To Executive Vice Chancellors and Provosts
From: UC Office of the President

Re: The UC Online Instruction Pilot Project
Request for Letters of Intent from UC Academic Senate faculty

[Further information: http://onlineeducation.universityofcalifornia.edu]

October 29, 2010

1. Summary
This announcement is being circulated to invite brief (3-5 pages) Letters of Intent (LOI) from UC Academic Senate faculty who are interested in participating in a Pilot Project to evaluate the effectiveness of online instruction in delivering a UC-quality undergraduate education. LOI are particularly sought from faculty who are passionate about teaching and learning and curious about the roles technology may play in support.

In their LOI faculty will identify the undergraduate course or courses they would like to develop as part of the Project and provide some additional information, e.g. about themselves and their approach to determining content scope and learning objectives. In this request, online refers to courses that are largely or wholly online.

Letters of Intent will be reviewed by a small interdisciplinary review committee that will make recommendations to the Provost about which LOI to move forward into the Project’s Planning Phase (October 2010 – March 2011).

In that Planning Phase, selected faculty will bring their creativity and their expertise as subject specialists and as teachers to bear in thinking about the online learning environment and the course design principles that will be used for the Project. They will also advise in the development of an evaluation framework that will be used to assess the Project’s progress and the efficacy of online instruction in UC’s undergraduate curricula.

Faculty will work as part of a team that includes experts in online instruction and course design and in the assessment of learning effectiveness. They will participate in two, one-day workshops and up to eight hours of conference calls between January and March 2011. Travel and accommodation costs associated with workshop attendance will be reimbursed and honoraria of up to $1,000 per LOI will be paid in support of faculty participation.

In March 2011, faculty who participate in the Planning Phase will be invited to submit full proposals to continue into the Project’s Implementation Phase (April 2011 – December 2012). In the Implementation Phase, faculty will develop their online course or courses, deliver them to undergraduates in UC credit bearing classes, and assess their effectiveness.

Up to 25 full proposals will be selected for the Implementation Phase, contingent upon the availability of Project funds and the quality of proposals received. Given the exploratory
nature of the Project, faculty who are selected to develop courses within this context will receive up to $30,000 per course (possibly more for multi-term sequences and/or particularly innovative proposals). These funds may be used by faculty for course release, summer salary, or as contribution to research or lab funds. Additional funds will be available for educational technology and other support staff who will work closely with faculty to build their online courses and to support their delivery and evaluation in instruction. The total amount of any single award is expected to vary to take into account, for example, multi-term course sequences, course complexity, the availability of local technology and other expert support, etc.

Depending on the progress of the Pilot and the funding available to it, additional faculty participation may be sought later in 2011 and/or in 2012. Any further invitation to participate would be issued as a request for additional Letters of Intent.

Detailed information about the Pilot Project is available in Appendix A.

2. Applicant Eligibility
Letters of Intent must name UC Senate faculty as their principal investigator (PI) but may include participation from others, inside or outside UC.

3. Information Required in Letters of Intent
Letters of Intent must be submitted by 12:00 P.M. (Pacific Time) on December 13, 2010 to the electronic application system proposalCENTRAL (http://proposalcentral.altum.com/). LOI submission instructions and the LOI narrative template are available online through proposalCENTRAL.

The LOI should include the following information, which will be entered in proposalCENTRAL:

i. Name, departmental, and institutional (campus) affiliation of Principal Investigator(s) and other faculty involved in the project.

ii. What course(s) will be developed? If the course(s) are currently offered through traditional methods, list the course number(s). Note if the course(s) are currently offered online and, hence, whether this submittal is for an update or modification.

iii. Through what academic department(s) could the course(s) be offered to enrolled students? If course(s) are intended to be offered on two or more campuses (including intersegmental courses), specify campus(es) as well as academic department(s).

iv. If possible, estimate the number of students that may be expected to enroll in the course(s) the first time it is offered. Estimates may be expressed as a range (e.g. 50-75).

v. Please describe your general availability to participate in conference calls (e.g. Mondays and Wednesdays after 3pm) and pick the two workshops you would
want to attend if selected to participate in the Planning Phase. Workshop dates are listed in Appendix A, section 7.

