ecology is to increase regular rank faculty headcount from 59 in FY2016 to 77 by FY2025 (+31%).

Strategies

- Leverage institutional resources, including the UC Presidential Postdoctoral Scholar program, to recruit extraordinary faculty with diverse backgrounds.
- Acknowledge, reward, and retain our best faculty by providing a strong peer mentoring program, proactively nominating scholars for national and global awards, and offering productivity incentives including additional research funds to recognize exceptional contributions in the areas of service, teaching and research.

Campus Goal 1.2: Increase research expenditures to over $500 million annually

Research funding is a standard measure of scholarly influence and a vital means of supporting high-impact discovery. We will secure additional research dollars in areas tied to human and societal well-being in addition to interdisciplinary team science. The internal goal for Social Ecology is to double research expenditures from $3.4M in FY2015 to $6.8M by FY2025.

Strategies

- Incentivize faculty, through a research development fund that provides short-term support for proposal development by internally funding course releases, pilot studies, and travel to meet with colleagues and agency representatives.
- Reorganize research centers into high research active institutes and affiliated centers with established external funding expectations.
- Review, in conjunction with the Office of Research and Budget Office, overhead distribution models to ensure units receive appropriate overhead return for Co-PIs.
- Explore options for developing an International Institute for Criminology and Prevention Science that will seek out federal funds, foundation funds and partnerships with multilateral development agencies to advance prevention science and related research both nationally and globally.
Campus Goal 1.3: Expand the quality and impact of UCI Health

Public research hospitals are uniquely situated to improve health outcomes in local communities while producing research with global impact. We will collaborate with UCI Health, through research endeavors and new program offerings, to build healthier individuals and stronger communities.

Strategies

- Develop a PhD program in Clinical Psychology and Prevention Science, in collaboration with the UCI School of Medicine, with a focus on translational and prevention science in multicultural settings.
- Seek support for a new UCI clinic facility to serve residents of Orange County and provide training for UCI clinical psychology students in areas of faculty strength including aging, stress and coping, health, and adolescent development.
- Launch the UCI Institute for Interdisciplinary Salivary Bioscience Research. The Institute will serve as a world stage for investigators to meet, discuss, and refine ideas about the role of saliva as a research and diagnostic specimen and open windows of opportunity for researchers across disciplines, including psychology, nursing, preventive medicine, sociology, anthropology, social work, economics, sports medicine, psychiatry, and neuroscience.

Campus Goal 1.4: Create appropriate programs and structures to facilitate interdisciplinary, problem-based scholarship and teaching, especially for convergence science

Addressing complex social, environmental and policy challenges require a multi-faceted disciplinary approach. We will, true to the roots of the School, remain committed to cross-disciplinary teaching and scholarship focused on real world problems and science-driven solutions.

Strategies

- Launch innovative cross-disciplinary degree programs, including a joint Psychology PhD / JD and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) / JD with the School of Law, a MURP / Master of Demographic and Social Analysis program with the School of Social Sciences, and encourage development of concurrent degree programs for the Master of Public Policy program.
- Provide the infrastructure and personnel necessary to transition the Master of Public Policy program to a single administrative home in the School of Social Ecology.
- Hire faculty with interdisciplinary focus and support efforts by faculty, through internally funded initiatives including additional research funds, to collaborate across disciplines and establish UCI’s footprint in convergence science.
Strategies (continued)

- Reframe the Social Ecology Ph.D. to emphasize problem-focused, project-based scholarship that is grounded in real-world problems, including the establishment of a flexible/blended graduate curriculum for professionals pursuing a Ph.D.

Campus Goal 1.5: Develop, support, and promote new comprehensive research initiatives that shed light on social problems and address regional and global grand challenges

Translational research is critical to addressing and finding solutions to the grand challenges facing our regional and global communities. We will continue to support interdisciplinary and transformative research that promotes a fair, just world and enhances human well-being.

Strategies

- Leverage and support Water UCI – a campus-wide initiative that facilitates seamless collaboration across schools, departments, and existing research centers – as a national resource for boundary-spanning research and education in the areas of fundamental and applied water science, management, and policy.

- Partner with and support Blum Center UCI, to enable a new generation of students and researchers to address critical questions about economic development and to devise effective and innovative approaches to alleviating poverty both locally and beyond.

