

October 2008

The Undergraduate Student Experience and Satisfaction (USES) Committee reached its final year. Attached is the final progress report that documents the actions of the Steering Committee and records the progress made by the campus community in improving the student experience for UC San Diego students. The final 2008 progress report and the previous two progress reports from 2006 and 2007, as well as the original USES Report, can be found on the Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs home page, vcsa.ucsd.edu.

I encourage members of the campus community to read the progress reports and submit their feedback and suggestions to my office. Comments can also be submitted at the VCSA homepage, vcsa.ucsd.edu

The USES Steering Committee will transition into a permanent ongoing committee under the Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs leadership. The new committee, now called the Committee on Student Life and Engagement, will focus itself on promoting positive change and growth that will enhance the student experience, increase the sense community at UCSD, and build lifelong affinities to the university.

The USES Steering Committee members wish to thank the original members of the USES Committee who undertook the momentous task of examining the student experience in 2005, organizing it into relatable principles, and presenting it to campus leadership. We also thank the committee for laying the groundwork on improving student life in ways that future Tritons will long appreciate.

Sincerely,



Penny Rue,
Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs on behalf of the USES Steering Committee

2007-2008 Undergraduate Student Experience and Satisfaction Steering Committee Progress Report

The Undergraduate Student Experience and Satisfaction (USES) Steering Committee, operating in its third and final year, worked with several Vice Chancellor areas, units and organizations to keep the student experience at the forefront of major campus decisions and initiatives. Meeting monthly, the Steering Committee tracked major projects, programs and initiatives and identified strategic areas in which significant change could be made. The following report captures the progress of the campus in addressing the findings and recommendations in the original USES Report.

USES Report

The USES Committee was charged in 2005 by then Acting Senior Vice Chancellor-Academic Affairs David Miller, Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs Joseph Watson, and Vice Chancellor-External Relations Jim Langley. The committee's main responsibility was "to evaluate the general nature and quality of undergraduate life at UCSD, both within and outside the classroom, and make recommendations on how to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience and student satisfaction." The committee co-chaired by then Sixth College Provost Gabriele Wienhausen and UCSD alumnus Joseph Leventhal, consisted of 16 members including eight students, and representatives from the Alumni Association, Academic Affairs, the Academic Senate and Student Affairs. In September 2005, the committee reported its findings and recommendations in what is now commonly known as the USES Report. This report has served as an important guiding document for understanding and improving the student experience at UC San Diego.

Since 2005 the original three commissioning Vice Chancellors have left their positions. However, the intent and messages of the USES Report have remained a high priority for Chancellor Fox. In the fall of 2007 Chancellor Fox appointed Dr. Penny Rue as Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs with the specific directive of leading the USES initiative. Additionally, new leadership in Student Affairs, External Relations and Academic Affairs have pledged support of the report and are committed to working together in order to strengthen the student experience at UC San Diego to the benefit of the entire campus community.

USES Key Recommendations

- To Address the Need for a Greater Physical, Social, and Emotional Community
- To Build Strong Intellectual and Social Student-Faculty Connections
- To Create a Strong School Identity (Basking in Reflected Glory)

Nine USES Principles

Principle 1: Advancing Education through Curricular and Co-curricular Activities

Principle 2: Supporting the Transition to Adulthood

Principle 3: Valuing Students as Important Members and Stakeholders of the UCSD

Community and Opening Avenues for Ongoing Interaction and Involvement with Alumni

Principle 4: Building Pride through Promotion of the Institution's Accomplishments

Principle 5: Increasing Coordination, Integration, and Communication

Principle 6: Cultivating Community Spirit and Fostering the Roles of On-Campus and Off-Campus Communities

Principle 7: Recognizing the Importance of the Physical Environment of the Campus

Principle 8: Focusing on Student Housing Options That Build Community

Principle 9: Allowing Access to the University and its Neighborhoods

The full USES report may be accessed at <http://studentresearch.ucsd.edu/satisfaction/>

2007-2008 USES Steering Committee Approach

The Steering Committee created a small subcommittee to go through each of the 162 USES recommendations listed in the Report in order to identify areas where significant progress had been made and areas that were deemed essential in receiving the continued attention of the campus. This approach provided the Steering Committee with a more focused plan and allowed members to target specific campus units and leaders to assist in making change.

The subcommittee reviewed and ranked each recommendation for importance and feasibility. Recommendations rising to the top of the list had to consist of actions that would meaningfully impact the UCSD experience for large segments of the student community and were in some capacity considered feasible, given specific constraints, such as financial resources and environmental limitations. The subcommittee was careful to select recommendations addressing each of the nine principles. Although each recommendation had its merits and reasons for being included in the USES report, the subcommittee identified 38 recommendations out of the 162 it felt were the most promising and vital for improving the student experience at UCSD.

