



Toward 2030+ Strategic Planning

President Richard Yao

Fall 2024

CI for 2030+

Cal State Channel Islands is launching our next strategic planning effort this semester, with the goal of completion in April 2025. This will be a challenging endeavor, to be sure. Campus conversations at numerous levels, around strategic planning have been going on since mid-2021, as detailed in the following sections. The process has been one that allowed various opportunities for consultation, input and feedback. All of this work culminating in our way forward will be inspiring and rewarding, too; the more we use this planning year to join our energies, talents, and persistence in common cause—envisioning and achieving CI’s enormous potential for serving regional needs.

What our current enrollment deficit makes clear is that we must create this strategic plan with resolute focus on short-term pragmatism coupled with an aspirational, inspirational, and actionable long-term vision for the future we can help our region and our University to achieve. In the context of current realities, necessity will truly be the parent of our re-invention. Our CI for 2030+ plan will therefore be conceived as a ten-year effort, designed to prioritize CI’s most urgent needs as our work for the immediate future (i.e., enrollment growth, financial sustainability), while we concurrently create pathways for enacting intermediate and longer-term goals in later years (e.g., those that informed the [President’s Select Committee Report](#) of February 2024, still malleable at this time). A Strategic Planning Steering Committee, currently under formation, will be led by Interim Provost Lavariega Monforti, Vice President for Student Affairs Ford Turnbow, and Dean Andrzejewski. The Steering Committee will be working to engage the campus community over the coming months to identify and recommend a finalized set of goals for the next decade, accompanied by a tiered timeline and immediate-, intermediate-, and long-term action plans for achieving them.

A Timeline of Activity: Building Toward CI for 2030+

Although April 2025 may strike those new to last year’s “One Health/CI for 2030+” conversations as an overly ambitious goal for completing a 10-year strategic plan, where we are now in launching this plan has been more than two years in the making. While the extensive forums for input and discussion may, at times, demand substantial time and attention from staff and faculty, the intentional efforts to involve the whole campus have informed the creation of a staggered approach to addressing immediate needs and building towards a 10-year vision of One Health. What follows is a summary of

steps taken and knowledge gained since 2022, and the campus feedback sought and implemented along the way. This foundational work positions us well to make data-informed decisions in the coming months about what must be prioritized and what cannot be included in our immediate-, intermediate-, and long-term planning for CI's next decade.

Spring-Summer 2022: [ADV Brand Market Research](#)

In the Spring and Summer of 2022, CI completed the initial phases of our Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Plan. These were designed to allow us to better understand and articulate our academic and institutional identity, the distinctive features of a CI education, and how we serve our region through our [post-graduate outcomes](#). We contracted with ADV Market Research & Consulting, a firm that conducted brand market research by collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data from a variety of internal and external campus stakeholders. Their key findings include the following:

- The majority of high school counselors were not able to assess CSUCI on several outcomes, including academic-related qualities.
- Only 15% of high school counselors indicated that they knew CSUCI “extremely well.”
- Student life was mentioned as an opportunity for improvement for both residential and commuter students – i.e., it is not solely an issue among commuter students who often feel less connected to campus life than residential students.
- Faculty and staff tend to be more critical of CSUCI than other stakeholders. This is uncommon in ADV's experience.
- Current students and alumni agree that they would like to see CSUCI improve its reputation for affordability, student life, and professional preparation. Faculty and staff, on the other hand, want CSUCI to have a stronger reputation on academic quality and campus facilities. Faculty and staff also want to see CSUCI have a stronger reputation for professional preparation.
- Alumni are most likely to recommend CSUCI.
- An impressive 87% of students would choose CSUCI again if given the chance. This is among the best results ADV has ever seen for this question and speaks to a high level of satisfaction and pride among CSUCI students.

Not surprisingly, ADV recommendations indicated that as a 20-year-old institution, “CSUCI has only started to develop a clear and powerful brand,” and much work needs to be done in relation to the long-term strategic success of the University. One of their most powerful findings was that CI should extend “far beyond the current brand introduction where you define yourself as student centered, innovative and creative – little in the research we have just completed would hint at the latter two, and student centered is superfluous as every college of university exists for that very reason.”

