CSUCI Strategic Directions Framework 2023-25

Draft version 4, September 1, 2023

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Strategic Direction I: Academic & Campus Identity

Leverage an evolving, distinctive campus and academic identity to effectively serve the people, communities, and workforce needs of our region and beyond.

GOAL A: DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY

Embrace and Enhance Our Distinctive Identity

- A1: Develop and implement a Strategic Enrollment Management & Marketing Plan, incorporating the Academic Master Plan and other elements of CSUCI's distinctive identity.
- A2: Highlight and utilize our status as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) to ensure institutional commitment to impactful, student-centered "servingness."
- A3: Evaluate, update as needed (e.g., outmoded language, "multiculturalism") and integrate CSUCI's mission pillars throughout academic and other student-centered programs.
- A4: Implement the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Plan (pp. 4-5), and use it to align values, mission, and organizational behavior.
- A5: Acknowledge, integrate, and maximize the **place-based assets** of our physical campus, including off-site locations – collecting and using stories to celebrate faculty, staff, and student success and to support Enrollment Management & Marketing efforts.

GOAL B: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Investing in Faculty Achievement and Academic Program Continuous Improvement

- B1: Expand academic program offerings through shared governance (e.g., Academic Programs & Planning Committee, APPC, Academic Master Plan, AMP, AVP for Academic Programs).
- B2: Articulate a long-term growth plan that incorporates new academic programs and utilizes targeted, proactive strategies for improving application and yield rates.
- B3: Support and fund **scholar-teachers** to continually enhance the quality of student academic experiences.
- B4: Integrate next generation technological advances into academic programs, ensuring ongoing faculty and staff development in using instructional technologies effectively and innovatively
- B5: Improve and expand post-graduate outcomes by aligning academic programs' continuous improvement efforts by using outcomes data effectively and by accurately communicating and marketing the value of a CSUCI degree.
- B6: Improve the quantity and quality of sponsored projects that advance our regional impact and foster strong community relationships.

GOAL C: STUDENT SUCCESS

Supporting Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation

- C1: Work efficiently and effectively within and across divisions to identify and dismantle administrative and academic barriers to success (e.g., course scheduling practices) for many categories of learner (e.g., undergraduate, credential, graduate, and certificate; **First-Generation** and non-First-Generation; **H**istorically **U**nderrepresented **G**roup**s (HUGS)** and non-HUGS; in-person and virtual; day-time, night-time, and weekend).
- C2: Improve student **retention** and **persistence** rates while eliminating equity gaps through targeted programs.

C3: Invest in and effectively utilize existing and emerging technologies to improve the user experience for prospective, new, and continuing students.
C4: Collect and use data effectively to aid in the creation of tailored, relevant academic experiences and support services for all of our diverse student populations, including undergraduate, graduate, and credential students.
C5: Design, implement, and assess a **Black Student Recruitment, Yield & Retention Plan**.
C6: Expand transfer and commuter students' programmatic and support experiences as an enhanced retention effort.
C7: Increase targeted recruitment and programmatic efforts for Veterans Affairs & Dolphin Guardian Scholars.
C8: Improve enrollment and retention rates by assessing and expanding New Student Onboarding cross-divisional services and operations, ensuring streamlined communication and improved new-student experience.

Strategic Direction II: Student Experience

Strengthen the holistic student experience to enhance students' sense of belonging and affinity to CSUCI.

GOAL D: SENSE OF BELONGING & ENHANCED PROGRAMMING

Supporting Students' Holistic Needs & Connectedness to CSUCI

D1: Ensure continuing development and assessment of the Student Marketing Center, providing opportunities for students to create and manage marketing campaigns and design materials for student-centered programming.
D2: Continue to expand student access to the Basic Needs Program and wellness services (e.g., Counseling & Psychological Services.; Student Health Services; Wellness Promotion & Education; Title IX & Inclusion Office).
D3: Create and expand CSUCI's sponsored competitive **Esports program**.
D4: Implement and assess an **Institutional Programming Collaborative** for cross-divisional, centralized programming.
D5: Provide support for academic programs for students to build a strong sense of connection within the major and to learn general and discipline-specific career readiness skills.
D6: Provide indoor and outdoor physical spaces for building connections and community by students from historically marginalized and underrepresented groups (e.g., student cultural centers; murals).
D7: Create and disseminate a menu of **place-based** experiential learning opportunities available to CSUCI students, using it to promote current student engagement and retention efforts and to market our distinctive identity to prospective students.

