



School of Medicine
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Riverside, CA, 92521

School of Medicine

March 8th, 2021

To: Jason Stajich, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

From: Declan McCole, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, UCR School of Medicine

Subject: SOM FEC Response to the Draft Strategic Plan – “Future Fluent”

Dear Jason,

The SOM Faculty Executive Committee is grateful to the committee for their efforts in creating a draft strategic plan. We were pleased to see that the weaknesses in UCR infrastructure for supporting larger research grants was acknowledged and that efforts (unspecified) will be made to rectify this. However, there are substantial concerns with this draft. The document is vague and contains too much ‘corporate-speak’ that sound pretty but doesn’t really offer any clarity. The document as a whole does not make clear what it hopes to achieve and how to achieve it as it lacks specifics regarding implementation and financial support for different goals. Given the decentralized budget model, any strategic plan will require greater input and ‘buy-in’ from various schools and units. If the document is an aspirational one and thus intentionally leaves out specifics of how various goals will be reached, then it should make that abundantly clear on page 1.

While the plan emphasizes that UCR will support research in all areas, it also emphasizes certain areas of prioritization to exploit perceived key strengths. The statement (page 18) that budget priorities will be aligned with the strategic plan likely renders these competing research goals incompatible. There is a danger that research on campus will become: i) too applied to align with 4 designated priority areas, and ii) this will lead to hemorrhage of researchers, and iii) lack of recruitment in other fields that do not directly align with the 4 research priority areas. This will reduce the intellectual and disciplinary diversity of the campus. This may also reduce innovation by constraining the faculty to predetermined areas.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Declan McCole".

Declan F. McCole, Ph.D.
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee
School of Medicine