ADV's synthesis of our current identity is that CI is a “fine, affordable, and convenient university for students who want a supportive and welcoming environment.” Obviously, these are not positions of strength; our ability to demonstrate and communicate strong and clear academic outcomes and success will make a significant difference in establishing a stronger brand identity. ADV data indicate

that “focusing on outcomes/success and its supporting attributes and actions is needed to become the appropriate top-of-mind associations with the University.” In addition, “between lack of awareness about this success from external audiences and internal both, nothing is more important to prove. And you may well have a powerful story to tell about life after CSUCI, but even stakeholders don’t know and/or believe this.”

Spring 2023: [Strategic Directions Bridge Plan](#)

[CSUCI’s Strategic Initiatives 2018-23](#) expired in May 2023. Given that a WSCUC re-accreditation visit was scheduled for Spring 2024, the development of a new strategic plan prior to receiving WSCUC feedback would have been premature. Therefore, in Fall 2022, my leadership team conceptualized a short-term “bridge plan” with the intention of using it to bridge our 2018-23 Strategic Initiatives with the WSCUC accreditation visit in April 2024, leading up to the creation of our next full strategic plan in 2024-25.

Importantly, the Strategic Directions Bridge Plan was intended to focus on priorities and work underway since January 2021 rather than to identify aspirational new goals. My team and I proceeded to engage the campus community in a number of ways with this plan in its earliest days – through presentations to the Academic Senate, CI Staff Council, Student Government, and campus administrators; through the Strategic Resource Planning Committee; through interactive WSCUC Accreditation Gallery Tours that engaged students, staff, faculty, and administrators in reviewing, critiquing, and offering suggested revisions and additions; and through Critical Learning Collectives whose [recommendations](#) for improving campus climate were presented to my leadership team and me in a series of late-Spring 2023 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 in the final version of the [Strategic Directions Bridge Plan](#).

Summer-Fall 2023: One Health Concept Paper and President’s Select Committee

Campus identity work since Spring 2022 deeply informed my reflections throughout the 2022-23 academic year, culminating in a [One Health Concept Paper](#) of Summer 2023 which focused on embracing and enhancing CI’s truly distinctive identity. I first shared these ideas with the campus community in my [Convocation Address of Fall 2023](#) (pp. 5-7). In brief, this vision for CI’s next decade (and hopefully beyond) is connected to a global movement called “One Health.” This movement supports the idea that the health and wellbeing of everyone and everything are interconnected—that is, that humans (i.e., communities and individuals), the environment (i.e., plants, animals, and the planet), and the economy thrive together or not at all. My vision is for CI to be an anchor for helping to actualize this idea in the region we serve.

The One Health Concept Paper of Summer 2023 identified four strategies for achieving this vision:

1. Leading Through Experiential Academic Programs (LEAP)
2. Providing a State-of-the-Art Learner User Experience (LUX)
3. Serving from the Peak of the P-20 Ecosystem (APEX)

4. Faculty as Scholars and Teachers (FAST)

It also identified two lenses through which to interpret, operationalize, and assess those strategies:

1. **Regional, Outside-In Perspective:** An outside-in perspective explicitly values community engagement and acknowledges CSUCI's primary responsibility to understanding and providing what the public needs from us – rather than what the campus has to offer them. This perspective requires engagement with and reflection from those external to campus, including prospective students and their families, regional partners in government, non-profits, industry, and the broader community. An outside-in approach supports place-based learning, community-based research, and program “co-creation” opportunities with community partners.
2. **Servingness:** Borrowed from Excelencia, this interpretative lens acknowledges our core values of diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility and our HSI status. “Servingness” is an example of an outside-in perspective in that CSUCI's DEIA work is focused on serving both those who enter our community and being aware of and working to serve those who do not. In this way, the servingness lens unites our mission to core value commitments.

