Center for Community Engagement

Advancing the CSU’s commitment to serving the economic, public policy and social needs of California

The Art of Planning

2007-2008
In short, these experiences demonstrated to students that classroom concepts have societal implications.

— Cal State Stanislaus faculty member
# Table of Contents

- **WELCOME LETTER**
  - 2

- **THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**
  - CSU Map
    - 4
  - Mission and Scope
    - 5

- **THE ART OF STRATEGIC PLANNING**
  - Background
    - 7
  - Process
    - 8
  - Initial Results
    - 8

- **COMMITMENT TO ENGAGEMENT**
  - Systemwide Achievements
    - 10
  - Partnerships with Community Colleges
    - 12
  - Environmental Sustainability
    - 15

- **CAMPUSS PROFILES**
  - 19

- **CONTACT INFORMATION**
  - back cover
As we mark a new year, the California State University Chancellor’s Office is also celebrating a milestone in its decade-long commitment to community service learning. We are ushering in a new name for our office, the Center for Community Engagement, and a bold five-year vision that serves as the driving force behind the Center’s commitment to being an integral partner with the CSU’s efforts in serving the public good.

Along with these changes comes a new strategic plan and mission that chart out the Center’s future directions, goals, and action steps, and builds upon our 10-year legacy of growth. Below are just a few of our accomplishments:

- Since 1999, CSU student volunteers have contributed more than 30 million hours of service. Their contribution equates to a minimum wage value of $1.3 billion.
- In 2006, five CSU campuses—Chico, Fresno, Monterey Bay, San Francisco, and San Marcos—along with 71 other U.S. colleges and universities received the first-ever elective Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This recognition, from an independent higher education center, affirms the deep investment and continuing excellence CSU campuses have made to their communities.
- In collaboration with Stylus Publishing, the CSU launched its first national monograph series on community issues, such as social justice, gender identity, equity, and violence. Sixty-two faculty and five graduate students chronicle their personal experiences in working in partnership with communities.

As you read this report, you will learn how—through the CSU’s community engagement programs—students work within communities, providing much-needed services and positively impacting the lives of others while also expanding their own educational experiences. You can keep up-to-date about the Center’s plans by receiving CSU Impact, our brief monthly e-newsletter, or visiting our website at www.calstate.edu/cce.

Sincerely,

Season Eckardt, Judy Botelho, Rich Berrett, Tarita Varner, and Joyce Oliver
CCE Staff
MISSION STATEMENT

The CSU Chancellor’s Office, Center for Community Engagement, as a driving and innovative force, advances the California State University’s systemwide and multicampus commitment to serving the economic, public policy, and social needs of our state.
Mission and Scope

The California State University (CSU) is the nation’s largest university system, with 23 campuses and seven off-campus centers, nearly 450,000 students, and 44,000 faculty and staff. The CSU, stretching from Humboldt in the north to San Diego in the south, is renowned for the quality of its teaching and for the job-ready graduates it produces. With its commitment to excellence, diversity, and innovation, the CSU contributes significantly to California communities.

While part of the CSU system, each campus has its own unique identity. CSU campuses range from those in urban settings with student populations of more than 25,000 to those in rural areas with much smaller student populations. All CSU campuses have distinct features and programs but share the same mission—to provide high-quality, affordable higher education to meet the ever-changing needs of California.

The CSU offers more than 1,800 bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in 240 subject areas. Since the CSU began in 1961, it has awarded more than 2 million degrees. The CSU contributes strongly to California’s workforce. The CSU prepares the majority of California teachers and graduates more students in agriculture, communications, health, education, and public administration than all other California universities and colleges combined. In total, the CSU awards approximately half the bachelor’s degrees and a third of the master’s degrees awarded annually in the state.
We’ve been trying to blur the line where the campus ends and the community begins. With the help of service learning classes and activities, it’s been possible.

