

# UC SANTA CRUZ

## Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

Leadership Profile

October 2025



*WittKieffer*

## Executive Summary

The University of California, Santa Cruz seeks a bold, strategic, and collaborative leader to serve as the Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor (CPEVC). The CPEVC will serve as chief academic officer of the University and partner closely with Chancellor Cynthia Larive to guide one of the nation's most distinctive research universities through a period of transformative opportunity and change.

Set within 2,000 acres of coastal redwood forest overlooking Monterey Bay, UC Santa Cruz is a top-tier public research university that combines academic excellence with a bold commitment to access, sustainability, and social impact. With a total enrollment of nearly 20,000 students—approximately 17,366 undergraduates and 1,888 graduate students—UC Santa Cruz is a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU) and holds R1 status. The University boasts 650 Academic Senate faculty and 200 lecturers, with a student-to-faculty ratio of 22:1, fostering a collaborative and personalized learning environment. In fiscal year 2024, UC Santa Cruz secured over \$250 million in extramural research funding, reflecting a dynamic research enterprise that spans climate resilience, genomics, astrophysics, and social justice. The University's annual operating budget exceeds \$1 billion, with core funds supporting its mission of teaching, research, and public service. Guided by its strategic plan, *Leading the Change*, UC Santa Cruz is advancing student success, interdisciplinary innovation, and inclusive excellence. The next CPEVC will join a campus poised for transformative growth and impact where curiosity meets purpose, and scholarship drives change.

The next CPEVC will play a central role in shaping the future of UC Santa Cruz. This leader will drive the development and execution of a strategic academic vision that reflects the University's distinctive values and positions it for long-term success. They will contribute to efforts to address budgetary challenges by guiding academic programs toward financial sustainability and making thoughtful, forward-looking decisions about resource allocation. Building trust across the campus community will be essential through meaningful engagement with faculty, staff, and students, and a strong commitment to shared governance. The CPEVC will strengthen the campus climate by addressing the unique needs of faculty and staff, while enhancing student engagement and support. They will help further define UC Santa Cruz's research identity and elevate its impact through strategic investment. At the same time, they will cultivate a cohesive academic leadership team, foster a culture of collaboration and transparency, and ensure alignment around shared goals that advance the University's mission.

The CPEVC must be an accomplished academic leader with national or international distinction as a scholar and educator, qualified for appointment as a tenured full professor at UC Santa Cruz. The role requires substantial experience in managing both academic programs and operations within a research university, including comprehensive academic planning, resource allocation, and fiscal oversight of large budgets. The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to lead and represent diverse academic units, communicate effectively in a shared governance environment, and make and explain difficult decisions with transparency. Essential qualities include commitment to collaboration, inclusivity, and long-term institutional success, as well as proven skill in supervising senior personnel and fostering team development. Preferred experience includes service at the dean or vice chancellor level, understanding of the complexities of high-intensity research universities, and experience in graduate and undergraduate education, strategic planning, and fundraising.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this document.

## Role of the Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

The Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor reports directly to the Chancellor and serves as the chief academic officer by providing academic leadership to the entire University. The CPEVC develops an effective leadership team and provides oversight, support, and guidance to the deans and vice-provosts. The CPEVC serves as a member of the Chancellor's Cabinet, advises the Chancellor on campus issues, and typically serves as the chief executive officer of the campus if the Chancellor is unavailable.

The CPEVC provides leadership in the development and implementation of short and long-term academic plans. In conjunction with the Chancellor, the CPEVC is responsible for articulating and implementing the campus vision and priorities. The CPEVC partners with the Vice Chancellor for Research and the Academic Deans to elevate the campus's research profile, facilitate the pursuit of high-impact research and creative scholarship, and diversify its resource base through the pursuit of grants and contracts and the generation of additional private funds and revenue opportunities. The CPEVC works closely with the CFO and Vice Chancellor of Facilities, Operations, and Administration in planning and managing the campus budget and resources, particularly with regard to fulfilling our academic mission of teaching and research. Through an enduring commitment to achieving academic excellence, the CPEVC leads efforts to improve graduation rates and close equity gaps through assessment, continuous improvement, curricular redesign, and adoption of effective pedagogical practices with an eye toward continuous improvement and implementation of emerging promising practices.