vi. Letter(s) of support. To illustrate support from your department and your campus, please supply a letter of endorsement signed by your campus Provost. For multi-campus LOI, please provide letters from each participant’s campus Provost. Please upload the letter(s) in proposalCENTRAL following the LOI submission instructions.

vii. A narrative describing the following key aspects of your proposal. The narrative must be submitted using the LOI narrative template, which is available on proposalCENTRAL. The LOI narrative should be brief, up to 5 pages in length, and include the following information, which also appears on the template:

- What strategies will be used to ensure that the course(s) cover the core materials and the learning outcomes that would be expected at UC campuses and at other leading, selective research universities?

- What, if any, aspects of the course(s) will entail face-to-face contact between students or between students and instructors?

- Explain your interest in the project and any experience(s) you have had in relevant areas (e.g. with innovative instructional methods and approaches, learning outcomes assessment, educational technologies, etc.).

4. Submission and Review Process
Letters of Intent are due by **12:00 P.M. (Pacific Time) on December 13, 2010** and must be submitted via the electronic application system proposalCENTRAL. LOI submission instructions and the LOI narrative template are available online through proposalCENTRAL (http://proposalcentral.altum.com/).

LOI will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary committee comprising UC faculty appointed by the Academic Senate. The committee will make recommendations to the Provost, who will determine selected LOI no later than January 17, 2011.

5. Review and Selection Criteria
In reviewing Letters of Intent, the following will be considered:

- Faculty campus location. The Project encourages participation from across UC wherever there is an interest in exploring the possible effectiveness of online education. Preference may be given to LOI that represent cross-campus collaborations.

- Course(s) proposed. The Project seeks to evaluate the efficacy of online instruction in a variety of disciplines. Preference will be given to high-enrollment, lower-division
courses (see Appendix A, Table 1), especially where they include the discrete units that, taken together, complete an introductory sequence (e.g. US History 1, 2, and 3).

- How much of the course(s) will be accessible online – that is, not requiring face-to-face contact between students or between students and instructors? Fully online courses are strongly preferred. Hybrid courses which are largely online may be supported, but will require a strong rationale and teaching support model.

- Course content and learning outcomes. A strong preference will be given to courses that incorporate the core content and learning objectives that would be expected at highly selective universities and colleges. The strategies that faculty propose to achieve this objective will figure significantly in the review and selection process.

- Evidence that courses will be taught to enough students in the first year to ensure the collection of reliable learning effectiveness data.

- Faculty experience as innovative and successful teachers and willingness and ability to participate in the Project according to its timeline and in the manner defined for faculty course developers.

- Opportunities for cross-campus collaboration and for inter-segmental uses. The Pilot is specifically looking to develop courses that are portable and, as such, will be delivered ultimately on more than one campus. Preference will be given to courses that will be offered on two or more campuses as part of the Pilot.

- Evidence of departmental and campus support. Letters of Intent without such support cannot be considered. Letters of Intent with support from two or more campuses will be preferred.

LOI that do not meet the preferences stated above are still encouraged and will be reviewed.

LOI recommending that existing online courses be updated or modified and included as part of the Project are also encouraged.

Please consult the Project website http://onlineeducation.universityofcalifornia.edu for questions regarding this Pilot Project, the request for Letters of Intent, or other questions regarding online education.

General inquiries can also be directed to uconline@ucop.edu.
Appendix A. The UC Online Instruction Pilot Project

Information for faculty who are considering submitting a Letter of Intent to participate in the Project.

To be read in conjunction with a request for Letters of Intent from UC Academic Senate Faculty.

October 29, 2010

1. Overview

The University of California’s teaching mission is unique and essential: world-class excellence and access for the best and brightest students who grapple with society’s most important and challenging questions. That mission is also inviolate, notwithstanding the deterioration in fiscal and political conditions over the course of a generation, and notwithstanding the painful effects of the current budget crisis. UC is responding to these challenges by restructuring, streamlining and adapting. However, UC must also innovate. The online delivery of high-quality education is one area that UC must explore if it is to thrive and continue its leadership in the selective higher education arena.

