

UC DAVIS
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Strategic Plan

2013 – 2018

Vision

Eliminating inequities in the schooling and learning opportunities for diverse learners using the power of knowledge and the promise of education

Our Mission

The UC Davis School of Education (SOE) marshals the knowledge and resources of the University of California, the world's pre-eminent public research university, to confront and eliminate inequities among people and communities through the generation of impactful knowledge and the promise of education. We accomplish this by engaging in research and policy analysis that bear on student attainment and success; by preparing and mentoring high quality teachers and educational leaders who serve as advocates for all learners; by forging partnerships and collaborations that make a difference in students' lives today and tomorrow; by broadening definitions of learning and the locations in which it takes place; and by offering interdisciplinary programs that position our graduates to provide leadership and insight into the greatest challenges facing educators in California, in our nation, and around the world.

What Distinguishes Us

We recognize and confront historical and ongoing inequities that result in many students being underserved in our public schools and higher education system. Educational institutions struggle to provide experiences that are rigorous, responsive, and relevant for diverse learners' unique backgrounds. Our faculty's particular expertise in areas of diversity including language, culture, ability/disability, socioeconomic status, gender, and sexual orientation, and our commitment to promoting equity for all learners and families, uniquely position the School of Education to confront these inequities. We do so through engaged research, policy, and practice that encompass the educational challenges of California and the nation. Our faculty recognizes the important educational opportunities that exist in a range of learning environments, and actively engages

and studies those opportunities across a wide variety of both formal and informal settings.

We are steadfast in our commitments to promote equity and excellence in all facets of the University of California's tripartite mission of research, teaching, and service. Beyond this, however, we look for ways to effectively blur the lines between these too often distinct sets of activities. We thereby create new approaches to scholarship, new definitions of the "engaged scholar" and definitions of worthwhile knowledge, and innovative thinking about how best to link theory, policy and practice.

At the School of Education, we also use additional watchwords to characterize the spirit of our academic enterprise and community: "resourceful", "innovative", "self-reflective", and both "forward-looking" and "results-oriented".

The School of Education has realized significant advantages that allow us to realize our vision for the success of all students:

First, UC Davis is among the premier public research universities that, in its everyday actions and values, instantiates the mandate of America's land-grant institutions: openness, accessibility, and teaching and research on society's most pressing issues with direct relevance to the lives of its citizens. While the original challenges for America's educational needs in the 19th century were in agriculture, mining, the mechanical arts, and classical studies, today's societal needs are different. The education of our children through the public education system is surely at the top of that list. In particular, our single most pressing challenge must be to find ways to address the pernicious gaps in achievement and opportunities to learn of so many of our children who live in poverty and/or who come from diverse ethnic and racial communities.

The School of Education, founded in 2002 by act of the Regents of the University of California, was created for the express purpose of finding new ways – grounded in research - of creating high quality, effective teaching and learning environments for our state's most underserved populations. In addition, we were charged with acting "differently" and avoiding "time-honored" approaches that produce "dry" and unusable scholarship, single-focus research that overlooks its broader implications for implementation in real-world contexts, and research and practice that is bounded by disciplinary blinders and the traditional research "territories" staked out by academic departments.

Second, it follows that the School of Education at UC Davis is distinguished by its absence of departments and artificial disciplinary boundaries that inhibit cross-fertilization of ideas and scholarship or ways of informing practice. We are a single School of Education. We believe deeply that new ideas and new ways of thinking about educational issues are discovered by scholars who respect each other's points of view and daily demonstrate their willingness to work together with each other, and with our students.

Faculty, staff, and students in the SOE conduct and disseminate leading-edge research on public education's most intractable problems. Our research will be grounded in practice; and we will work in partnership with complex and diverse schools and communities, inside and outside classrooms, to make immediate impact and establish nationally recognized models of best practices.

Our faculty and professional staff have created a community of common interests, goals, and motivations. Collaborative work on grants is common. Our teacher education and Senate faculty work closely together to provide exemplary experiences for our cohorts of future teachers. Faculty and staff often work together in our research and outreach centers.

There is the excitement of genuine interdisciplinary thinking, teaching, and learning at the School of Education. We engage the full spectrum of research on education in its socio-political, developmental, and economic contexts. Educational thinking to be productive and useful in society must be inherently interdisciplinary. Much happens in our offices and classrooms where new ideas, new ways of thinking about educational issues are discovered by scholars and practitioners who respect one another's points of view and willingness to work together with each other, and with students.

Third, for the SOE, reflection must always be the cornerstone of our success. Reflection on our own practices as a community – and with our partners - must be continuous, must be concerned with trying to understand who we ought to be as a community as times and circumstances change, and must be grounded in the “now” but must always be aspirational as well. We embrace new challenges and eagerly explore new opportunities for us to make a difference in public education and the other educational settings in which children and youth find themselves.

Finally, California is home to the 8th largest economy in the world and is both a national and international trend-setter in culture, technology, and lifestyle. UC Davis is situated 12 miles from the state capital in Sacramento, home to the legislative policy-making apparatus of the State. It is also home to many of the statewide professional organizations or their advocacy, lobbying, or government relations offices. This is particularly true for the education sector.

Many School of Education faculty and staff have professional relationships with these government and policy-oriented individuals, and we enjoy remarkable access and opportunities to provide them with independent, high quality policy-relevant research, programs, training, forums, and advice on key educational policy issues being debated in the state.

