

Division of Academic Affairs  
Provost Special Action Team (SAT)  
*Reimagining Chico State for a Brighter Future*  
Fall 2024

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Team Members

- Tiffani Anderson, Chemistry and Biochemistry
- Shawn Brackett, College of Communication and Education
- Cindy Daley, College of Agriculture
- Jesse Engebretson, Recreation, Hospitality, and Parks Management
- Emily Fleming, Biological Sciences
- Eli Goodsell, Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
- Aishu Gowda, AS Director of Social Justice and Equity
- Nathan Heggins Bryant, English
- Ben Juliano, Computer Science
- Dev Kachiwala, AS Director of Academic Affairs
- David Leonard, Multicultural and Gender Studies
- Rachel McBride-Praetorius, Tribal Relations
- Matthew Meuter, Marketing
- Rachel Middleman, Art and Art History
- Rebecca Nelson, Faculty Development
- William Nitzky, Anthropology
- Tal Slemrod, School of Education
- Christian Sullivan, AS President
- Zanja Yudell, Philosophy

Special thanks to Holly Ferguson for providing administrative support.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CHARGE

In August 2024, Provost Leslie Cornick appointed a 19-member Special Action Team (SAT) charged with reimagining the future of Chico State's academic identity and structures. In September, the SAT met with the Provost and EAB, a consulting firm specializing in education, to discuss key considerations, focus areas, a consultation plan, and deliverables.

[Appendix A: Charge Letter](#)

### PROCESS

The SAT met and communicated regularly, conducted public surveys and listening sessions, and presented recommendations to the Provost. Internal subgroup committees focused on research, engagement, analytics, and recommendations. SAT maintained transparency through a public website and internal email updates and utilized Google *NotebookLM* to analyze the data collected through campus engagement with the following prompt: "What key points and themes emerge from the sources?" [Appendix B: Detailed Process](#)

### CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The interdisciplinary matrix model represents how the academic colleges (columns) interact with support units (rows) and is used to highlight administrative *and* academic work that crosses college boundaries.

### STRUCTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Form a college centered around **Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and the Environment**.
2. Form a college centered around **Health, Wellbeing, and Human Services**.
3. Departments/units **choose** college affiliation if structural recommendations are adopted.
4. Form an **interdisciplinary** academic support unit that works with all colleges.

[Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations](#)

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT UNITS

The Special Action Team recommends further research for a more thorough assessment of the academic support units (rows) to fully understand how they function. Our academic support units could be reimagined to leverage innovation.

### WORKFLOW BARRIERS

Multiple workflow and processes currently undermine the core mission of Chico State, limit student experience, undermine workplace quality, and undercut the possibilities of innovation and new modes of thinking.

### ADDITIONAL CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Special Action Team recommends further campus engagement and consideration of the key points for successful restructuring (i.e. transparency and communication, shared governance, equity and fairness, student-centeredness, strategic alignment).

[Appendix D: Recommended Student Survey Questions](#)

## CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The research subgroup committee reviewed organizational models at higher education institutions across North America to identify organizational structures in use and in discussion.

It was determined that an **interdisciplinary matrix model (Figure 1)** represents how our current academic colleges interact with our current support units. This model can be used to examine administrative relationships, and below we use this model to highlight administrative *and* academic work that crosses college boundaries.

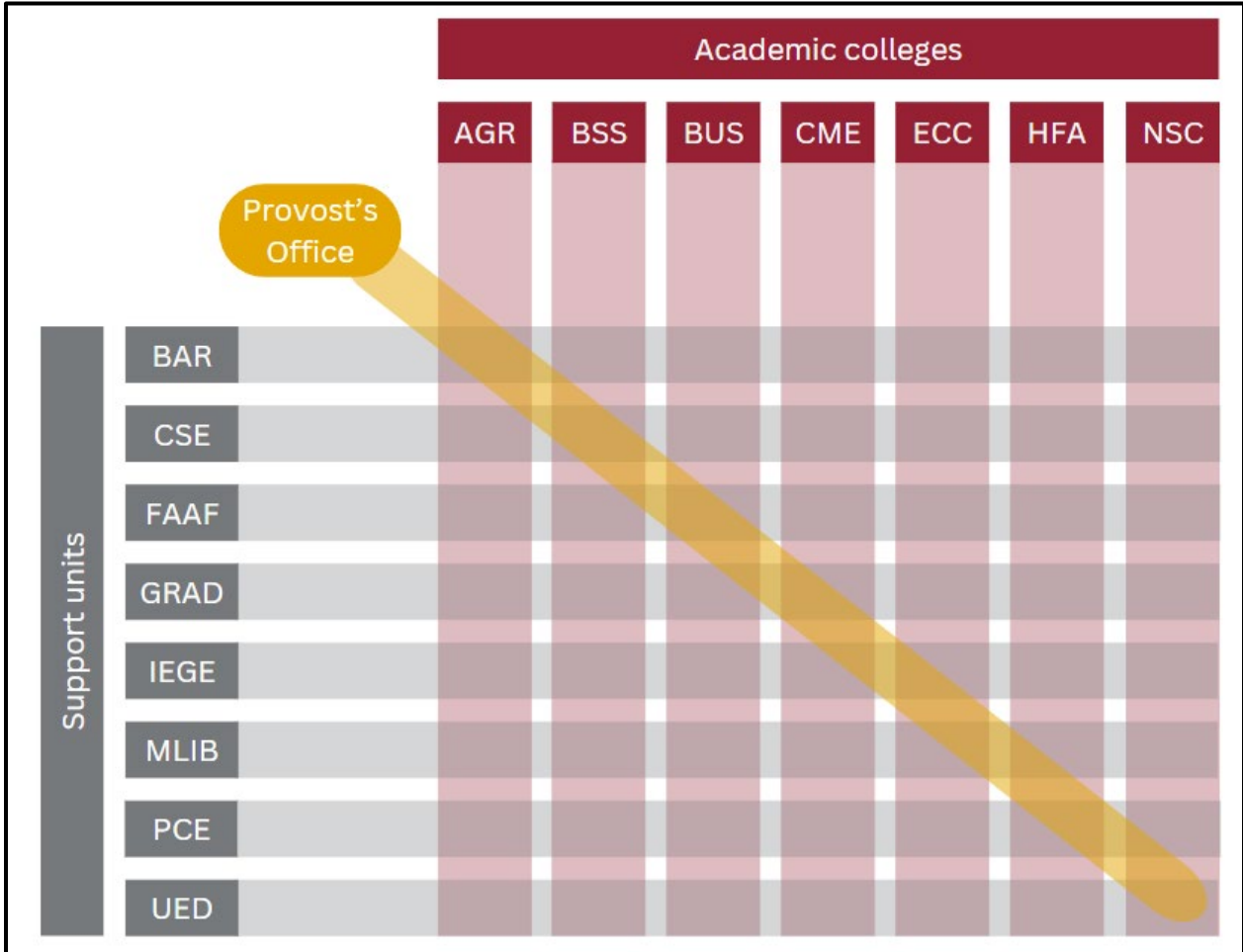


Figure 1. Chico State’s Academic Affairs, including Academic colleges (columns) and Academic support units (rows) organized as a matrix model.

## STRUCTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Special Action Team developed four comprehensive recommendations for restructuring academic units grounded in key aspects of our current challenges and opportunities that foster student-centeredness; innovation and creativity; and interdisciplinarity. [Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations.](#)

1. **Form a college centered around Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and the Environment (Figure 2).** This new college could bring together faculty, staff, and centers that focus on agriculture, science, land, and the environment that were previously in up to three or four different colleges. This could increase the college size, leading to the benefits provided for larger colleges, such as more specific dedicated support staff. [Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations.](#)

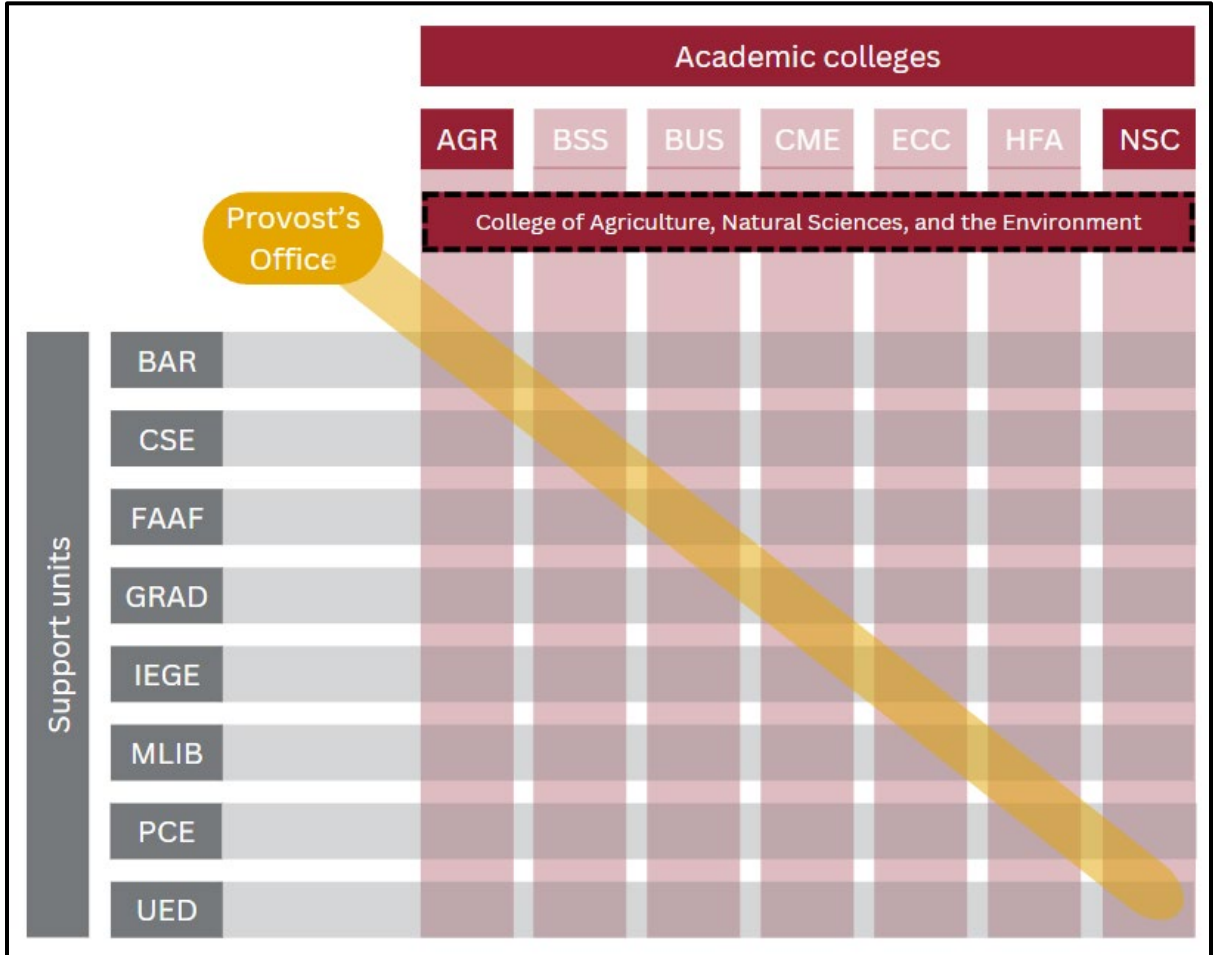


Figure 2. A proposed college centered around Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and the Environment (combined as one column with AGR and NSC removed), highlighting the colleges that could be associated with this as a new college. The actual name of the college, yet to be determined, would be up to the individuals in the college.