— J. Michael Ortiz,
Cal Poly Pomona President
The Art of Strategic Planning

Background

In 2006-07, service-learning offices at CSU campuses and the Chancellor’s Office embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning initiative. The planning process elicited a fresh opportunity to consider how these offices play a role in advancing the CSU’s public service to local communities, California, and beyond. The process was also strongly influenced by a national community engagement movement, which has taken hold and expanded the roles of service-learning offices in higher education.

Four interlocking reasons served as the basis for launching the strategic planning initiative:

- Inform systemwide direction at two levels—the strategic plan for the Center for Community Engagement (formerly the Office of Community Service Learning) at the Chancellor’s Office and Access to Excellence, the CSU’s overall strategic plan;
- Understand the contributions of service-learning offices to broader engagement matters;
- Bolster campus support for service learning; and
- Increase coherence within each office.
Process

The collaborative process was marked by shared decision-making by a diverse set of stakeholders. Additionally, four outside consultants served as facilitators and designed a number of Web-accessible resources.

Initial Results

Community engagement offices at 20 CSU campuses plus the Chancellor’s Office have current strategic plans, and the remaining three offices are currently engaged in a strategic planning process. The new strategic plans point to some clear convergence of priorities and strategies and yet also leave room for demonstration projects that can ultimately serve as best practices for other campuses. Other outcomes include:

- Ten campus offices, along with the systemwide office, have been renamed to reflect broader missions.
- Campus administrators have pledged to elevate programs among students and faculty.
- New financial resources have been secured.
Systemwide Achievements: A Review of 2006-07

Once again, the systemwide office completed a number of ventures such as public relations, fundraising, and faculty support.

PUBLIC RELATIONS
The creation of an award-winning video series documented service-learning efforts at six campuses: Chico, Humboldt, Monterey Bay, Northridge, San Francisco, and San Marcos. Personal reflections from community partners, students, faculty, and presidents convey how community-based teaching is empowering communities and transforming education. The videos debuted at the November 2006 CSU Board of Trustees meeting and have been used extensively at both campus and community levels.

FUNDRAISING
The CSU was awarded a three-year $200,000 grant from the Surdna Foundation to design a professional development series for campus leaders. Through the use of in-person meetings and a peer mentor, the Surdna training program aims to strengthen leadership skills and offer a networking forum that will inspire colleagues in both the professional and personal realms.

"The service-learning opportunities assist me in accomplishing my goals as a professor: to help students learn from books, people, and real-life problems; and to offer solutions. For me, that is how you measure a good education..."

— Valerie Talavera-Bustillos, Cal State Los Angeles faculty member
FACULTY SUPPORT

To achieve a broader community engagement agenda, the Center is shifting its culture to be more receptive and supportive of faculty. The following projects highlight this new focus:

- In February 2007, the 2nd Annual Conference on Community-Based Teaching and Research: Diversity in California was held, and more than 150 participants attended representing all 23 campuses. California is one of four states designated majority-minority by the U.S. Census Bureau; the conference provided an opportunity for community scholars to discuss research methods and results related to the diversity theme and to share lessons learned in addressing critical challenges in working with the many diverse communities of California and beyond.

- The first two volumes in a civic engagement monograph series was issued where 36 CSU faculty exclusively published their multidisciplinary perspectives on community issues, in partnership with Stylus Publishing. More volumes, including a focus on political engagement, will be released in 2008.

- The Center for Community Engagement released a new guidebook titled, “See It Grow: Two Organic Approaches to Bringing Civic Learning into the First Year.” The publication highlights two campus case studies and faculty development resources. Connecting the service-learning offices and first-year programs is an ongoing priority of the systemwide office; both efforts encourage interactive teaching strategies that lead to motivated and engaged students.
Partnerships with Community Colleges

Community colleges are crucial partners in the CSU’s aspiration to produce CSU graduates who are well-informed, engaged, and committed, since two-thirds of CSU graduates choose community college for some part of their educational experiences. Many committed CSU service-learning leaders are closely working with community college colleagues with the goal of creating a mixture of service-learning opportunities in the community college curriculum as well as to encourage continued participation in higher education for community college students.

**CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS**

CSU Channel Islands is hosting a yearlong series of four cross-disciplinary forums for its faculty and their counterparts from the five surrounding community colleges in which to share techniques for building service learning into the curriculum. Using the environment as the common theme, workshop participants learn, share their experiences, and identify assessment and documentation models. Resource materials help them to incorporate the environmental theme into their classes.

**FRESNO STATE**

CSU Fresno’s Youth to College initiative provides mentoring services to improve the odds of disadvantaged high school students to graduate and go on to college. College-student mentors work with them to increase their personal, social, and academic competencies. This grant-supported project also gives the high school and college students opportunities to serve the community jointly, and a component is included to help develop new service-learning courses at colleges throughout Central California. In the first year, six such courses have been developed, including two at community colleges.
The Office of Community Service Learning staff at CSU San Marcos worked with two nearby community colleges, MiraCosta and Palomar, on an initiative to strengthen community service-learning opportunities in the region. Drawing on the strengths of existing service-learning programs at CSU San Marcos and MiraCosta, a one-day summit provided expertise to Palomar College’s administrators and faculty. The summit sparked momentum at Palomar to work toward institutionalizing a service-learning program.

“As I think about what I have gained from this course, I feel that professionally I have improved my higher order analytical skills dramatically.”

— Humboldt State University student
Opportunities for learning and insight, which cannot be simulated, routinely occur when students put their knowledge to work in the community."

— Dave Colnic, Cal State Stanislaus faculty member
Environmental Sustainability

One dimension of engagement is how universities model environmentally friendly practices, such as the integration of sustainability into the curriculum, an action plan outlining how to neutralize the carbon footprint of air travel, and campus construction. Through a wide array of engagement efforts, several CSU campuses are showing leadership in the green movement.

CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS
During spring break, students enrolled in the Mexican Mangroves and Wildlife Experience/Service Learning course traveled to a field research station based in La Manzanilla, Mexico, to learn close-up about issues in Mexican conservation. Community-based research projects offered students a chance to participate in such critical activities as hydrologic monitoring. In an area where coastal resort development threatens groundwater levels in a surrounding area that includes a mangrove forest, students helped to build and install monitoring devices. Data produced by the monitors will be used to inform local restoration and educational initiatives in La Manzanilla.

CSU CHICO
CSU Chico has been named to a list of 15 colleges and universities around the world cited for their leadership in sustainability and environmental programs. Grist, a Web-based environmental publication, placed CSU Chico eighth on its list, citing the campus’ recent first-place award from the National Wildlife Federation for work to combat global warming, as well as campus efforts in environmentally conscious building and solar energy. The publication noted that CSU Chico students “have taken up the charge with energy-saving projects and sustainability-minded service-learning programs.”
CSU DOMINGUEZ HILLS
There are two nature preserves on the CSU Dominguez Hills campus, which is a site for California native species propagation. Biology students have performed baseline studies as class assignments and have worked with faculty and community volunteers on restoration efforts. A number of service-learning students brought family members to join in planting native grasses and wildflowers as part of returning Heritage Creek to its natural vegetation. In addition, students have helped with the propagation of native animal and insect species in the nature preserve wetlands. The Center for Service Learning, Internships and Civic Engagement assists with administration and information sharing, and CSU Dominguez Hills anticipates using the preserves as teaching resources for local community outreach.