In Fall 2023, I appointed 25 members (15 faculty, 7 administrators, 3 staff) to a [President's Select Committee](#) which was charged with reviewing, critiquing, and improving upon my One Health Concept Paper of Summer 2023. Five teams were formed to flesh out the five main sections of that draft: (1) One Health, (2) LEAP, (3) LUX, (4) APEX, and (5) FAST. These teams met through the end of the Fall 2023 semester, and their work informed the President's Select Committee Report which was shared with the campus community in February 2024.

Spring 2024: President's Select Committee Report and Campus Engagement

I shared the [President's Select Committee Report](#) with the campus community in February 2024. My leadership team and I then implemented a number of strategies to engage the broader campus community. We shared the meaning of a One Health vision for CI and the region we serve in a webinar on March 5 (see [Slides](#), [Video](#), [Summary Paper](#)). The next day, in an in-person campus forum entitled [Crafting Our Vision: CSUCI for 2030+](#), we briefly reviewed the meaning of the One Health vision; celebrated the John Spoor Broome Library's publication of the [Chumash Dictionary](#) and heard Matthew Vestuto, Chair of the Barbareño Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, reflect on how that project was a manifestation of a One Health vision; brainstormed [CI's values, purposes, and impact](#) and [potential vision statements](#); and held small group discussions on the following questions: (1) How can we translate One Health into an understandable, tangible, and actionable vision? (2) How do the two lenses (i.e., underlying principles) of regional, outside-in perspective-taking and servingness inform our vision for 2030+? (3) What will our vision statement be?

On March 11, I summarized this work in a [campus global email](#), inviting all to attend a follow-up campus forum on March 13. On April 16, the [campus community was invited](#) to a campus wide experience with artificial intelligence that was designed to: (1) answer questions about the meaning of One Health and the strategies identified for pursuing it, using results of Fall 2023-Spring 2024 research and conversations to inform AI-generated responses; (2) collect examples that showcase existing curricular and co-curricular activities and experiences related to the One Health theme and strategies, and (3) provide a shared experience in the use of AI – a technology that invites both excitement and trepidation, which our students need us to understand and lead in its responsible use. [Vision Chat](#) is the name we gave to this first-of-its-kind campus-wide experience with AI (see [summary of results](#)). According to Lokesh Dani, a developer of ProtoBot, the private AI platform we utilized, while the

number of individuals participating in VisionChat was low, the length of engagement by individual users was high.

Though I had determined that all of this visioning work was most appropriately done with faculty, staff, and administrators prior to engaging students more broadly, we presented the work to [Student Government](#), including invitation to participation in the Vision Chat, in late April.

Spring 2024: WSCUC Site Visit

In the midst of all of the above, CI was pursuing reaffirmation of WSCUC accreditation through the [Thematic Pathways to Reaffirmation](#) process. The [Reaffirmation Steering Committee](#) and its working groups had been working throughout the 2022-23 academic year and through Summer and Fall 2023 on CI's [Institutional Report](#), which was submitted in February 2024. In July 2024, CI was reaffirmed for accreditation for an additional eight years via [WSCUC action letter](#). The six commendations and six recommendations noted in that action letter are:

Commendations	Recommendations
1. Undertaking initial steps to transition campus culture toward integrated planning processes aligned with the maturation of the institution.	1. Continue to prioritize multi-year financial and enrollment planning towards achieving institutional sustainability.
2. Using and sharing data transparently to inform decision making.	2. Develop and communicate priorities, timelines, and structures in support of academic program development that consider enrollment and budget contingencies.
3. Valuing and deepening connections with surrounding communities, particularly related to enrollment and student outcomes.	3. Develop a plan for institutionalizing student success interventions according to data on effectiveness and potential for scaling.
4. Demonstrating commitment to and shared engagement in DEIA efforts throughout the campus.	4. Advance the integration of holistic student success approaches into academic departments and faculty development, as well as across student and academic affairs.
5. Exemplifying passion for and commitment to the core mission of serving students.	5. Fully execute the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (IEAP) ensuring that efforts are connected in a strategic manner.
6. Building centralized resources and infrastructure to support faculty and staff engagement in meaningful learning outcomes assessment.	6. Accelerate development and implementation of an integrated general education program assessment process.

