

## Undergraduate Education

# New Resources for Faculty & Investments in Student Success

An update on activities from the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

### Classroom Improvements

In collaboration with the university registrar and the academic senate, we have created a plan for high-priority classroom improvements to invest \$2 million over the next three years for enhancements to our general assignment classrooms. Among the improvements you'll see are wireless mics in 40 classrooms with seats for 50+ students each, upgrades to lighting, new wireless connectivity, instructors' tables, new seating, improved media centers, and renovations in Veihmeyer and Peter Rock Hall. This plan was informed by the senate's Instructional Space Advisory Subcommittee and Administrative Classroom Committee's survey. With a response rate above 70%, the survey allowed us to see where funding would make the largest impact on your teaching.

### Enhancing Academic Advising

Our advisers at UC Davis are tremendously dedicated and skilled. To better support their ongoing training and improve coordination across colleges, departments and student affairs units, the Council of Associate Deans has recommended a new position: Director of Academic Advising. The new director will be hired this fall and will work with us in Undergraduate Education, in partnership with the colleges and co-curricular units. This recommendation emerged from the blue ribbon committee on the student experience, and we are excited to see it happening quickly.

### Investments in Online Learning

**Continued funding for Provost Hybrid Course Awards (PHCA).** The provost will fund a third round of this competition, and we anticipate making 7-8 awards to develop hybrid learning in UC Davis courses. The PHCA offers

support for faculty in the form of course buyouts, graduate student assistants or researchers, instructional design from CETL/ATS, and a workshop series on how flipped, or technology-enhanced, classes can improve the teaching and learning experience. The program has produced courses offered in spring 2013 and nine new courses to be offered during the coming academic year.

**Exploring the Future of Online Learning.** Online learning plays an increasingly significant role in higher education, and presents both opportunities and challenges. In June, the provost hosted an Online Learning Retreat to explore the current climate at UC Davis and discuss our status, goals, plans, and concerns. The report is currently with the academic senate and we look forward to its circulation among faculty, and partnering with faculty to determine where our next investments should be made.

### Additional Staff in the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The CETL has hired a third faculty developer, Cara Harwood, to allow the center to extend its services to more faculty and instructors. The focus of this position is working with faculty and TAs to increase and diversify teaching using technological tools, and will have significant impact on the university's commitment to active learning through "blended," hybrid, and online teaching methods. Cara's presence, along with current developers Mikaela Huntzinger and Rosemary Capps, will increase our capacity to assist faculty with continued improvements in their classroom approaches.

**Assessment Support** – We also welcomed Allison Cantwell, a PhD in sociology and former analyst in the assessment office at UC Riverside, as a faculty director for assessment. Allison will work with Kara Moloney to support faculty in conducting research into their teaching practice and its impact and help programs develop and implement program learning outcomes.

## Additional Leadership Positions in UE

**Associate Vice Provost for Honors** – The University Honors Program (UHP) provides an intellectual home to many of our top students. With new AVP and Director Ari Kelman, we are beginning a joint senate-administrative review of UHP and planning improvements to this important program to meet student needs. This fall we launched a faculty mentorship program for freshmen Regents Scholars.

**Undergraduate Research Center** – we have appointed our first faculty director of the URC, Angelique Louie. Dr. Louie is already at work identifying strategies to develop and enhance faculty mentorship for undergraduates, and work closely with the academic senate.

## Academic Programming and Support for ESL and International Students

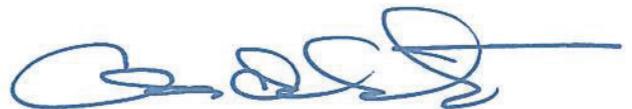
In spring 2013, I convened an interdepartmental working group to assess the status of ESL education and plan for future needs in light of significant growth in the international student population. While ESL has long benefited from the expertise of the linguistics department, the group concurred that ESL education is a multifaceted campus good best met by coordinating expertise from several departments and divisions to ensure that students develop writing, speaking and listening skills needed to succeed.

With the provost's support, UE and its campus partners have identified a new strategy which draws on strengths of various departments and a centralized administrative home. The restructured, cooperative academic program will enhance ESL support for all UC Davis students with new summer and GE initiatives, enhanced academic advising, and improved testing. Under the new structure, the following changes have been put into place:

- ESL will be administered through Undergraduate Education rather than a single academic department. We are hiring an academic coordinator to work in with our faculty and units.
- The required three-course ESL writing series has moved from the linguistics department to the University Writing Program (UWP). UWP is undertaking research to improve testing and placement procedures and update curriculum. Speaking and listening classes will continue to be offered by linguistics, as will ESL instructor training, in planning with Graduate Studies.
- This fall and winter we are piloting enhanced GE courses which offer faculty support to conceptualize a large lecture as serving domestic and international students. ESL students are offered an optional two-unit section where instructors trained in ESL pedagogy work in small groups to review lecture content and improve students' listening and speaking skills.
- Dedicated Academic Advising: We have also, for the first time, hired advisors within each college to support first-year international students as they make the adjustment to the US and UC Davis.
- With University Extension we piloted Summer Start, a six-week intensive academic, language and orientation program for incoming international students. Targeted to freshmen with ESL placements, the first cohort is on campus this fall. listening and speaking skills.

If you have any questions about these new developments, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Best wishes,



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