Strategic Direction III: Campus Culture

Reinforce and enact the values of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility and create a vibrant and engaging campus culture where students and employees thrive.

GOAL E: CAMPUS CLIMATE

Collecting and using data to understand students' and employees' needs and improve campus climate.

E1: Engage the campus in developing and administering two series of campus climate surveys (CCS), one for employees and one for students, publishing findings to the campus community, utilizing findings to inform action, communicating actions taken, and assessing impact of actions over time.
E2: Create formal opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and administrators to share concerns and needs with campus leaders, suggest strategies for addressing them, and help design, implement, and evaluate approved action plans.

E3: Make meaningful and impactful changes needed to transform our Title IX and other anti-discrimination policies, procedures, infrastructure, culture, and climate, publishing progress toward implementing recommendations, assessing changes made, and communicating results of actions taken.

GOAL F: RACIAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Applying the tools of continuous improvement to disrupt supremacies based on race, sex, sexuality, gender, ability, and religion to advance racial and social justice.

F1: Assess and continue initiatives of the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (IEAP), monitoring for accountability and outcomes, revising as needed to ensure continuous growth in realizing **DEIA values**, and publishing updates to the campus community in each of the six **Inclusive Excellence Action Themes (IEAT)**.

F2: Elevate disability in our DEIA work, promoting campus-wide responsibility for disability awareness and advocacy.

F3: Implement usage of the **Equity Lens Framework (ELF)** and develop a DEIA Dashboard to publish findings and track change over time.

F4: Create and use a rubric as a DEIA lens for developing and assessing policies, enforcement mechanisms, compliance issues, and accountability strategies, revising these as needed to ensure DEIA values are consistently and appropriately embedded.

Strategic Direction IV: Sustainability, Resources, and Growth

Advance campus growth, and manage and enhance campus resources effectively and sustainably to fulfill our mission of being a transformational force for individuals, communities, the region, and state.

GOAL G: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ensuring long-term fiscal health of the University

G1: Strengthen integrated and multi-year fiscal and program planning across all divisions, ensuring budget structures that align with fiscal viability and result in the strategic allocation of resources.

G2: Enhance business acumen across divisions, ensuring that campus policies, guidance, and practices are current and in line with underlying laws and Chancellor's Office Executive Orders – while also promoting internal coherence by building more understanding and coordination across divisions, particularly in pursuit of new partnerships and opportunities.

G3: Develop a CSUCI comprehensive funds dictionary identifying parameters and policies pertaining to use of funds (linked to CSU legal manual, Executive Orders and regulations), and use this set of shared understandings to build out a comprehensive, all-funds budgeting and reporting model.

G4: Leverage the Site Authority as a campus resource.

G5: Re-evaluate the University Auxiliary Services (UAS) model and revise as needed to ensure effectiveness, sustainability, and desirability for internal and external use.

G6: Increase and diversify existing revenue streams beyond general fund and tuition.

GOAL H: STRENGTHEN EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH TO SERVE OUR REGION

Advancing our mission and vision through partnerships

H1: Clarify, amplify, leverage, and support external partnerships as we develop a **"One Health" approach to 2030+**.

H2: Foster opportunities for public/private partnerships.

H3: Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy and structure to effectively increase philanthropic support and external funding.

H4: Launch a campaign leveraging existing philanthropic resources to achieve campus strategic directions.
H5: Create and leverage an updated campus master plan (including regional transportation).

GOAL I: COLLABORATION, OPERATIONAL COHERENCE & EFFICIENCY

Working together with curiosity and care to create systems, structures, and strategies to ensure operational efficiency and sustainability