2. **Form a college centered around Health, Wellbeing, and Human Services (Figure 3).** This new college would aggregate students, faculty, and centers currently dispersed across three colleges. Pulling together these disciplines, which have a common theme, would provide for more prominence to the programs, provide students with better advising, and facilitate more private/public partnerships in the North State. [Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations.](#)

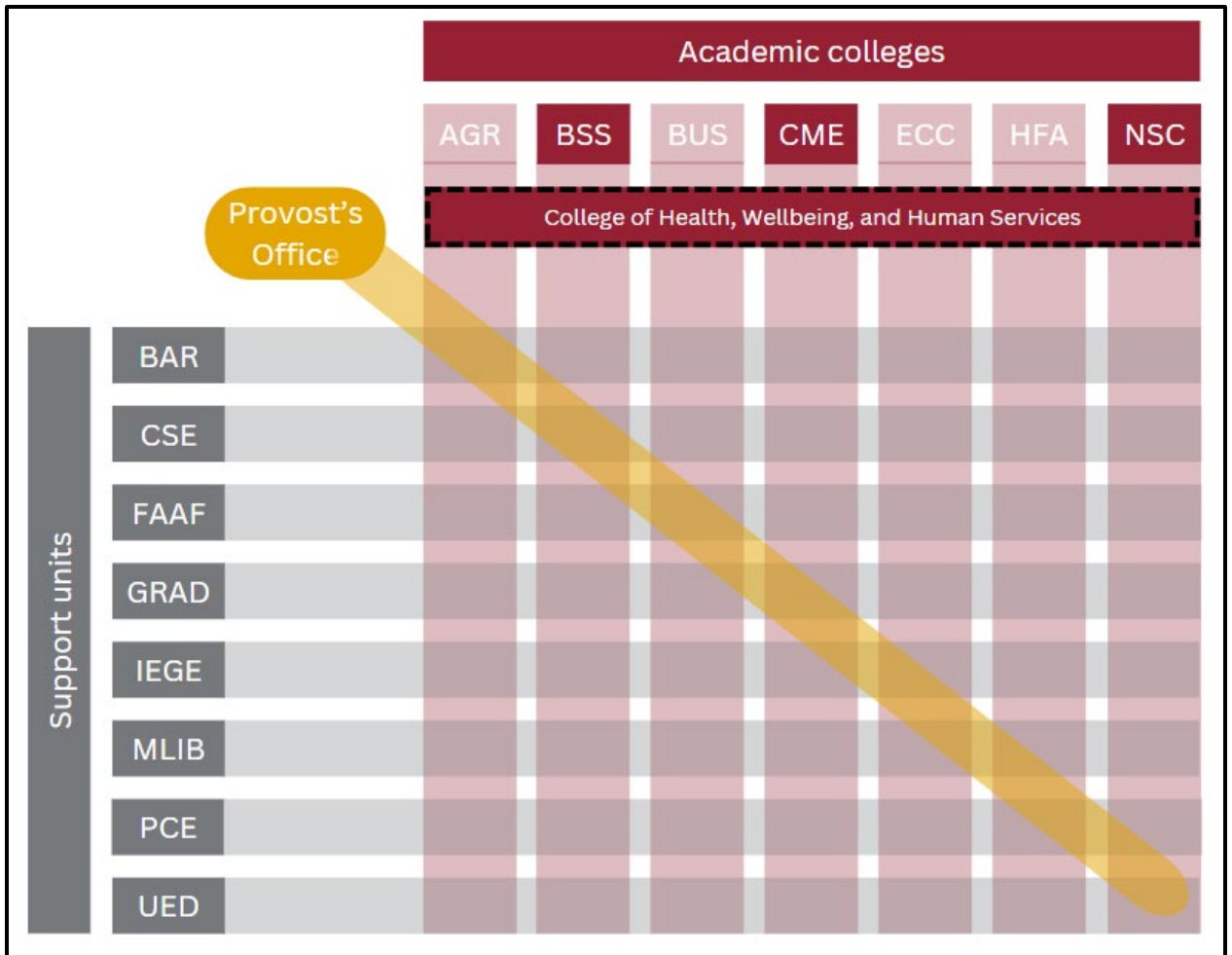


Figure 3. A proposed college centered around Health, Wellbeing, and Human Services (combined as one column with potential departments from BSS, CME, and NSC self-selecting into this proposed college) highlighting the colleges that could be associated with Health, Wellbeing, and Human Services. The actual name of the college, yet to be determined, would be up to the individuals in the college.

3. **Allow departments/units and associated centers to choose their college affiliation if structural recommendations are adopted.** Regardless of the structural change, departments/units and associated centers should be free to choose their future college affiliation. This would be determined with all partners involved including, but not limited to, the department members, the department chair, the dean, and the provost. [Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations.](#)
4. **Form a cross/multi/inter-disciplinary support unit (Figure 4) that works with faculty, staff, and other units (i.e. hubs, centers, schools) in all colleges.** This support unit would be led by a dean or AVP-level member advised by a representative or representative body of faculty. Such a unit could break down current barriers that prevent interdisciplinary teaching and research; allow for equal representation of campus members; facilitate new programs; and serve as a nimbler and less bureaucratic testing-ground for emerging topics and innovation. [Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations.](#)

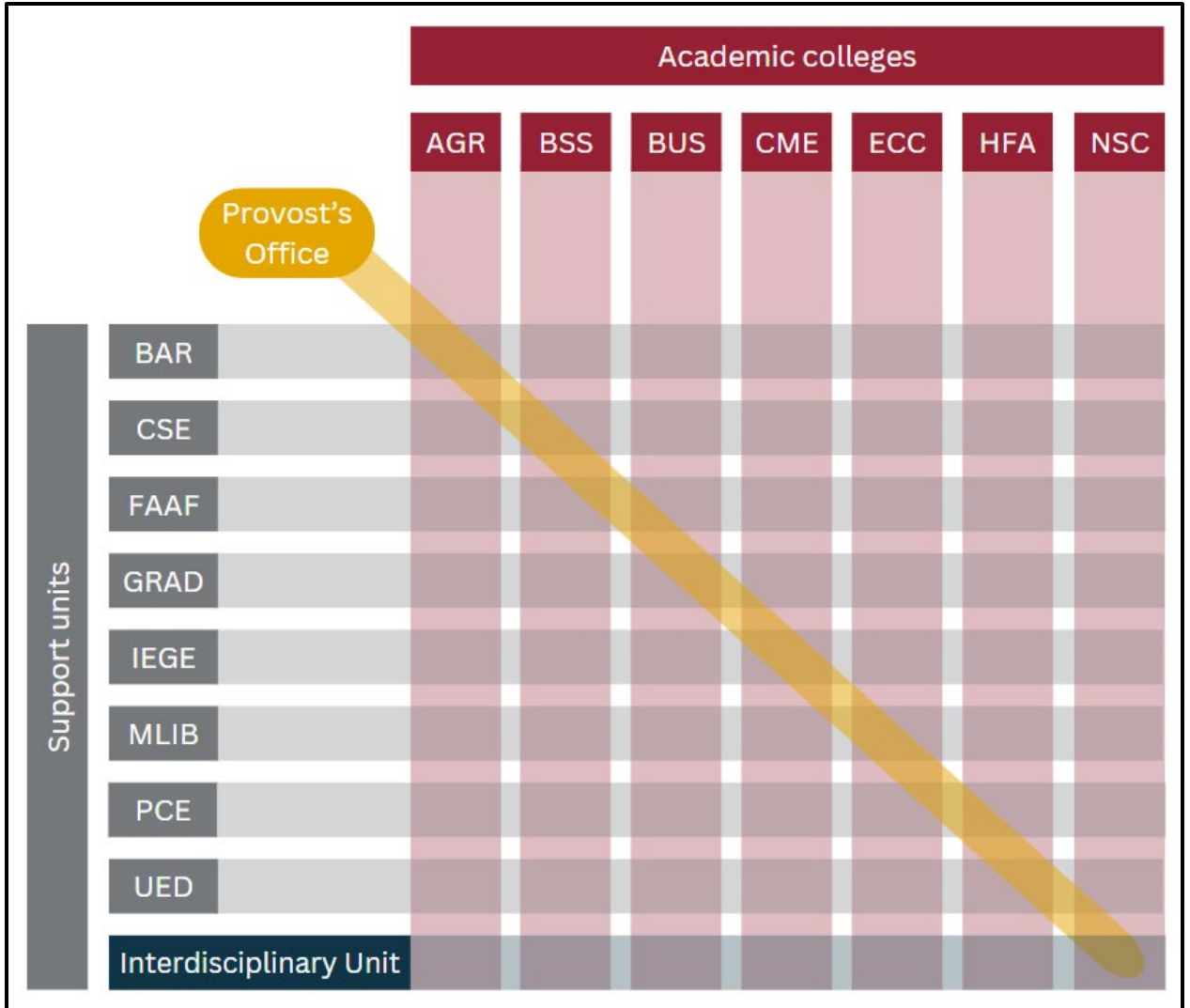


Figure 4. A proposed interdisciplinary support unit (row) within the matrix structure.

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT UNITS

The Special Action Team recommends further research for a more thorough assessment of reimagining the academic support units (rows). This work should start by first fully understanding how they currently function. The academic support units had limited representation on the SAT, and we were unable to engage in discussion with all units during the time provided.

Rows: Budget and Academic Resources (BAR), Chico State Enterprises (CSE), Faculty Affairs and Success (FAAF), Graduate Studies (GRAD), International Education and Global Engagement (IEGE), Meriam Library (MLIB), Professional and Continuing Education (PCE), Undergraduate Education and Academic Success (UED). Chico State Enterprises was consistently identified during campus engagement as a unit that could function better.

### **Chico State Enterprises (CSE)**

Participants in the listening sessions expressed several concerns about CSE, particularly regarding their perceived impact on research and collaboration. The consistent theme across these criticisms is a need for CSE to improve its customer service, streamline its processes, and better align its practices with the needs of faculty and staff to foster a more supportive and productive research environment at Chico State.

- **CSE as a Barrier to Research**
  - Participants repeatedly identified CSE as a significant obstacle to research, particularly in securing and managing grant funding.
  - CSE's customer service was identified as lacking, and participants felt that the organization did not provide sufficient support in navigating the grant process.
  - Participants expressed reluctance to pursue grants due to the perceived burden of managing them after they were awarded, with faculty stating they will not write grants because they could not manage them post-award.
- **Frustration with CSE's Processes**
  - Faculty and staff expressed frustration with CSE's processes, finding them cumbersome, outdated, and time-consuming.
  - Participants described a sense of disconnect between CSE and the academic departments CSE is meant to serve. This disconnect led to confusion, delays, and difficulty in accessing funds for research and programmatic initiatives.
- **Hindrance to Interdisciplinary Collaboration**
  - The difficulties associated with CSE were seen as extending beyond individual research projects and hindering interdisciplinary collaboration.
  - Participants cited CSE's complex procedures as a major roadblock in getting joint programs off the ground and accessing necessary funding.
- **Negative Impact on Morale**
  - The frustration and perceived lack of support from CSE contributed to a sense of mistrust and low morale among faculty and staff.
  - The added workload and complexity associated with CSE's procedures discouraged faculty from seeking funding opportunities and pursuing collaborative projects, ultimately hindering the academic goals of the university.

### **WORKFLOW BARRIERS**

The SAT utilized Google *NotebookLM* to analyze the survey and listening session data collected through campus engagement with the following prompts: "What are the major barriers to workflow facing the university based on the sources provided?" and "What are the key themes from the sources on workflow at the university?"

Based on SAT analysis of this data, we have identified six barriers related to workflow and processes that undermine the core mission of Chico State, limit student experience, undermine workplace quality, and undercut the possibilities of innovation and new modes of thinking.

1. **Budget and Funding.** Participants consistently point to budget and funding as major impediments to collaboration.

- Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES) Model: Participants frequently mention the FTES model—where funding is allocated based on student enrollment—as a source of competition between departments. Competition for FTES discourages collaboration because faculty and departments are incentivized to protect their own student enrollments and funding. Additionally, this model leads to curricular protectionism rather than interdisciplinarity, collaboration, and new modes of thinking since departments work to offer classes that net enrollment rather than prioritize shared work that centers the student experience.
- 2. **Administrative Processes.** Participants frequently mention cumbersome and time-consuming administrative processes and procedures as significant impediments to efficient workflow.
  - **Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Process**
    - Tenure and RTP guidelines often prioritize individual scholarship over collaborative work, discouraging faculty from engaging in interdisciplinary projects. Inconsistencies exist in how collaboration and interdisciplinary work is evaluated and recognized across departments. There is a need for incorporating collaboration as a recognized category in RTP evaluations to incentivize interdisciplinary work.
  - **Curriculum approval**
    - The process of curriculum changes is lengthy, cumbersome, and fuels competition rather than collaboration and interdisciplinary work.
  - **Hiring processes**
    - Participants consistently called for the streamlining of various hiring processes
      - EPPC (extra-contractual pay for professional and administrative staff)
      - Senate procedures
      - Payroll procedures
      - Hiring procedures
      - Processes for transitioning employees from temporary to permanent status
    - Impact of Delays on Recruitment
      - The slow pace of hiring processes often creates delays in filling vacant positions, further exacerbating workload issues for existing staff.
    - Inadequate Support for International Students
      - The backlog in the Registrar's office negatively impacts the International Education and Global Engagement (IEGE) department, particularly concerning articulation with community colleges, potentially hindering international student recruitment.
    - Turnover and Unfilled Positions
      - High turnover rates, particularly among administrative support staff, contribute to staffing shortages, leaving remaining staff overburdened and struggling to maintain workflow efficiency. Participants specifically highlighted the lack of adequate pay and career development opportunities for Administrative Support Coordinators (ASCs) as contributing factors to the high turnover rate.
    - Lack of Attention to Succession Planning



- A lack of attention to succession planning further exacerbates the problem of unfilled positions. When employees leave, their responsibilities often fall on already overburdened colleagues, leading to a decline in overall workflow efficiency.
  - Impact of Restructuring on Workload
    - There is considerable anxiety regarding the potential for restructuring to increase workload. Participants emphasized that any restructuring efforts should include a realistic assessment of workload implications and prioritize equitable distribution of responsibilities.
  - Impact of Budget Cuts on Staffing
    - Budget cuts and a "do more with less" mentality are seen as contributing factors to staffing shortages and increased workload for remaining employees. Participants expressed concern about the potential for restructuring to exacerbate these issues by further reducing staff or increasing responsibilities without adequate compensation.
  - **Grant management**
    - Chico State Enterprises (CSE) is understood as a major source of bureaucratic challenges due to processes undertaken being understood as slow, inefficient, and prone to errors, leading to delays in research, hiring, and program implementation. As noted above, campus frustration with CSE was a common theme throughout SAT engagement work.
- 3. Staffing and Personnel.**
- Staffing shortages—particularly in key administrative roles—and high turnover rates contribute to workflow bottlenecks and inefficiencies, disrupting ongoing collaborative efforts, leading to a loss of momentum and knowledge transfer.
  - Projects and initiatives struggle to maintain continuity after key personnel leave, highlighting the need for sustainable structures to support management and collaborative work.
  - Participants express concern about the impact of understaffing, such as in department offices, student support services, and the Office of the Registrar, which leads to backlogs and delays. This is particularly relevant for programs involving articulation agreements with community colleges.
- 4. Workload.** Participants raise concerns about workload imbalances and inequities across different departments and roles, creating additional strain and impacting overall workflow.
- **Faculty (Tenure-Track and Lecturers)**
    - Faculty across different departments and colleges teach fewer or more courses per semester compared to colleagues in other colleges, suggesting an imbalance in workload distribution.
    - Heavy teaching loads limit time for research and collaboration. The current FTES model and Weighted Teaching Units (WTU) allocation system often incentivizes maximizing student enrollment in courses, leading to larger class sizes and increased workload, rather than supporting innovative teaching or collaborative initiatives

- Due to structural impediments, there are specific challenges faced by and limited incentives for lecturers to participate in collaborations, including potential loss of entitlements if they teach outside their home department.
  - **Staff**
    - Staff, particularly ASCs, experience heavy workload demands, due to complex and time-consuming processes (mentioned above, see #2) and an increasing number of mandates.
- 5. University Policies and Procedures.** Participants point to certain policies and procedures as overly rigid and inequitable, thereby hindering effective collaboration, including:
- Inconsistent RTP requirements across departments, which can create challenges for faculty engaged in interdisciplinary work.
  - Strict reclassification processes for staff, limiting opportunities for professional growth and recognition.
  - FTES model as a source of competition between departments, discouraging collaborative teaching and program development.
- 6. Communication and Information Sharing.** Participants identify poor communication and limited information sharing as obstacles to efficient workflow. Major themes to emerge include:
- Difficulties in staying informed about relevant changes, initiatives, and resources across different departments and units.
  - Lack of sharing mechanisms or platforms to identify potential collaborators and understand ongoing projects, leading to duplicated efforts, missed opportunities, and difficulty connecting with individuals or departments who have relevant expertise.
  - Siloed departmental structures sometimes fostering territoriality and competition for resources, making it more challenging to establish and maintain interdisciplinary collaboration.
  - Technology and system integration hindered by outdated technology, inadequate systems, and poor integration between platforms, thus presenting challenges that impact workflow efficiency.
    - Examples:
      - The payroll system is described as inefficient and requiring manual workarounds, placing an undue burden on staff and faculty.
      - Infrastructure limitations and lack of maintenance require programs to use funds intended for other purposes to address building maintenance issues.
      - Limited access to appropriate and updated technology, like specialized equipment and software.
  - Recommendations to improve communication mechanisms, such as creation of regular newsletters, forums, or meetings that facilitate collaboration and prevent duplicated efforts.

The data suggests a clear need for a comprehensive approach to address workflow challenges at Chico State. This involves streamlining and simplifying administrative processes, updating technology and improving system integration, addressing staffing shortages and turnover, promoting equitable workload distribution, and fostering clear communication and information sharing. Participants suggest that these changes would create a more efficient and supportive work environment, allowing faculty and staff to better focus on their core responsibilities and contribute to student success and innovative program development. SAT calls for

additional analysis of workflow barriers, whether through a specific task force empowered to transform university processes or an internal audit.

To reimagine Chico State University requires reimagining how it conducts its day-to-day operations, how it invests in the campus, and otherwise how to empower faculty, staff, and administration to fulfill its core mission. Unnecessarily complex, dated, and cumbersome processes continue to stifle this work and reimagination must prioritize these changes.

### **ADDITIONAL CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Special Action Team recommends further campus engagement from individuals and groups that were unable to participate fully in the various campus outreach strategies set out by the SAT in the allotted two-month period. We have included a summary below with recommendations.

1. **Student Engagement.** Including students on the SAT in the earliest phase may have been premature. Therefore, the next phase of this reimagining process will need to include more complete engagement with the student body.
  - **Future Forms of Student Engagement**
    - Two or three listening sessions for further sustained student engagement in the Spring 2025 semester.
    - Listening sessions should use modified, student-centered questions to gather student input. We have included sample questions in [Appendix D: Recommended Student Questions](#).
    - All messaging and outreach must be tailored specifically to students. Messaging must address the student perspective regarding why the university is considering reorganization and include a summary of what has already been accomplished, a description of how and why this will benefit students, and a list of multiple ways students can get and stay engaged with the process.
      - Associated Students (AS) and AS senators must be involved in student engagement.
      - AS Senators are a natural group to start with student outreach, but student engagement needs to extend past AS to capture other student feedback.
      - Student engagement must go beyond AS to capture other students, including affinity groups and organizations including, but not limited to, the Cross-Cultural Leadership Center (CCLC), the Black Student Resource Center, El Centro, Asian Pacific Islander and Desi American Resource Center (APIDA), Gender & Sexuality Equity Coalition (GSEC), International Education and Global Engagement (IEGE), Council of Graduate Students (COGS), and Students for Quality Education (SQE).
      - Specific means of engaging students that we discussed include developing QR codes for student-specific surveys that they can access during listening sessions or by AS tabling, in addition to periodic messaging (two or three times a semester).
2. **Staff Consultation.** SAT had limited staff representation and there was not enough time to seek staff input for how reorganization efforts will impact them. The SAT strongly recommends that the next phase of any reimagining include staff consultation, via specific listening sessions and surveys,

to collect staff input in a substantial and meaningful way. Direct input from staff members who work at a program and department levels are most likely to be directly affected by reorganization efforts and need to be included in campus engagement.

- **Reasons for Staff Engagement**
  - The high cost of reorganization
    - The amount of labor that will necessarily go into any reorganization efforts for staff members, who are already overworked and under-resourced, especially with the very real threat of permanent job loss, will thereby further undercut staff and reduce morale.
  - The high reward of engagement
    - There is the potential for improving the working lives of staff members if reorganization is done in such a way to reduce or more evenly redistribute workload and responsibilities for staff.
- **Future Forms of Staff Engagement**
  - A new survey with questions tailored to staff work and roles is necessary.
  - Additional listening sessions scheduled during working hours with an option for anonymous feedback are appropriate. Include online options to attend and participate. Advertising participation opportunities well in advance may maximize staff engagement.
    - Consider offering listening sessions by department/unit/college and role. Start with college/unit level Administrative Analyst/Specialists, followed by or in parallel with department/unit level Administrative Support Coordinators and Assistants with outreach to all staff through Staff Council to keep cross functional staff from other divisions and across campus included and engaged.
    - Consider offering a listening session for staff members who have been working on campus for 10 years or more and another for newer staff with less than 10 years of service as a different way to approach the conversation.
  - Staff may be hesitant to speak in front of faculty and upper administrators. A mediator might help to get more authentic and productive feedback.

**3. The SAT recommends any specific restructuring plans should:**

- Be reviewed and discussed with the campus community;
- Include a protection of workload;
- Include a projection of cost;
- Include a projection of how changes will affect the people (staff, students, faculty) and programs involved.

**4. Key Considerations.** The SAT utilized Google *NotebookLM* to compile the source input from survey responses, documents gathered from the listening sessions, and documents gathered from feedback sent directly to SAT to summarize the summary with the following prompt: “Indicate key considerations for successful restructuring expressed by our campus community.”

- **Transparency and Communication:** The administration must prioritize open and honest communication throughout the process. This includes clearly articulating the goals, rationale, and potential impacts of restructuring.

- **Shared Governance:** All employees (both faculty and staff) must feel that their voices are heard and that they have a meaningful role in shaping the future of the university.
- **Equity and Fairness:** Restructuring decisions must be guided by principles of equity and fairness, ensuring that all stakeholders are treated fairly and that the process does not exacerbate existing disparities.
- **Student-Centeredness:** The needs and experiences of students must be at the forefront of all decisions.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Restructuring should be aligned with the university's mission, vision, and strategic goals, ensuring that changes support the university's long-term success.

Appendix References:

- [Appendix A: Charge Letter](#)
- [Appendix B: Detailed Process](#)
- [Appendix C: Detailed Structural Recommendations](#)
- [Appendix D: Recommended Student Survey Questions](#)
- [Appendix E: Listening Session Slides](#)
- [Appendix F: SAT Recommendations Presentation Slides](#)
- [Appendix G: Research Timeline](#)
- [Appendix H: Engagement Timeline](#)
- [Appendix I: SAT Campus Engagement Summary](#)
- [Appendix J: IRSA Survey 1 Summary](#)
- [Appendix K: IRSA Survey 2 Summary](#)



**Provost and Vice President for  
Academic Affairs**  
400 West First Street  
Chico, CA 95929-0110  
530-898-6101  
[academicaffairs@csuchico.edu](mailto:academicaffairs@csuchico.edu)

August 27, 2024

Greetings Reimagining Special Action Team!

Thank you again for your enthusiasm in reimagining the future of Chico State's academic identity and structures. This critical work will help us forge a new path to a robust, vibrant, and sustainable future.

### **Charge**

Through a process of investigation, dialogue, and sustained campus engagement, the Special Action Team is charged with developing 2-3 comprehensive recommendations for restructuring academic units in service to our mission, which should be grounded in key aspects of our current challenges and animated by opportunities for continuous improvement.

Your work should be informed by the following understandings: the changing enrollment landscape, our majority minority and first-generation student population, service to our region, positioning Chico State as forward-facing and academically distinctive, and reflective of our role as the regional comprehensive liberal arts and sciences university of the North State.

### **Considerations**

Your primary focus will be on the academic program structure, not the curriculum, although some conversations may naturally emerge around this area.

I encourage you to think outside the box. There is no "right" number of colleges; in fact, you may recommend a structure with no colleges at all.

Your recommendations should foster student-centeredness, innovation and creativity, and interdisciplinarity. They should be equity-minded, regionally relevant, and showcase Chico State as a destination campus.

We want the rest of the CSU to say, "Wow, look at what Chico did!"

### **First Steps**

As part of the agenda for your first meeting, you should:

- Select a chair whose role will include working with Holly and Khadish on logistics, administering surveys, and providing regular reports to the Provost.

- Schedule weekly 2-hour meetings, endeavoring to find a time that most members can attend. Regular attendance is expected; if a team member must miss more than three meetings, please consult the chair and Holly.

### **Consultation**

Input from campus constituencies and external partners is a critical component of this work. This may entail, but is not limited to, surveys, listening sessions, focus groups, etc. The Provost's office will assist with these logistics.

While I will not directly participate in your meetings or discussions, I will be available as needed, including regular meetings with the chair as necessary.

