

ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE
Campus Conversation Report
California State University, San Bernardino

On February 27, 2007, California State University, San Bernardino hosted a day of campus discussions to address the CSU system wide "Access to Excellence" process. Eight separate sessions were scheduled throughout the day. A facilitated discussion in each session addressed the questions posed the scheduled domain. The response to the process was positive, and during the course of the day many different faculty, students, staff, CSUSB administrators, P-14 groups, and community groups participated in discussions.

During each of the sessions, participants were provided a copy of the domain(s) to be discussed, and an overview of the goals of the exercise. Feedback from these discussions is summarized in the sections below.

Strengths of CSUSB and in the CSU:

- Exceptional opportunities for students to work directly with Faculty on Research projects that result in student papers presented at Professional Association meetings and co-authored (with faculty) academic journal publications. Result: large number of students admitted to prestigious graduate programs around the country, and improving reputation of the quality of education at CSUSB.
- Exceptional level of external research and training grants that involve partnerships with local governmental agencies and community organizations. Result: University expertise of faculty and students applied to important community issues with problem solving focus across crime prevention, children's safety and health, deteriorating neighborhoods, arts for children, teacher training and school improvement, cross-cultural understanding among other initiatives.
- Affordable
- Teaching emphasis (including opportunities for students to work directly with faculty in lower division classes and with faculty in research projects in upper division classes)
- Diversity
- Strong Comprehensive Academic Programs

What we could do better:

- Provide dedicated resources for yearly mandatory advising for all students. This theme was consistent in conversations of every domain. There is a clear need for a formal advising program either through peer advising, staff advising, or a faculty, student mentor program.
- CSU-- raise the acknowledgment of student research activities by formally educating the trustees, the legislature and the California community through regular awards, CSU informational publicity and organized faculty briefings with the Trustees/Legislators.
- CSU--recognize the critical important role that research plays in the daily life of this campus, in attracting students and in recruiting and in keeping outstanding faculty. Additional budgetary support for the research enterprise.(similar to line items for exceptional teaching programs)
- Align budgeting with program delivery so that new programs can be adequately funded over longer term
- Assume expanded leadership role with business community and K-14 public schools, particularly in the area of college-going rate and remediation programs

Needs:

- Stabilize individual campus budgets over period of time within an FTE range to allow for effective planning, rather than the topsy-turvy cycles we have experienced.
- Need to develop clear academic-based plans for future use of technology
- Advising for students. This is particularly important for those who intend to apply to or transition into the CSU, and for academic advising for currently matriculating students.
- Elevate the image of CSU. The image of an affordable working class institution that educates the workers of the state is not accurate. The CSU is turning out many of the state's leaders -- in both the private and public sectors.

DOMAIN SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Domain 1 *Assuring Access*

- Open University is an important vehicle for providing access to CSUSB / CSU. It could be used more strategically to engage prospective students and to encourage applications for admission. However, Open University policies as they stand now are not very welcoming to these students. Trends for Open University to matriculation rate should be tracked.
- Students, faculty, and community members consistently mentioned difficulties faced by students attempting to transfer into the CSU from Community Colleges. The overwhelming sentiment is that it would be very useful to have dedicated advisors to work with students who wish to attend a CSU. A wide range of issues was raised -- from the impossibility of successfully using the CSU Mentor website, to not knowing or understanding how classes will transfer, to feeling like they were “dropped” during the transfer process.
- A Distance Learning Consortium between campuses would increase the offerings and programs over a larger area to a wider number of students.

CSUSB needs to spend more time recruiting in the western part of the county. College bound high school students are often not exposed to CSUSB as an option.