To develop an even more focused approach, the Steering Committee took the list of the most actionable and influential recommendations identified by the subcommittee and placed them in highest priority by principle. Although some of these recommendations are very specific and give suggestions for implementation, the Steering Committee chose to utilize the spirit of the recommendation and look for additional ways to address the concern with various approaches. Below, sorted by principle, is the USES Steering Committee's interpretation of some of the most relevant recommendations, a general description of why the recommendation was chosen, and how it is being implemented.

Principle 1

Articulated in Principle 1, strengthening community among faculty and students is a significant premise in the USES Report. Increased interactions with faculty on academic-related topics within and outside the classroom, or the general involvement and participation in events that makeup a college experience, Principle 1 recommends a variety of actions that promote community with faculty by suggesting more visibility, accessibility, and engagement in the student experience.

- Increase promotion of freshman seminars as an integral part of the first-year experience during orientation and throughout student's first year; open up seminars to transfer students.

To date there are now 160 freshman seminars and 40 Senior Seminars. Transfer students can enroll in Senior seminars.

- Top leadership needs to express the expectation that faculty at UCSD is to get involved in the student experience.

Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs, Penny Rue will speak with new faculty at Faculty Orientation about the undergraduate student experience.

Principle 3

Recognizing the connection between students satisfied with their college experience and future relationship as alumni, the Steering Committee felt it important to continue its focus on alumni.

- UCSD should make it a priority to include alumni in the University, attempting to have as many permanent members of the UCSD community as possible.

In addition to this approach, the Steering Committee is also looking to Alumni Relations to begin the alumni relationship with current students, versus waiting for students to graduate. Two new student leadership programs designed to increase alumni involvement are the Order of the Tritons and SAGA Scholars. The Alumni Association has also become key partners in large student events such as, New Student Convocation, Family Weekend, Senior Week, and All Campus Graduation.

Principle 4

Principle 4 of the USES Report provides several recommendations and opportunities for the campus to increase pride and identity through traditions. The Steering Committee selected this particular recommendation because it suggested improvement for existing traditions and to create new ones.

- Enhance existing traditions and campus-wide events, as well as develop new ones. Promote them broadly to the campus community.

Convocation has been in existence at UCSD for three years. The 2008 Convocation is expected to be the largest convocation to date. It will begin with each college walking onto RIMAC Field with college banners. Following Convocation will be a first dinner for all new students on RIMAC field. This year to unite all Welcome Week events, core values were identified and a comprehensive Web site was created to welcome returning and new students. Homecoming has traditionally been an event that existed for UCSD Athletic teams. This year with support from the Associated Students and the Alumni Association, Homecoming will include more campus participation. The Loft, located in Price Center East features weekly performances for students that can be enjoyed in a lounge environment with food and beverages.

Principle 5

A customizable central online events calendar for the entire UCSD community to utilize was recommended twice in the USES Report. Recognizing its significance as a community building tool, the Steering Committee felt it important to keep this recommendation as a high priority.

- Create a central, online campus-wide event calendar and create a consolidated marketing approach for the campus.

In 2007 Vice Chancellors Relyea and Rue charged an Event Calendaring Workgroup to form recommendations and an action plan on how to provide the campus community with a simple, user-friendly, searchable, and maintainable event calendaring solution. The work group submitted a final report to the Vice Chancellors, and review of implementation is underway. This initiative will be ongoing until a suitable online calendar is in place.

Principle 6

Principle 6 addresses the physical environment and infrastructure of the campus as an opportunity to develop a greater sense of community. Access to campus, housing, and central “downtown” area that serves as a college town were the types of recommendations suggested in the USES Report. The Steering Committee recognized that campus agreed, and had already begun to create these types of environments, such as the Price Center Expansion and North Campus Housing. For this marked progress and ongoing campus development, the following recommendations were selected.

- Increase the number of shuttle buses during peak times. Expand shuttle services: Expand shuttle system operating time when late-night campus events take place.

This recommendation is closely related to Principle 9, which addresses parking. The campus is currently looking at shuttle ridership and high peak usage times. To alleviate strains on the campus’ shuttle route, Parking and Transportation services is working with MTS to coordinate service on the campus and nearby communities.

- Expand on campus housing options.

In 2008 the campus broke ground for the North Campus Housing, Phase 1 project (1010 beds), which will accommodate transfer students. In addition, planning for three other undergraduate housing projects advanced: Muir College Apartments (275 beds); North Campus, Phase 2 (750 Beds); and Revelle College Apartments (510 Beds). Progress toward reaching a four-year housing guarantee is key to improving the student experience and must be kept as a top priority.

- Create physical space that supports and enhances campus community.