I1. Use the WSCUC Reaffirmation process through Thematic Pathway Review, with site visit scheduled for April 2024, to deepen intentionality for building a culture of assessment and continuous improvement to encourage individual, unit, divisional, and institutional learning and growth.
I2: Build acumen, capacity, and infrastructure for action planning, compliance, conflict competence, and assessment (e.g., cultural resource management, Title IX).
I3: Achieve a reputation for excellent customer service and operational efficacy to better serve students, employees, community members, and the region, strengthening CSUCI's brand and image, internally and externally, in the process.
I4: Provide purposeful and extended onboarding processes for all new (or new to their position) staff, faculty, and administrators, structured to intentionally increase opportunities for connections within and across divisions; to communicate CSUCI's DEIA values, expectations, initiatives, and accountability efforts; and to support positive morale.
I5: Ensure proper supervisory training for employees with direct reports to provide accountability and support in the development of staff retention strategies, working within CSU Salary Structure and union requirements.
I6: When possible, ensure that campus leaders with accountability for implementing a decision or initiative have timely, meaningful opportunities to help inform &/or shape the work.
I7: Design and implement an effective and equitable hybrid and remote work policy to attract and retain employees.
I8: Promote and support ongoing professional development as central to career progression for staff, ensuring awareness of options and opportunities for advancement.
I9: Implement and evaluate impact of CSUCI's Climate Action Plan.
I10: Ensure ongoing implementation of the campus safety plan and educational opportunities for students, staff, faculty, and administrators to learn about it and how to respond in an emergency.

Glossary of Terms

Strategic Directions Framework Architecture

- **Note relationships** that exist between and among several important planning processes and documents from 2021-23, as follows. At this point at the start of the 2023-24 academic year, only the first, our University mission statement, and the last, our Academic Master Plan, are finalized. Campus conversations and feedback opportunities for the middle three planning processes are planned for Fall 2023.
    - **Mission statement:** This remains unchanged and serves as our highest-level statements about why we exist and what we value.
    - **One Health for 2030+:** This is our strategy, articulated in President Yao's Convocation Address of Fall 2023, for achieving CSUCI's mission in our third decade of existence – a strategy that logically differs from those needed in our first and second decades of being.
    - **Strategic Directions Framework 2023-26:** The Framework identifies the directions, goals, and actions we will be undertaking in just the next three years. These will set us on the path of realizing our One Health for 2030+ strategy.
    - **Brand Foundation:** Our ADV market research and brand foundation document are two Integrated Marketing Communication Plan deliverables already in hand, and the IMCP is an initiative referenced within our Strategic Directions Framework – specifically in relation to web redesign and strategic enrollment management initiatives.
    - **Academic Master Plan:** The AMP is referenced in the Strategic Directions Framework in any initiatives involving prioritizing, implementing, expanding, and evaluating new and/or existing programs.

- **Strategic Directions:** Four new Strategic Directions serve as a bridge connecting our 2018-23 Strategic Initiatives that expired at the end of Spring 2023, our WSCUC accreditation visit in April 2024, and the creation of our next five-year strategic plan which will address the results of that visit.
    - Strategic Direction I: Embrace and enhance our distinctive identity
    - Strategic Direction II: Strengthen the holistic student experience to enhance students' sense of belonging and affinity to CSUCI
    - Strategic Direction III: Reinforce and enact the values of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility and create a vibrant and engaging campus culture where students and employees thrive
    - Strategic Direction IV: Advance campus growth, and manage and enhance campus resources effectively and sustainably to fulfill our mission of being a transformational force for individuals, communities, the region, and state

- **Goals** (A-I) answer the question of how each of the Strategic Directions will be achieved.

- **Actions:** Nine goals are articulated through 49 actions (A1-6, B1-6, C1-8, D1-7, E1-2, F1-4, G1-6, H1-5, and I1-5) that will have leads responsible for moving the actions forward.

- **Action Leads:** Responsible for moving the actions forward, Action Leads will identify metrics for measuring progress and contribute to an ongoing assessment of the Strategic

Directions Framework, utilizing the strategy of ensuring accountability through positive, productive visibility. Status reports will be written each semester by Action Leads from Fall 2023 through Spring 2026 and published to the Strategic Directions Framework 2023-26 website (under development).

Strategic Direction I: Embrace and enhance our distinctive identity

- **Place-based assets:** President Yao introduced several place-based assets in his Convocation Address of August 17, 2023 in introducing his vision for One Health toward 2030+ (see below, in Strategic Direction III) – with these unique place-based assets making experiential education at CSUCI truly distinctive in all of higher education. These include CSUCI's:
    - identity as the ancestral land of the Barbareño Ventureño Band of Chumash Indians and home to sat'wiwa, a Chumash mountain shrine on the CSUCI campus
    - location in the heart of the nation's 11th largest county in crop value
    - interdisciplinary engagement in coastal health and ocean affairs
    - proximity to one of the biggest independent biotech firms in the world
    - status as one of only 11 universities in the country with a research station on National Park Service land, with opportunities for extensive, interdisciplinary engagement by faculty and staff with the Santa Rosa Island Research Station and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
    - serving as the future home for the Santa Barbara Zoo Conservation Center, the first zoo-owned and managed facility accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums on a university campus
    - our proximity to the heart of the nation's entertainment industry – one of the main global hubs for the industry
    - eastern border framed by the Santa Monica Mountains
    - sometimes struggling but always continuing and evolving commitments to interdisciplinarity, multicultural and international perspectives, community engagement and service learning – with each of these pillars given meanings, opportunities, and partnerships unique to our region, in the diverse and closely-woven communities of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties

