

August 1, 2006

To: Council of Academic Deans

From: Scott G. McNall  
Provost

Cc: Paul J. Zingg  
Drew Calandrella  
Richard Ellison  
Dennis Graham  
Gayle Hutchinson

Re: **Collective Goals for Academic Affairs, 2006-2007**

As we focus on the new academic year, it is important that we continue to build on our past actions and accomplishments. It is also important to be mindful of how our individual and collective actions are shaped by the values articulated in the updated version (2006) of CSU, Chico's Strategic Plan for the Future. It is noted, for example, that we celebrate diversity not only as an idea, but as a social goal for the university. We are an academy devoted to the integration of liberal and applied learning; we promote active learning both in and outside of the classroom; we celebrate a respect for the natural environment and an orientation to the principles and practices of sustainability; and we embrace an ethic of service. These and other core values shape our academic plan, the master plan for the campus, as well as our plans for enrollment, advancement, budget and strategic plan.

Last spring (May 4-5) teams from all of the university's divisions (Academic Affairs, Advancement, Business and Finance, and Student Affairs) came together to identify goals and actions that exemplified our values and would allow us to achieve distinction through implementation of our updated Strategic Plan.

The team in Academic Affairs listed four goals for each strategic priority, after consultation with both members of the team and subject matter experts. Each goal then listed four actions to be taken. Those goals, under each strategic priority, follow.

1. Strategic Priority #1, Believing in the primary of student learning. . .we will:
  - a. Recruit, enroll, retain and graduate a diverse and high-quality student population.
  - b. Rededicate ourselves to student success by re-examining the total education of our students.
  - c. Maintain superior learning support systems that promote student success.
  - d. Systematically assess and evaluate the effectiveness of all our efforts to promote student success.

2. Believing in the importance of faculty and staff. . .we will:
  - a. Recruit and retain a highly qualified faculty and staff.
  - b. Continue to promote the teacher-scholar model to integrate teaching, scholarly and creative activities, and the exchange of ideas.
  - c. Celebrate the scholarly, professional, and creative achievements of our faculty and staff.
  - d. Ensure that our system of rewards is aligned with our vision, mission and strategic priorities.
3. Believing in the wise use of new technologies in learning and teaching, we will:
  - a. Assure that all students, faculty, and staff have access to appropriate information and instructional technology both inside and outside of the classroom.
  - b. Create a state-of-the art learning management system that will serve as the basic infrastructure for academic technology.
  - c. Assure that all learning and business processes as well as all university services are continuously improved through the wise use of information technology.
  - d. Assess the effects of technology in fostering student and organizational learning.
4. Believing in the value of service to others, we will:
  - a. Serve as the North State center for intellectual, cultural, athletic, and lifelong learning opportunities.
  - b. Establish partnerships and alliances with the diverse communities of the North State to address critical local, regional and state needs.
  - c. Support and expand internships and experiential and service learning programs for our students.
  - d. Enhance the status of Chico State as a creative campus.
5. Believing that we are accountable to the people of California, we will:
  - a. Ensure that an operating philosophy of serving the educational mission of the University defines all university units.
  - b. Foster a philanthropic culture and execute bold initiatives in the areas of fund raising and university advancement at both the university and college levels.
  - c. Encourage and support greater grant and contract activities among our faculty and staff.
  - d. Strengthen our institutional effectiveness, shared governance and sense of community.
6. Believing that each generation owes something to those who follow we will:
  - a. Become an environmentally-engaged university and strengthen our institutional reputation for environmental stewardship.
  - b. Advance sustainable development throughout the North State and beyond.
  - c. Integrate and systematically institutionalize our campus sustainability efforts.

- d. Systematically assess and evaluate the effectiveness of all our sustainability efforts.

Our colleagues in the other divisions, working with members of the Council of Deans, also came with proposed goals for each strategic priority. Let me list them for just the 1<sup>st</sup> Strategic Priority. It is, however, important to review the entire set of goals.

Strategic Priority #1:

1. Business and Finance:

- a. Through the Master Plan, foster and highlight the special unique sense of place for the University in the design and appearance of the campus in all of our capital projects.
- b. Provide an optimum learning environment by identifying and correcting unsafe conditions.

2. Student Affairs:

- a. Purposefully structure and nurture our students' academic, intellectual, cultural, and civic engagements and personal development.
- b. Periodically assess the personal, social and demographic characteristics of our students, their university experience and career needs.
- c. Recruit, enroll, retain and graduate a diverse and high-quality student population.
- d. Engage our students in the richness and diversity of American and world cultures both in and outside of the classroom.

