



Memorandum of Understanding

This MOU has been read and approved by:

Executive Director: Paul Henderson Date: 5/13/2026
Paul Henderson

Associate Vice President : Kerry Johnson Date: 5/13/2026
Kerry Johnson

Vice Provost Academic Programs: Pei-Fang Hung Date: 5/14/2026
Pei-Fang Hung



Program Review Summary
Memorandum of Understanding
The University Center for Undergraduate Advising
April 2026

This document serves as a summary of the Program Review findings and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the consensus reached by the University Center for Undergraduate Advising (UCUA) and the Division of Academic Affairs, based on the recently conducted program review with a Self-study received in June 2025. M. Lopez completed the external review on September 12, 2025. This report and MOU describe the goals to be achieved and the actions to be undertaken by all parties to this MOU to achieve these goals during the next program review cycle.

The University Center for Undergraduate Advising (UCUA) serves as the primary academic advising unit for first- and second-year undergraduate students with fewer than 60 earned units who are exploring major options at CSULB. UCUA also supports first-generation students through GenExcel, transfer students through the Beach Transfer and Transition Center, and students pursuing structured pathways to timely graduation through the Finish in Four/Through in Two Program (formally Beach Pledge Program). In addition, UCUA provides advising for students on academic warning and for former students seeking reinstatement after academic disqualification. Through these programs and services, UCUA contributes to student success and the broader undergraduate experience at CSULB.

UCUA previously underwent program review in 2018 with an MOU signed in 2020. The MOU recommended the following: 1) Continue to develop a system of assessments for all programs of the UCUA, referring to models of assessment presented by the external reviewer; 2) Report assessment annually, and in a self-study due June 2024 for a 2024-25 program review; 3) Consider revising the UCUA mission statement and adding it to the UCUA website; 4) Consider having faculty serve as general advisors in the center; and, 5) Explore professional development opportunities for the UCUA staff with on and off campus institutions and colleagues. UCUA has made progress toward these recommendations, including revising its mission and vision statements and relocating its advising center from the Horn Center to the Shakarian Family Student Success Center.

In addition to the 2018 program review, UCUA underwent an external evaluation by NACADA. A campus-wide advising task force was subsequently formed, with participation from UCUA



leadership, including the Executive Director; final recommendations from this task force are still being implemented.

Resources reviewed for the report:

- Self-study May 2025
- External Review Report 2025
- February 2020 MOU
- UCUA website

Strengths were identified in the reports

1. **Caseload Management.** UCUA has implemented a proactive caseload management model informed by student feedback, the NACADA external review, and advising best practices. The model emphasizes manageable advisor-to-student ratios, intentional outreach, and the use of technology to support student success.
 - a. Since 2018, UCUA has utilized an enhanced CRM platform, EAB Navigate (branded locally as Beach Connect), to support coordinated advising, proactive outreach, and targeted communication campaigns. UCUA was an early adopter of these expanded functionalities.
 - b. Advisor caseloads average approximately 250:1, aligning with recommended practices for developmental advising.
 - c. Each summer, UCUA advises and registers approximately 800–975 first-time, first-year students and enrolls an additional approximately 800 continuing students.
 - d. Student survey data indicate a preference for the proactive caseload model, particularly for its support of consistent, high-touch advising relationships.
2. **Student Success Graduation Initiatives.** UCUA administers and supports several programs that contribute to student persistence, timely degree completion, and successful academic transitions.
 - a. GenExcel Faculty & Peer Mentorship Program
Relaunched in 2019, GenExcel supports first-generation, first-time, first-year students in their transition to CSULB. The program primarily serves Hispanic/Latino, first-generation, and female students by connecting them with faculty and peer mentors, many of whom share similar backgrounds. Each participant is paired with both a peer mentor and a faculty mentor. The program serves approximately 200 first-year students annually and is supported by 20 faculty mentors.
 - b. Finish in Four/Through in Two Program (formally Beach Pledge Program)



Established in 2017 in response to Senate Bill 412, this initiative aims to increase four-year graduation rates for first-time, first-year students and two-year graduation rates for Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) students. The program supports timely degree completion through structured academic requirements. Participation has grown to more than 2,600 students in 2024, an increase from 1,283 students in Fall 2022. Data from Fall 2017-2020 cohorts indicate that a substantial proportion of participants remained on track to graduate within their designated timeframes.

c. Beach Transfer Transition Center (BTTC)

The BTTC supports transfer student success by connecting students to campus resources, community, and peer networks. Services include an Ambassador Program, workshops, social events, and dedicated student space. The Ambassador Program has expanded significantly, growing from 32 students in 2020–21 to 362 in Fall 2024, with a total of 493 participants in 2024-25.

d. COUN 191 Course: Career and Personal Explorations

UCUA contributes to COUN 191, a course designed for students on academic warning. The course incorporates Peer Academic Coaches and maintains low student-to-faculty ratios. Participants improved their median GPA from 1.36 to 2.60 in one semester and sustained gains to approximately 3.0 in the following term.