- **First-Gen:** First-generation college student, defined at CSUCI as any college student who comes from a family in which no parent holds a bachelor's degree. As of Fall 2022, 61% of CSUCI students were First-Gen.

- **HUGS/HURMS:** Historically Underrepresented Groups/Historically Underrepresented Minority Students, including students of color (with special note of the need to disaggregate data not only by race but by ethnicity); students who are Pell-eligible, students who are undocumented (i.e., AB540, DACA, fully undocumented), and in some disciplines (e.g., STEM), students who are underrepresented by sex and/or gender.
    - Bourke (2016) states that members of underrepresented racial groups are not only underrepresented numerically but also systemically through social structures and the ways in which power is situated among groups. This systemic underrepresentation reinforces the need for consideration of invisibility over time and how it continues to impact access and equity issues. (in Longmire-Avital, n.d.)

- **Black Student Recruitment, Yield & Retention Plan:** This comprehensive plan will provide data to describe where we are and what exists in our efforts to recruit, admit, and retain Black students along with how these data are used to inform how we will move forward (e.g., what resources are needed for recruitment and retention; where and how to invest resources). It will also identify specific targets for improvement (e.g., improve yield by x%).

- **Scholar-teacher:** Through this organizing concept, CSUCI commits to advancing academic excellence through support for faculty development and pedagogical expertise in active learning, interdisciplinary- and DEIA-focused classroom and field experiences, community engagement, international learning experiences, and other pedagogical approaches for placing students at the center of the educational experience – CI style. Investment in faculty scholarship and creative activities is an equally essential necessity – both of which tie the reputation of CI and its educational content to professional support for faculty. This organizing concept supports faculty and student success in the classroom, advances student research, engages "big problems" for their learning opportunities and impact (e.g., climate change), and is foundational for undergraduate student success and graduate education.

- **Retention Rate:** The percentage of students who continue to study in the next fall semester are counted in this rate. Retention rates are calculated based on a fall to fall enrollment**.**

- **Persistence Rate:** The percentage of students who return to college in the next fall semester or have earned a degree. It is the sum of the retention and graduation rate.

Strategic Direction II: Strengthen the holistic student experience to enhance students' sense of belonging and affinity to CSUCI

- **E-Sports Program:** Intercollegiate esports, the organized competitive play of computer games, has rapidly grown in popularity over the last decade. Many CSU campuses have initiated esports programs with the support of the CSU chancellor's office. The potential benefits of an active esports program include driving enrollment, making advanced computing resources available to all students for planned local gaming events, and providing support for students in computer game development courses (like those in the Minor in Computer Game Design and Development). Trinity Hall room 1501 has been earmarked for the location of the esports lab in collaboration with multiple campus cross-divisional entities in DSA, BFA, and DUA.

- **Institutional Programming Collaborative:** Co-led by Associated Students & Orientation to serve as a cross-divisional working group to centralize campus programs and events that simultaneously foster collaborative partnerships and sharing of fiscal resources for students. Centralized institutional events and programs are coordinated centrally to prevent overlap and help share opportunities with students.

Strategic Direction III: Reinforce and enact the values of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility and create a vibrant and engaging campus culture where students and employees thrive

- **DEIA:** Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

- **IEAT:** Inclusive Excellence Action Teams met from March-October 2021 to conduct inventories of DEIA activities at CSUCI, identify gaps, and recommend new initiatives for inclusion in the campus's first Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (see IEAP methodology). Within the IEAP website, **IEAT now stands for Inclusive Excellence Action Theme**, of which there are six:
    - Professional and Leadership Development
    - Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of a Diverse Workforce
    - Advancement and Community & Government Relations
    - Campus Climate & Communication
    - Data-Based Decision Making & Planning
    - Student Access & Success

- **Equity Lens Framework (ELF):** a self-assessment instrument created by the President's Advisory Council on Inclusive Excellence designed to help individual units and the campus as a whole to see where and how we are emerging, developing, and transforming through our efforts to walk the DEIA talk

- **One-Health toward 2030+:** One Health for 2030+ is an aspirational and strategic approach to CSUCI's third decade of being. It amplifies and builds on our truly unique sense of place as a Central Coast university that is committed to the environmental, economic, and community wellness of our region. It combines our strengths in providing both liberal arts education and experiential, career preparation while focusing both in very intentional ways on distinctive aspects of our region.