### **Deliverables**

- Monthly Executive summary of meetings (with action items and owners), activities, summary of consultations (with themes and/or trends), etc.
- Meet with the Provost Nov 13. (time TBD) to plan for final recommendations
- Final summary report with 2-3 comprehensive recommendations due December 13.

Thank you again – I look forward to the future we will build together for Chico State as a result of your important work and creativity!

Go Wildcats!!

## Timeline

- **September:** The SAT met with the Provost and EAB, a consulting firm specializing in education, to discuss key considerations, focus areas, a consultation plan, and deliverables. The SAT voted to appoint two co-chairs and held weekly internal team meetings for two hours on 9/27, 10/4, 10/11, 10/28, 10/25, 11/1, 11/8, 11/15, 11/22, and 12/6 in a hybrid format, with the majority meeting in person and a few joining online as needed.
- **October:** The SAT emailed survey #1 to campus and posted it publicly on the website. In the all-announce campus email that was sent on 10/11, the SAT also invited the campus to request an internal group listening session for a department, college, or committee. Internal and external public listening sessions began on 10/14/2024 and ended on 10/30/2024. The SAT hosted six listening sessions in October and reached 146 people in total. The co-chairs met with the Provost for a check-in meeting on 10/15 and clarified information that was then published as an FAQ on the website in November.

### Appendix E: Listening Session Slides

#### Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) What is the purpose of the listening sessions? To hear ideas, questions, and concerns about the organizational structure of Academic Affairs at Chico State from faculty, students, staff, and external partners. We used a common agenda to provide a fair opportunity to share feedback across all listening sessions. To the best of our knowledge, we are the only campus with a special action team that actively hosted listening sessions to provide feedback toward making direct recommendations to the Provost.
  - 2) How will the Special Action Team (SAT) use the information gathered from the listening sessions to make recommendations? At least three SAT members attended each listening session to take notes that were paired with automated transcripts from Zoom and/or Otter.AI, thereby combining human perspectives with digital tools. The listening session notes and survey question responses were recorded for thematic analysis. In addition to the listening sessions and survey questions, we actively researched academic structure models to better understand how higher education is structured across the CSU and beyond. We will use analysis and research to make recommendations.
  - 3) What will happen after the Special Action Team (SAT) makes recommendations to the Provost? Final recommendations from the SAT will be posted to this website.
- **November:** The SAT emailed survey #2 to campus and posted it publicly on the website. In the all-announce campus email that was sent on 11/5, the SAT provided an update on the listening sessions that had occurred over the previous three weeks and reminded the campus about the process to request an internal group listening session for a department, college, or committee. The SAT continued to host internal listening sessions when requests were received between 11/1-11/20. The SAT hosted 11 listening sessions in November and reached 133 people in total. The co-chairs met with the Provost for check in meetings on 11/4 and 11/13 to provide updates from the listening session feedback and seek clarification on why we were asked to reimagine our academic identity.



- **December:** The SAT drafted and finalized this recommendations report and presented highlights to the Provost on 12/13. On 12/17, the recommendations report will be emailed to the campus and published on the Academic Affairs website under the Special Action Team webpage.

Appendix F: SAT Recommendations Presentation Slides

### **Teamwork**

The SAT utilized *Microsoft 365* (Teams, in particular) and *Google Workspace* applications to communicate internally through documents, forms, chats, and comments. As a team of 19, we met for two hours every Friday as a group and formed internal subgroup committees focused on research, engagement, analytics, and recommendations.

### **Meetings**

- Weekly: SAT group, research subgroup committee, co-chair prep meetings.
  - Our weekly group meetings followed a preset agenda with an interactive advance agenda to share notes, ideas, comments, action items, priorities, feedback.
- Scheduled: Provost check in meetings (x3)

### **Internal Subgroup committees**

- Subgroup committees met and communicated through shared Microsoft *Teams* channels between SAT weekly group meetings to discuss information related to their specific focus areas. All SAT members had access to chat messaging in the shared Microsoft *Teams* channels to add reactions, make comments, and ask questions.
  - Research
    - Met with the Meriam Library to conduct research.
    - Established a research approach, gathered resources, defined and discussed structures, identified sister schools, developed a set of benchmark universities, presented models, gathered feedback, proposed recommendations.

Appendix G: Research Timeline

- Engagement
  - Met with the President's Strategic Planning Steering Committee Co-Chairs to share approaches, best practices, lessons learned, etc.
  - Maintained open communication throughout the engagement and consultation process, both internally and externally, through various outlets (i.e. email, website, surveys, listening sessions).
  - Conducted two surveys and 17 listening sessions between October 14th and November 20<sup>th</sup> to hear thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns from employees and external partners. We received 114 survey responses, and 279 total people attended the listening sessions.
  - The internal and external public listening sessions were facilitated by a designated campus partner who was not on the SAT and moderated following a common agenda. The internal group listening sessions were facilitated by a SAT co-chair or SAT member who moderated following the same common agenda used for the public sessions. The listening sessions were transcribed using an AI meeting assistant (Otter.AI or Zoom), paired with human notes from 2-4 SAT members who attended each session.

Appendix H: Engagement Timeline

- Analytics

- Met with Institutional Research and Strategic Analytics (IRSA) to discuss approaches, best practices, tools, advice, etc.
- Utilized generative artificial intelligence language model prompts to generate common themes and reviewed to summarize as general takeaways. We ran two AI tools independently with the same sets of data to allow for a comparison between models.
  - SAT: Google *NotebookLM*
    - Sources: Listening session transcripts, listening session notes taken by SAT members, survey #1 responses, survey #2 responses, other feedback provided (i.e. internal SAT survey, prepared documents, statements, and shared reports).
    - Prompt: What key points and themes emerge from the sources?
    - Output: The prompt generated five sets of common themes across the data. We reviewed the five sets of common themes *NotebookLM* found and summarized these as general takeaways.

Appendix I: SAT Campus Engagement Summary

- IRSA: Microsoft *Copilot*
  - Sources: Survey #1 and survey #2 responses.
  - Prompts: Please provide a concise summary of the main points and key details from this document and please identify and list any outliers in this document.

Appendix J: IRSA Survey 1 Summary

Appendix K: IRSA Survey 2 Summary

- Recommendations
  - We all came together to write this recommendations report based on a draft outline that we voted on and approved as a team. We distributed sections of the report to writing subgroups and reviewed work by editing and commenting on shared documents. The co-chairs reviewed each section and compiled a final draft for the team to review.

## 1. To form a college centered around Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and the Environment.

### Rationale

This new college could bring together faculty, staff, and centers that focus on science, agriculture, land, and the environment that were previously in up to three or four different colleges. There are existing collaborations and conversations between these groups, including instances where curriculum between courses is already shared, and two of these units are already managed by one Dean and Associate Dean. Consolidating may increase some efficiencies and resources and facilitate existing interdisciplinary collaborations. This could also increase the college size, leading to the benefits provided to by larger colleges, including additional specific support staff and resources.

### Benefits of this proposed college

- **Enhance Experiential Learning opportunities.** The disciplines associated with science, agriculture, land, and the environment are grounded in experiential learning. These activities require similar resources, laboratories, or field trips, and engage with similar university regulatory bodies. By consolidating the units that do these activities together, the roadblocks to facilitating experiential learning that these units face can be more easily identified and solved when several departments or units regularly converse and share a college rather than when they are in multiple colleges.
- **Strengthen existing interdisciplinary collaboration, curriculum, and research.** There is much existing teaching overlap and there is a potential for increased collaboration between departments that might choose to associate with this college. This is apparent with curricular crossover between Agriculture and departments in the College of Natural Sciences as well as the departments involved in Teaching the Environment. Aggregating in one college would make it easier to co-teach classes, streamline the process for funded collaborations, and avoid the need for college FTES trades, especially when these units are unified under a single dean.
- **Promote sustainability, environmental stewardship, and agriculture in the North State.** Bringing together faculty and centers from these diverse disciplines could strengthen the programs in sustainability, environmental stewardship, and agriculture. Discussions about curriculum are more likely to happen within a college rather than across colleges. A strengthened curriculum could help students develop a stronger understanding of the interconnectedness of natural systems and human activities and provide students with a better foundation to address the changes occurring rapidly in the North State.
- **Address shared concerns and aggregate resources addressing existing inequities.** Faculty and staff from these departments and units expressed frustration with Chico State Enterprises (CSE) and the bureaucratic hurdles they face. With an increased college size, additional staff could solve some of these intractable problems and help increase future opportunities. For example, a dedicated individual serving as a liaison with CSE could decrease frustration, supporting the possibility of increased funding. Such a person already exists in other colleges. Inequities in advising could be addressed, too: Ag and NSC have some of the lowest number of associated advisors to the College Advising & Retention

Specialist (CARS) on campus, and merging these colleges could thus increase the allocation of advising resources.

#### Potential mechanisms and considerations

There are several important considerations when forming a college of Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and the Environment, including the college name, college membership, whether departments choose to merge with other departments within the college or form a School (or even 2 or 3) within the College. It is challenging to truly adhere to the principle of department or unit self-section when the name of the departments or units are a part of the name of the college. Agriculture faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners strongly identify with “Agriculture” and therefore prioritize the importance of Agriculture being present in the college title for the purposes of student recruitment, community engagement, and alumni relations. Additionally, those individuals associated with the environment also appear to have a strong association with “Environment,” having already separately proposed a School of the Environment. The natural science faculty identify with fundamental sciences and would like to remain as a part of a science-focused college but have less attachment to their specific college name. Allowing departments to aggregate together first and then go through secondary divisions or consolidations such as forming schools or merging departments, could be more easily facilitated within a college through mutual agreement and consensus-building than forcing these to occur across and to several colleges in a top-down approach. Providing space for these conversations maintains the spirit of self-determination that promotes faculty buy-in and other features described above in the first recommendation.

## **2. To form a college centered around Health, Wellbeing, and Human Services.**

#### Rationale

There exists tremendous need for health-provider training in the North State and the medical professions are consistently identified as a growth area for graduates, yet our current structure does not encourage collaborative work and development of innovative programs in these fields. Many health and human services majors could benefit from the shared coursework and curriculum, joint research projects, and enhanced partnerships with private industry that a more integrated college structure may provide. More prominence for these Health, Wellness and Human Services areas could provide a more vibrant and streamlined experience for our students. In addition, this is a structural change that many faculty in these areas have been campaigning for over the past ten years and is likely to be supported by our local and regional partners.

#### Benefits of this proposed new college

- **Improved Student Advising.** The listening sessions consistently highlighted this shortcoming with health-related disciplines spread across three colleges. Students may be unable to understand the wide range of medical professions and how many are interrelated. There would also be a more efficient mechanism by which to provide advising support for students interested in advanced degrees in health professions after graduation.
- **Increased Student Demand.** Many students may be interested in health field professions and majors, yet our current structure does not make it easy for students to find an appropriate field

of study; some students mistakenly believe Nursing is our only program for students interested in medical fields. The creation of this college could potentially increase student enrollment by capturing many of these students, especially given that other campuses already house expanded and integrated Health and Human Services colleges.

- **Strengthened Community Partnerships.** There are abundant opportunities for private/public partnerships that could be pursued with a more streamlined college structure. A unified College of Health, Wellness and Human Services would provide a clear point of contact, aid with organized funding and support processes, and identify Chico State as a North State leader in medical training. A unified college may also lead to additional internship opportunities for students.
- **Enhanced Interdisciplinary Collaboration.** Placing programs with a common theme within one college would allow for wide-ranging collaboration across teaching, research, grants, and enhanced student experiences. These collaborations will help these programs with accreditation. By working together, the development of innovative new research centers, medical programs, or training services can be more easily developed and launched.

#### Potential mechanisms and considerations

Given the recommendation of units selecting their own college affiliation, it is unclear which areas may opt into this new college. However, it is possible that several departments and programs within the current College of Communication and Education (CME) may fit with this proposed new College. Further analysis of the remaining programs in CME may be necessary to determine its long-term viability. Retaining a smaller CME is one option. Allowing remaining programs to transition to other existing colleges with the ultimate elimination of CME is another option. If CME is eliminated, we should consider the historical roots of Chico State as a Normal School in the context of education and whether the word education should be included in a new college name. For example, if we do not maintain a college with the word education in its title, are we still publicly honoring our history as a Normal School? And what impacts may this have on primary and secondary education in our service area into the future? The ultimate name of a new college should be determined after units transitioning to the college are identified. The departments and programs housed within the new college should be the appropriate group to develop its ultimate name.