- Develop highly visible, interdisciplinary research endeavors to address critical problems facing society, including the Law Enforcement Research Institute in conjunction with the School of Law, a new campus-wide Center on Children in the Digital Age, the Irvine Laboratory for the Study of Neighborhoods and Crime, and the International Institute for Criminology and Prevention Science.

- Develop 2-3 international research partnerships, in areas of faculty expertise, aligned with regions actively seeking to partner with US universities including Latin America, the Caribbean, and Pacific Rim.

- Partner with the Schools of Engineering, Information & Computer Science, Law and Social Science to develop an Institute for the Study of Cybersecurity.

- House and support the National Registry of Exonerations, a nationally recognized research endeavor providing detailed information on every known exoneration in the United States over the past 25 years.
Campus Goal 1.6: Make pervasive the place of art, culture, creative expression, and humanistic inquiry within our research and education missions

The arts and humanities reinforce and nurture cultures that value discovery, creation, and inclusive excellence. We will encourage and support initiatives by faculty and students to incorporate artistic and humanistic inquiry into their teaching and learning activities.

Strategies

• Support faculty efforts to engage arts and humanities scholars in teaching collaborations aimed at enriching the student learning experience.

• Cultivate student interest in art and cultural events on campus to better inform classroom discussions on issues related to social behavior, crime, and urban planning.

• Develop an arts/research collaboration where local artists partner with researchers to present key research findings through art.

Pillar #2: First in Class

Campus Goal 2.1: Expand the student body and make UCI a first-choice campus for students

Increasing the size of the undergraduate and graduate student body maximizes access to opportunity and broadens community impact. We will grow our student populations at all levels while both refining and augmenting our degree offerings. The internal goal for Social Ecology is to increase total undergraduate enrollment from 2,650 students in Fall 2015 to 3,455 by Fall 2025 (+30%) and to increase total graduate enrollment from 376 in Fall 2015 to 545 by Fall 2025 (+45%).

Strategies

• Introduce contemporary degree programs and learning opportunities for undergraduates including degrees in Environmental Studies and Public Policy, as well as a Social Ecology Global Scholars program.

• Launch an online Masters in Legal and Forensic Psychology program in Fall 2016 and develop a Global MA program in partnership with 1-3 international universities requiring graduate students to reside for at least 1 quarter at a partner university.

• Develop PhD programs in Clinical Psychology and Prevention Science as well as Public Policy.
Campus Goal 2.2: Foster excellence in teaching and learning

Preparing students to make positive contributions to the world can be achieved through teaching excellence and by fostering a life-long commitment to learning. We will provide comprehensive world-class education and programmatic opportunities targeting key indicators for student success.

**Strategies**

- Grow the Dean's Excellence Fund for Undergraduates to support multiple research and community-based opportunities for our students.
- Improve the professional development and career skills of graduate students via pro-seminars, teaching opportunities, and peer mentoring.
- Assess, identify and recognize high quality teaching and ensure 80% of course offerings are led by tenure or tenure-track instructors.
- Explore launching an innovative, one-quarter block instructional program where undergraduates take 3-4 block courses, with 50% or more of their time spent in community projects/agencies under faculty supervision.

Campus Goal 2.3: Utilize modern technological tools to create the most effective learning environments

Dynamic and effective learning environments demand innovation and a willingness to embrace advanced teaching tools. We will rigorously assess, and employ when effective, technological tools to enhance traditional instructional methods.

**Strategies**

- Increase the availability of online and hybrid courses, including introducing in FY2017 a signature course - Global Poverty and Inequality in the 21st Century - made available system-wide to approximately 230,000 UC students.
- Leverage campus flipped classroom instructional space to assess and develop new course pedagogy.
- Utilize next generation educational software by FY2018, including the new second life platform technology VirBELA, in our Introduction to Criminology, Law and Society course.

Strategies (continued)

- Hire a Recruitment and Enrollment Specialist to ensure students experience high caliber graduate cohorts and develop a faculty-led program to recruit outstanding college seniors in Southern California.
Campus Goal 2.4: Integrate student life with educational experiences

The student learning experience spans environments beyond the classroom. We will supplement classroom education through student research and service opportunities that develop critical thinking skills and an ability to work with diverse teams.

**Strategies**

- Continue to provide students with committee-based service opportunities, at both the undergraduate and graduate level, focused on community services activities and building a nationally recognized campus climate welcoming to all students.
- Expand undergraduate research opportunities to supplement classroom learning and to encourage students to pursue graduate study.