Strategic Direction IV: Advance campus growth, and manage and enhance campus resources effectively and sustainably to fulfill our mission of being a transformational force for individuals, communities, the region, and state

- **Cultural Resource Management Team:** A subcommittee of the Chumash Advisory Council, this is a group that centrally tracks information and provides recommendations to ensure University compliance with relevant cultural heritage laws, regulations, and processes as well as to implement best practices in promoting land stewardship and cultural awareness

Notes on Methodology

CSUCI's Strategic Initiatives 2018-23 expired in May 2023 (see a summary of accomplishments as of June 30, 2023). Initiation of a new five-year strategic plan was not possible during an interim presidency that spanned

the 2021 calendar year. A full-scale strategic planning process was further delayed by successive shocks to the campus in the form of the lingering coronavirus pandemic, significant changes in leadership and other personnel in calendar years 2021 and 2022, severe enrollment decline, and an overall sense of overwhelm and exhaustion across campus (borne out by Fall 2022 campus climate survey data).

To serve the need of replacing expired strategic initiatives in this context, President Yao and his leadership team decided to create a three-year "bridge plan" rather than launch a campuswide five-year strategic planning effort in Fall 2022. This bridge plan would link our 2018-23 Strategic Initiatives with our WSCUC accreditation visit in April 2024, and lead to the creation of our next five-year strategic plan for 2026-31, which will address the results of that visit. Importantly, it would focus on the President's priorities and work underway since January 2021 rather than identify grand new goals. Four new Strategic Initiatives (draft version 1) were drafted by the Chief of Staff Tollefson in Jan-Feb 2023 through identifying, analyzing, and categorizing the many already-underway initiatives deriving from several "planning strategically" efforts dating back to President Yao's interim appointment of Spring 2021. In March 2023, Cabinet members reviewed, critiqued, and revised this draft – adding to it several additional strategies/initiatives not included in the original (linked above). On the second tab of this draft #2, Strategic Initiatives were renamed as Strategic Directions (draft v2) – underscoring through metaphor the importance of having a clear path forward, while at the same time emphasizing the need for flexibility.

We engaged the campus community in a number of ways with Strategic Directions (draft v2) in its earliest days – through presentations to the Academic Senate, Staff Council, Student Government, and campus administrators; through our Strategic Resource Planning Committee, which is our campus wide budget committee; through interactive WASC Accreditation Gallery Tours in late March that engaged students, staff, faculty, and administrators in reviewing, critiquing, and offering suggested revisions and additions; and through our Critical Learning Collectives whose recommendations for improving campus climate were presented to President Yao and his Cabinet in a series of late-Spring meetings – after these groups had spent the year until then studying, making sense of, and ultimately making informed use of campus climate survey data. Gallery Tour feedback and CLC recommendations were incorporated into the Strategic Directions Framework (draft v3).

On August 30, 2023, Chief of Staff Kaia Tollefson engaged all units in the Office of the President in a first division-level, in-depth review of the Strategic Directions Framework (draft v3) for the purpose of refining that draft prior to campus-wide review and critique. The current document, Strategic Directions Framework (draft 4), incorporates that feedback. To finalize, vice presidents are asked to collect and submit feedback from their divisions. That input will be incorporated in Strategic Directions Framework (draft 5) and presented in penultimate-draft form to the campus, with finalization anticipated in mid-October.

These four Strategic Directions serve as a bridge connecting our 2018-23 Strategic Initiatives that expired at the end of last semester, our WSCUC accreditation visit in April 2024, and the creation of our next five-year strategic plan, which will address the results of that visit. By having the Strategic Directions Framework span 2023-26, we will be able to make significant progress on immediately impactful strategies and set ourselves up for utilizing accreditation feedback in the formation of our next five-year plan, for 2026-31.