The CPEVC promotes a campus community that values and celebrates the varied contributions of its members and fosters an environment of respectful discourse where all are welcome. Working with a faculty committed to a culture of excellence in teaching and research, the CPEVC builds on UC Santa Cruz's commitment to experiential learning and an inclusive living-learning environment. Academic and administrative units currently reporting directly to the CPEVC include Academic Affairs; Enrollment Management; Global Engagement; Graduate Studies; Undergraduate Education; the Academic Divisions of the Arts, Humanities, Physical and Biological Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Baskin School of Engineering; University Extension; University Library; and the Office of the CPEVC.

The CPEVC's primary responsibilities include:

- Provides vision for and management of the academic priorities of the University, including high-quality education programs and impactful research.
- Serves as a liaison to the Santa Cruz Division of the Academic Senate and fosters productive discussion and consultation leading to effective shared government.
- Identifies, nurtures, and grows key research and academic programs in partnership with Academic Deans and the Academic Senate.
- Works with Academic Deans to recruit and retain top faculty and to offer opportunities for faculty development; ensures fair and equitable faculty merit, promotion, and tenure processes; directs the planning, coordination, implementation, and review of academic personnel policy.
- Works with the Vice Chancellor for Research and Academic Deans to achieve national and international recognition for research excellence and enhance the student research experience.
- Works closely with the Chief Financial Officer on budget planning and management, particularly as it pertains to the University's efforts to fulfill our academic mission.
- Advances the reputation of UC Santa Cruz through global partnerships and international programs.



- Works with academic and administrative leadership to advance student success through student support programs, learning experiences, and the vitality and quality of student life.
- In partnership with the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education, provides oversight and guidance of the residential Colleges.
- Works with academic and administrative leadership to increase partnerships in Silicon Valley as UC Santa Cruz continues to establish itself as the UC campus for Silicon Valley.
- Provides UC systemwide committee service as required.
- Delivers on the campus mission to serve our community, region, and state.



## Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

As the chief academic officer and a key strategic partner to the Chancellor, the Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor will play a pivotal role in shaping UC Santa Cruz's future. This leader will help guide the University through a period of significant opportunity and change, advancing academic excellence, fostering innovation, and ensuring long-term financial sustainability. Working collaboratively across a highly engaged campus community and the UC system, the CPEVC will champion initiatives that strengthen UC Santa Cruz's distinctive identity while positioning it for success in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

The CPEVC will be expected to advance the following priorities, among others:

### **Articulate a Strategic Academic Vision and Lead Change**

UC Santa Cruz is at a pivotal moment, requiring a CPEVC who can articulate a bold, forward-looking academic vision that reflects the institution's values and strengths. The campus community seeks a leader who can guide academic planning with clarity and purpose, balancing tradition with innovation. This includes expanding online and master's programs, strengthening interdisciplinary research, shaping the future of graduate programs, and ensuring academic excellence amid financial constraints. The next CPEVC must be a change agent—someone who can thoughtfully manage transformation, build consensus, and make difficult decisions with transparency and integrity.

### **Steward Budget Resources and Ensure Financial Sustainability**

UC Santa Cruz faces a structural budget deficit and must navigate a challenging financial landscape. While a multi-year plan to address the budget deficit is in place, operating under budgetary constraints has become the norm in higher education; the next CPEVC must see opportunity in constraints. The next CPEVC will play a critical role in shaping financially sustainable academic programs, aligning resources with strategic priorities, supporting robust philanthropic activity, and guiding the campus through necessary structural changes. Creative thinking, financial acumen, and the ability to communicate budget realities clearly and empathetically are vital. The CPEVC must also advocate for equitable funding and recognition for the campus within the UC system and externally.

