

California State University, Chico

Academic Plan

May 5, 2015

Academic Affairs Vision

Prepare our academic community -- students, faculty, staff and administrators -- to thrive in today's rapidly changing social, cultural and economic contexts and to advance solutions to complex local and global problems.

Academic Plan: 2015-2020

This Academic Plan is the result of a collaborative, consultative process designed to give direction to the work of Academic Affairs over the next five years in service to our vision. This plan will serve as the guiding strategic planning document for the Division of Academic Affairs through 2020. This Academic Plan reflects the many voices of the campus community that contributed to its creation, Chico State's evolving Strategic Priorities and the mission of the California State University system. Our focus is on student success – improving access, ensuring high quality learning experiences, engaging students in high impact learning practices and facilitating timely graduation. We seek to create a campus environment that is student-centered and inclusive especially as we concentrate our efforts on enhancing student, staff and faculty diversity.

This plan provides a rich context for setting ambitious goals for ourselves and our students and for holding ourselves accountable for reaching these goals. We intend this plan to be a living document, one that is used annually as a touchstone for ongoing progress as well as new initiatives. It will also be used as a lens through which we will view other initiatives in Academic Affairs as we develop new priorities for advancing our work on behalf of students. Colleges and departments within Academic Affairs will also use this plan to guide the development of their own strategic plans. The plan will also be shared with other divisions, Student Affairs,

Advancement and Business and Finance, because it recognizes that collaboration and cooperation across divisions is critical to the success of students.

Specifically, the themes identified in this plan will be used to: 1) align our efforts in Academic Affairs with the priorities outlined in the university's 2006 strategic plan, 2) develop new and enhance existing initiatives that are consistent with this plan, 3) determine appropriate ways to measure our success in meeting the challenges outlined in this plan, and 4) assign responsibility to appropriate people, departments, colleges or other units in Academic Affairs.

Theme 1: Prepare Students for Lifelong Success

We are committed to the goal of *inclusive excellence* for all students at California State University, Chico as we prepare them for fulfilling professional, civic and personal lives. We will strive to attract and retain a diverse student body, both domestic and international. Our students will graduate in a timely manner, well-prepared for lifelong success. A Chico State education will make available to all students engaging learning environments, enhanced by high-impact educational practices and immersive experiences that provide them with the preparation necessary for success in a diverse and globalized world.

1. Support academic excellence and achievement through highly intentional, appropriately scaffolded and up-to-date curricula and learning environments.
 - Ensure proficiency in core competencies: written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning and information literacy.
 - Ensure proficiency in disciplinary competencies in the major field of study and opportunities for integrative interdisciplinary scholarship and learning.
 - Provide timely, high-quality academic advising to assist students in finding their passion and realizing their full academic potential.

2. Provide professional preparation that supports our students as effective contributors to the economic health and vitality of the State of California and to our increasingly globalized society.
 - Provide effective career path advising at all stages of students' education.
 - Foster professional competencies such as: presentation skills, technological fluency, financial literacy, and sophisticated use of e-portfolios to demonstrate competencies.

3. Foster an ethic of personal and social responsibility characterized by an appreciation of diversity, an understanding of globalization, and a commitment to civic engagement and sustainability.

- Reaffirm the civic mission of a Chico State education and cultivate an ethic of respect for and appreciation of diversity both locally and globally, intellectually and personally.
 - Implement a more systematic and coherent inclusion of civic engagement across the curriculum and co-curriculum.
 - Strive for quality of life through a commitment to the sustainability of our planet and the health and wellness of our students.
4. Provide students with opportunities for high impact and immersive experiences that prepare them for academic, professional and civic excellence.
- Expand opportunities for quality internships, practica, mentoring and similar practical experiences focused on professional preparation.
 - Provide research experiences for graduate and undergraduate students to sharpen disciplinary and interdisciplinary learning.
 - Expand service learning, study abroad and community-based research opportunities focused on the application of knowledge in local and global contexts.

Theme 2: Cultivate a Culture of Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Learning is at the heart of all we do. We cultivate a culture of excellence in teaching and learning for students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Doing so honors our heritage and ensures our ability to serve our students now and in the future.

1. Provide institutional resources and support for pedagogical excellence for continuous professional and pedagogical development.
- Provide appropriate technologies (computers, software and other discipline-specific equipment) and training in their use.
 - Encourage and reward pedagogical innovations including high-impact practices, civic engagement, and immersive educational experiences.

- Share pedagogical innovation and success through research on and dissemination of our results at the local, state, and national and international levels, while learning from others.
2. Create innovative curricula through effective processes that lead to thoughtful review, modification, and renewal of our curriculum, including a concerted effort to create interdisciplinary scholarship and research opportunities for faculty and students.
 - Develop efficient mechanisms for integrating disciplinary, interdisciplinary and general education curricula.
 - Expand and support international teaching, research and learning opportunities, both locally and globally.
 - Demonstrate and encourage disciplinary excellence and interdisciplinary innovation.
 3. Commit to continuous improvement in teaching and learning practices. Evaluate our current practices, set goals for improvement, and actively pursue strategies for achieving those goals.
 - Conduct strategic and purposeful assessment of teaching and learning at all levels (course, program, unit, college and university).
 - Build and utilize rich and appropriate sources of data for analytical research and decision making in support of excellence in learning and teaching.
 - Ensure that our campus is characterized by physical environments and spaces that enable active learning.
 - Anticipate and respond to changes in the academy and society.