The Price Center Expansion and Downtown Initiative contribute to creating a “College Village” on campus. The design and services of Price Center East bring important community organizations such as, the Cross-Cultural Center, Associated Students, Center for Student Involvement, and Alumni Association under one roof in a student-centered structure, where students can meet and connect with one another. Diverse dining and entertainment options, commuter lounge, study rooms, and computers have provided a space where students can linger and make use of the comfortable and functional furniture and business services, such as the Post Office, between classes and co-curricular activities. Coupled with improvements to Lyman Lane, the newly constructed Student Services Center that features additional meeting rooms and retail space, and with the installation of the Triton Statue and Triton Steps, a downtown has been created in the center of campus that captures the essence of the college village recommendation.

Principle 9

This particular recommendation was included in the original USES Report and selected by the Steering Committee based on the overall concern that the campus remains accessible for students who commute daily and return to campus for evening activities and programs. Additionally campus visitors, vendors, and alumni who return to campus need convenient access to reach their destination and participate in the array of lectures, concerts, meetings, and activities that take place on campus. Parking is a concern that impacts students and the larger campus community, for this reason it was selected as a priority recommendation.

- Advance financially feasible alternative transportation programs and construct new parking facilities so that appropriate access to campus activities is ensured in a manner that is consistent with UC San Diego's environmental sustainability objectives.

Several options to ensure access were examined by the Transportation Policy Committee, including constructing a new parking facility in the center of campus; however, due to the need for parking to be a self-supporting activity, there was weak student support to build an additional parking structure near the center of campus, since that would increase parking permit rates. UCSD Parking and Transportation Services (TPS) staff are looking into parking and transportation alternatives that are financially feasible and consistent with UC San Diego's environmental sustainability objectives. Work on this effort will be ongoing and will be consultative with the student population. In addition, TPS has taken action to increase the amount of parking available in the evening hours in the University Center area of campus through reallocation of existing spaces, especially in the Gilman Parking Structure.

Future Planned Initiatives:

The Steering Committee looks forward to future programs, events, and initiatives that will continue to strengthen the community and student experience. A few of these activities include:

- The campus' first collective Family Weekend taking place in October 2008
- A creative campaign that utilizes the new campus messaging platform, *Local Impact, National Influence and Global Research* will be launched in 2008. Student feedback has been instrumental in the process.
- The campus' 50th Anniversary will occur in 2010. Planning will start in the 2008-09 academic year and will include student input and participation.
- Smaller scale student assessment initiatives that survey students on specific topics and issues will be launched in 2009. These smaller assessments are meant to collect immediate data so faculty, staff, administrators, and others can work faster to address specific areas.

Future Direction of the USES Steering Committee

The USES Steering Committee has completed its original three year charge and strongly agrees that the work needed to make significant change in the student experience must be ongoing. Beginning with the 2008-09 academic year, the Steering Committee will transition into the Committee on Student Life and Engagement (CSLE) and will keep the student experience at the forefront of campus development. It will assist with making connections across campus that result in partnerships aligned to improve the student experience both within and outside the classroom. Its

membership will consist of students, faculty, and administrators. The committee will meet regularly, a minimum of twice a quarter and more if needed for specific initiatives or projects. It will update the Chancellor and the campus on progress.

Although the currency of the USES Report and its identified issues may be questioned from year to year, the USES Report serves as a resource for campus leaders to look back to the student voice captured in the report to understand the desire and need to make UCSD a more welcoming and connecting university and will thus be utilized by the new committee. Data captured in the 2008 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) will continue to provide information on how UC San Diego students experience a range of services and perceive community on the campus. This combined with smaller targeted student surveys will help guide campus leadership in addressing the needs of students. If engagement should wane, the committee will direct individuals to review the original USES Report and encourage their involvement in contributing to the student experience.

Finally, the Committee on Student Life and Engagement will meet with new senior leadership to raise their awareness about the UCSD student experience and how they can contribute. They will also solicit input from students throughout the year and encourage their engagement and leadership in creating new traditions that strengthen the campus community.