Campus Goal 2.5: Ensure that UCI’s educational opportunities are an engine for social mobility, impact and positive innovation

Universities provide access to opportunity and open doors for students from diverse backgrounds. We will build an environment that embraces inclusive excellence and exposes students to contemporary issues of diversity.

**Strategies**

- Continue our tradition of welcoming and serving under-represented minority students. In Fall 2015, Social Ecology enrolled 1226 undergraduate students self-identified as either American Indian / Alaskan Native, Black, or Hispanic, representing over 46% of the undergraduate student population.
- Partner with campus to support initiatives, including the Freshman Edge Program, aimed at improving retention and graduation rates of undergraduate students.
- Identify, assess and incorporate additional predictors of success into PhD application review processes.
- Support ACCESS, Social Ecology’s innovative peer mentoring and retention program created to meet the needs of a diverse undergraduate student population, including first-generation, low-income and international students.
Campus Goal 2.6: Build on the success of UCI’s Campus-wide Honors Program by developing a new honors college

Honors programs offer high achieving and ambitious students a rigorous and rewarding educational experience combining the best qualities of both a liberal arts college and a major research university. We will support the Campus Honors Program (CHP) through curriculum enhancements and by strengthening the connection between CHP and Social Ecology honors students.

Strategies

• Encourage and fund interdisciplinary seminars open to Campus Honors students, including the SE Honors Colloquium Series, co-taught by faculty across departments with the goal of demonstrating firsthand how intellectual traditions and disciplinary perspectives frame and explain social issues.

• Participate in the development and teaching of the new sustainability track in the Campus Honors program.

• Institute a peer-reviewed and faculty-reviewed Honors Journal that publishes manuscripts based on students’ honors theses.

• Identify yearly themes for a new Honors College that are interdisciplinary, include a civic engagement component, and translate academic scholarship to real-world application.

Pillar #3 Great Partners

Campus Goal 3.1: Build an engagement culture

Engaged universities translate research and programmatic activities into positive community change. We will promote collaborations between our academic community and local and global partners to build healthier, just, and sustainable environments.

Strategies

• Continue to reward meaningful community and public engagement by faculty and students through recognition and incentive programs.

• Collaborate with the Academic Senate to develop and implement impact statements that reflect translational and real-world uptake of faculty research and are ultimately considered in the merit and promotion process.

• Work with the Office of Global Engagement to develop and implement a 5-year internationalization plan for the School.
Campus Goal 3.2: Create a powerful Anteater-for-life ethos that promotes ideal and sustained student and alumni participation

Successful universities develop life-long partnerships with their students in a larger community dedicated to learning and innovation. We will build lasting alumni networks through new, mutually beneficial, outreach activities.

**Strategies**

- Support faculty and student efforts to engage global partners in research and service through a Globex Fund to support short-term international travel and collaboration.

- Promote opportunities for alumni to reconnect with the campus, through career panels, mentoring engagements with undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty led seminars.

- Cultivate future alumni participation by providing current students with a strong internal climate that values inclusive excellence, a physical infrastructure that promotes effective learning, and employees committed to offering an excellent student experience.

- Develop a Social Ecology Alumni Study Abroad program and a Social Ecology Global Alumni Forum where alumni interact with current faculty and students around thematic issues relevant to faculty and student research.

Campus Goal 3.3: Become a stronger partner with community organizations

Universities, in particular the students they serve, benefit from strong partnerships with government, nonprofits, and businesses. We will strategically grow our community engagement efforts through dynamic student programs and high-impact research endeavors.

**Strategies**

- Continue expansion of the highly innovative Field Study program, which places over 900 students annually at one of more than 225 approved community partners. The program expanded to community partner sites nationally in FY2015 and internationally in FY2016.

- Implement a community outreach ambassador program for graduate students to serve as speakers for community organizations, including the Oscher Lifelong Learning Institute.

- Expand access to professional networks for graduate students through Distinguished Fellows programs and alumni outreach.
Campus Goal 3.4: Partner with Orange County to develop a national model for how to live responsibly and well in the 21st century

Orange County serves as a model of innovation, an engine for social mobility, and a test bed for sustainable living. We will develop and nurture local partnerships to ensure Orange County remains a vibrant and welcoming community.

**Strategies**

- Support and expand the Metropolitan Futures Initiative, including securing an MFI Endowed Chair, to develop an improved understanding of communities and their potential for integrative and collaborative planning by bringing together interdisciplinary research teams with the insights and techniques of big data research.