This feedback will inform our answers, via CI for 2030+, to a question referenced earlier: What must be prioritized and what cannot be included in our immediate, intermediate-, and long-term planning for CI's next decade?

Summer 2024: CI for 2030+ Strategic Action Team

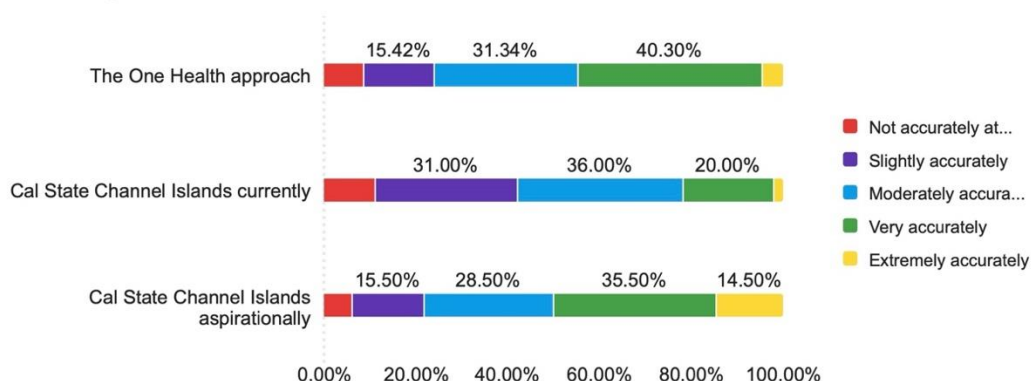
A significant topic of discussion among members of the President's Select Committee in Fall 2023 was our campus's lack of a unifying vision statement – a clear statement of the future we are striving to achieve together. Without such a statement, communication with internal and external constituent groups alike lacks coherence and a clear sense of our purpose. Therefore, in June 2024, I convened a group to synthesize feedback gathered through the many avenues detailed in the form of a draft vision statement for 2030+ (see below). Members of this team were Interim Provost, Dr. Jessica Lavariega

Monforti; Vice President for University Advancement, Richard LeRoy; Chief of Staff, Dr. Kaia Tollefson; Chief Information Officer & Associate Vice President for Information Technology Services, Dr. Jim August; President's Faculty Fellow, Dr. Ekin Pehlivan; and Assistant Vice President for Digital Learning, Dr. Lorna Gonzalez.

- Draft Vision Statement: CSU Channel Islands is a transformational, educational force whose diverse graduates emerge as leaders, driving human, economic, and environmental well-being and justice in the Central Coast and beyond.
- Draft Vision Realization Statement: CSU Channel Islands will have achieved its vision when our university is widely recognized as a transformative destination for students to gain the interdisciplinary knowledge, experiential learning, and regional engagement needed to partner across sectors to address complex, emerging challenges and opportunities related to the health and well-being of people, environments, and economies in our communities.

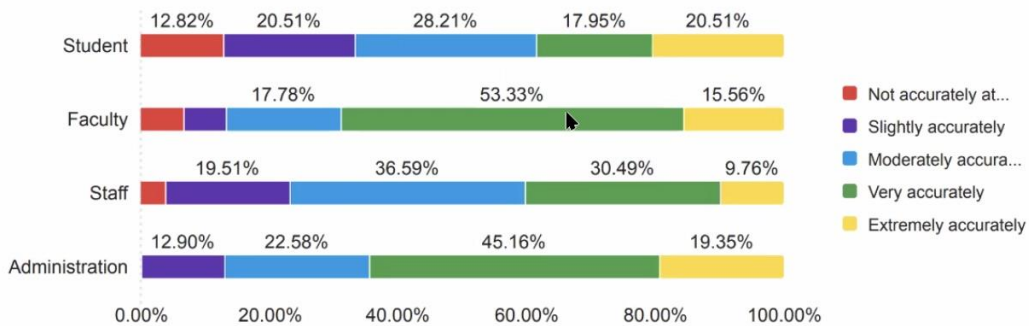
In my [early October message](#) to the campus community, I shared the draft vision statement and requested feedback in response via a short Qualtrics survey. Survey responses indicate general agreement with the One Health vision, with about 75% of 201 respondents to the following question indicating anywhere from moderate to extreme support of it: “Based on the information provided, to what extent would you say the **vision statement** accurately represents Cal State Channel Islands **currently?**”.

