

Toward 2010:

Division must lead UC push for public service

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Over the next 15 years the University of California will be confronted with challenges unlike any that it has faced before. Perhaps the most daunting of these will appear in the form of sharp increases in students eligible for UC admission. Beginning in 1997, the population of college-age, eligible students will begin to grow rapidly. That growth will continue and, under terms of the California Master Plan for Higher Education, it is estimated that by the year 2010 the University will be faced with enrollments nearly 80,000 higher than now, an increase of almost 70%. These figures are particularly disquieting given the apparent inability of the state of California to provide the financial resources necessary to accommodate such increases.

Unfortunately, the University's shortcomings and failures frequently receive more attention than its successes. This erodes the public support which is urgently required if the University is to meet increasing needs for teaching, research and public service. Many citizens are questioning the capacity and willingness of the University to help California solve its problems. To retain public confidence, UC must redouble efforts to respond to the problems besetting California.

The University has initiated a long-term planning effort to develop strategies to meet the challenges of a future very different from the past. Although planning is still in the early stages, a set of principles intended to govern the development of a long-term strategy has been formulated and is now being discussed by members of the University community. One striking feature of these governing principles is the emphasis that they place on a renewed commitment to the University's public service mission. Thus, for example, the principles envision the need for additional public service efforts by individual faculty and also the need for public service efforts by groups of faculty — be they departments, research units or informal collaborations. The principles recognize that appropriate incentives must be built into the faculty tenure and promotion process to foster such efforts.

The Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources has a long and distinguished history of public service to the citizens of California. Division research and extension have contributed significantly to the state's preeminence in agriculture. California farmers outproduce every state in the nation, providing more than half of the country's fruits, nuts and vegetables on just 3% of its farmland. Farming and related activities now generate about 10% of the gross state product. In the natural resources area, more than 840 Division scientists are actively involved in some aspect of research and extension that will help Californians balance multiple land uses; improve the condition of farmland, rangeland and forests; protect endangered species; reduce

environmental pollution; and manage water quality and supply.

The rest of the University will look to the Division to provide leadership in demonstrating a renewed commitment to public service. However, the Division itself faces challenges if it is to maintain its tradition of outstanding public service. New information will be required if California agriculture is to remain profitable in the face of constraints on the way in which it uses land, air and water resources. New and potentially devastating pests will pose urgent challenges. The intensifying pressures of population growth on the state's resource base will demand the development of superior technologies and management strategies if the state is to continue to enjoy the natural resources with which it has been blessed. Finally, the Division's human and community development programs will have to be delivered more efficiently to serve a growing and diversifying population.

To meet these challenges the Division is engaged in a long-run planning process of its own. Although this process is further advanced than the companion University-wide process, much remains to be done. It is clear that if the Division is to maintain its well-deserved reputation for excellence in teaching, research and public service, it will have to behave differently in the future:

- It will have to work more *effectively* to meet the challenges of the future with fewer resources. This may mean consolidating campus resources to eliminate unnecessary duplication and realigning some Cooperative Extension offices to provide multiple county services.
- It will have to work more *flexibly* to address rapidly evolving problems without making unrealistic demands for additional fiscal support. This may mean developing more Divisionwide competitive grants programs to meet critical statewide needs.
- It will have to work more *collaboratively* with constituents, with other segments of the University and with new partners from the public and private sectors if it is to leverage scientific and outreach resources to address tomorrow's needs. This may mean more active pursuit of private as well as public funding.

Public service will always be at the heart of the Division's mission. But the Division must renew its own commitment to serve the citizens of California and do it in ways that are well adapted to rapid change both inside and outside the University. This will mean abandoning some old and comfortable ways, taking new risks and making new sacrifices. It will not be easy but it will surely be worth the effort, both for the Division and for California.