

# **Strategic Plan for Excellence IV 2011-15**

**May 5, 2011**

The strategic plan for California State University, Fresno establishes the direction for the University as it begins its second century. The Centennial celebration has provided an opportunity to reflect on the University's evolution and growth over the past 100 years. It is now time to turn to the next 100 years.

## **Introduction**

The University's first three strategic plans: Plan for the 90's, Plan for Excellence I, (1997-2000), and Plan for Excellence II (2001-06), established a foundation for a new level of excellence and a culture of planning on the campus. The Plan for Excellence III (2006-11), has resulted in the recognition of the importance of the University engaging with its region and the significant growth of key academic programs fueled by private support, despite enormous financial pressures caused by dwindling state resources. This period has resulted in a new recognition of the importance of the University as a place of opportunity for those groups not previously served effectively by public higher education.

As the University begins its second 100 years of service, the environment in which it exists is facing extraordinarily turbulent times. Dramatically changing economic trends throughout the world are forcing a complete re-thinking of the future and the ability of the United States to sustain its quality of life. At the same time, public higher education faces increasing competition from the for-profit sector and extraordinary public pressure to control costs. In addition, reductions in the California budget call into question the ability of the State to provide adequate support to assure access to a public higher education for all who are qualified to attend. It is a watershed moment for the future of public higher education and an opportunity for Fresno State to refocus its efforts in the valley.

As these explosive forces buffet higher education, Central California must cope with their impact on the state and national economy while also attempting to address dramatic changes in the population of this region, as well as the need for significant transformation of the regional economy, transformation that is essential if systemic poverty is to be addressed. The future of this region, which we call the "New California," is dependent upon increasing the educational level of the population and developing an innovative culture led by social entrepreneurs who are committed to the stewardship of the region, its resources, and the people who live in this place. It is a daunting challenge, and Fresno State must play a major role in meeting it, by working collaboratively toward an alignment of major institutions and citizen leaders who are committed to transformation.

This Strategic Plan calls for the University to aggressively pursue innovation in its academic programs, to improve student success, and to close the achievement gaps between all groups. It recognizes the critical importance of providing support for the continuing

dedication of the faculty to stimulating learning, and the need for faculty to engage in transformational scholarship. At the same time, it recognizes the necessity for the University to develop innovative approaches to service delivery in order to reduce costs and to utilize the talent of existing staff and faculty. To achieve success will require an increase in private support and creative approaches to developing new resources. The campus has in place a Master Plan designed to serve the University for several years along with an Academic Plan which supports the overall University Plan.

This Plan, when successfully implemented, will allow the University to continue to grow in stature and to help transform Central California. We undertake this Strategic Plan at a perilous time, facing challenges that are both frightening in their magnitude, and exciting in the opportunities they present for new thinking and positive change. This is exactly the type of environment in which strong leadership and creativity are the essential elements of success.

## **Vision**

California State University, Fresno will become nationally recognized for education that transforms students and improves the quality of life in the region and beyond; for leadership that drives economic, infrastructure, and human development; and for institutional responsiveness that fosters creativity, generates opportunity for all, and thrives on change. Drawing from the rich human diversity of experiences, values, world views, and cultures that make up the fabric of the Central Valley, we will power the New California through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Mission**

California State University, Fresno powers the New California through learning, scholarship, and engagement. The University faculty, staff, and administrators work together to:

- Make student success our first priority;
- Embrace a culture of diversity, internationalization, and inclusion;
- Advance our established distinction in liberal arts and sciences, professional programs, and community engagement;
- Produce transformative scholarly research and creative works that target regional issues with global significance;
- Exemplify the ethical stewardship of capital and human resources; and,
- Develop institutional, community, and intellectual leaders.

## **Core Values**

- Student success that leads to lifelong learning and rewarding careers.
- Respect for difference.
- Solutions-oriented engagement with Central California challenges.

- Ethical citizenship and stewardship.
- Responsible and open inquiry, dialogue, and expression.
- Integrity-based leadership.

## **Themes**

### **1. Enhance the Student Learning Environment**

The University will improve learning for its diverse student population by placing emphasis upon effective traditional teaching methods, innovative pedagogy and active learning through research experiences, internships, service learning, and learning communities/cohorts. We will accomplish this by promoting teamwork, academic rigor, learning assessment, personal inquiry, information literacy, ethics, and problem solving.

#### **Strategies**

- Support for faculty in utilizing innovative pedagogy, on-line delivery systems and emerging technological tools that enhance learning effectiveness.
- A review of options for a more flexible academic calendar and schedule of classes, to improve student access, engagement, and learning.
- Investment in technology that encourages and enhances exceptional teaching.
- Emphasis on improved physical spaces, including “learning commons,” that provide effective environments for instruction and study.
- Development of searchable online course descriptions which also include descriptions of the learning environment, instructional style, amount of engagement expected from the student and other instructional components.
- Instructional support teams to assist faculty with enhancing learning.

### **2. Commitment to Student Transformation and Success**

The University will aggressively focus on student success and transformation, emphasizing data driven and research-based strategies, and provide support for faculty to undertake these activities.

