

UC San Diego Process Palooza

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A few days ago, I had the great pleasure of attending and speaking at Process Palooza for the second year in a row.

The first time, in fall 2017, there was the excitement of a brand-new venture. No one knew quite what the day would bring or what lasting effects it might inspire. Our high hopes gave the day an effervescent feeling; the excitement on the 15th floor of The Village was palpable.

That day was also a highlight of my own early weeks at UC San Diego. I'd known that the university's Strategic Plan included the goal of "creating an agile, sustainable, and supportive infrastructure." But it was inspiring to encounter, in person, a crowd of community members who were so energetically dedicated to continuous improvement.

A year later, we have over 1700 individuals across campus trained in Lean Six Sigma, at levels all the way to black belt. Having a common vocabulary and set of practices that can be shared by individuals regardless of their campus affiliation or role has proven incredibly valuable. As a result, use of Lean Bench techniques to review and improve everyday processes and unit organization is spreading steadily.

Moreover, the general philosophy of using data-driven analysis to creatively, yet methodically guide our everyday work underpins many campus-spanning units: The Office of Strategic Initiatives, the Teaching + Learning Commons, the Audit and Management Advisory Services office, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Enterprise Systems Renewal initiative, to name a few influential examples. Similarly, as we prepare to submit the university's application for reaccreditation, the main focus is on our ongoing assessment of students' learning outcomes and the use of this assessment to inform the systematic design of curricula and teaching practices.

So the second instance of Project Palooza had a new layer of excitement: the momentum of a growing and successful venture. Over 800 individuals took part in the day's competitions and workshops. And I fully expect that we will, again, see tangible impact from those activities across the coming year.

It is nearly impossible to overstate the importance of Process Palooza for our campus. As Chancellor Khosla consistently reminds us, our Strategic Plan is built around a common vision of being a student-centered, research-focused, service-oriented public university. Achieving this requires that we transform the campus

- **Intellectually**, through scholarly, artistic, pedagogical, and medical initiatives that draw on multiple disciplines and approaches;

- **Physically**, to become a residential campus designed to support the needs of our increasingly diverse student cohort; and
- **Culturally**, by renewing our entrepreneurial spirit of non-tradition, taking risks, creating bold initiatives, and connecting strongly with the broader San Diego community.

Process Palooza fully embodies that spirit and process of transformation.

Moreover, it is especially powerful because it draws directly upon the expertise of the administrative and support staff who are intimately familiar with current campus practices and workflows. These individuals are among those best placed to spot bottlenecks, inefficiencies, and opportunities for tangible improvement. The more we can fully engage and honor the intellectual contributions of our outstanding staff, the faster we will progress as a university.

I look forward to Process Palooza 2019!