Strategic Goals

The School of Education at UC Davis aspires to be recognized among the top tier of the nation's schools/colleges of education that are committed to equity and diversity, as well as the application of research to address public education's most challenging issues. Building on both the history and commitments of UC Davis as a public land-grant institution, we will reach this objective through our focus on four comprehensive strategic goals:

- (1) Creation of a community of scholars and education practitioners that demonstrates through its joint actions a broad-based and continuous commitment to equity and diversity.
- (2) Enhanced capacity for innovative, interdisciplinary and cutting-edge educational research that both focuses on, and yields solutions for, the achievement gaps that reflect inequities in the schooling and learning opportunities of diverse learners.
- (3) Commitment to innovative and second-to-none education programs for our students so that they will develop careers as educators and assume leadership roles in their chosen fields.
- (4) Enhancement of meaningful and fruitful partnerships with leading institutions and individuals who will join and broaden our efforts to produce an equitable, learner- and community-centered education system.

Implementing Our Strategic Goals: A Plan for the School's Next Five Years

1. Creation of a community of scholars and education practitioners that demonstrates through its joint actions a broad-based and continuous commitment to equity and diversity.

Strategy:

We will increase, support, and retain faculty whose primary research focus is on the diverse student populations in California's schools, with the intentional recruitment of scholars of color from those ethnic and linguistic communities, in the following ways:

- Invite and aggressively recruit scholars of color to apply for all new faculty positions
- Include language in all faculty job descriptions that incorporates the vision/mission of the School
- Identify and work to mitigate any barriers that either inhibit faculty of color from applying to the SOE or leading to their success once they are hired

- Maintain ongoing discussions about areas of scholarship that may be attractive to scholars of color; factor these areas into job descriptions whenever feasible

Metric:

We will increase, support, and retain the diversity of our faculty to meet or exceed faculty diversity at our peer institutions.

Strategy:

We will examine our recruitment materials and procedures, admissions criteria, curricula and advising for barriers to student diversity and to develop a concerted effort to recruit and retain a student population that more closely reflects the diversity of California

Metrics:

We will increase the number of student fellowships by an average of 10% annually.

We will increase the number of four-year support packages for Ph.D. students by an average of 10% annually.

We will increase by 10% annually the number of undergraduates in our education minor who apply for post-baccalaureate or graduate study in the SOE.

We will develop a national recruitment plan for our Ph.D. program and increase our non-California students by an average of 10% annually.

We will develop a model student mentoring program involving faculty, CRESS and other professional staff, and current students.

We will increase the diversity of our graduate student programs to by a minimum of 10% annually.

2. Enhanced capacity for innovative, interdisciplinary and cutting-edge educational research that both focuses on, and yields solutions for, the achievement gaps that reflect inequities in the schooling and learning opportunities of diverse learners.

Strategy:

We will enhance the incentives for faculty to obtain extramural grants to support our research in the following ways:

- Revisit the School’s policy on course buyouts while still maintaining our SFR and SCH targets
- Include proposals submitted as well as funded as criteria used in the merit and promotion process
- Provide staff support for large grant proposal preparation that would include help with formatting, citations, and so forth
- Provide grant-writing support/mentorship for faculty with less experience in grant development and submittal
- Foster collaborative grant proposals with other campus units

Metrics:

We will grow our overall extramural research funding by a minimum of 15% per year..

A minimum of 80% of tenure-track faculty will have extramural support for their research during any given three-year period.

We will pursue at least one national training grant and/or Center of Excellence that aligns with our academic and scholarly emphases.

Strategy:

Faculty and professional staff will demonstrate the impact of their work on the field through engaged scholarship.

Metrics:

Annual merit reviews for faculty will include a section on “impact” and be used in merit decisions; criteria for merit and promotion will be updated to reflect additional focus.

We will conduct and publish an annual review of the impact of faculty and student research on issues of equity and diversity.

3. Commitment to innovative and second-to-none education programs for our students so that they will develop careers as educators and assume leadership roles in their chosen fields

Strategy:

We will expand, adapt, and – resources permitting - add new programs to address the emerging needs of diverse learners in the field of education.

Metrics:

Resources permitting we will further develop a new strand for education and neurodevelopmental disorders within our current program emphasis areas.

We will pursue resources that will allow us to add a teaching credential in special education/neurodevelopmental disorders.

We will create an innovative MA program that explicitly addresses the needs of the field and the interests of prospective students.

We will develop, and implement as appropriate, a plan for the uses of technology and online learning in student education and degree programs.

We will examine opportunities/challenges for the SOE to launch self-supporting degree programs (SSDP) in line with new campus policies and procedures.

Strategy:

We will redesign the undergraduate program, including the minor, to foster the knowledge and skills of our undergraduate students to make impacts in society and the field of education.

We will create a formal admissions procedure for students wishing to enter the education minor to allow us to better follow their progress and provide mentoring experiences.

Metric:

A full plan for redesigning the undergraduate curriculum, including the minor, with a timeline for implementation.

4. Enhancement of meaningful and fruitful partnerships with leading institutions and individuals who will join and broaden our efforts to produce an equitable, learner- and community-centered education system

Strategies:

The SOE will seek strategic collaborations with other organizations and individuals on our campus, in our region, nationally and internationally to create an equitable, learner- and community-centered education system that provides college- and career-ready educational opportunities for all students.

To the extent feasible, we will align current and future partnerships to

produce the maximum programmatic impact.

The School of Education will stand out in our community as a responsive, multi-layered organization with the desire and the capacity to respond to the needs of the field using the best of cutting edge research and its applications to practice.

Metrics:

We will identify additional organizations, individuals, and funding sources to pursue our vision.

We will develop further mechanisms to be responsive to the State's needs for high quality, third-party, non-partisan policy research and evaluation studies.

New collaborative opportunities regionally, nationally, and internationally will be reviewed and pursued with faculty and professional staff on a regular basis.

Establish a CRESS Advisory Group to strategically deepen regional alliances and interest in CRESS collaborative projects.

EdForward will bring at least three innovative programs to maturity.