CAL STATE EAST BAY
CSU East Bay planned carefully for an “ideagora,” an online forum wherein anyone can contribute ideas. Coordinated through the Freshman Year Experience and run by first-time freshmen, the “Healthy Environment, Healthy People” ideagora matches environmental problems with problem-solvers from campus and the community. Participants in the online think tank can propose projects that put ideas into action, and student facilitators are looking for suggestions for small steps toward a greener, healthier campus, such as increasing recycling and minimizing Styrofoam waste in the food services. As ideas are posted, participants can discuss and debate them.
SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
At San José State, The Center for the Development of Recycling provides education and referral for major recycling efforts in Santa Clara County and its 15 cities. In a community service-learning program within the Environmental Studies Department, students operate the recycling website, where they research and respond to questions from the community. In addition, the students participate in special programs for recycling phonebooks, holiday trees, and motor oil. After gaining this practical experience in the field of integrated waste management, more than 50 graduates have gone on to work for cities, businesses, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. San José State’s Center for Community Learning and Leadership helps to foster similar programs at other CSU campuses.

CAL POLY SAN LUIS OBISPO
The Community Center has contributed to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo’s sustainability efforts by making its annual Change the Status Quo Conference, a community-campus event where various groups present workshops on how to address public issues, into a zero-waste event. At the conference, staff and students worked with campus dining staff to create a zero-waste, sustainable menu. Local farms donated organic vegetables, and the rest of the food was ordered from local and organic vendors. Instead of disposable plates, utensils, cups, and bowls, catering provided reusable ones, and trash-bound containers were rescued for planting seedlings. All the informational material handed out was printed on reused paper and held in recyclable folders.

"Through my service-learning experience, I learned that to safeguard a social movement there needs to be many leaders, not just one."

I see this as one of my important goals for life, to help bring up smart and constantly thinking leaders.

— Justin Nguyen, San José State University student
There are many issues that became more evident [through service learning] and made me more curious in understanding, learning, and wanting to help solve them.

— Cal State Bakersfield student
CAL STATE BAKERSFIELD
CSU Bakersfield Humanities and Social Science students worked at the Bakersfield Homeless Center as part of Champ Camp. The program provides a place to go after school for the elementary through high school students living at the shelter. The CSU volunteers helped with homework, passed out snacks, and participated in after-study arts and crafts.

CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS
Students in a sociology Capstone course partnered with Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation to evaluate the neighborhood coalition efforts in Oxnard and Ventura, and to gather baseline information on conditions in a third neighborhood in El Rio. Student participation in community building, surveys, and coalition meetings aims to assist the organization’s community- and coalition-building efforts and to determine the impact of its work to create systemic change in areas where its housing is located.

CSU CHICO
The Connections Program at CSU Chico was developed in fall 2006, as a living-learning community for first-year students to take a yearlong series of courses that integrate civic engagement and the theme “Chico as Place” while also living together in themed campus housing. Funding from the Association of American Colleges and Universities “Bringing Theory to Practice” project will allow the campus to develop two more themes for the 2008-09 academic year.

CSU DOMINGUEZ HILLS
Anthropology students at CSU Dominguez Hills enrolled in the Ethnographic Methods and Techniques course interviewed and videotaped members of the Long Beach Cambodian community, the largest such population outside Cambodia. Using the ethnographic skills learned in the classroom, students learning about this colorful community are documenting and helping to preserve its history for future generations.
**CAL STATE EAST BAY**
Kinesiology students coached kids with Team-Up for Youth, a nonprofit organization supporting high-quality sports programs for children in low-income neighborhoods. The students completed training on youth development in sports, lesson/curriculum planning, behavior and group management, CPR certification, and cooperative team building. They coached at local agencies throughout the East Bay, preparing for practices and participating in games, promoting a love of sports and physical activity, and teaching children life lessons like teamwork and the importance of hard work.

**FRESNO STATE**
Approximately 113 CSU Fresno faculty members took part in trainings through a variety of workshops and presentations, and funds were made available directly to faculty members to support service-learning and engaged research activities. Among the results is a new service-learning course in music to serve extremely high-risk high school students in a court-affiliated school run jointly by Fresno County’s probation and education offices. Another example is CSU Fresno’s project at McLane High School, now part of a longitudinal research study on the effectiveness of school-based intervention to promote regular physical activity and to reduce adolescent overweight and obesity.

