



AGENDA
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Meeting: 8:00 or 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, January 27, 2010**
Glenn S. Dumke Auditorium

Discussion

2. California State University Graduation Initiative: Delivering on Access to Excellence, *Information*

California State University Graduation Initiative: Delivering on Access to Excellence

Presentation By

Charles B. Reed
Chancellor
Jeri Echeverria
Executive Vice Chancellor and
Chief Academic Officer

Summary

This item presents the California State University's Graduation Initiative, an initiative in which all twenty-three campuses are participating. The overall goal of the initiative is to raise the six-year graduation rates of our students to the top quartile of national averages for six-year graduation rates and to halve the existing achievement gap between our traditionally underrepresented students (URMs) and our non-traditionally underrepresented students (non-URMs). This six-year initiative will also include targets for our transfer students, as well as a structure for monthly, quarterly and annual progress reports. Initial campus plans received in December 2009 indicate that, should our campuses achieve their stated goals, we will achieve an 8% increase in graduation rates as a system by spring of 2016.

Background

As a result of national, regional, and system-wide conversations regarding the achievement gap between URMs and non-URMs, Chancellor Reed convened CSU executives in October 2009 to launch a Graduation Initiative aimed at improving graduation rates and closing achievement gaps among our students. Campus presidents and provosts came together for a workshop entitled, *Raising Overall Achievement and Closing Gaps: Delivering the Access to Excellence Goals*. The workshop was conducted by Sir Michael Barber who shared his approaches to taking on large-scale targets in England's Blair Administration, and to delivering on them successfully.

As a result of the workshop, each CSU president committed to bringing their six-year freshman graduation rates into alignment with national universities in the top quartile of graduation rates. Those CSU campuses already in that quartile signed on to increase their graduation rates by an additional 6%. All campuses committed to halving their achievement gaps. These bold targets were engaged with full knowledge that achieving them will be challenging and that innovative approaches may be required to deliver them. In late December, all twenty-three campuses submitted plans for their Graduation Initiative. Each plan included:

- Contact information for campus Delivery Team Members;
- Targets for full-time freshmen six-year graduation rates;
- Targets for underrepresented (URM) freshmen six-year graduation rates;
- Targets for increasing graduation rates among transfer students;
- Targets for increasing URM transfer graduation rates;
- Specific action steps to be taken by each campus;
- Specific action steps to be taken this month and in February and March; and
- Trajectory chart(s) showing anticipated improvements over the next six years.

All of the reports were received and members of the Chancellor's Office Delivery Team are drafting responses to each campus president and provost. The CO Delivery Team is planning to share best practices with all campuses through the Academic Council meetings, as well as through direct communication with Delivery Team Leaders on each campus. The Chancellor's Office Delivery Team is comprised of:

Jeri Echeverria, Executive Vice Chancellor;
Jeff Gold, Director of Academic Technology Services for Operations and Management;
Kenneth O'Donnell, State Associate Dean for Academic Programs; and
Robyn Pennington, Director of Quality Improvement Programs.

This team has been meeting weekly since December to establish procedures for the project and will continue to meet weekly for the life of the project in order to support campus Delivery Teams, to share best practices, to consider and encourage system-wide ideas and innovations are appropriate, and to track and report on progress being made toward our overall goal to all constituencies. This month the Delivery team is also working with Vice Chancellor Ashley to develop a long-term communication plan for the project.

After the campuses have received initial feedback on their plans and have clarified any questions regarding their plans, campuses will begin reporting their progress in a monthly one-page format on the final Friday of each month. In addition, there are plans to collect fuller quarterly and annual reports, and to have the Graduation Initiative as a regular agenda item on the Executive Council and Board of Trustees agendas.

The Delivery Team looks forward to reporting to the Board of Trustees on our progress and on our challenges in future meetings.