Theme 3: Build and Sustain a Diverse and Connected Community

Creating and sustaining community is essential for our collective success, including the success of our students. An ethic of inclusiveness reflects our commitment to a diverse and flourishing academic community. Community is an essential aspect of the Chico Experience that grounds us in the local and connects us to the global.

1. Commit to shared governance through a climate of mutual trust, shared responsibility and transparency. This shared responsibility builds the collective campus community, strengthens our culture of teaching and learning and promotes productive, creative, satisfying work environments for all.
 - Develop, administer, and respond to periodic surveys of campus climate.
 - Provide professional development opportunities to facilitate community and strengthen effective leadership.

2. Foster a stronger sense of academic community through physical spaces that facilitate communication and remove barriers to collaboration.
 - Create spaces for communication, collaboration, wellness, and social interaction.
 - Strengthen *inreach* efforts designed to build academic community.
 - Strengthen *outreach* efforts designed to promote sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships between the University and the communities we serve.

3. Support highly intentional mentoring for the success of students, faculty, staff and administrators.
 - Strengthen the use of student peer mentors through enhanced peer mentor training, a broader, more diverse pool of peer mentors, creative and constructive incorporation of peer mentors in support of our academic mission and assessment of their effectiveness.
 - Collaborate with Staff Council and Faculty Affairs to determine the optimal scope of mentoring needed and develop programs to address those needs.

Theme 4: Foster Faculty Renewal and Sustainability

The Academic Plan represents an opportunity to reflect collectively on the quality of faculty life in a context of rapid change. Renewing our commitment to the teacher-scholar model and our investment in individual faculty excellence strengthens our academic community, supports

student success and contributes to our collective success and well-being. A diverse and highly-qualified faculty is a fundamental value of our University and critical to the success of our students.

1. Recruit and retain a diverse, high-quality faculty.
 - Actively pursue strategies to attract and hire faculty that contribute to educational excellence and share our values of an inclusive academic community.
 - Create a welcoming environment that supports faculty professional development and success in navigating the retention and tenure process.

2. Align faculty workload and responsibilities: teaching, research, and service.
 - Increase tenure density to better manage tenure-track/tenured faculty workload.
 - Demonstrate our commitment to those faculty not on the tenure-track through expanded opportunities for professional development and career advancement.

3. Promote the Teacher-Scholar model through faculty development activities focused on enhanced teaching, research and scholarship across the faculty's career.
 - Align departmental, college and university retention, tenure and promotion standards in support of the Teacher-Scholar model.
 - Provide incentives for temporary faculty, including awards and opportunities for leadership consistent with their essential roles in meeting our academic goals.

4. Ensure equitable compensation for faculty.
 - Create campus mechanisms to ensure that compensation issues are addressed in an equitable and ethical manner, to include negotiation transparency, formal codification in college constitution/procedures, consistent and timely information sharing.

Theme 5: Foster Staff Renewal and Sustainability

We recognize that staff, individually and collectively, are essential contributors to the educational experiences of our students and the mission of our University. We will strengthen our focus on staff excellence, professional development, wellness and diversity.

1. Recruit and retain a diverse and high-quality staff.
 - Follow exemplary practices in attracting and nurturing diverse and highly qualified staff.
 - Recognize and celebrate the value and contributions of staff across all classifications.
2. Strengthen and increase opportunities for professional growth, development of job skills, and wellness activities.
 - Create accurate position descriptions and identify career paths for every job classification.
 - Improve annual performance review processes and include development plans for growth.
 - Increase number of workshops, classes, and training sessions offered.
 - Promote and support use of online courses and training tools.
3. Sustain and enhance flexibility in the workplace and workforce.
 - Provide opportunities for cross training and collaboration.
 - Allow for flexible schedules to enhance work/life balance and allow for professional development opportunities.
4. Ensure equitable compensation for staff.
 - Ensure that compensation issues are addressed in an effective, efficient, equitable and ethical manner.

Theme 6: Implement Highly Effective Administrative Processes

We will strengthen the effectiveness of administrative processes to support data-driven decision making in support of our shared priorities. All administrative processes must support the University's and Academic Affairs' Mission including student success, academic community and the wise stewardship of resources.

1. Strengthen the organization and provision of data to various stakeholders in Academic Affairs in support of informed decision-making focused on the goals of this Academic Plan. Data-driven decision making includes the setting of specific goals, performance metrics and the provision of data to track progress.
2. Streamline administrative processes to ensure that all actions are appropriate to the task, focused on the University's and Academic Affairs' mission and supported by effective technologies, platforms and related tools.
3. Support professional development opportunities for administrative staff and managers to enhance effective management, increase necessary capacities and skills and cultivate academic leadership at the University.