### **3. Departments/units choose college affiliation if structural recommendations are adopted.**

#### Rationale

Departments and units should choose their college affiliation through a process that includes the departmental faculty, department chair, associated auxiliary centers, college dean, and the provost. **Regardless of the restructuring plan, Units/Departments should be able to choose their college affiliation.** Self-choice could potentially eliminate outright or at least mitigate several disadvantages associated with restructuring academic departments/units, as highlighted during the listening sessions, the survey results, and the literature that we collected. The advantages of this approach may lead to more faculty buy-in, an increase in faculty and staff morale, and the preservation of successful programs.

- **Reduce Faculty Dissatisfaction of Restructuring and Potential for Conflict.** Faculty and staff often mentioned the importance of input and autonomy. A voluntary, opt-in approach addresses these concerns by giving department/units the power to determine their own futures.
- **Preserve Successful Programs.** Allowing department/units to self-select their college alignments would likely protect already successful programs from disruption. By enabling department/units to choose their affiliations based on shared interests, complementary strengths, and preexisting collaborative relationships, the risk of these negative consequences may be significantly reduced.
- **Foster Genuine Collaboration.** The faculty and staff advocated for collaboration based on mutual benefit and shared vision, rather than imposed, top-down mandates or collaboration that has arisen because of programmatic, situational and/or curricular need—piecemeal collaborative efforts forcing departments together by circumstances rather than choice and consensus. Voluntary department/unit choice aligns with this principle by encouraging department/units to actively seek out partners that would enhance their programs and create new opportunities. This potentially leads to more innovative and effective partnerships, as department/units are more likely to invest in collaborations they have chosen themselves.

#### Potential mechanisms and considerations

To aid the departments and units in the choice and transition to a new college, Academic Affairs will need to provide a transparent process, facilitate the process as these groups carefully consider their future, and provide support for any departmental/units that transition to the new college.

1) First, Academic Affairs needs to communicate a clear transition process and provide departments with comprehensive data about their department (for example, enrollment trends, program costs, and student demographics). Departments and units should explore potential partnerships and engage in dialogue with other department/units and centers. Finally, departments should be encouraged to look for future growth opportunities rather than maintaining the status quo.

2) Clear Criteria for Alignment: The department and unit realignments should be based on shared academic interests, complementary strengths, potential for growth, and potential for collaboration and should avoid arbitrary or politically motivated decisions. There should be clear and transparent criteria for evaluating alignments, such as:

- Overlapping research areas
- Shared curricular goals
- Potential for joint degree programs
- Alignment with regional workforce needs
- Opportunities for resource sharing
- Department/units should be able to articulate how their chosen affiliation meets these criteria and demonstrates a genuine potential for enhancing academic quality and student success.
- Processes for Addressing Equity Concerns: There are significant problems with equity in representation, teaching loads, and resource allocation across colleges (such as advising staff).

3) Support for Transition and Integration: Department/units making significant changes, such as merging with other department/units or moving to a different college, would require support for a smooth transition. For those units making this transition, the university needs to provide resources for:

- Developing new curriculum or revising existing courses.
- Updating websites, promotional materials, and other communications.
- Facilitating faculty and staff integration into the new unit or college.
- Revising RTP processes and policies.
- Managing the transition and integration of department/units into new colleges.
- Addressing potential faculty and staff disputes arising from the changes.

**4. To form a new interdisciplinary support unit that works with faculty, staff, and other units (i.e., hubs, centers, schools) in all colleges.**

Rationale

Through SAT surveys, listening sessions, and other campus engagement strategies, there was a common theme around fostering interdisciplinary work at the university. From this engagement, it was clear that the Chico State community believes it needs resources, improved processes, and leadership to foster cross-disciplinary (at least two), multi-disciplinary (two or more), and interdisciplinary (synthesis) teaching and scholarship. To fulfill this possibility, campus requires a place and a person/leader who brings people together, communicates collaborative possibilities, and provides resources to encourage this work. As such, Chico State needs a space to facilitate the bringing together of people and ideas from on and off campus. A unit focused on disciplinary convergence and interdisciplinarity at Chico State could provide a unifying space, a venue for communication, collaborative leadership, improved processes, and a home for interdisciplinary research and teaching.

This support unit would transform Chico State from a place that celebrates and claims to support and cross-disciplinary work and collaboration (while often impeding both) to a modern university that invests in, facilitates, and otherwise nurtures interdisciplinarity of learning, teaching, knowing, and doing. This support unit will allow for research opportunities, dynamic teaching, and an ability to address the ever-changing world. Its structure and focus will allow for flexibility and the development of new approaches to both tackle current problems and facilitate innovation regarding future ones, too.

Benefits of this proposed unit

- **Tackling Problems.** This unit could support the means to address complex and pressing challenges currently facing the North State, its changing dynamics, and unknown futures. The often-interrelated challenges facing our region—spanning wildfire resilience, homelessness, rural healthcare disparities, food insecurity, drug addiction, and climate adaptation—demand integrative approaches that break down traditional disciplinary boundaries and integrate local community insights and expertise to address their multifaceted root causes.
- **Innovation.** Beyond building teams from across the campus that would tackle problems, this space could focus on a collaborative convergence of faculty, staff, students, and community members,

daring Chico State to explore and dream into the twenty-first century. Beyond addressing problems, creating collaborative spaces of dialogue for shared research and teaching, this unit would create a space for community and culture on campus with resources to innovate, to create new programs and possibilities, and to otherwise to explore beyond disciplinary siloes, and to disrupt and/or repair the long-standing town-gown divide in our community.

- **Building bridges, constructing windows, and breaking down disciplinary siloes.** By breaking down disciplinary siloes to construct windows and bridges, all while incentivizing collaboration, this unit would empower faculty, staff, and students to develop new teaching/training/learning models, advance curriculum, and further research reimagining how we learn, how we think about problems and possibilities, and how we share our discoveries, insights, and interventions within and beyond the campus. This will move us beyond our static and segregated places/spaces/perspectives to see what is possible when we work together and reimagine the classroom, the laboratory, the workplace, the community, our methods, our procedures, and how we can tackle the pressing challenges of this current moment and future opportunities.

#### Potential mechanisms and considerations

- The unit would need a dedicated faculty member, at the Dean or AVP level, to oversee, lead, and facilitate this work. The SAT believes a faculty member with expertise in the diverse scholarship, methods, and practices of cross- and inter-disciplinarity is primed to help the campus reimagine how we teach, learn, and communicate knowledge. This person will be well situated to improve workflow, bringing campus faculty, staff, students, and community members together to provide resources that nurture interdisciplinary work. This person will work with leadership throughout campus to encourage research and teaching across disciplines, departments, colleges, and into the community. To ensure this work is both effective and inclusive, this unit would prioritize epistemic justice—or the valuing and meaningful integration of diverse knowledge systems, such as scientific knowledge, humanistic inquiry and practice, the arts, Indigenous knowledge, and other community-based insights—as a foundational and operational virtue.
- With the necessary time and support to grow, this unit can work to build bridges and construct windows across campus, creating spaces (and incentives) for faculty collaboration and curricular dialogue. This unit should also work with other units and leaders on campus to facilitate changes to workflow and processes that impede interdisciplinary work.



1. Why did you pick your major?
2. Would your major be more valuable, less valuable, or the same if it stayed in its existing college?
  - a. More Valuable
  - b. Less Valuable
    - i. If less valuable, where would you place your major?
  - c. The Same
3. What are your personal/life goals?
4. What are your career aspirations?



California State  
University **Chico**

**Reimagining Chico State  
Academic Affairs**

# Introduction: Special Action Team

The Provost appointed us, along with 15 others, to a Special Action Team (SAT) to "reimagine Chico State Academic Affairs for a brighter future," charged with developing 2-3 comprehensive **recommendations for restructuring academic units**. Our role as a special action team today and for the duration of these sessions is to listen and summarize comments and perspectives. We are committed to transparency and meaningful consultation. We will be utilizing Zoom and OtterAI to generate a transcript that will be combined with SAT member notes to help us thematize feedback and sentiment from these sessions.

To our best knowledge, we are the only campus with a special action team that is actively hosting listening sessions to provide feedback toward making direct recommendations to the Provost.

<https://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/sat>

# Introduction: Special Action Team

Your input and ideas about our strengths, opportunities, challenges, and concerns are critical and will help identify our needs, interests, and vision for a future Chico State academic experience. We are looking for recommendations that foster student-centeredness, innovation and creativity, equity, and interdisciplinarity that showcase Chico State as a destination campus.

Final recommendations from the SAT will be posted to this website. During the Spring 2025 semester, the Provost will facilitate role-specific listening sessions to engage with the campus community. Any proposed change(s) will follow the **EM 22-013** process that outlines the policy for Approval of Changes in Academic Organization Policy.

**<https://www.csuchico.edu/vpaa/sat>**

# Introduction: Co-Chair

## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and are mindful that Chico State stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, **Mechoopda**, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land, the flora, the fauna, and the waters that run through campus. We are humbled that our campus resides upon sacred lands that since time immemorial have sustained the Mechoopda people and continue to do so today.

## Community Agreements

At Chico State, we are committed to fostering a culture of belonging, excellence, and personal responsibility by prioritizing equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of campus life. We will practice and exercise **respect, empathy, and integrity** by speaking audibly and clearly when sharing. Use professional and respectful language, thus being mindful of time to allow colleagues and students an opportunity to share their perspectives.

# Format: Co-Chair

As the facilitator, I will read eight question prompts, allowing 5 minutes for each question amongst participants present here today, followed by a 10 minute open forum for additional comments or feedback. You may also add feedback to the question prompts on the poster boards in the room. If you have questions about the charge letter or additional feedback, please email [\*\*SAT@csuchico.edu\*\*](mailto:SAT@csuchico.edu)

After I read a question prompt, I will ask you to raise your hand if you'd like to share publicly. You may introduce yourself or not.

## Prompt #1

**What makes your  
unit/college/department/program  
unique and distinctive?**

**What are the key strengths of your  
unit/college/department/program?**

Please raise your hand if you  
would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Prompt #2

**What are students seeking in your unit/department /programs/college?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.



## **Prompt #3**

**Have the needs of students changed over the past few years (pre- and post-COVID) in your unit/department /programs/college?**

**How can your unit/department /program/college improve on satisfying what students seek now?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Prompt #4

**What units/colleges/departments/programs do you work most closely with and in what ways?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Prompt #5

**What are some ways the university could provide opportunities and/or remove barriers for greater collaboration across units/colleges/departments/programs?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Prompt #6

**Where do you see future cross-disciplinary opportunities that currently do not exist across the university?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Prompt #7

**From the standpoint of work and workload, what are some areas that seem most in need of reorganization within your unit/college/department/program?  
And, what do you feel those changes would accomplish?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Prompt #8

**How would you suggest the academic units of the university be reimaged or restructured?**

Please raise your hand if you would like to provide feedback publicly.

## Open Forum

**Do you have any additional  
comments or feedback?**

Please raise your hand if you  
would like to provide feedback publicly.

# Closing: Facilitator

Thank you for participating today. If you have additional feedback, please add it to the question prompts on the poster boards before you go. You may also email questions or feedback to [\*\*SAT@csuchico.edu\*\*](mailto:SAT@csuchico.edu).

Please visit the SAT website for additional information and opportunities for feedback.



**SAT website**



**Qualtrics Survey**



**Listening Sessions**



# Special Action Team Recommendations Fall 2024

# The Charge

"Through a process of investigation, dialogue, and sustained campus engagement, the Special Action Team is charged with developing 2-3 comprehensive recommendations for restructuring academic units in service to our mission, which should be grounded in key aspects of our current challenges and animated by opportunities for continuous improvement.

Your work should be informed by the following understandings: the changing enrollment landscape, our majority minority and first-generation student population, service to our region, positioning Chico State as forward-facing and academically distinctive, and reflective of our role as the regional comprehensive liberal arts and sciences university of the North State."

# Our Process

## Organization and Tools

- Co-Chairs
- Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace
- Internal and external communication
- *NotebookLM*


## Recurring meetings

- Weekly SAT meetings with an advance agenda
- Weekly co-chair prep meetings
- Weekly research subgroup committee
- Provost check-in meetings

## Internal subgroup committees

- Research
- Engagement
- Analytics
- Recommendations


# Engagement and Research Timelines




## Fall 2024 - Special Action Team (SAT) Research Timeline

An internal subgroup committee formed to conduct research. The research subgroup met every Tuesday for 2-3 hours and shared updates to the full SAT through Microsoft Teams and during our weekly Friday meetings.