3. University Advancement:

- a. Recruit, enroll, retain and graduate a diverse and high-quality student population.
- b. Rededicate ourselves to student success by re-examining the total education of our students.
- c. Through the Master Plan, foster and highlight the special unique sense of place for the university in the design and appearance of the campus.
- d. Strengthen our institutional reputation and record of service and environmental stewardship.

One of the things that we discovered in sharing ideas across divisions was that a congruence of values had led to a congruence of many goals and actions. It was also realized that each division must approach implementation of the Strategic Plan in ways that are unique to the division, which will lead to unique goals and actions. But, we were all focused on the same key things, e.g., achieving distinction through our sustainability initiatives, our focus on student success in and outside of the classroom; the ethical development of our students, and so forth.

After each group presented, and everyone had listened to their colleagues' ideas, each divisional team was then asked, "What actions will you take to implement each strategic priority?" There was some modification of the original divisional goals and greater

congruence was achieved. Again, taking only our 1<sup>st</sup> Strategic Priority, here is the non-ranked listing of what would be done by each division:

1. Academic Affairs:
  - a. Improve classrooms and equipment for all programs.
  - b. Development assessment and evaluation tools that allow us to measure both student and organizational learning.
  - c. Promote active learning, including internships, service learning opportunities, study-abroad opportunities, and the performing and creative arts.
  - d. Help students internalize the value of life-long learning.
  
2. Business and Finance:
  - a. Provide a beautiful place to learn, socialize, and grow.
  - b. Continue to hire high quality and committed faculty.
  - c. Dedicate ourselves to improving life-long success for our students.
  - d. Maintain our facilities in an affirmative, clean, and safe manner.
  
3. Student Affairs:
  - a. Enhance living and learning communities.
  - b. Recruit high-quality faculty and staff dedicated to student success.
  - c. Purposefully structure the experience for and nurture first-year students.
  - d. Always ask, “How will this affect the students?” before any important decision is made.
  
4. University Advancement:
  - a. Encourage collaboration between all university divisions to improve services and processes.
  - b. Increase the university’s endowments.
  - c. Increase funding for scholarships for high quality students and embrace internships.
  - d. Facilitate the connections between distinguished alumni and current students.

The final question posed to all of the teams was, “On which of the six strategic priorities should we focus, if we are to achieve distinction?” The answer was that we should focus on the 1<sup>st</sup> (student success), the 4<sup>th</sup> (community engagement broadly defined), and the 6<sup>th</sup> (sustainability). It was noted that this did not imply we would abandon implementation of the others. We must still provide resources for faculty and staff development; we must still work to assure we are using academic technologies wisely, and we must continue to raise new resources. Each unit within Academic Affairs has a responsibility to consider every year how it will implement each of the priorities and how it will build on past accomplishments.

Implementing the Strategic Plan for the university and continuously improving has required the work of many people, usually working in teams. It is especially important that we build on the success of the spring retreat and work across divisional boundaries. We can't all do everything. (There were four goals for each of the six strategic priorities, and four actions for each goal, which yielded ninety-six important things to do.) After reviewing the results of the spring retreat, going over the goals of all divisions, and looking for congruence on a few key goals and actions, I believe it will be most productive if we organize ourselves into groups to work with our colleagues in the other divisions. **Teams will therefore have primary responsibility for finalizing the specific goals and actions to be taken for their priority and for reporting back by September 15, 2006 what those goals and actions are for each division.** Let me hasten to add that this does not mean we are telling other divisions what to do, only assuring that our efforts are mutually supportive.

Individuals are listed below for each strategic priority. The first person named in the list has the responsibility for bringing together the relevant members of the teams in advancement, business and finance, and student affairs. It may be that the necessary "meetings" can be held electronically, as we already have the written results of the spring retreat.

1. Strategic Priority #1. Bill Loker, Bob Hannigan, Susan Place.
2. Strategic Priority #2. Leslie Nix-Baker, Sarah Blackstone, Bob Jackson, Diane Wright.
3. Strategic Priority #3. Bill Post, Arno Rethans.
4. Strategic Priority #4. Debra Barger, Phyllis Fernlund, Jim Houpis, Dan DeWayne.
5. Strategic Priority #5. Ken Derucher, Willie Hopkins, Katie Milo
6. **Strategic Priority #6. Scott McNall, Jennifer Fox**

I have asked President Zingg to provide an opportunity for the teams to report at the senior management meetings. I will also ask for a brief report at each of the CAD meetings. I would like to offer Gayle Hutchinson, Chair of the Academic Senate, the opportunity to join one or more of the teams.