Vision buy in - Overall



Responses to the question “Based on the information provided, to what extent would you say the **vision statement** accurately represents Cal State Channel Islands **aspirationally?**” are also of particular interest. Given that a vision statement is intended to communicate what is intended to eventually be true but is not yet, this survey result reveals that significant agreement exists across all constituent groups that the draft vision statement captures something worth aspiring toward.

Fit with aspirations



That said, [responses to the open-ended question](#) clearly indicate that agreement with the One Health vision is not universal and that room for improving the draft vision statement exists. While full agreement with the overall vision cannot be our goal, I greatly value the feedback offered in response to the draft vision and agree that improvement can be made. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will study the survey results, come to agreement on a second draft vision statement, and share it with the campus community in the coming weeks.

Next Steps

I recognize the value and limitations of strategies identified in 2023-24 for realizing our vision for 2030+, revised as they were through improvements made by the President’s Select Committee last year. While “Serving from the Peak of the P-20 Ecosystem (APEX)” became “Connecting with Our Regional Educational Ecosystem (COREe),” and “Faculty as Scholars and Teachers (FAST)” became “Faculty as Artists, Scholars, and Teachers (FaAST),” gaps remain.

For example, I continue to believe that “Providing a State-of-the-Art Learner User Experience (LUX)” via upgrading the instructional technologies available to our faculty and students is vital to their current and future success; however, there are additional aspects of the university experience for students, employees, and visitors alike that are not captured in the current DAA- and IT-focused iteration of that goal. I have encouraged the 2030+ Strategic Planning Leadership Team to broaden their focus from “state-of-the-art learner user experience” to something akin to “the university experience.” This shift will allow for a continuing focus on Instructional Technologies within the Division of Academic Affairs while also making room for other essential areas of concern, such as accessibility, campus climate, “customer service,” and operational effectiveness. This broader scope will require focus and effort from every division.

While we have course-corrected from the hubris of “Serving from the Peak of the P20 Ecosystem (APEX)” to “Connecting with Our Regional Educational Ecosystem (CORE),” a tremendous amount of work toward achieving this goal remains. CI’s institutional outlook and viability depend to a significant degree upon our relationships with local high school and community college counselors, our academic reputation with P12 schools and community colleges, our capacity to support our P12 partners in communicating the rationale for, and importance of, A-G requirements, and our ability to translate all of this into the creation of manageable, seamless transitions across the P12, community

college, and CI experiences. We have willing partners in the P12 and community college systems. We need a coordinated, strategic outreach and engagement plan, designed to demonstrate the extraordinary opportunities that our current and prospective students have for engaging with our faculty, our academic programs, our campus staff and support systems, and our approach to realizing racial and social justice.

Regarding the timelines and action plans for operationalizing the goals of “Leading through Experiential Academic Programs (LEAP)” and “Faculty as Artists, Scholars, and Teachers (FaAST),” I look forward to reviewing the Strategic Planning Steering Committee’s work, as I fully support both goals. Each address and build our reputation for academic excellence, the core function of our University.

It will be the responsibility of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee to recommend a vision statement and finalized goals for our 2030+ plan. Once our vision and goals are finalized: (1) workgroups for each goal will be created; (2) metrics for each strategic goal will be identified and vetted through the Strategic Planning Committee and the campus community; and (3) action plans will be created by the Strategic Planning Committee and vetted through outreach to the campus community.

I look forward to the work ahead, with all of you, in envisioning and achieving CI’s enormous potential in serving the needs of our region.

Sincerely,

Richard Yao, Ph.D.
President