September	October	November
Established Approach and Resource Gathering	Defined and Discussed Compared and Developed Presented and Voted	Reviewed Recommendations Gathered Feedback Adjusted and Voted
<p><b>9/24/2024</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiated sister school matrix.</li> <li>Started library and web research about structures.</li> <li>Discussed resources needed (i.e. campus organizational charts, from EAB, feedback from campus).</li> </ol>	<p><b>10/1/2024:</b> Defined Chico State structure and discuss sibling school matrix.  <b>10/8/2024:</b> Discussed Chico State structure, compared our attributes to sibling schools, defined organizational models.  <b>10/15/2024:</b> Developed a set of benchmark universities, acquired organizational charts for all units in Chico State Academic Affairs and discussed the different organizational structures, developed an idea for self-choice.  <b>10/18/2024:</b> Presented different organizational models to the entire SAT, voted to move forward with the interdisciplinary matrix model.  <b>10/22/2024:</b> Met with EAB, worked on sister schools, investigated different structural models.  <b>10/29/2024:</b> Met with EAB, completed benchmark campuses academic structure.</p>	<p><b>11/1/2024:</b> Discussed possible college themes with the entire SAT and the idea for self-choice.  <b>11/5/2024:</b> Discussed feedback, developed a list of preliminary structural recommendations for college adjustments.  <b>11/12/2024:</b> Solidified the preliminary structural recommendations using feedback data.  <b>11/15/2024:</b> Presented the college based structural recommendations to the entire SAT (form HHS, form AGR/NSC/Environment).  <b>11/19/2024:</b> Discussed the academic support units role and voting.  <b>11/20-11/21/2024:</b> Voted on structural recommendations.  <b>11/22/2024:</b> Discussed voting outcomes.</p>








## Fall 2024 - Special Action Team (SAT) Engagement Timeline


In August 2024, the Provost appointed a Special Action Team (SAT) charged with reimagining the future of Chico State's academic identity and structures. Through a process of investigation, dialogue, and sustained campus engagement, the Special Action Team was charged with developing 2-3 comprehensive recommendations for restructuring academic units in service to our mission.


August	September	October	November	December
 <b>Charge Letter</b>	 <b>Weekly Meetings Established Co-Chairs</b>	 <b>Survey #1 Sessions</b>	 <b>Survey #2 Sessions</b>	 <b>Report Recommendations</b>
<p><b>8/27</b> – Provost Email to SAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charge</li> <li>Considerations</li> <li>First Steps</li> <li>Consultation</li> <li>Deliverables</li> </ul>	<p><b>Established weekly two-hour meetings.</b></p> <p><b>Voted on co-chairs.</b></p>	<p>10/11 – Public Survey #1 Open Internal Email Public Website Update                      10/14 – Internal Campus Listening Session (x41)                      10/15 – Provost/Co-Chair Meeting                      10/18 – Department Chairs Listening Session (x35)                      10/23 – Agriculture External Listening Session (x3)                      10/24 – IRSA Meeting                      10/25 – Internal Online Listening Session (x42)                      10/29 – Internal Campus Listening Session (x14)                      10/30 – External Online Listening Session (x11)                      10/31 – Public Survey Close</p>	<p>11/1 – Farm Staff Session (x14)                      POLS Session (x14)                      11/4 – Provost/Co-Chair Meeting                      11/5 – Public Survey #2 Open Internal Email Public Website Update                      11/6 – IEGE Session (x18)                      11/7 – BSS Chairs Session (x12)                      11/8 – FDEV Board Session (x10)                      GRAD Session (x13)                      11/13 – Online/Dist. Session (x11)                      Provost/Co-Chair Meeting HHS Session (x9)                      11/18 – Library Session (x12)                      11/19 – ARC Session (x9)                      11/20 – HFA Session (x11)                      11/20 – Public Survey Close                      11/20 – Internal Sessions Close</p>	<p>12/6 – Complete Draft Report Prepare Presentation                      12/10 – Finalize Report                      12/10 – Internal Email Engagement Summary Public Website Update                      12/13 – Provost Presentation                      12/16 – Internal Email Public Website Update</p> <p>Phase 1: Fall SAT work concludes in December 2024.</p> <p>Phase 2: The Provost and PAC work will continue in Spring 2025.</p>


  
 Email  
Icon credit: Smashicons



  
 Meetings  
Icon credit: Satira Amata

  
 Survey  
Icon credit: Unicornlabs

  
 Listening Session  
Icon credit: Unicornlabs

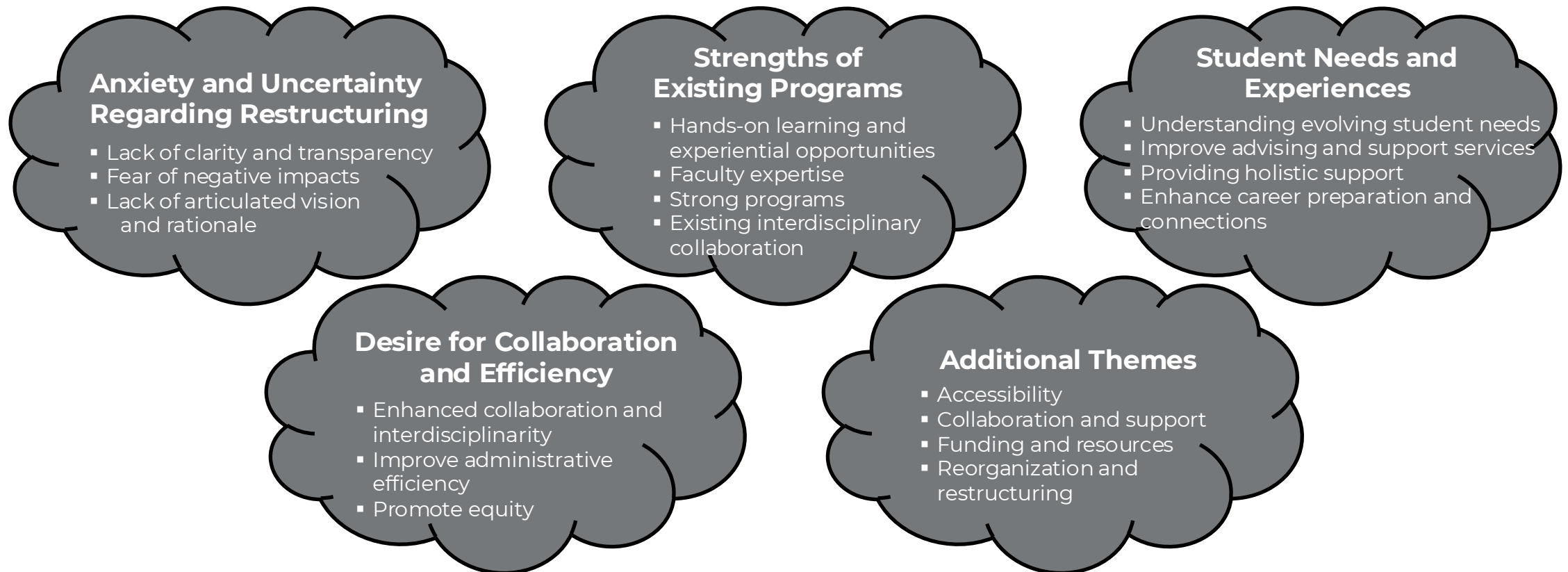
  
 Report  
Icon credit: Kiranshastry

  
 Presentation  
Icon credit: Unicornlabs

# Engagement Strategies Summary

Data from all 17 listening sessions (including summary notes from SAT members and transcripts from all sessions ( $n=279$ ), two surveys ( $n=114$ ), and feedback provided to SAT in the way of prepared documents, statements, or shared reports were analyzed using *NotebookLM*. SAT used the following prompt for all data sources: “What key points and themes emerge from the sources?” The prompt generated five sets of common themes across the data. We reviewed the five sets of common themes *NotebookLM* found and summarized these as general takeaways.



# Structural Recommendations

1. Form a college centered around **Agriculture, Natural Sciences, and the Environment**.
2. Form a college centered around **Health, Wellbeing, and Human Services**.
3. Departments/units **choose** college affiliation.
4. Form a **cross/multi/inter-disciplinary** academic support unit that works with all colleges.



		Academic colleges						
		AGR	BSS	BUS	CME	ECC	HFA	NSC
Support units	BAR							
	CSE							
	FAAF							
	GRAD							
	IEGE							
	MLIB							
	PCE							
	UED							
	Interdisciplinary Unit							

Provost's Office

# Academic Support Units

## Academic Support Units

We recommend to further research academic support units (rows: BAR, CSE, FAAF, GRAD, IEGE, MLIB, PCE, UED) and possibly create a committee or team to consider how their structure and roles could be reimaged to leverage innovation. Chico State Enterprises was identified consistently during community engagement as a unit that could function better.

## Chico State Enterprises

Participants in the listening sessions expressed several concerns about CSE, particularly regarding their perceived impact on research and collaboration. The consistent theme across these criticisms is a need for CSE to improve its customer service, streamline its processes, and better align its practices with the needs of faculty and staff to foster a more supportive and productive research environment at Chico State.

# Workflow Barriers



To reimagine Chico State University requires reimagining how it conducts its day-to-day operations, how it invests in the campus, and otherwise how to empowers faculty, staff, and administration to fulfill its core mission.

The SAT utilized Google *NotebookLM* to analyze the survey and listening session data collected through campus engagement with the following prompts: "What are the major barriers to workflow facing the university based on the sources provided?" and "What are the key themes from the sources on workflow at the university?"

Six workflow and processes that undermine the core mission of Chico State, limit student experience, undermine workplace quality, and undercut the possibilities of innovation and new modes of thinking.

- **Budget and Funding:** Budget models and funding thwarts collaboration.
- **Administrative Processes:** Cumbersome and time-consuming administrative processes and procedures impediment to efficient workflow.
- **Staffing and Personnel:** Staffing shortages, contribute to workflow bottlenecks and inefficiencies, disrupting ongoing collaborative efforts.
- **Workload:** Participants raise concerns about workload imbalances and inequities across campus.
- **University Policies and Procedures:** Overly rigid, inequitable, and dated policies and procedures that hinder effective collaboration.
- **Communication and Information Sharing:** Poor communication and limited information sharing as obstacles to efficient workflow.

**Comprehensive approach, that may include specific taskforce or internal audit, to address workflow challenges at Chico State and address the following:**

- Streamlining and simplifying administrative processes.
- Updating technology and improving system integration.
- Addressing staffing shortages and turnover.
- Promoting equitable workload distribution.
- Fostering clear communication and information sharing.



# Additional Campus Engagement: Students and Staff

## Students

- NEED: 2 or 3 listening sessions for student engagement in the Spring 2025 semester.
- WITH: modified, student-centered versions of the survey questions.
- INCLUDE: digital and physical outreach.
- START: with Associated Students (AS) and AS senators...
- BUT: communicate beyond AS to reach other students, including affinity groups and the so-called "average" student who may not participate in extracurricular activities.

## Staff

- NEED: specific listening sessions for staff engagement in the spring 2025 semester.
- WITH: modified, staff-centered versions of the survey questions.
- INCLUDE: an anonymous feedback option and a virtual session option.
- CONSIDER: sessions based on years of service or by department/unit/college and role.
- START: with college/unit level AA/S.
- AND: outreach through Staff Council as a *secondary* option to keep cross-functional staff in the know.

# Recommendations for Successful Restructuring

Data from our surveys, listening sessions, and feedback sent directly to the SAT indicate the following key considerations for “successful restructuring” expressed by our campus community. Google *NotebookLM* was used as a tool to compile the source input from survey responses, documents gathered from the listening sessions, and documents gathered from feedback sent directly to the SAT. Key considerations include:

- **Transparency and Communication:** The administration must prioritize open and honest communication throughout the process. This includes clearly articulating the goals, rationale, and potential impacts of restructuring.
- **Shared Governance:** All employees (both faculty and staff) must feel that their voices are heard and that they have a meaningful role in shaping the future of the university.
- **Equity and Fairness:** Restructuring decisions must be guided by principles of equity and fairness, ensuring that all stakeholders are treated fairly and that the process does not exacerbate existing disparities.
- **Student-Centeredness:** The needs and experiences of students must be at the forefront of all decisions.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Restructuring should be aligned with the university's mission, vision, and strategic goals, ensuring that changes support the university's long-term success.