### **Build Trust Through Shared Governance**

A strong and enduring commitment to shared governance is foundational to UC Santa Cruz's identity, culture, and success. The next CPEVC must deeply understand and respect the University's Faculty Senate structure, which plays a central role in academic decision-making and institutional stewardship. Working collaboratively with the Academic Senate is not optional—it is essential. Genuine consultation, principled leadership, and trust-based relationships must guide the CPEVC's approach. This means fostering open, respectful dialogue; honoring the "no surprises" principle; and ensuring transparency in decision-making processes. The CPEVC must actively listen to and engage with diverse perspectives across the University, consistently practice UC Santa Cruz's Principles of Community, and embrace the deliberative culture that defines shared governance at UC Santa Cruz. Success in this role depends on the ability to lead through collaboration, uphold academic values, and cultivate mutual trust across all constituencies.

### **Engage and Support Faculty, Staff, and Students and Strengthen Campus Climate**

The campus community expressed a desire for a CPEVC who is visible, approachable, and genuinely invested in faculty, staff, and student success. UC Santa Cruz's high percentage of first-generation and Pell-eligible students and its activist culture require a leader who understands and supports their unique needs. The next CPEVC must prioritize student well-being, experiential learning, and inclusive engagement, whether through housing initiatives, mental health support, or academic programming. Building trust with students and being present in their spaces will be key to fostering a healthy and vibrant campus climate. The next CPEVC must be a champion for faculty and staff welfare, advocating for fair compensation, childcare access, housing solutions, and professional



development. The CPEVC should also be attuned to the needs of marginalized and underrepresented groups, ensuring that equity and inclusion are embedded in all aspects of leadership.

### **Advance Research Excellence and Institutional Reputation**

Maintaining and enhancing UC Santa Cruz's research profile is a top priority. The next CPEVC must support faculty scholarship, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and help further define the University's research identity. With recent federal funding challenges and a need for strategic prioritization, the CPEVC must guide investment in areas of strength and potential growth. This includes being a visible advocate for UC Santa Cruz's contributions to science, social justice, and innovation, among other areas, and ensuring that research excellence is integrated with the University's teaching mission and public impact.

### **Foster Collaborative Leadership and Team Culture**

The CPEVC must foster a cohesive and effective leadership team, particularly among deans and vice provosts. The next CPEVC should build a "first team" culture, encouraging shared responsibility, mutual respect, and strategic alignment. Strong interpersonal skills, humility, and the ability to lead from behind will be important. Delegating effectively, supporting management professionals, and promoting a culture of respect and collaboration are essential. The CPEVC must also be a thought partner to the Chancellor and other senior leaders, helping to unite the campus around shared goals and priorities.



## Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

### Basic Qualifications

- Substantial demonstrated administrative leadership for both academic programs and operations in a research university or comparable setting.
- National or international distinction as a scholar, researcher/practitioner, and educator with the accomplishments expected for appointment as a tenured full professor at the University of California.

### Required Qualifications and Characteristics

- Success in leading, managing, and representing academic units outside of personal area of expertise.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with administrators, faculty, students, and staff in an environment of shared governance.
- Appreciation for the mission and responsibilities of a university serving the wide range of communities and populations in our region and state.
- Ability to make, implement, and productively communicate reasons for difficult decisions.
- Experience in comprehensive academic planning and its use to advance research and undergraduate/graduate education.
- Experience with resource allocation and skill in budget and fiscal oversight of a large division budget or equivalent program or institute.
- Experience with academic personnel processes.
- Commitment to shared governance, respect for differences of opinion and points of view, and experience and skill in consulting with multiple constituencies.
- Skill and experience supervising and managing senior personnel – hiring, team building, leadership development, inclusivity, performance management, and problem-solving skills.

### Preferred Skills, Qualifications, and Characteristics

- Preferred experience at the dean, vice chancellor, or vice provost level.
- Understanding of higher education in the context of a high-intensity research university, including how political, social, and economic forces shape higher education.
- Understanding of capital projects and skill with other aspects of long-range financial planning.
- Experience in the oversight and continuous improvement of undergraduate and graduate education.
- Experience working with represented employees.
- Ability to leverage emerging technologies and maximize their application in academic and administrative functions.
- Experience with development/fundraising efforts.
- Experience interacting with the systemwide offices and officers if previously part of a multi-campus institution.

