

**Access to Excellence Campus Conversation  
Report from CSU Monterey Bay  
Spring 2007**

On March 5<sup>th</sup> CSUMB conducted its *Access to Excellence* campus conversation. Three domains that closely aligned with campus planning and accreditation efforts were selected for focus (domains 3, 4, & 5). The event catalyzed broad participation and engagement. Many people on campus were involved in planning, inviting stakeholders, facilitating, and recording. External community members were personally invited by campus colleagues and 13 attended the event. Student leaders (16) participated mostly in the afternoon session. Faculty (36), staff (24), and administrators (46) were well distributed in both sessions. The format included two sessions of facilitated round table discussions. Participants were invited to join a domain discussion that they chose. A facilitated wrap-up conversation occurred at the conclusion of the afternoon. Trustee Glen Toney and Dr. Elizabeth Ambose were the CSU guests on campus.

The round table discussions were very local. Less discussion occurred about the CSU system than occurred about CSUMB. As the participants reflected on CSUMB strengths in a round table conversation on *Ensuring success in student learning* a participant made a statement that well captures the spirit of their conversation: “CSUMB prepares students in their development of global perspective, language, cross-cultural competencies, and technological capabilities that will lead to successful lives and life long learning skills.” Following discussions of strengths in the CSU and at CSUMB, the conversations moved on to identify some of the needed changes that lay ahead. These comments were echoed in other conversations. Many ideas, concerns and suggestions for CSUMB emerged and, in addition to being reported here, will be referred to various campus groups for consideration and, further, incorporated in campus planning efforts in the coming months.

The feedback and comments cited below emerged in more than one round table discussion. The items appearing below have been ordered by frequency of occurrence in the round table discussions and in recorders’ notes. Those with the highest frequency of occurrence appear first in each category of the report below. For example, the #1 issue in each CSUMB-related category was reported in the recorders’ notes of five or more round table discussions. The last item identified for each CSUMB-related category emerged in two round table discussions. In several cases, the same comments emerged in round table discussions of different domains. The items receiving discussion in only round table are not listed below. As requested, the report is organized by question rather than by topic or domain.

**What are the strengths of your campus and the CSU system now?**

CSU System Strengths:

1. Affordability
2. Diversity

CSUMB Strengths:

1. Outcomes-based education
2. Connections to the community through service learning
3. Multiculturalism/diversity among students and in the curriculum
4. Small class sizes & faculty getting to know students
5. Location
6. A framework for Review, Tenure and Promotion with four categories (Teaching and Learning; Discovery, Creation and Integration; Professional Application; and University Service)

**What would you like either or both to be doing better in the future?**

CSU System could do better in the future with:

1. Providing support for mandates
2. Affordable housing
3. Prioritizing new initiatives
4. Less of a “one size fits all” approach

CSUMB could do better in the future with:

1. More effective and clear internal campus communications
2. Our multiple stakeholders by:
  - a. Attracting community members to campus with events
  - b. Enhancing CSUMB visibility
  - c. Establishing effective regional educational partnerships with community
  - d. colleges
  - e. Communicating with external audiences more frequently and in positive ways
  - f. Establishing CSUMB as a “first choice” university
  - g. Increasing alumni relations
  - h. Participating in Super Sunday
3. Continuing to develop a physically attractive campus
4. Retaining faculty and staff by:
  - a. Providing affordable housing and/or increasing salaries to offset lack of affordable housing,
  - b. Providing faculty travel funds
  - c. Providing more, high quality professional development opportunities for staff and faculty
  - d. Acknowledging and rewarding staff and faculty for what they do
5. Student experience by:
  - a. Offering a vibrant co-curricular experience
  - b. Effective referrals; less “run around” for students
6. A focus that moves beyond the Tri-County (developing a sense of the local, regional, national, and international in the evolution of CSUMB)
7. Leadership:
  - a. Re-evaluating the academic funding model
  - b. Prioritizing CSUMB’s strategic goals

**What changes need to occur at each level (campus and system) in order to do what each should be doing?**

The CSU system needs changes to:

1. The funding model
2. Increase advocacy of the system with the legislature
3. Increase marketing of the benefits of a CSU education
4. Expand the definition of "success" beyond "throughput" (recruitment, retention and graduation) to encompass achievement of the educational outcomes of the institution.

CSUMB needs changes in:

1. Recruitment and retention
  - a. Providing stronger academic advising
  - b. Smoothing the transfer process
  - c. Emphasizing affordability
2. Academic Affairs
  - a. Continue to develop assessment of outcomes-based education—commit resources to enhance assessment capacity
  - b. Provide degree programs that are needed in the region. CSUMB is providing concentrations in Agribusiness, Hospitality Management and Entrepreneurship/Intrapreneurship. Additional degree offerings should be considered.
  - c. Respond to complaints and evaluations of ineffective teaching
3. Campus culture
  - a. Shift from focus on technology to the management of information. Apply technology as a tool, not a solution. Put less focus on technological solutions and more focus on face-to-face interaction.
  - b. Enhance civility in the workplace
  - c. Enhance shared governance; and engage staff
  - d. Improve accountability
  - e. Improve infrastructure and processes
  - f. Responsiveness—"customer service" improves

**How could technology help to achieve goals and/or improve business processes in this area?**

CSU system: achieving goals with technology

1. Address the issue of a technology fee for the campuses so that they can keep their technology up to date to support day-to-day operations and student learning.
2. Work with CMS people to assure that implementation assists campuses as needed with Facilitating Graduation initiatives.

Opportunities at CSUMB with technology:

1. An improved website is essential. It will enhance the visibility of CSUMB. Easy navigation is also essential.
2. The implementation of the CMS Student Information System is a huge, slow process. Its opportunities for CSUMB are degree audit and an improved vehicle for student learning plans.