



Pathology Strategic Plan 2021–2024



Updated: Feb. 13, 2023

Message From the Chair



Thank you for your interest in our department and our strategic plan for 2022-2027! This is an exciting time for UC Davis Health and for our department. Under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Lubarsky, UC Davis Health is rapidly evolving into a more fully integrated academic health center to better serve our region. We are recognized for excellent clinical care – in pathology and laboratory medicine and all specialties – with strong synergies that bring our research discoveries to our patient care work as well as to our educational programs. We take great pride in providing the health care professionals of the future to our region and to the world – and sending them out with leading-edge knowledge and tools to deliver tomorrow’s health care today.

Our plan is intentionally designed to complement and leverage UC Davis Health’s organizational mission of transforming lives and communities by providing unparalleled care across California that is grounded in equity. We also share UC Davis Health’s vision for “the next generation, the next innovation, the next cure”, as well as the organizational values of kindness, trust, and inclusion. We join all of our UC Davis Health colleagues in our promise to patients that they are at the center of everything we do.

We have many strengths to build from -- our department has grown in people, accomplishments, and resources over the 12 years that I have served as chair. Our innovation, dedication, and commitment to patient care and community health distinguishes all of our departmental activities and particularly stood out during the COVID-19 pandemic. These qualities are embedded within all aspects of our departmental strategic plan.

I hope you enjoy learning about us through our strategic plan, and through the many pages of our website <https://health.ucdavis.edu/pathology/>. We look forward to partnering with new and existing collaborators and friends to provide a future of good health and opportunity to the people of California and the world.

Sincerely,

Lydia Pleotis Howell, M.D.
Professor and Chair
Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

Departmental Strategic Planning Process

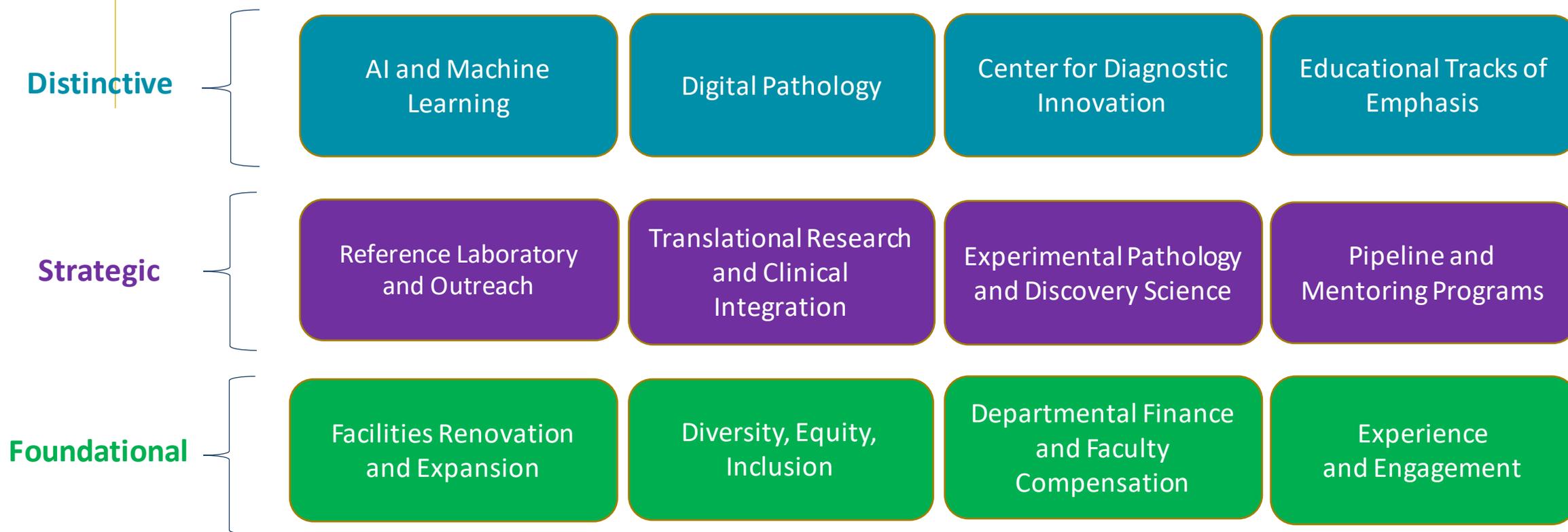
This plan was developed in collaboration with the UC Davis Health Strategic Planning Office over a period of many months beginning in academic year 2020-21.