The CPEVC is a full-time Senior Management Group ([SMG](#)) staff position with an underlying professional appointment covered by academic policies.

### Special Conditions of Employment

- Successful background check
- Financial disclosure requirements of the California Reform Act of 1974
- Annual disclosure of outside professional activities
- Mandatory trainings as required by the University of California
- Successful appointment to a tenured faculty position at UC Santa Cruz





## About UC Santa Cruz

A global research university, UC Santa Cruz is part of the world's most celebrated system of public higher education and stands among the leading institutions of higher learning.

The campus rests among redwood forests on former ranchlands above the city of Santa Cruz and the Pacific Ocean—both of which provide opportunities for study, research, and recreation.

UC Santa Cruz invites students to find their voice at a place that is not just a location, but a community of learning that spans the globe.

- 17,366 Undergraduate students
- 1,888 Graduate students
- 19,254 Entire student body
- 74 Undergraduate majors
- 66 Graduate programs
- 93% California residents (undergraduates)

**[Get More Facts - Achievements, Facts, and Figures](#)**



## Overview

UC Santa Cruz—acclaimed for [high-impact research](#) and a [commitment to teaching and public service](#)—leads at the intersection of innovation, social justice, and sustainability.

Known for impactful research, teaching, and public service, UC Santa Cruz leads at the intersection of innovation, social justice, and sustainability. Nearly 20,000 students are enrolled at UC Santa Cruz in undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs.

Located in and around a redwood forest overlooking the Monterey Bay, UC Santa Cruz is widely considered to be one of the most beautiful college campuses in the world. The campus includes three sites in Santa Cruz: a 2,000-acre residential campus, the [Westside Research Park](#), and the [Coastal Science Campus](#). UC Santa Cruz also manages seven [natural reserves](#) and the Silicon Valley campus, which provide locations for learning and experimentation.

## Mission

As a preeminent public research university, UC Santa Cruz transforms California and the world through groundbreaking discoveries, creative scholarship, public service, and an inclusive student-centered learning environment that empowers students to become engaged global leaders.

## Vision

At UC Santa Cruz, we aspire to lead at the intersection of innovation and social justice. By challenging conventional thinking through our collaborative interdisciplinary approach and distinction as an inclusive learning environment, we will advance the spectrum of knowledge and develop sustainable solutions to the challenges of our time.

Social justice and environmental sustainability are critical to the collective future of humankind and our planet, and we will continue to work tirelessly to advance these ideals. Our work will transcend our university to produce contributions and solutions through collaborations and community partnerships that advance knowledge and transform California and the world.

We will be recognized broadly for our areas of research excellence and their impact, known for our advancements in core disciplines and exploration at their intersections. Our approach to research and creative scholarship will enhance the faculty community and enrich the undergraduate experience through mentorship, research, and experiential learning opportunities. We will advance graduate program excellence to develop, mentor, and prepare future generations of scholars, researchers, practitioners, and leaders. Our world-renowned research clusters and programs will make UC Santa Cruz the destination of choice for faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars.

We will provide a student-centered learning experience for our undergraduate and graduate students. Our teaching and learning will be enhanced by a culture of inclusion, respect, and agency, the open exchange of ideas, and the strength and perspectives that emerge from a diverse community of scholars. Advanced by our distinctive residential college system and approach to the holistic student experience, we will help our students develop their skills in critical thinking, inquiry, and analysis through inclusive teaching approaches, mentoring, hands-on learning opportunities, and support programs for students from all backgrounds.

## Academics

Leading at the intersection of innovation, social justice, and sustainability, the UC Santa Cruz campus community members use their voices, knowledge, and talents to create real change.

### Disciplines

The UC Santa Cruz student experience fuses high-level academics with passionate engagement in the world. Here, you learn by doing, and the University is routinely ranked among the top universities for research excellence and impact.