Comprehensive list of 2008 Progress

- **Senior Week** – A first time initiative coordinated by students and Student Affairs, Senior Week provided a menu of options for seniors to participate in before becoming alumni. Planning is underway to continue in 2009.
- **All Campus Graduation Celebration** – Student initiated and student driven with support from University Communications and Public Relations, this event brought all six colleges and graduate students together for a less formal, yet celebratory evening. Planning is underway to continue for 2009.
- **Outstanding Senior Awards and Outstanding Graduate Student Awards** – A component of the All Campus Graduation Celebration, the Outstanding Senior and Graduate Student Awards looked at the total contributions students have made to the campus to enhance the student experience.
- **Price Center Expansion** - Over 175,000 square feet were added to the Price Center. Students now have the opportunity to connect with other students and faculty in the new food court area, study lounges, meeting rooms, and event spaces.
- **Student Center Renovation** – An alternative to the Price Center, the Student Center is the campus' original student meet-up place. An expansion of retail space, computer-study lounges, and a modernization of the exterior were completed in the spring. A block party marked the completion of the project and opening of the renovated facility.
- **Groundbreaking North Campus Housing** – Providing transfer students an opportunity for on-campus living is a critical element in strengthening the student experience. Slated to open in Fall 2009, North Campus Housing will have 1010 beds for transfer students.
- **Groundbreaking RIMAC Annex** – Adding more community, study, and retail space, this addition will sustain and invigorate community in north campus, especially for the transfer students moving into North Campus Housing, current students living in Eleanor Roosevelt College, and all students utilizing RIMAC.

- **ucsd.edu Web Remodel** – The new campus Web site was launched in October 2007 and reflects the campus’ new message platform of Local Impact, National Influence, Global Reach.
- **Traditions Retreat** – A group of 50 students, alumni, and USES Steering Committee members, met for a day to examine UC San Diego traditions and to assess what makes a tradition and learn how it is sustained. Students were quick to see the potential and ability in themselves to create meaningful and lasting UC San Diego traditions.
- **160 Freshman and 40 Senior Seminars** – A significant jump from 2005, small seminars provide students the opportunity to work more closely with their peers and faculty members on a specialized focused topic.
- **Faculty Advisors for Student Organizations** – Of the more than 400 student organizations, 146 have advisors that are either faculty or community members. The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) continues to encourage student organizations to solicit faculty advisors as a way to work with faculty in a co-curricular experience.
- **Commuter Student Services (CSC) Improvements** – Recently relocated to level one of Price Center East, the new CSC space is conveniently located near the shuttle stop and includes a social lounge, All Campus Transfer Association and All Campus Commuter Board offices, vending machines, dining table, kitchenette, rental search computers, and multiple posting areas. Beginning September 25, the commuter area will be open 24 hours. The Online Housing Database is also being improved and is currently in a beta testing mode. The new off-campus housing Web site will be more user-friendly and will be refreshed with new listings and guidance for renting an off-campus apartment.
- **Welcome Convocation & Dinner** – Now in its third year, New Student Convocation has become a campus tradition that incorporates faculty, students, administrators, and alumni. New components adding ritual and community have been added. This year new students will walk with their six colleges to convocation and will share their “first college meal” together on RIMAC field.
- **Student Affairs and Alumni Relations Partnerships** – Understanding that today’s student experience impacts the alumni relationship, leadership in Student Affairs and Alumni Affairs have committed to partnering to strengthen the student experience. Collaborations include Senior Week, Outstanding Senior and Graduate Student Awards, Convocation, and Family Weekend.
- **Campus Calendar Workgroup** - A workgroup charged by the TritonLink Executive Committee Co-Chairs, Vice Chancellors Rue and Relyea is exploring ways to improve the usability and functionality of the Campus Events Calendar.
- **SPACES Referendum** – In winter 2008, students passed a referendum to fund the Student Promoted Access Center for Education and Service and is a central resource for student initiated access and retention projects.
- **Overnight Experience** – This year select admitted students were invited to participate in an overnight experience before Admit Day. Coordinated among Admissions, the Colleges, and Student Initiated Access Programs and Services (SIAPS) the program is expanding in 2009.
- **Housing Initiatives** – In addition to North Campus Housing, the Muir and Revelle infill projects will result in a total of 780 new beds. Phase II of North Campus Housing, scheduled to break ground in Fall 2009, will offer an additional 750 beds to transfer students. The completion date is Fall 2011. The Muir and Revelle infill projects will also begin in Fall 2009 and be completed in Fall 2011.

- **Triton Statue and Triton Steps** - The Triton Statue, created by alumni sculptor Manuelita Brown will be installed and unveiled to the campus community in Fall 2008. The Triton Sculpture will sit atop the Triton Steps and will serve as reminder of our campus identity and heritage to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and proximity to the Pacific.

Members of the 2008 USES Steering Committee

Steven Adler, Provost, Warren College

Armin Afsahi, Assistant Vice Chancellor-Alumni Relations

Donna Bean, Vice President Student Life, Associated Students

Cynthia Davalos, Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs

Dan Donoghue, Vice Chair, Academic Senate

Mike Hirshman, AS Representative

Aaron Parker, GSA Representative

Penny Rue, Vice Chancellor-Student Affairs (Chair)

Barbara Sawrey, Associate Vice Chancellor-Undergraduate Education

Stacie Spector, Associate Vice Chancellor-University Communications & Public Affairs

Jeremy Song, AS Representative

Jeff Steindorf, Associate Vice Chancellor-Campus Planning