

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-2435-98/FA/AA
November 5-6, 1998

Response to the Draft “Cornerstones Implementation Plan”

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University adopt the following response to Executive Vice Chancellor David Spence's draft "Cornerstones Implementation Plan" (October 16, 1998). The Board of Trustees adopted the Cornerstones Report on January 28, 1998. The Academic Senate CSU adopted the Cornerstones Report's ten principles on January 23, 1998. Implementing Cornerstones requires an active partnership among the Board of Trustees, the CSU administration, and the CSU faculty, students, staff, and administration on each campus. In general, the various partners have the following responsibility in providing the high-quality education envisioned in Cornerstones:

- The CSU Board of Trustees has primary responsibility to secure adequate funding from the State of California, to advocate for the broad meaning of higher education in a pluralistic society, and to adopt the regulations and policies that will provide an atmosphere of adaptability and improvement;
- The CSU administration has primary responsibility to propose—in consultation with faculty, students, and staff—the structure and administrative flexibility to carry out Board of Trustees regulations and policies;
- The faculty, administration, students, and staff on each campus have the primary responsibility to translate the principles of Cornerstones into action in a way that maintains and improves upon past levels of quality and meets the challenge envisioned for the future; and
- Faculty on each CSU campus have primary responsibility to study the efficacy of the changes proposed by Cornerstones as a means of maintaining the high level of excellence in baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate education. It remains the faculty's responsibility on each campus to determine the appropriate number of units required for awarding degrees for our diverse baccalaureate programs, for example, applying, a priori, 120 units as a benchmark for our diverse programs is ill advised.

The ASCSU recommends that Executive Vice Chancellor Spence, in preparing an implementation report for the Board of Trustees, address the need to remove barriers to experimentation and creative problem solving, and specify as priorities the following Cornerstones objectives:

1. Recognize campus autonomy and uniqueness as important factors in meeting clearly defined system policy goals (Principle 10).
2. Support and encourage faculty scholarship, research, and creative activity as essential components to the CSU's teaching mission (Principle 4).
3. Provide faculty with a fair and reasonable reward system that allows the CSU to attract and retain the highest quality faculty (Principle 4, recommendation 4a).

4. Facilitate and provide funding to achieve the conditions that will allow faculty to carry out their professorial responsibilities, by funding efforts to “[r]einvest significantly in faculty, through a faculty development and reinvestment program that protects the core resources and ensures additional resources for faculty development and learning” (Cornerstones, p. 21) through such things as:
 - increased support for faculty to work at the cutting edge of their disciplines;
 - adjusted course load levels to be consonant with those in current CPEC comparison institutions;
 - increased sabbatical leave opportunities;
 - increased funds for travel and participation in professional conferences;
 - increased assigned time, technical and clerical staff support, and other resources to assist faculty in their professional growth;
 - increased assigned time to develop student learning outcomes and assessment methods;
 - increased assigned time and technical staff support, as well as acquisition of appropriate technology, to study the possible conversion of courses to new modes of instruction and, where appropriate, carry out the conversion;
 - expanded assigned time for training programs in the use of technology-mediated instruction;
 - expanded summer and off-term stipends to support faculty development of educational initiatives;
 - increased investment in library resources;
 - increased investment in physical facilities and instructional equipment;
 - expanded instructional development and support operations and expanded support for campus faculty development centers;
 - greater support to new faculty during their earlier years as they acclimate to the academic profession, including regular and predictable salary step increases;
 - increased funding for faculty to study the efficacy and advisability of gradually shifting attention in the CSU from a course and unit-based curriculum to one that places greater emphasis on student learning outcomes;
 - increased assigned time to review and strengthen articulation for General Education among CSU universities and community colleges; and
 - increased assigned time and other funding to enable faculty from CSU campuses, community colleges, and the University of California to convene in disciplinary groups to improve articulation of courses and competencies within degree programs. Until faculty within disciplines have reached consensus on specific transferability of major requirements,

the CSU should not encourage any perception that there is a seamless system in this regard.

5. Acknowledge that faculty retain primary responsibility to develop learning outcomes and assessment (Principle 1). Where Step A in the draft Implementation Plan refers to the university, it should specifically assign those responsibilities to the faculty.
6. Recognize that not all desirable outcomes of a baccalaureate education can be easily measured. Such outcomes include a desire for life-long learning; development of social skills through interaction with peers and colleagues; ethical, moral, and social responsibility including effective participation in a democratic society; and appreciation and tolerance for diversity in all of its manifestations (Principle 1 and the CSU Academic Senate Report *Baccalaureate Education in the California State University*).
7. Increase outreach efforts between CSU and K-12 in an effort to ensure a greater preparation of high school students who are prepared for college level study upon entry to CSU (Principle 5, recommendation 5a).
8. Support innovative ways to involve students as active partners with faculty in the learning process, including student involvement in scholarship, research, and creative activity under faculty guidance (Principle 3).
9. Ensure stable state funding for higher education to meet the goals of the California Master Plan (Principle 7).
10. Develop specific means to measure overall effectiveness and efficiency of administrative units at all levels. Such accountability addresses institutional achievements of educational outcomes, campus climate, institutional governance style, resource allocations, personnel transactions, fiscal accounting, and compliance with the law. (Principle 7 and the "Conclusion: Shared Responsibility").
11. Foster a collegial and collaborative partnership between faculty and administration (Principle 4, recommendation 4a).

Many of the proposed Cornerstones initiatives will require significant financial support. These new proposals must not be implemented at the expense of our existing tradition of educational excellence. For instance, it shall be noted that throughout their history CSU campuses have sought excellence and have produced the current high level of quality evident in the CSU. Thus, many of the prescriptions for excellence found in Cornerstones are already found on CSU campuses. For example, faculty have:

- awarded degrees on the basis of demonstrated learning;
- stated clearly through catalogs, advising, and syllabi what students are expected to know;
- assured breadth and depth of knowledge through General Education and disciplinary majors;
- articulated course requirements effectively with the community colleges, the University of California, and among universities in the CSU system;

- focused on students and worked diligently to meet the needs of a diverse and changing student population;
- encouraged students to actively participate in their learning through involvement in scholarship, research, and creative activities;
- supported—within the limited resources available—faculty development, both professional and pedagogical;
- provided a quality educational experience in a reasonable time;
- striven to carry out the goals of the California Master Plan while maintaining access for all qualified students who desire an education;
- served effectively the communities and citizens of their region;
- made significant and meaningful contributions to the California economy and society;
- assessed on a continuing basis student learning—at the course, program, and graduation levels;
- worked within the context of clearly stated mission statements that identify specific educational goals; and
- created, through a two-year study by the Academic Senate CSU, a statement on the baccalaureate that recognizes that undergraduate education in the CSU is an ongoing cumulative process and not primarily a series of measurable, discrete learning outcomes.

All of these existing activities deserve our continued support. We must remember that our tradition of excellence forms the educational foundation upon which we will place the Cornerstones of the next century.

Approved Unanimously – December 11, 1998