Online undergraduate instruction may prove to be a vital part of what UC must become in the decade ahead. If quality and some other concerns can be resolved, large-scale deployment of online delivery of credit-bearing courses promises among other things to:

- create opportunities for new, powerful forms of instruction, collaboration, interaction, and student assessment, not only exploiting current technologies but also driving innovation in software and pedagogy through a program of UC-based research and development, as befits a great research university;
- broaden access to an affordable University of California education for well-prepared students within California, across the country and around the world, in furtherance of our belief that delivering excellence need not be exclusionary;
- expand course options for on-campus UC students, enabling them to complete their degree more quickly by increasing capacity in presently over-subscribed courses and expanding use of cross-campus general, advanced and “niche” offerings;
- improve B.A. completion rates and time-to-degree generally; and
- expand UC’s capacity to serve mid-career students, students with family obligations, students who work part-time, and professionals.

Where courses are developed and adopted jointly by UC campuses and community colleges, there is also potential to facilitate community college transfer and improve academic preparedness and ultimate success of transfer students.

*But all of these goals require first and foremost that the faculty agree on online pedagogies that will provide online students with “UC Quality” – in content mastery, critical thinking, collaboration skills, and more. In short, a broad online strategy must fully meet the*
To that end, the University will conduct a Pilot Project in the coordinated development, delivery, and formal evaluation of fully online, credit-bearing, undergraduate courses that are suitable for UC. The three foundation elements of the pilot will be:

- the expertise of interested faculty who will be selected competitively to participate,
- the Academic Senate’s deliberative process for reviewing and approving courses, and
- the substantial expertise in technology, online course development and online course administration currently available across the UC system.

The pilot is designed to focus on quality, effectiveness and assessment and to shape infrastructure, funding, revenue and business model questions that will need to be answered to move beyond the pilot.

The Project has been planned through a highly consultative process that has engaged the Academic Senate’s leadership, the Senate’s University Committee on Education Policy, and other bodies. It is guided by a special faculty-administration advisory committee and engages experts within and beyond the UC community to ensure adoption of best practices. The primary goal is to test whether online education allows UC’s academic quality of instruction and the effectiveness of student learning to be maintained.

This document summarizes our current thoughts on how the Project will unfold and some of the issues it will address. It is prepared specifically to guide Academic Senate Faculty who are interested in preparing Letters of Intent to participate in the Project.

2. Project Phases
The Project is being conducted in two phases. During a Planning Phase (October 2010 – March 2011) the Project will build a distributed team of faculty, course design specialists, educational technologists, and experts in learning effectiveness assessment. It will also develop detailed proposals for up to 25 online courses that will be developed and offered to UC students for credit. During the Planning Phase, the Project will also design a learning environment, and determine the course design principles and evaluation framework that will be adopted. An Implementation Phase (April 2011 – December 2012) will entail the development, delivery and evaluation of the online courses.

3. The Online Courses
The courses developed by this Project will be largely or wholly online and designed for UC undergraduates as regular academic year or summer session courses. They will not be designed as stand-alone courses that can be completed for credit by students operating independently, at their own pace or without interaction with instructors. On the contrary, the courses will rely upon an appropriately high degree of faculty involvement, and encourage and support the level of student-student and student-faculty interaction that is deemed appropriate for a UC-quality undergraduate education.

Courses will include the core content and learning outcomes expected of students at a high quality, selective, research university. Accordingly, the pedagogical frameworks and
strategies proposed by faculty to define core course content and learning objectives will be important in the evaluation of their proposals.

Preference will be given to proposals including one or more of the following:

- Course or courses are fully online.
- Course or courses are drawn from the list in of high-enrollment, lower-division courses that are offered on most campuses (see below). For this Pilot Project, such courses will include the discrete units that, taken together, complete an introductory sequence (e.g. US History 1, 2, and 3).
- Proposals that result from multi-campus or cross-departmental collaborations.
- Course or courses that are offered on two or more campuses for the purposes of the Pilot.
- Course or courses that have possible inter-segmental uses (i.e., delivery at a community college for transfer purposes).