- [Arts](#)
- [Humanities](#)
- [Social Sciences](#)
- [Sciences](#)
- [Baskin School Of Engineering](#)
- [Graduate Studies](#)

### Colleges

All undergraduate students choose one of 10 colleges as their living/learning community. Each college is like its own “neighborhood,” complete with traditions and history, academic support, activities, and events.

- [Cowell College](#)
- [Crown College](#)
- [John R. Lewis College](#)
- [Kresge College](#)
- [Merrill College](#)
- [College Nine](#)
- [Oakes College](#)
- [Porter College](#)
- [Rachel Carson College](#)
- [Stevenson College](#)

## Leadership

### Chancellor Cynthia K. Larive



As the 11th chancellor of UC Santa Cruz, Cynthia Larive leads an institution known worldwide for its interdisciplinary approach to research for the public good, for seeking solutions and giving voice to the challenges of our time, and for its commitment to social and environmental justice.

A common thread throughout Larive’s career has been her commitment to student success, inclusion, and equity. Upon her arrival at UC Santa Cruz in 2019, Larive set out to achieve many goals for the campus, chief among them improving graduation rates and eliminating graduation gaps for low-income and first-generation students, and for students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

An accomplished bioanalytical chemist, Larive is also focused on research, innovation, and developing the next generation of entrepreneurs.

[Read more about Chancellor Larive.](#)



## Santa Cruz, California

The Santa Cruz area is a place of inspiring natural beauty. Picture-perfect scenes surround the campus and the town: the vast Pacific Ocean, primeval stands of redwood forests, majestic mountains, and rows of fresh farmland. But it is also a convenient, modern place to live with good shopping and amenities, as well as its own personality and culture.

Santa Cruz has long been a place that embraces individuality. Jack O'Neill, who is credited with inventing the wetsuit, built his global business here. The idea that launched media titan Netflix happened in downtown Santa Cruz, and the business launched in nearby Scotts Valley.

Santa Cruz is a small coastal city of about 60,000 people. Its laid-back Surf City atmosphere and world-famous Beach Boardwalk amusement park are augmented by the globally recognized Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History, a vibrant symphonic and independent music scene, a burgeoning tech ecosystem, cutting-edge genomics companies, and a lively downtown retail experience.

Come live and learn with us in this gorgeous place!

For a complete visitor guide, including information on accommodations, dining, activities, and more, see the [Visit Santa Cruz County](#) homepage.



## Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting UC Santa Cruz in this search. For full consideration, candidate materials should be received by January 8, 2026.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Zachary A. Smith, Ph.D., Suzanne Teer, and Sarah Seavey

[UCSCProvost@wittkieffer.com](mailto:UCSCProvost@wittkieffer.com)

The budgeted salary range that the University reasonably expects to pay for this position is \$470,000 to \$530,000. Please visit [UCnet](#) to learn about the benefits of working at UC.

### Misconduct Disclosure Requirement

As a condition of employment, the final candidate who accepts a conditional offer of employment will be required to disclose if they have been subject to any final administrative or judicial decisions within the last seven years determining that they committed any misconduct; received notice of any allegations or are currently the subject of any administrative or disciplinary proceedings involving misconduct; have left a position after receiving notice of allegations or while under investigation in an administrative or disciplinary proceeding involving misconduct; or have filed an appeal of a finding of misconduct with a previous employer.

"Misconduct" means any violation of the policies or laws governing conduct at the applicant's previous place of employment, including, but not limited to, violations of policies or laws prohibiting sexual harassment, sexual assault, or other forms of harassment, discrimination, dishonesty, or unethical conduct, as defined by the employer. For reference, below are UC's policies addressing some forms of misconduct:

- [UC Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [UC Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)
- [Abusive Conduct in the Workplace](#)

*The University of California is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status or other protected categories covered by the [UC Anti-Discrimination Policy](#).*

*It is the policy of the University of California to undertake affirmative action and anti-discrimination efforts, consistent with its obligations as a Federal and State contractor.*