Domain 2 *Connecting to P-12 Schools and to Community Colleges*

- CSUSB has been proactive in working with K-12 students, parents and school districts in promoting a culture of “I can go to college.” Of particular significance is the U.S. Department of Education “Gear UP” which was recently refunded for a second five year period. Gear Up is a partnership that is valuable enough to be regarded as a national model. The statistics reveal that “Gear UP” has made -- and is making -- a difference. More students participating in this program are making it to college. If this program could be expanded, then perhaps even a greater impact can be made in the region.
- Extended Education units can be used more systematically to ramp up teacher credential programs quickly and flexibly, with School of Education oversight of programs and quality. The CSU sprang from the state “normal school”—it should be recognized as the best in preparing teachers and the best in serving students. CSU’s MSTI initiative could be greatly enhanced by Extended Education units.
- CSU needs to work more closely with the high schools. There is confusion about why some students who successfully pass the math and English portions of the high school exit exam do not pass the ELM and EPT tests, and need remediation in college. We may consider sharing the CSU math and English standards, or perhaps offer prep classes for the ELM and EPT.
- There is some frustration about transfer patterns between the community colleges and the CSU. Even though there are articulation agreements,

transferred courses may not be degree applicable. Having community college students work with dedicated CSU advisors who are familiar with specific community college curriculum could be economically prudent in moving students more quickly through to graduation.

- The Inland Empire has the lowest college going rate in the state. We need more interventions in the primary and secondary schools. CSUSB is currently doing some very important outreach intervention, but we need to do more. Statewide, there is a real lack of understanding of the education issues in the Inland Empire.

Domain 3 **Fulfilling Commitments to Multiple Stakeholders**

- Strategic proposition: Leverage the connections of the Trustees to increase connections to key stakeholders and philanthropy for individual campuses.

Proposed action:

- Elevate the image of CSU. The UC has a brand that is positive, in contrast to the CSU's lack of brand with negative or second-class image among some prospective students and their families, some high school and community college counselors, and among some faculty recruits
 - Send RFP from the System to financial institutions for credit card fee benefits to all campuses (perhaps cutting fee rates by half or more)
 - Centralized database on alumni, made available to deans and presidents
 - Retain outside marketing consultants to provide strategic-level assistance for marketing individual campuses.
- It's important that campuses establish priorities concerning partnerships, since a university can be bombarded with requests for "partnership". Beyond that, it's also important that structures, processes and policies are in place to ensure the institution responds to requests and speaks with one voice. Extended Education operations can play a central role for the campus in the fundamental "outreach" function for local, national and international constituents.
 - Marketing plans for individual campuses and for the system need to be developed and advanced. The uniqueness and strength of each need to be celebrated. Through Advancement and Development efforts new stakeholders are being identified as well as new donors. CSUSB's Community/University Partnerships Office has brought vitality to these efforts.
 - CSU needs to spend much more effort advertising the CSU system. Advertising in local communities needs to focus on the strengths of the specific CSU. The CSU needs to highlight successful alumni and their contributions to their communities. The CSU can use alumni ambassadors to form stronger relationships with various communities.

- Service learning or community requirements for graduation would foster more of a relationship between the community and the university.

Domain 4 **Ensuring Success in Student Learning**

- Strategic proposition: Make available to presidents, provosts, and deans better comparative data about all of our students including those who enter as freshmen as well as those who enter from community college.

Proposed action:

- Provide improved assessments of students who leave the CSU, including post-graduate, to assist in alumni relations and student tracking
 - Provide improved student learning and student success data to assist in college rankings
 - Align data collection with specialized accreditations
- The issues addressed in numbers 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9 appear to be the most pertinent. Holding to an expectation that faculty will provide a rigorous learning experience is something that needs to be supported. The importance of the advising process is central to facilitating the success of our students. Finding ways in which to enrich the academic experience leading to transfer student success is important due to the large number of transfer students on this campus. Often the selection of courses or depth of course work at the community college leaves the transfer student with significant adjustment problems. We should be able to control the campus policies that directly support student success. Increasing the support for student participation in research and scholarship is important and provides an enrichment for both our students and our faculty.
 - Information literacy as demonstrated by ETS ICT, student work on research assignments, culminating experiences, e-portfolios of assembled work, etc. Library-developed online tutorials and instructional programs fostering information literacy integrated into campus curriculum. Developing information literacy as a key component of lifelong learning skills. Fits with CSU Libraries Strategic Plan, Theme A: Advancing Student Success. Requires stable, on-going funding as is being realized by the Chancellor's Office impact with the Governor. The centralized funding/support of the CSU libraries represents the maximum benefit for the expenditure and has earned the CSU national attention.
 - Many corners of a campus can contribute toward helping students gain a global perspective and cross-cultural competencies. Foreign-born faculty and students are ready resources, as are Extended Education units of campuses, given their many international programs and connections to international universities. Within the CSU system, there are now many examples of innovative programs involving