# Fall 2024 - Special Action Team (SAT) Research Timeline

An internal subgroup committee formed to conduct research. The research subgroup met every Tuesday for 2-3 hours and shared updates to the full SAT through Microsoft Teams and during our weekly Friday meetings.

September

Established Approach  
and Resource Gathering

**9/24/2024**

- 1) Initiated sister school matrix.
- 2) Started library and web research about structures.
- 3) Discussed resources needed (i.e. campus organizational charts, from EAB, feedback from campus).

October

Defined and Discussed  
Compared and Developed  
Presented and Voted

**10/1/2024**: Defined Chico State structure and discuss sibling school matrix.  
**10/8/2024**: Discussed Chico State structure, compared our attributes to sibling schools, defined organizational models.  
**10/15/2024**: Developed a set of benchmark universities, acquired organizational charts for all units in Chico State Academic Affairs and discussed the different organizational structures, developed an idea for self-choice.  
**10/18/2024**: Presented different organizational models to the entire SAT, voted to move forward with the interdisciplinary matrix model.  
**10/22/2024**: Met with EAB, worked on sister schools, investigated different structural models.  
**10/29/2024**: Met with EAB, completed benchmark campuses academic structure.






November

Reviewed Recommendations  
Gathered Feedback  
Adjusted and Voted

**11/1/2024**: Discussed possible college themes with the entire SAT and the idea for self-choice.  
**11/5/2024**: Discussed feedback, developed a list of preliminary structural recommendations for college adjustments.  
**11/12/2024**: Solidified the preliminary structural recommendations using feedback data.  
**11/15/2024**: Presented the college based structural recommendations to the entire SAT (form HHS, form AGR/NSC/Environment).  
**11/19/2024**: Discussed the academic support units role and voting.  
**11/20-11/21/2024**: Voted on structural recommendations.  
**11/22/2024**: Discussed voting outcomes.

# Fall 2024 - Special Action Team (SAT) Engagement Timeline

In August 2024, the Provost appointed a Special Action Team (SAT) charged with reimagining the future of Chico State's academic identity and structures. Through a process of investigation, dialogue, and sustained campus engagement, the Special Action Team was charged with developing 2-3 comprehensive recommendations for restructuring academic units in service to our mission.

August	September	October	November	December
				
<b>Charge Letter</b>	<b>Weekly Meetings Established Co-Chairs</b>	<b>Survey #1 Sessions</b>	<b>Survey #2 Sessions</b>	<b>Report Recommendations</b>
<p><b>8/27 – Provost Email to SAT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charge</li> <li>Considerations</li> <li>First Steps</li> <li>Consultation</li> <li>Deliverables</li> </ul>	<p><b>Established weekly two-hour meetings.</b></p> <p><b>Voted on co-chairs.</b></p>	<p>10/11 – Public Survey #1 Open Internal Email Public Website Update</p> <p>10/14 – Internal Campus Listening Session (x41)</p> <p>10/15 – Provost/ Co-Chair Meeting</p> <p>10/18 – Department Chairs Listening Session (x35)</p> <p>10/23 – Agriculture External Listening Session (x3)</p> <p>10/24 – IRSA Meeting</p> <p>10/25 – Internal Online Listening Session (x42)</p> <p>10/29 – Internal Campus Listening Session (x14)</p> <p>10/30 – External Online Listening Session (x11)</p> <p>10/31 – Public Survey Close</p>	<p>11/1 – Farm Staff Session (x14) POLS Session (x14)</p> <p>11/4 – Provost/ Co-Chair Meeting</p> <p>11/5 – Public Survey #2 Open Internal Email Public Website Update</p> <p>11/6 – IEGE Session (x18)</p> <p>11/7 – BSS Chairs Session (x12)</p> <p>11/8 – FDEV Board Session (x10) GRAD Session (x13)</p> <p>11/13 – Online /Dist. Session (x11) Provost/ Co-Chair Meeting HHS Session (x9)</p> <p>11/18 – Library Session (x12)</p> <p>11/19 – ARC Session (x9)</p> <p>11/20 – HFA Session (x11)</p> <p>11/20 – Public Survey Close</p> <p>11/20 – Internal Sessions Close</p>	<p>12/6 – Complete Draft Report Prepare Presentation</p> <p>12/10 – Finalize Report</p> <p>12/10 – Internal Email Engagement Summary Public Website Update</p> <p>12/13 – Provost Presentation</p> <p>12/16 – Internal Email Public Website Update</p> <p>Phase 1: Fall SAT work concludes in December 2024.</p> <p>Phase 2: The Provost and PAC+ work will continue in Spring 2025.</p>

 Email <small>Icon credit: Smashicons</small>	 Meetings <small>Icon credit: Satria Amata</small>	 Survey <small>Icon credit: Uniconlabs</small>	 Listening Session <small>Icon credit: Uniconlabs</small>	 Report <small>Icon credit: Kiranashtry</small>	 Presentation <small>Icon credit: Uniconlabs</small>
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## Special Action Team (SAT) Campus Engagement Summary

In October and November 2024, the Special Action Team (SAT) conducted listening sessions, surveys, and received input from Chico State employees, partners, and stakeholders. Feedback from these sources reveals a complex mix of anxiety about the unknowns of restructuring, an appreciation for our existing strengths, and a desire for a more collaborative, equitable, and student-centered university.

With limited time and a charge from the Provost to deliver recommendations by mid-December, the team utilized Google *NotebookLM*, a generative AI/language model tool that helps users analyze and process information from multiple sources to assess feedback from our campus community. Data from all 17 listening sessions (including summary notes from SAT members and transcripts from all sessions ( $n=279$ )), two surveys ( $n=114$ ), and feedback provided to SAT in the way of prepared documents, statements, or shared reports were analyzed using *NotebookLM*. SAT used the following prompt for all data sources: “What key points and themes emerge from the sources?”. The prompt generated five sets of common themes across the data. We reviewed the five sets of common themes *NotebookLM* found and summarized these as general takeaways.

Access to NotebookLM is currently restricted to personal Google accounts only.

### Strengths of Existing Programs

Participants frequently emphasized the strengths and achievements of their respective units:

- **Hands-on Learning and Experiential Opportunities:** Hands-on learning opportunities, including internships, field experiences, and community engagement were seen as key strengths.
- **Faculty Expertise:** Strong faculty expertise was consistently identified as a key strength across departments.
- **Strong Programs:** Units consistently highlighted their successful programs, pointing to accreditation, high placement rates, and national recognition.
- **Existing Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Several units highlighted their existing collaborative efforts with other departments and colleges.

### Student Needs and Experiences

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of keeping student needs and experiences at the center of any restructuring decisions:

- **Understanding Evolving Student Needs:** Participants highlighted the need for increased flexibility, mental health support, career preparation resources, and a strong sense of community.
- **Providing Holistic Support:** Participants called for a more holistic approach to student support, including adequate academic advising, mental health services, financial assistance, and support for diverse student populations.

## General Takeaways from the SAT Campus Engagement Summary

- **Improve Advising and Support Services:** Participants identified challenges with current advising and support services, particularly for online and distance education students.
- **Enhance Career Preparation and Connections:** Participants emphasized equipping students with the skills and experiences needed for career success.

### Desire for Collaboration and Efficiency

Participants desired a more collaborative, efficient, and equitable university structure:

- **Enhanced Collaboration and Interdisciplinarity:** Participants identified several barriers to collaboration, including administrative hurdles, lack of resources, and siloed departmental structures. Suggestions for improvement included streamlining processes and procedures, providing resources and incentives, and improving communication.
- **Improve Administrative Efficiency:** Participants called for streamlining procedures, reducing duplication of efforts, and investing in technology to improve efficiency.
- **Promote Equity:** Participants called for fair workload distribution, equitable resource allocation, and representation of diverse perspectives in decision-making.

### Anxiety and Uncertainty Regarding Restructuring

Our analysis revealed a pervasive sense of anxiety, uncertainty, and distrust among faculty and staff regarding the restructuring process:

- **Lack of Clarity and Transparency:** Participants repeatedly voiced frustration with the vagueness of the Provost's charge letter that informed the work of the SAT and the lack of clearly defined goals for the restructuring process articulated by that letter and SAT representatives.
- **Fear of Negative Impacts:** Specific concerns included potential job losses, program cuts, loss of unit identity, disruption of existing successes, and negative impacts on morale and campus climate.
- **Lack of Articulated Vision and Rationale:** Participants repeatedly asked questions about the ultimate purpose and desired outcomes of the restructuring process.

### Additional Themes

Feedback from listening sessions, surveys and other sources revealed additional areas for improvement:

- **Accessibility:** Students are seeking increased accessibility across campus, including accessible furniture, universal design in courses, and more resources to support students with disabilities.<sup>1</sup> Participants also highlighted the need for mixed modality in course offerings, including maintenance of in-person classes and a bolstering of hybrid and online course offerings and programs.

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<sup>1</sup> While a diversity of constituents across Chico State participated in SAT data collection through surveys and listening sessions, SAT recognizes a clear lack of participation by students. It is recommended that the Provost engages directly with students in the Spring 2025 semester.

*General Takeaways from the SAT Campus Engagement Summary*

- **Collaboration and Support:** Participants expressed a need for greater collaboration between departments and units, increased communication and support from faculty, and more personalized spaces on campus.
- **Funding and Resources:** Participants highlighted the need for increased funding and resources to support student learning, including library resources and staffing levels.
- **Reorganization and Restructuring:** The feedback suggested several areas where reorganization and restructuring could improve the university's functioning, including clearer communication channels, greater flexibility in staffing, and a re-evaluation of faculty workload expectations.

# Faculty

Q1 Given the charge the Special Action Team was provided, what broad ideas would you like to share to inform our work?

## Summary

### Key Themes and Ideas

#### 1. Concerns About Reorganization:

- Many respondents express skepticism about the effectiveness of a top-down reorganization approach. They question whether such changes will genuinely lead to improved outcomes, particularly in terms of enrollment and budget efficiency.
- There is a strong sentiment that existing successful departments should not be disrupted. Faculty emphasize the importance of maintaining stability in programs that are thriving.

#### 2. Equity and Workload:

- A recurring theme is the need for equitable distribution of teaching loads among faculty. Some faculty members highlight disparities in teaching responsibilities, suggesting that a uniform teaching load could promote fairness and recognition of faculty contributions.
- Concerns about workload equity extend to committee responsibilities, with some departments feeling overburdened compared to others.

#### 3. Creative Solutions and Autonomy:

- Several responses advocate for allowing colleges to devise their own solutions to budgetary challenges rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all directive. This approach could foster innovation and accountability at the departmental level.
- Suggestions include creating hybrid programs that blend technical certifications with traditional degrees, which could attract a broader student demographic.

#### 4. Interdisciplinary Collaboration:

- There is a strong call for fostering interdisciplinary collaboration rather than merely restructuring for the sake of efficiency. Respondents argue that collaboration should be encouraged through events and initiatives rather than enforced through administrative changes.
- Some faculty propose organizing academic units around societal issues, which could enhance relevance and engagement with current challenges.

#### 5. Financial Considerations:

- Many responses emphasize the need for a clear understanding of the financial implications of any proposed changes. Faculty are concerned about the hidden costs associated with restructuring, such as updating materials and potential impacts on morale.



- The idea of merging colleges is met with caution, as faculty worry that this could lead to inefficiencies and increased administrative burdens rather than the intended cost savings.

**6. Student-Centric Focus:**

- A significant number of respondents stress that any changes should prioritize student needs and experiences. They argue that restructuring should ultimately enhance the educational environment and support student success.
- Suggestions include improving research infrastructure and diversifying revenue streams to better serve students and the community.

**Recommendations for the Special Action Team**

- **Engage in Transparent Communication:** Clearly articulate the goals and rationale behind the restructuring process to build trust and cooperation among faculty and staff.
- **Prioritize Equity:** Ensure that any changes made are equitable and do not disproportionately burden certain departments or faculty members.
- **Encourage Voluntary Collaboration:** Allow departments to voluntarily combine or collaborate based on shared interests and goals, rather than enforcing mergers.
- **Conduct a Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Before implementing changes, perform a thorough analysis of the costs associated with restructuring versus the anticipated benefits.
- **Focus on Student Outcomes:** Keep the student experience at the forefront of any decisions made, ensuring that changes enhance educational quality and accessibility.