#### **Strategies**

- Revise existing, and create new curricula to prepare students for careers and graduate education.
- Use individualized learning plans with personal learning objectives.
- Implement e-portfolios with an assessment plan to show student growth over time.
- Place an emphasis upon mentoring and mandatory advising and enhanced student interaction with faculty, staff and alumni.

- Investigate the value of block scheduling for first semester freshmen in improving student success.
- Enhance tutorial and support services for high failure rate core courses
- Use new and emerging best practices to make student advising more convenient and effective.
- Implement programs to improve academic preparation.
- Utilize other techniques such as mentoring, learning communities and first-year experience to enhance student success.
- Recruit the most talented undergraduate and graduate students and process their applications in the most efficient and timely manner.
- Continue to provide additional programs to support diverse and non-traditional students, e.g. first generation and underrepresented ethnic groups.

### **3. Transformational Scholarship**

The University will celebrate discovery and diversity, and commit itself to transformational scholarship that addresses regional issues with global applications.

#### **Strategies**

- Continue to value, support and sustain intellectual exchange and target investment to emphasize interdisciplinary research, creative activities, and engagement of faculty and students.
- Build capacity and partnerships in areas of emerging and vital importance, to include water (quality, resources, and management), atmospheric pollution and health disparity.
- Strengthen graduate programs in research and creative activities.
- Develop distinctive selected professional programs at the certificate, master's, and doctoral levels that meet the needs and addresses the diversity of the Central Valley.

### **4. Developing our Campus Community**

The ability of the University to achieve its aspirations is dependent upon its ability to recruit and retain diverse faculty, staff and administrators. An emphasis will be placed on defining, supporting and assessing the whole University as an inclusive and transformative learning community characterized by a strong commitment to innovation.

We will draw from the rich human diversity of experiences, values, world views, and cultures that make up the fabric of the Central Valley.

## **Strategies**

- Proactively recruit and retain talented, globally aware, diverse faculty and staff through a campus-wide culture of inclusiveness, shared leadership and integrity.
- Support faculty and staff in exploring a multiplicity of career paths.
- Create appropriate recognition and reward programs for the whole university community.
- Encourage a culture of health, wellness, and life balance.
- Promote faculty and staff development in response to a rapidly changing world.
- Create a culture that embraces redesign of business processes for continuous improvement, assessment and responsiveness to the campus community.

## **5. Internationalization**

The university will increase its international presence and international student enrollment with the goal of making students, faculty, staff and administrators better global citizens. We will strive to create strategic global institutional partnerships across the world.

### **Strategies**

- Provide international opportunities for Fresno State's traditional and nontraditional students through study and research abroad programs.
- Increase the enrollment of international students at Fresno State. We will provide these students educational opportunities including our traditional degree programs, professional training, and certificates with an international focus at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Provide important cultural and social experiences to increase understanding of other cultures and encourage those students to share their cultural traditions with our campus community.
- Expand the number of professional collaborations with international scholars in common areas of interest.
- Engage our global alumni as ambassadors of Fresno State to facilitate the previous points and maintain their connection to the institution.

## **6. Resource Development**

The University will seek to generate sufficient resources to support our strategic planning priorities. Resources will be increased from a combination of state funds, student tuition, private support, grants and contracts, continuing education initiatives, and funds for services provided to the region. The successful acquisition of resources

combined with creative approaches to reducing costs will ensure the funding necessary to support key priorities.

### **Strategies**

- Generate additional revenue from sponsored activity.
- Generate additional revenue from donor development.
- Develop infrastructure support for faculty or staff who provide services to the region.
- Generate additional revenue from self-supported and non-state supported programs.
- Develop a culture that embraces creative approaches to cost reduction in university operations.
- Become a leader in environmental practices that promote energy efficiency, green business operations, sustainable practices, environmental education and alternative transportation.
- Implement a broad campus-wide program that solicits and adopts ideas for fiscal savings from faculty, staff, administrators and students.
- Implement an exhaustive comprehensive program review process that evaluates each program for efficiencies and productivity in comparison to pre-established standards.
- Identify rules and procedures that need to be changed to maximize resource availability and identify ‘champions’ in areas where significant change support Fresno State’s mission.
- Create and implement a program that evaluates and potentially reduces routine administrative support services in light of technology innovations, opportunities for shared resources or process improvement in each executive area.
- Develop incentives and recognition programs that support campus wide initiatives to streamline operations or services, reduce costs and promote efficiencies.

## **7. Engagement with the Region**

As an “Engaged University”, we accept this responsibility and commit to engaging with our region and contributing to the transformation of Central California.

### **Strategies**

- Focus efforts to address the core issues of poverty in our region.
- Engage with regional partners to improve health care, agriculture, air quality, water and environmental conservation.
- Collaborate with K-12 to raise the educational achievement of all students.
- Build a culture of relevant applied research and innovation to address regional needs.
- Develop industry clusters to improve the regional economy and vitality.

- Empower social networks to improve neighborhoods and communities.
- Enhance the quality of life and celebrate cultural diversity through partnerships in the arts.
- Support a more intensive and visible leadership program designed to create transformational leaders to engage with our community.
- Offer a Division I athletics collegiate program that characterizes a commitment to student academic and athletic success, integrity, gender equity and engagement with the community.
- Deepen our connection with our alumni through university activities.

Submitted by the Strategic Planning Committee  
Endorsed by the Academic Senate, April 2011