Extended Education units that could further the international educations of resident students

- The Outcomes Assessment efforts on this campus are a real strength. The COE's accreditation by NCATE requires annual unit assessment reports that include data driven decisions and program improvement based on those data. The credential programs have embedded performance assessments in compliance with state requirements.
- Community-based research is a strength at CSUSB and in the CSU. It provides opportunities for faculty and students to join with community partners to define a research problem, execute research techniques together, and take specific action to promote change in the community. This type of research addresses community problems while providing scholarly recognition for faculty and advanced learning opportunities for students.
- Key idea: Provide paid opportunities for students to engage in community-based research projects through the Federal Work/Study program. Students would receive valuable research experience, mentoring from faculty during the research project, and Work/Study funds to help with their educational expenses.
- The CSU needs to affirm the priorities of student research experiences and of addressing community needs by developing the capacity for CSU service learning offices to promote community-based research participation as one option for students' Federal Work/Study awards.
- The CSU needs to understand and support the degree to which remedial intervention is needed for students who are admitted to the universities. Besides traditional intervention strategies, there needs to be an awareness of the way in which low English skills increase the time spent in faculty course preparation and grading.
- Many students believe that one of the most important factors in movement toward graduation in a timely way is through a dedicated advisor who is a mandatory part of the educational process. The CSU should provide more resources for mandatory advising programs with paid staff that are managed through a central campus location.
- On the CSUSB campus, students would like to see at least one big campus event each quarter held on the library lawn or some other central and easily accessible location. Commuter students often have a difficult time finding opportunities to interact and connect with the larger university community.
- A more clearly defined and stated articulation between CSU campuses would make it much easier for students to finish their education when there are interruptions due to moving or lapses of time. This could be dealt with in part, with more attention to a centralized advising.

- Unfunded mandates take resources that are otherwise used for education and student success. Future mandates must come with resources in order to maintain an ability to continue with current programs and mandates.
- The formulae for campus space allocation need to be revisited to include a more realistic assessment of space usage, and an anticipation of realistic campus growth rates. In many cases, by the time the buildings are finished, we've already outgrown them.

Domain 5 Faculty/Staff Excellence to Promote Student Success

- At CSUSB: We have good staff, just not enough of them. In the staff arena in particular, we have somehow been able to preserve the "small campus" feel and customer service orientation--in general. The challenge will be to preserve these two qualities as the campus inevitably grows.
- Strategic proposition: Demonstrate and value faculty research.

Proposed action:

- Contractual agreements should reflect demands by accrediting bodies, particularly regarding part-time and lecturer faculty contracts
- The balance of tenure-track / part-time faculty must recognize the importance of tenure-track faculty for quality, consistency, and continuity of the institution.
- Add measurements to the outline point made for "supporting high performance by faculty, staff, and administrators;" tie measurements directly to Academic Qualification (AQ) standards in the case of accredited business programs.
- Recognize differences across the system and across disciplines.
- The importance of faculty quality can not be understated as it pertains to student success. Currency in the course content and awareness of future trends in the field are central to the quality experience for students. The recruitment and retention of these high-quality and diverse faculty provide the stability and direction for the campus. Support needs to be given to those faculty, staff, and administrators who clearly excel in the quality factor, a statement that argues for merit pay.
- Faculty are the heart of the institution, in fact they ARE the institution. So recruiting new faculty who are committed to the dual mission of teaching/scholarship is critical. I think we do a pretty good job of recruiting. The challenge is to keep them by supporting them in their endeavors. Nowadays, part of the support has to include assistance in the increasingly difficult California housing market.