The process included large interactive meetings as well as small focus groups with many stakeholders.

Through these meetings, the following priorities were identified which shaped the strategic initiatives within the plan:

- Enhance the learning, teaching, research, and care delivery experience
- Expand services and offerings to meet the needs of patients in our region and abroad
- Innovate and deliver new technologies and methods of care delivery and education
- Discover and deliver tomorrow's healthcare today

Tiers of Strategy with Initiatives for the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine



2022-23 Strategic Initiatives and Focus Areas: Distinctive

Initiatives	Project Scope	Focus Areas and Progress
<p>Educational Tracks of Emphasis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative builds on UC Davis Health’s strong academic standing and existing programs to provide house staff with special expertise that can embellish their training experience and enhance preparedness for the contemporary job market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and implement focused tracks for residents to demonstrate added qualifications and enhance job opportunities: Tracks defined and implemented, July 2022 – resident experience in progress Align with national efforts for restructuring residency curriculum: Collaborative efforts by ABPath and subspecialty society shared with faculty for consideration in curriculum here (June 2022); awaiting formal changes by ABPath. Explore new and existing educational resources/content: Change in 2nd molecular rotation under consideration, February 2023.
<p>Digital Pathology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative aims to expand anatomic pathology services beyond traditional microscopy using digital pathology and support clinical work at remote locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validate new instrumentation and train faculty and staff: Validation of 1st faculty member for primary interpretation completed as of February 2023; others scheduled. Implement for subspecialty teams. Pending completion of individual faculty validation above.
<p>Center for Diagnostic Innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative aims to improve translation pathway from bench to clinical lab by providing a CLIA-certified space for clinical validation and clinical trials. The Center also aims to attract new industry partnerships, create educational opportunity for cross-disciplinary literacy, and enhance a learning health system through innovative approaches to quality improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install and implement new clinical automation line in CDxI Validation Laboratory: Completed January 23. Hire a manager: In progress Complete mass spec COVID-19 FDA trial: In progress Identify new partners and sponsors to achieve financial security: Sandbox partnership with Roche Info System (February 2023); meetings with others (February 2023).
<p>Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative aims to develop and utilize new AI/ML tools to enhance clinical care and create efficiencies that will improve patient care, save dollars, and create efficiencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit a new pathology informatics faculty member who will grow AI/ML applications through application and development of new AI tools: Informatics fellowship grad Dr. LaValley to join faculty in July 2023. Leverage MILO for new collaborative opportunities. Identify new AI collaborations with industry and at UC Davis Medical Center: CDxI partnership with UC Davis Medical Center’s CoLab (February 2023).