**CAL STATE FULLERTON**
Apart from helping preschoolers in Orange County Head Start sites prepare for school success, CSU Fullerton Jumpstart students worked in teams to implement activities for families to promote greater involvement in their children’s learning. Family Literacy Night is an activity where each preschool child reads to her or his family. Jumpstart’s

“I interact with children much differently now than when I first started Jumpstart.”

*Through the learning in classes and hands-on work at the Head Start site, I’ve become more aware of the types of questions to ask and activities that are developmentally appropriate to stimulate progress.*

—Andrea Caplis, Cal State Fullerton student
Read for the Record is a national campaign to encourage hundreds of thousands of children and adults to read the same book on the same day. These activities reach the community and supplement learning that takes place in the classroom.

**HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY**

Twenty students enrolled in Theatre Arts Grant Writing formed one-on-one partnerships with representatives of different community agencies to write and develop grant proposals for submission to funding sources. Students applied their writing and organizational leadership skills to help proposals for such projects as a new wildlife care facility, an intertribal land management coalition, an outdoor community theatre, solar panels for a salmon restoration council, and financial support for a regional veterans’ services fair.

**CAL STATE LONG BEACH**

The Center for Community Engagement and the Center for Language Minority Education and Research at CSU Long Beach partnered with Long Beach Better Learning After School Today to design and team-teach the community service-learning course Leadership and Social Change. The first students were placed in school and after-school programs to work with at-risk middle school children while exploring concepts of community-based leadership. All participants evaluated the new course positively, and it will be offered again next year.
CALIFORNIA MARITIME ACADEMY
Students at Cal Maritime participate in a service-learning class on “environmental law” that examines laws that affect pollution, marine-life conservation, and other regulations. The future mariners then share basic concepts about these laws and policies to fifth and sixth graders in Vallejo. The elementary-aged youth create T-shirts that reflect what they have learned from their interactions with the college students. Ultimately, this experience encourages youth to be more environmentally conscious and deepens college students’ learning on complex matters.

CSU MONTEREY BAY
Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County youth got a taste for college life through a daylong college visit hosted by the Service Learning Student Leadership Program at CSU Monterey Bay. The young people participated in health and fitness activities led by CSU Monterey Bay faculty and service-learning students. They also took part in a restoration project on campus by planting native seedlings with a service-learning class from the Watershed Institute. For many, this was their first visit to a college campus.
CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE
A pilot service-learning project connected psychology students at CSU Northridge with college youth attending El Camino College’s Compton Center. CSU Northridge mentors joined the Compton Center students in a community garden every Saturday morning to clean up the campus, landscape, plant flowers, and maintain the garden. Both groups of students reported excellent results. The mentors described having more appreciation for volunteer and community-service projects, while the Compton Center students noted increases in their own socially positive attitudes while working with the mentors.

CAL POLY POMONA
Advanced Landscape Design Studio students at Cal Poly Pomona partnered with Lassalette Middle School students to create a sustainable garden while improving mathematics skills. Based on California content standards for math, the service-learning students created lesson plans related to the garden design, development, and construction. Lassalette students, although their school has been documented as low-performing, accomplished higher-level math exercises and used architectural and engineering scales for construction. Working together, the students, teachers, parents, and community members created the garden in just two weeks.

SACRAMENTO STATE
Twenty CSU Sacramento students participated in the inaugural Alternative Spring Break program by volunteering locally with Habitat for Humanity, an organization that builds or improves homes for people in need. The project, at eight sites, involved tasks ranging from laying foundations to finishing landscaping for a new house. The collaboration included campus staff from Community Engagement, Student Activities, and Student Health Alcohol Education. By helping a grassroots effort to develop affordable housing in the Sacramento region, students gained teamwork abilities, leadership skills, and a grasp of the national housing issue.