- Recognition and support for faculty as teacher-scholars. CSU faculty conduct and produce a significant amount of important research. This research activity is central to the educational experience and quality in the CSU. It must be recognized, supported, and rewarded at a higher level than is currently the case.
- The greatest selling point and bragging point I make for this campus is we have great faculty who care about students. I advise friends to attend our campus because they will get a high quality education from a dedicated faculty who will take the time to work with students in and out of the classroom. Students are trained to succeed in graduate schools and research endeavors because of their opportunities as undergraduates to work on joint research projects with faculty and in internships with employers.

Domain 6 **Now and in the Future: Campus/System Identity**

- Strategic proposition: Individual identity of universities is paramount, as is the uniqueness of academic areas.

Proposed action:
 - Additional fees for accredited programs, consistent with quality demands may be assessed.
 - Benchmark funding sources and funding amounts / proportions against the 15 CSU-comparable institutions.

- Emphasize the role of the CSU in workforce training. Graduates of the CSU go on to become leaders in their fields – ranging from business to education to health care. Many of the graduate students in professional programs and Ph.D. programs in California graduate programs were undergraduates in the CSU. There are several initiatives, which will have a major impact upon developing areas such as biotechnology, stem cell research, and nursing.

Emphasize the role of the CSU in economic development of the state and the local regions near each CSU campus. In addition to role of research and workforce training mentioned above, there are many activities within the CSU system and individual campuses which enhance the economies of our state and region.

- Once we identify our “strengths and identity”, we need to promote it / market it to the state stakeholders and to the rest of the nation. Other university systems have done this successfully, and the CSU should look at some examples
- Advertising and Marketing are key elements that are missing at the system level. We need to advertise the strengths of the campuses to the local communities. We should be highlighting our many highly successful alumni in marketing campaigns.

- Change the image of the CSU from a “second-class” institution or a “working-class” institution to more reflect the truth of who we are turning out. While it is true that the CSU educates the middle class, we are also turning them into state and community leaders. We need to make a very concerted effort to raise the bar on our image.
- Local campus should develop more autonomy and play to their regional strengths. Some of the uniqueness of campuses is metaphorically “swallowed up” by the image of a larger monolithic system. This is a true parts/whole dilemma where truly the whole is greater than the sum of its parts but each part has as well an identity of its own. There is a delicate balance required here and I do not think we are close to achieving it.
- CSUSB has a robust technical infrastructure for on-line and videoconference learning. We have excellent instructional designers who work closely with faculty in the necessary training, design, creation, and support of 100% online and on-line hybrid courses. We have an excellent staff of multimedia developers who provide high quality enhancements to on-line and hybrid courses. Assuring quality outcomes in program offerings, providing for strategic future expansion of offerings, maintaining appropriate technical infrastructure, faculty involvement, market research, and ongoing marketing of our on-line programs will be challenges as we move forward.

OTHER:

Missing in Domains for Access to Excellence Document:

Cost of campus building and maintenance is going up. Much of the budget increases are going for operating costs, instead of for academic programs and support. Building projects are now often in the \$60- \$80 million dollar range. Balancing the costs of capital and academic needs is likely to become a real problem for campuses.

Substantive recognition of the central role that research and publications play in the health and vitality of a campus for both faculty and students.

A White Paper on the Role of Scholarly Research and Creative Activities in the CSU has been developed by the Senior Research Administrators and the Provosts. It is available at:

http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/system_strategic_planning/docs/CSU-WhitePape_12-13-06-acc.pdf

This position paper recommends steps to enable faculty and student research within the CSU, not to require research. The benefits of research and scholarly activity include:

Stronger student preparation for the workforce

Diversification of the professional workforce and the professoriate

Enhanced and often accelerated learning

Faculty retention and job satisfaction

Faculty maintain disciplinary currency

Campus prestige and student recruitment

Additional resources for campuses