Collectively, these initiatives reflect UCUA's emphasis on student-centered advising and structured support for academic progression. Supporting efforts include the development of an Undeclared Advising Syllabus, contributions to guided pathways, and participation in "Day at the Beach."

3. **Collaboration across Units**

UCUA coordinates campuswide professional development through the University Advising Council and biannual Advising Institutes, which bring together advisors from academic colleges and student support units. Each UCUA advisor also serves as a liaison to a specific college, facilitating the exchange of information on major requirements, policies, and practices. This structure enhances coordination and supports more consistent advising for students exploring majors. UCUA is also leading the redesign of Beach Connect, used by both academic advisors and career counselors, to strengthen integration between advising and career development services.

Concerns were noted in the reports

No major concerns were identified in either the self-study or the external review report.

Opportunities for Development were noted in the reports

1. **Assessment**



An annual Undergraduate Academic Advising Survey was developed in 2022 and has been administered each year since, collecting feedback on advisor knowledge, advising style, and advising center operations, including appointment availability and communication. With three years of data, UCUA has established a baseline to inform improvement efforts and identify areas of strength. However, participation has declined from 19% in 2022 to 6% in 2024, limiting the reliability and validity of the findings. Strengthening survey design, increasing outreach, and improving dissemination of results through dashboards and campuswide reporting would enhance data use and support continuous improvement.

2. Enrollment Access and Equity

Advisors reported inconsistencies between catalog requirements and their implementation across colleges, contributing to confusion and equity challenges for undeclared students. Access to key courses also varies, with some colleges offering permits or pre-major pathways while others restrict enrollment until full major declaration. A coordinated, cross-college review of declaration practices, enrollment access, and communication protocols would help address these disparities. Expanding advisor cross-training on college-specific policies and prerequisites would further improve consistency in advising.

3. Faculty Collaboration

Rather than embedding faculty advisors within the center, UCUA has developed collaborative partnerships with academic departments. These partnerships have supported initiatives, such as offering General Education courses within Beach XP cohorts in collaboration with the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Health & Human Services. Expanding structured opportunities, incentives, and training for faculty engagement would strengthen alignment between advising and academic programs.

4. Support for Vulnerable Student Populations

With COUN 191 phasing out of General Education, there is a need to preserve its most effective elements, including structured career exploration, advising relationships, and reflective learning. Institutional data indicate that students who are reassigned to undeclared status are more likely to stop out by their sixth semester. Transfer students also continue to face challenges beyond the initial transition period despite support through BTTC. Developing targeted interventions for these populations would help mitigate persistence gaps.

5. Campuswide Advising SLOs and Advisor Competencies

The UCUA Advising Syllabus, introduced during orientation in 2024, clarifies advising expectations and connects students to key resources. However, campuswide advising Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and advisor competencies have not yet been formally established. Defining shared outcomes across colleges would promote



consistency, improve transparency for students, and align advising practices with NACADA core competencies.

6. **Staff Capacity**

UCUA's current staffing structure limits its ability to scale proactive advising and sustain coordination of student success initiatives. Strengthening e-advising capacity (e.g., through reclassification of the E-Advising Project Lead role or additional staffing) would support campuswide implementation. A distributed model, with trained lead advisors in each college serving as local experts, could reduce bottlenecks and improve system-wide effectiveness. At the same time, high advisor caseloads constrain opportunities for proactive outreach and limit potential collaboration with the Career Development Center to integrate career readiness milestones into advising systems.

Recommendations

It is therefore agreed that the UCUA will collaborate with the Division of Academic Affairs to:

1. Implement the program's comprehensive assessment plan, including annual assessments using direct and indirect methods, and document "closing-the-loop" activities to demonstrate data-informed decision-making. UCUA will provide an annual progress report (due September 1) to the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies, the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, and the Coordinator for Assessment. The current review cycle will span 2024-2031, with a comprehensive self-study due in June 2031 for the 2031-2032 program review. *(Opportunity 1)*
2. Develop a more formalized process for engagement between UCUA college advising center liaisons and advising units to support regular communication, share updates on policy and practice changes, and enhance mutual understanding of college-specific advising approaches. *(Opportunity 2)*
3. Expand structured collaboration with faculty to strengthen connections between advising and academic programs and to enhance student engagement with their disciplines. *(Opportunity 3)*
4. Develop and implement targeted interventions (e.g., courses, modules, or programs) to support undeclared students, with the goal of improving retention and academic success, and collaborate with campus partners to strengthen coordinated support for transfer students within broader advising ecosystem. *(Opportunity 4)*
5. Collaborate with college advising center leadership to establish campuswide advising SLOs and advisor competencies to promote consistency, clarity, and alignment with NACADA core competencies. *(Opportunity 5)*
6. Strengthen e-advising capacity and infrastructure, including staffing, role clarity, and system-level coordination, to support scalable and proactive advising practices *(Opportunity 6)*.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

LONG BEACH

Office of Program and Institutional Effectiveness



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