“Being part of service learning has made me feel like I belong in the CSUN family. Working in a program that keeps kids out of gangs has helped me find my niche and has given me an opportunity to work with professionals who urged me to attend graduate school so I can earn my master’s in social work.”

— Cal State Northridge student
CAL STATE SAN BERNARDINO
A grant-funded service-learning project on disaster preparation for people with disabilities was carried out at CSU San Bernardino. Health science students gathered information from community experts and used other resources to create informational brochures, fact sheets, PowerPoint presentations, and websites. Class members also created sample disaster-response kits as training aids and described their final projects to university officials and community first responders. The training materials will be distributed on campus and throughout San Bernardino County.

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
Students enrolled in Environmental Ethics worked with community partners to increase awareness of global climate change. The students helped to design educational exhibits on global warming at the Birch Aquarium. They also recruited members of local canyon communities to join a Sierra Club “friends network,” facilitated conversations and educational lectures with community members on canyon restoration and revitalization, and then worked alongside them to restore native species.

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY
The Institute for Civic and Community Engagement at San Francisco State University produced a two-minute video promoting voluntary service that highlighted the mayor’s Project Homeless Connect. Project volunteers help the homeless people obtain needed services that can make big changes possible. University leaders were on hand when the video screened at a San Francisco Giants game on a special night where proceeds went to support the project. The video, which demonstrates how individual volunteers can make a positive impact on the community, is now being used by the mayor’s office to get more people involved.
SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
CommUniverCity San José is a collaboration of residents, San José State University, the city, and community organizations to address resident-identified priorities in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood near campus. Service-learning projects focus on education, health, neighborhood development, and building social capital. One project, at Selma Olinder Elementary School, engaged San José State students from many majors in tutoring, conducting chemistry workshops, and organizing recess activities.

CAL POLY SAN LUIS OBISPO
The Zambian ambassador, a Cal Poly San Luis Obispo alumna who has been visiting the campus for the past four years to promote a sense of global awareness in students, suggested a way for engineering students to go international. The students developed a brick press that helps address critical housing problems in Zambia. One class assessed needs, prepared a business plan, conducted a feasibility analysis, did soil testing, and built a prototype. In the follow-up class, manufacturing engineering students took it from prototype to reality, helping to shelter people halfway around the world.

CAL STATE SAN MARCOS
Collaborating with Human Resources and Equal Opportunity staff and with the literature and writing studies graduate program, the Office of Service Learning hosts a series of workshops to improve the overall professional writing health of CSU San Marcos’ internal and external communities. The students facilitate the series, offered free to campus office professionals and to community partners, who learn about letter writing, e-mail etiquette, office writing communities, and editing. Six months later, 85 percent of workshop participants surveyed said that they were still using what they had learned and that they felt more confident in their writing.
SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
As a critical part of its public mission, Sonoma State University has opened a new Center for Community Engagement to coordinate and integrate the university’s community engagement activities. The center is currently developing after-school programs with the local public housing authority to provide younger children with homework assistance and to offer leadership opportunities to adolescents. In addition, several organizations that support the access of primarily low-income Latino residents in the community of Roseland to social and health services have teamed up with the center.

CAL STATE STANISLAUS
Communications students enrolled in Group Discussion Processes joined with the Hunger Network Club on campus and the United Samaritans Foundation in Turlock to develop a garden and a gardening handbook for the campus titled, “Harvest for the Hungry Garden.” The vegetable garden supplies produce to hungry families in Turlock. Student groups produced the different portions of the handbook, the history of the garden, a list of agency and business supporters, volunteer recruitment rules and procedures, contacts, and promotional materials. This effort seeks to ensure the continued operation and maintenance of this vital community service.

“SFSU students are creating a norm among community members that attending college, particularly SFSU, is possible for everyone regardless of socioeconomic status.”
— San Francisco State University community partner
For more information about the CSU:
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