Proposals that do not meet the preferences stated above are still encouraged and will be reviewed.

Proposals recommending that existing online courses be updated or modified and included as part of the Project are also encouraged.

Table 1. The top 25 lower-division General Education courses or course sequences taught at UC ranked with the highest enrollment annual average, 2006/07 and 2007/08.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course name (or course sequence)</th>
<th>UC Annual Enrollments</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calculus 1-3</td>
<td>48876</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Chemistry 1-3</td>
<td>38131</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics 1-3</td>
<td>37854</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman composition 1-2</td>
<td>31583</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology 1-3</td>
<td>29084</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other math (pre-calculus, multivariate calc, linear algebra, differential equations)</td>
<td>24236</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macro and micro economics</td>
<td>20651</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Psychology</td>
<td>17091</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>15447</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Chemistry 1-2</td>
<td>13472</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish 1-4</td>
<td>12268</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World history 1-3 and survey</td>
<td>9503</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Courses in several rows are defined as the first year or introductory sequences (e.g. US History 1, 2, and 3). In this regard, distinctions are not made in the table between versions of a course that are developed as part of pathways into different majors (e.g. Calculus for non-majors, Calculus for life sciences). Course sequences listed are for quarter courses, but also include semester equivalents (e.g., Calculus 1–3 is a full year quarter sequence and comparable to Calculus 1–2 in a semester system).
### Academic Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Anthropology</td>
<td>9224</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Sociology</td>
<td>8556</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Civilization 1-3</td>
<td>7776</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>7433</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>6698</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US history 1-3</td>
<td>6129</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Government &amp; Politics</td>
<td>5321</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting I</td>
<td>4994</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Astronomy</td>
<td>4603</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>3762</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>3749</td>
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<td>Comparative Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oceanography</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myths</td>
<td>3487</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>3466</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introductory Philosophy</td>
<td>3355</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Business</td>
<td>3274</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>2776</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear Algebra &amp; Differential Equations</td>
<td>2455</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>392326</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4. Senate Approvals

As appropriate, online courses will be reviewed and approved by Divisional Senate committees before being offered to UC undergraduates for credit. It is anticipated that the full proposals that are developed by faculty in March 2011 will include the information required by their Divisional Senate for the purposes of course review. The Project team will work with faculty and the systemwide Academic Senate to ensure that faculty course developers are fully informed about the review criteria and processes that will apply.

#### 5. The Online Learning Environment

Courses will be developed on and delivered from a web-based learning environment that will be used for the purposes of the Project. They will also be developed according to common design principles established in consultation with faculty who participate in the Planning Phase to ensure the Project’s objectives are met with regard to:

- **quality** – will reflect the rigorous academic standards that apply at UC and will be defined in tangible terms that support ongoing evaluation of the courses and the experience of faculty and students who engage with them;
- **scope** – courses will cover the core content and learning objectives expected for the specific discipline and level;
- **engaging** – course content and activities will be developed for multiple learning modalities and utilize tools and techniques to support active learning;
- **usability** – courses will be readily adaptable for future use and accordingly be:
  - modular – so course components can be easily updated
  - granular – so updating can happen at the lesson or task level
- platform independent – so faculty may use courses developed for the purposes of the pilot in their local learning management system and so that courses may be maintained over time and through changing technologies;
  • resources – course content, including any network-based resource (data, computational resource, library resources, on-line archives, etc.) and as much of the supplementary reading material as possible that will be made accessible freely to anyone with an Internet connection;
  • sustainable – developed according to design principles that will ensure that the cost and effort involved in updating or adapting a course can be kept predictably low; and
  • evaluation – courses will be assessed according to local campus evaluation standards and to the framework developed and implemented on a Project-wide basis in order to gather comparable data with regard to learning effectiveness, cost, etc.

Copyright in all materials created pursuant to this RFP shall remain with the Principal Investigator(s). Principal investigator(s) will be required to grant the university a non-exclusive license to the materials permitting all uses, including the development of derivatives, in accordance with generally accepted open access principles.