- Research and translate, through Water UCI, sustainable local water management policies with applications both nationally and internationally.

- Work, in conjunction with local law enforcement and social agencies, to address the causes, manifestations, and consequences of criminal behavior and better understand the interactions between law and cultural practices within Orange County.

Campus Goal 3.5: More broadly communicate and translate UCI’s discoveries and innovations

The best universities efficiently translate research through visible avenues to affect positive community change. We will, in concert with internal and external stakeholders, support our academic and student communities as they transform research into solutions.

**Strategies**

- Showcase research, with emphasis on insights leading to stronger and healthier communities, through varied media platforms and an improved Social Ecology website.

- Work with all SE faculty to develop 5-minute Ignite Talks to be posted on the SE website that describes the real-world, end-use impact of their research.

- Support faculty travel to high visible conferences and speaking engagements, including TED talks, scholarly associations, universities, and important global events.

- Work with local and state funding agencies to develop an annual Smart Solutions conference focused on translating research into policy and programs to solve urgent social and environmental problems facing Orange County and beyond.
Pillar #4: New Paths for our Brilliant Future

Campus Goal 4.1: Develop a sustainable financial plan

A strong, sustainable financial foundation enables continued excellence in teaching, research and translational efforts to address community challenges. We will continue adapting budget models, leveraging campus resources, and reinvesting entrepreneurial successes to fund our ambitious research and educational goals.

**Strategies**

- Support and grow revenue generating programs, including the online Masters of Advanced Study in Criminology, Law and Society, the Post-Baccalaureate Program in Psychology, and the online Masters in Legal and Forensic Psychology, as well as explore the development of both an MA in Evidence-Based Policy and Practice, and a certificate program for LAPD professionals.

- Compete for campus resources by increasing undergraduate enrollment by 30% over the next ten years and by submitting competitive proposals for campus faculty hiring initiatives.

- Pursue major advancement initiatives and cultivate sustainable external stakeholder engagement through innovative programs such as the Department of Policy, Planning and Design’s Distinguished Fellows program.

Campus Goal 4.2: Make fundraising a central feature of our academic planning and leadership culture

The financial blueprint for successful public research universities is changing and philanthropic support from community partners and alumni is vital for creating sustainable, dynamic environments for our students and researchers to thrive. We will expand the size of our external relations office and further refine and articulate our value proposition. The internal goal for Social Ecology is to double gift and endowment income from $2M in FY2016 to $4M by FY2025.

**Strategies**

- Increase the size of the external relations office to offer enhanced services for both alumni and external stakeholders and to support faculty efforts to engage community partners.

- Pursue naming opportunities for the School and key research projects, including the UCI Institute for Interdisciplinary Biosalivary Science.

- Engage distinguished stakeholders through events including the Global Alumni Forum, partnering with internationally based alumni.
**Campus Goal 4.3: Bolster and position staff to more effectively support the academic mission**

Empowered, engaged staff enhance organizational efficiency, foster a campus environment that welcomes inclusive excellence, and help students and researchers thrive. We will continue evaluating staff workload levels and incentivize the most productive staff to remain at the institution.

**Strategies**

- Implement a merit pay program to reward high performing staff, increase employee engagement, and improve both organizational performance and workforce planning.
- Streamline administrative processes and procedures to allow staff to focus on value added projects and activities.

**Campus Goal 4.4: Expand, build, and maintain an excellent physical infrastructure**

A robust physical infrastructure promotes collaboration, enhances student learning outcomes, and nurtures innovation. We will invest heavily in ensuring space is configured appropriately to maximize use and utility.

**Strategies**

- Improve the efficiency and use of research space by renovating wet laboratory facilities, tying the use of space to funded projects, and promoting the shared use of physical resources.
- Enhance instructional and student space by building a new urban planning design studio, modernizing shared study and meeting space, and renovating seminar and classroom facilities.

**Goal 4.5: Ensure a high-quality, ubiquitous, secure, and robust information technology infrastructure**

Access to a secure and dynamic information technology infrastructure is vital to the mission of discovery and to providing a modern learning environment. We will standardize our computing environment while offering enhanced services to end-users.

**Strategies**

- Launch a dedicated virtual environment, supported by new server capacity, for research computing and storage.
- Internally fund faculty computing initiatives to ensure scholars are regularly supported with new computing equipment.