2022-23 Strategic Initiatives and Focus Areas: Strategic

Initiatives	Project Scope	Focus Areas and Progress
<p>Experimental Pathology and Discovery Science</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative aims to increase resources and collaboration within the department by collaborative work and alignment with UC Davis Health goals, and goals of centers of excellence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build cross-disciplinary research program in immuno-oncology with Cancer Center by leveraging recruitment of new Stowell Chair Xiao-Jing Wang: Request by Dr. Wang for faculty to participate in SDCR program, Feb. 3, 2023. Grow faculty involvement in American Society of Investigative Pathology via on-site visit President William Muller. On-site visit and lecture by Dr. Muller, December 2022. Align and integrate with UC Davis Health research strategic plan: UC Davis Health plan in progress - committee member VCR Yvonne Wan shared updates on UC Davis Health plan development on October 2022. Updates from Vice Dean Barrett shared February 2023.
<p>Pipeline and Mentoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative builds on UC Davis's strong academic standing and existing programs to create an environment in which senior faculty are involved in mentorship of junior faculty, academic excellence and achievement are recognized, and a clear pipeline is implemented to increase retention and promotion of junior faculty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with DEI committee to revise mentoring program and to host URM residents from other schools. Partnership with Howard University Pathology Department to host elective rotations for their residents Work with PATH-SIG to increase medical student interest in pathology as a career choice. Dr. Rubinstein designated as pathology specialty liaison to students, his efforts have included individual mtgs for CV review and group presentations.
<p>Translational Research and Clinical Integration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative grows inter-departmental collaboration that will enhance coordination and adoption of new technologies and services to improve patient care. This can include, integration of AI, collaboration on grant funding, integration of proprietary innovations into clinical application and as a revenue generating stream and improving overall system capabilities to provide better patient care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2022 Highman Lecture to focus on new technologies (Spatial-omics): Lecture February 23. Establish new industry partnerships and affiliations: Discussion in progress Build capacity via new space with CLIA certification: CDxI CLIA application submitted Integrate AI into clinical activities Involve more house staff in clinical research projects, including new technologies: Inter-department seed grant program co-led by Pathology, Radiology and CDxI launching February 23 and includes house staff as eligible team members
<p>Reference Lab and Outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This initiative aims to expand laboratory testing to better support the Cancer Center, Transplant service, and other subspecialty areas to provide leading edge clinical care to our region, supports clinical trials and new treatments, provides a future-oriented educational environment for trainees and students, and career satisfaction to faculty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repatriate send out testing, the recommended first phase for lab expansion identified by NMG consultants. 3/6 initial tests complete by December 2023, others on target Provide renal pathology services to a broader region through recruitment of additional renal pathologists. Recruitment in progress as of February 2023 Identify tests and resource needs for expanded lab menu to support Cancer Center; use savings from repatriation to fund resources. Pending completions of Phase 1 of NMG plan

2022-23 Strategic Initiatives and Focus Areas: Foundational

Initiatives	Project Scope	Focus Areas
<p>Experience and Engagement</p>	<p>This initiative aims to increase satisfaction and work-life balance for faculty and staff by building on areas of strengths and identifying and addressing areas of frustration faced by staff, faculty, house staff, and students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with UC Davis Organizational Excellence consultant to follow-up on departmental engagement survey to take action on identified pain points and to optimize recruitment: Barrett McBride (UC Davis Org Excellence) conducted focus groups (fall 2022) and group meetings (January 23, and spring 2023) • Recruit new faculty to fill vacancies and meet growing workload before over-work occurs: 5 of 12 approved recruitments filled; offers pending on 3; more interviews scheduled, February 2023 • Optimize use of remote work to better serve patients and provide work-life balance needs of faculty, house staff, and staff. Digital Path validation in progress • Improve on-boarding: In-progress
<p>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DEI initiative aims to create an environment of sharing cultures, embed cultural competence in all programs, and increase diversity of the department's student body, faculty and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of new faculty to increase diversity: 3 of 5 confirmed recruits = women (February 2023); 2/3 pending offers are women; identifying and recruiting other URM groups is a priority as additional positions are filled. • Use experience from spring 2022 DEI retreat to establish protocols for socializing new hires within the department. • Collaborate with pipeline committee to revise mentoring program for new faculty and staff and to host URM residents from other medical centers. Mentorship plan to be developed • Initiate SEED training targeted at new pathology and lab medicine members: To follow
<p>Facilities Renovation and Lab Expansion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This initiative aims to grow laboratory capacity and complexity of testing to better serve UC Davis Health patients and programs, attract outside clients and improve faculty satisfaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with UC Davis Health facilities leaders on short-, intermediate- and long-term plans for PATH building, including office space, and to acquire more research space. Many meetings with UC Davis Health space leaders re: PATH Bldg options; new space opportunities (most recent tour Feb. 9, 2023) • Implement first phase of NMG consultant plan for lab expansion focusing on repatriation of send-out tests. 1st phase in progress (February 2023.; see Ref Lab initiative) • Explore research options for molecular and genomic industry relationships as first step toward growing clinical molecular services. To follow
<p>Department Finance and Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This initiative aims to grow laboratory capacity and complexity of testing to better serve UC Davis Health patients and programs, attract outside clients and improve faculty satisfaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Finance Advisory Committee to update compensation plan to better recognize and reward faculty contributions, and to improve transparency. FAC will review our plan for major updates following UC Davis Health consultants' recommendations re: standardizing dept comp plans schoolwide and aligning with funds flow. • Work with UC Davis Health Finance and others to evaluate the first year experience of funds flow change, including metrics for staffing model. To follow