6. The Project Team

Faculty course developers will be responsible for designing and developing UC-quality online courses, offering them for credit to UC students, and evaluating their effectiveness. They will help develop and adopt, for the purposes of the Project, a common learning environment, a common set of course design principles, and a common framework for assessing the efficacy of online instruction. The Project Team will also include three other groups.

An evaluation group will develop and implement a common assessment framework so that the Pilot Project gathers comparable data and advances our understanding of whether, how, and at what cost online instruction is or is not effective in delivering a UC-quality undergraduate education. This group will consult directly with faculty and the course design group in the development of an assessment framework for each course throughout the pilot project. Further support from this group in the development and implementation phase can be worked into the full proposals as appropriate.

A course design and development group will be responsible for the development of the course design principles. They will also specify the functional requirements for and oversee the implementation of the pilot’s learning environment. For the purposes of this pilot, it is not expected that these courses be delivered within an existing campus LMS, but they should be developed in such a way that the course content can be readily transferred into a local campus LMS, if so desired, in the future. This group will consult directly with local campus staff in the development of the online resource framework from infrastructure to interface, ensuring a functional and cost-effective approach and technical framework. This group will be available on a consultation basis in the development of the full proposals. Further support from this group in the development and implementation phase can be worked into the full proposals.
proposals as appropriate. The group will also support and facilitate collaboration amongst faculty course developers and any campus-based technology support staff that assist them.

An executive group will be responsible for the Project’s effective administration, timely progress, and its reporting to and interaction with interested UC (Senate as well as administrative) and external bodies.

7. Project phasing

The project will be conducted in two phases.

**Phase 1. Planning. October 2010 – March 2011.**

*Description:* This phase will begin in October 2010 with the release of this call for Letters of Intent and end in March 2011, with submission by faculty of full proposals to participate in the Project’s implementation phase.

*Key deliverables*
- a detailed statement of the course design and development principles and associated standards that will be adopted for the Project and supported by its learning management system
- an evaluation protocol for use in assessment
- guidelines for faculty interested in preparing full proposals to participate in the Project’s implementation phase
- full proposals developed by faculty and submitted (a) for review and consideration by the Project and where necessary (b) for course review and approval of the Academic Senate

*Key milestones:*

2010

October 29       Call for Letters of Intent issued
November 1-12    Informational sessions scheduled as conference calls for faculty interested in submitting LOI
December 13      LOI submitted by faculty interested in participating as course developers

2011
January 17  
Selection decisions announced for LOI

Feb 14 - 28  
Selected faculty participate in two day-long workshops (one each with the course design/development and evaluation team, respectively) and follow-up conference calls. Workshops will be repeated according to the schedule set out below and additional dates will be added if necessary. Participation in the workshops is required.

Course Design Workshops (pick one): Feb 12, Feb 17
Evaluation Workshops (pick one): Feb 25, Feb 26

March 7  
Call for full proposals issued to selected faculty, with detailed information about the Project’s course design principles, learning management system, and the evaluation framework.

April 11  
Full proposals submitted by faculty who wish to participate in the project’s Implementation Phase. Proposals include detailed budgets and implementation plans as well as course designs that provide sufficient information for Divisional Senate review of the proposed online course.

May 2  
Faculty selected to participate in the project’s Implementation Phase, contingent on Divisional Senate approval of their course proposals.

**Phase 2. Implementation: April 2011 – December 2012**

**Description:**
Selected faculty develop an online course or courses following Project guidelines, offer the course or courses to UC undergraduates in credit-bearing classes, and assess their effectiveness using the Project’s evaluation framework.

**Key deliverables**
- a team of faculty selected as course developers for the Project’s implementation phase
- up to 25 online courses reviewed and approved by the Academic Senate and offered at least once by faculty PI to UC students for UC credit-bearing instruction, adopting the Project’s course design principles and developed for delivery using its learning management system
- summary data on learning effectiveness and other aspects of online instruction published and made available

**Key milestones**
• Funding for course development distributed to selected faculty.
• Faculty develop courses for implementation in the project’s learning environment. Implementation will take place over an agreed upon timeline and is largely completed by December 31, 2012.