It is important to add a reminder, as we focus on goals and actions, that "All goals and actions have resource implications." For example, it was noted by many at the spring retreat that we should expand experiential learning opportunities for our students as well as opportunities for service learning and civic engagement. I agree we should do this, but we are now operating at capacity in terms of our ability to provide the training for faculty to identify and develop appropriate learning opportunities for our students. It will be helpful to all of us, as you are determining which things are most important, if you rank goals and actions. Our values become a guide in determining how best to allocate and reallocate resources to meet the needs of our students and to achieve institutional distinctiveness.

Normally I do not list the goals for the vice provosts and deans in this letter. I'm making an exception because I think it is important that we consider the many different responsibilities each of us have when it comes to implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Future. The following are a few of the assignments our colleagues have; it is not a complete list of individual goals. They are simply some of the highlights of what I've asked people to do.

1. Debra Barger. Help to assure the success of the November conference on sustainability; broaden conference management; seek new sources of revenue for RCE; and expand opportunities in Yuba City.
2. Sarah Blackstone. Complete the measures for the Equity or Diversity Scorecard and post to the Diversity web site; bring to CAD recommendations concerning affirmative recruitment of faculty and staff; develop a North State arts forum or arts day.
3. Ken Derucher. Help raise resources for a conference center at the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve; develop a CASE statement for an endowed position in leadership studies; and assure success of the major in Concrete Management.
4. Dan DeWayne. Continue to broaden underwriting support; assure success of "On the Creek," and develop and implement a plan for the transformation of KCHO.
5. Phyllis Fernlund. Address the shortage of mathematics and science teachers in the North State; work with Dean Houpis to host a North State forum for mathematics and science teachers; and complete needs assessment for the educational doctorate.
6. Jennifer Fox. Help with the development of a new organic dairy; deepen industry connections for the Agricultural Resource Initiative; and, work to integrate the College of Agriculture's programs with the university's sustainability initiatives.
7. Bob Hannigan. Assure the success of the partnership with the McConnell Foundation; work closely with the deans to provide educational offerings in Redding; expand out-of-state recruitment efforts, Yuba City opportunities and coordinate campus efforts at facilitating graduation.
8. Willie Hopkins. Continue to expand fellowships for faculty and industry connections; assure the success of the program in entrepreneurship; assist in the development of a Center for Sustainable Business Practices.
9. Jim Houpis. Work with Dean Fernlund to host a North State mathematics and science forum and increase number of mathematics and science teachers; oversee the development of a natural history museum, its exhibits and its programs; and continue to support expansion of environmental research.
10. Bob Jackson. Provide opportunities for college chairs to become more familiar with their budgets, as well as that of the larger university; begin

strategic hiring initiative in the college; and facilitate a smooth transition to a new dean.

11. Bill Loker. Work with appropriate Senate committees to advance assessment of our general education curriculum and the programs; assure the success and vitality of the Honors Program, with a new director and adviser; continue work on the First-Year Experience; assure the quality of the University Life course; and work closely with the deans to assure quality of undergraduate programs.
12. Katie Milo. Continue to mentor new faculty to help them develop funded research agendas; expand grant and contract opportunities for the faculty, particularly in the area of the environment; assure that the Research Foundation operates with a positive cash balance and restore the faculty incentive program.
13. Leslie Nix-Baker. Work closely with Bill Loker, Karla Zimmerlee, Katie Milo, and other appropriate campus representatives, to orient new faculty to the life of the campus; continue cross-training in Human Resources (HR); and assure that HR is seen as an effective service provider for the campus.
14. Susan Place. Expand international recruiting efforts; help to retain international students; work with Butte Community College on the joint recruiting of international students; assure the success of the exchange relationship with the National University of Costa Rica.
15. Bill Post. Help at the local and system level to make PeopleSoft a more effective management tool; assure the success of our new course-management system; consult with faculty to determine the level of support that needs to be provided to use Vista effectively; update and expand the number of “smart” classrooms; and continue strategic planning efforts to fund campus technology needs.
16. Arno Rethans. Provide the leadership and resources necessary to assure a successful WASC reaccreditation visit; help deans manage to balance resources and enrollments; provide budgetary advice to the provost; and assure all resources are managed to protect the future of the institution and implement the Strategic Plan for the Future.
17. Diane Wright. Continue to serve as a liaison with the staff development committee; work to mentor new administrative assistants; help to provide timely reports; and manage the day-to-day operations of the office.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our collective goals, or your individual assignments. As always, I stand ready to help you in any way I can.