**Outlier Summary**

**1. Anti-Capitalism Sentiment:**

- One respondent explicitly mentions an anti-capitalist viewpoint, suggesting that the restructuring should not be driven by administrative interests or profit motives. This perspective contrasts sharply with the more pragmatic concerns about budget and efficiency expressed by others.

**2. Radical Structural Changes:**

- A comment advocates for a significant reduction in the number of colleges, proposing a model that consolidates to just three or four colleges. This is a stark contrast to the more cautious suggestions of maintaining existing structures or allowing voluntary collaborations.

**3. Focus on Student Experience Over Administrative Structure:**

- Some responses emphasize that students do not care about the college structure but are primarily concerned with their degree programs. This viewpoint challenges the focus on administrative efficiency and suggests a more student-centered approach, which is less common in the other responses.

**4. Call for Transparency and Choice:**

- A respondent calls for a transparent process where faculty and staff can choose their new units or departments, likening the restructuring to a puzzle that should be rebuilt from the ground up. This idea of faculty autonomy and choice is less frequently mentioned in the context of the proposed changes.

**5. Concerns About Job Security:**

- While many responses discuss workload and equity, one comment explicitly prioritizes job preservation as a guiding principle for restructuring. This focus on job security highlights a deeper concern about the potential impacts of restructuring on faculty employment, which is not as prominently featured in other comments.

**6. Skepticism About the Charge's Clarity:**

- Several respondents express confusion about the purpose of the Special Action Team and the lack of clear goals. However, one comment stands out by questioning the very rationale behind the restructuring, suggesting that it may be an administrative exercise rather than a genuine effort to improve academic affairs.

## Q2 What opportunities do you think could be leveraged in a restructuring Academic Affairs given the unique historical, cultural, regional, administrative, disciplinary and/or other characteristics of the university?

### Summary

#### Key Themes and Opportunities

**1. Departmental Collaboration and Autonomy:**

- Many respondents emphasize the importance of voluntary departmental mergers, suggesting that departments should choose their partners based on shared goals and interests. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and collaboration, which could lead to more effective partnerships.
- Organizing events to facilitate connections between departments is proposed as a way to encourage discussions about potential collaborations, particularly for smaller departments with fewer majors.

**2. Equity in College Sizes:**

- There is a strong call for ensuring that any combined colleges maintain equitable sizes to address workload issues. Respondents argue that larger colleges should not exacerbate existing inequities among faculty and staff.
- Suggestions include creating models for equitable college sizes that balance student populations and faculty resources, thereby enhancing operational efficiency.

**3. Utilizing Existing Expertise:**

- A notable sentiment is the rejection of external consulting firms. Faculty advocate for leveraging the expertise already present on campus to inform restructuring decisions, which could save costs and utilize institutional knowledge effectively.

**4. Focus on Growth Areas:**

- Respondents highlight the rapid growth of online programs as a significant opportunity. These programs have shown substantial enrollment increases and

should be supported rather than merged with other programs that may dilute their effectiveness.

- The growth of specific disciplines, such as Sociology and Social Science, is noted as a potential area for expansion, particularly in online offerings that cater to a broader audience.

**5. Interdisciplinary Programs:**

- There is a strong push for enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly in fields that address pressing societal issues. Programs like Latin American Studies and Museum Studies are cited as having potential for greater integration across departments.
- Respondents suggest that restructuring should not merely combine departments but should also foster genuine interdisciplinary initiatives that enhance student learning and faculty collaboration.

**6. Community and Regional Focus:**

- Several comments stress the importance of aligning academic programs with the needs of the local community and region. This includes developing programs that prepare students for careers in social services, health care, and agriculture, which are vital to the local economy.
- The university's unique position as a residential campus in a beautiful natural setting is seen as an asset that can attract students and enhance their educational experience.

**7. Addressing Administrative Overhead:**

- Many responses call for a reduction in administrative positions, particularly those that do not directly contribute to academic outcomes. This could free up resources for faculty and student support.
- Concerns about the disparity in salaries between administrators and faculty are raised, with suggestions for more equitable compensation structures that reflect the university's mission to serve students.

**8. Innovative Curriculum Development:**

- Respondents advocate for a curriculum that emphasizes general education and interdisciplinary studies, arguing that these areas are crucial for developing well-rounded graduates.
- There is a call for new programs that reflect the changing landscape of higher education, including online and hybrid models that cater to diverse student needs.

## Outlier Summary

**1. Critique of Administrative Compensation:**

- One respondent strongly criticizes the high salaries of university administrators, suggesting that drastic cuts to administrative pay could free up resources for faculty and student support. This perspective challenges the general focus on restructuring academic units and highlights broader financial concerns.

**2. Skepticism About the Need for Restructuring:**

- A few comments express confusion about the rationale behind the restructuring process, questioning whether it is genuinely necessary or merely a superficial response to budget issues. This skepticism contrasts with the more proactive suggestions for collaboration and growth.

**3. Focus on Community and Social Services:**

- Some responses advocate for prioritizing programs that serve the community, such as social work and education, suggesting that the university should focus on helping professions rather than business-oriented programs. This emphasis on social responsibility is less common in the overall discourse.

**4. Call for a Liberal Arts Focus:**

- A respondent argues for a restructuring that emphasizes the value of liberal arts education, suggesting that general education should be central to the university's mission. This contrasts with the more technical or vocational focus seen in other comments.

**5. Concerns About Affinity Centers:**

- One comment explicitly calls for the elimination of affinity centers, arguing that they create silos and alienation on campus. This viewpoint is less frequently mentioned and highlights concerns about inclusivity and collaboration.

**6. Innovative Curriculum Development:**

- A unique suggestion involves creating a college specifically for online programs, advocating for a distinct administrative structure to support these growing areas. This idea reflects a forward-thinking approach that diverges from traditional restructuring models.

**7. Emphasis on Historical and Cultural Context:**

- Some responses highlight the university's unique historical and cultural context, suggesting that any restructuring should honor and leverage these characteristics. This perspective emphasizes the importance of place and identity in academic restructuring.

## Q3 What challenges and/or concerns do you foresee in restructuring Academic Affairs?

### Summary

#### Key Themes and Concerns

**1. Financial Implications:**

- Many respondents express skepticism about the cost-effectiveness of restructuring. They question whether merging departments and colleges will lead to significant savings, especially given the potential costs associated with rebranding, administrative changes, and the time required for implementation.

- Concerns are raised about the financial burden of restructuring, particularly in a context where the university is already facing budget shortfalls. Respondents emphasize that any restructuring should not exacerbate existing financial challenges.
- 2. Impact on Faculty and Staff:**
- There is a strong concern about the potential loss of jobs, particularly for lecturers and staff. Many faculty members fear that restructuring could lead to layoffs or increased workloads for remaining staff, which would negatively impact morale and job satisfaction.
  - The issue of equity in teaching loads is highlighted, with some colleges having significantly lighter loads than others. This disparity raises concerns about fairness and could complicate the merging of departments.
- 3. Resistance to Change:**
- Faculty resistance to change is a recurring theme. Many respondents indicate that change can be met with skepticism and reluctance, particularly if it threatens established programs or faculty roles.
  - Historical context is provided, with references to past restructuring attempts that faced significant pushback and ultimately failed. This history contributes to a general wariness about the current initiative.
- 4. Concerns About Academic Integrity:**
- Respondents worry that restructuring could disrupt successful programs and initiatives that are currently in place. There is a fear that merging departments may dilute academic quality and hinder innovation.
  - The potential for increased bureaucracy and administrative overhead is also a concern, as faculty express the need to focus on teaching and student support rather than navigating complex administrative structures.
- 5. Lack of Clear Goals:**
- Many comments reflect confusion about the overarching goals of the restructuring process. Respondents call for clearer communication regarding the objectives and expected outcomes of the initiative.
  - The perceived lack of data-driven decision-making is highlighted, with calls for a more transparent approach that considers the unique needs and strengths of various departments.
- 6. Interdisciplinary Collaboration:**
- While interdisciplinary collaboration is often cited as a goal of restructuring, some faculty members argue that existing barriers to collaboration are not solely structural. They suggest that the challenges lie more in campus policies and faculty workload than in the organizational framework itself.
  - Concerns are raised about whether restructuring will genuinely facilitate interdisciplinary work or simply create new challenges.
- 7. Cultural and Historical Context:**

- Respondents emphasize the importance of considering the university's unique cultural and historical context in any restructuring efforts. There is a call to honor the traditions and strengths of the institution while pursuing necessary changes.

## Outlier Summary

### 1. **Critique of Administrative Pay:**

- One respondent explicitly criticizes the high salaries of CSU executives, suggesting that their compensation should be reduced to alleviate budget pressures. This comment highlights a broader concern about financial priorities and the perceived disconnect between administrative compensation and faculty/staff salaries.

### 2. **Skepticism About the Need for Restructuring:**

- Some comments express doubt about the necessity of restructuring, questioning whether it will genuinely address the university's challenges. This skepticism contrasts with the more proactive suggestions for collaboration and growth, indicating a divide in how faculty perceive the restructuring initiative.

### 3. **Historical Context and Resistance:**

- A few respondents reference past restructuring attempts that were met with significant resistance and ultimately failed. This historical perspective adds depth to the current concerns, suggesting that faculty memories of previous conflicts may influence their reactions to the current initiative.

### 4. **Focus on Community and Social Responsibility:**

- Some comments advocate for prioritizing programs that serve the community, such as social work and education, suggesting that the university should focus on helping professions rather than business-oriented programs. This emphasis on social responsibility is less common in the overall discourse.

### 5. **Concerns About Interdisciplinary Collaboration:**

- While interdisciplinary collaboration is often cited as a goal, some faculty argue that existing barriers are not solely structural. They suggest that the challenges lie more in campus policies and faculty workload than in the organizational framework itself, indicating a nuanced view of the restructuring's potential impact.

### 6. **Call for Evidence-Based Decision Making:**

- A respondent emphasizes the need for clear, data-driven reasons for restructuring, arguing that changes should be based on concrete evidence rather than vague goals. This call for transparency and accountability stands out against more general concerns about the restructuring process.

### 7. **Emphasis on Faculty Autonomy:**

- Some comments advocate for maintaining faculty autonomy in decision-making, suggesting that departments should have the freedom to choose their paths rather than being forced into mergers. This perspective highlights a desire for self-management and respect for departmental identities.

# Staff

Q1 Given the charge the Special Action Team was provided, what broad ideas would you like to share to inform our work?

## Summary

### Key Themes and Insights

#### 1. **Skepticism About Institutional Change:**

- Many respondents express a deep-seated skepticism regarding the effectiveness of previous surveys and the actual implementation of feedback. There's a sentiment that decisions are made without genuine consideration of staff input, leading to feelings of disillusionment.

#### 2. **Caution in Change Management:**

- A recurring suggestion is to **proceed with caution** when considering changes. Respondents highlight the emotional burden carried by faculty and staff, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic. They emphasize the need for careful consideration of the potential negative consequences of any proposed changes.

#### 3. **Structural Concerns:**

- There are calls to **review and possibly consolidate colleges and programs** to enhance clarity and efficiency. Suggestions include combining departments that complement each other and aligning programs to better meet student needs. Respondents argue that the current structure, while complex, is logical and serves students well.

#### 4. **Focus on Identity and Strengths:**

- Respondents advocate for a renewed focus on the university's identity, suggesting that Chico State should leverage its strengths, such as its notable academic programs (e.g., Nursing, Teacher Credential programs). This could help the institution stand out and attract more students.

#### 5. **Inclusivity and Accessibility:**

- There is a strong emphasis on **increasing inclusivity** by removing barriers—be they physical, technological, or attitudinal. This aligns with the broader goal of ensuring that all students have equitable access to educational opportunities.

#### 6. **Alignment with Student Needs:**

- Several responses indicate a disconnect between current program offerings and student interests. For instance, there are requests for programs in film and audio that are not adequately addressed by existing departments. This suggests a need for a thorough review of programs to ensure they align with student demand and job readiness.

#### 7. **Concerns About Administrative Overhead:**

- Some respondents express concern about the increasing number of administrative positions and the potential inefficiencies this creates. They advocate for a more streamlined approach that prioritizes student and faculty support over administrative expansion.

#### 8. **Long-term Planning and Stability:**

- There is a call for any restructuring to be sustainable and well-planned, addressing not just immediate concerns but also long-term stability. Respondents urge the team to consider the implications of changes over time and to ensure that support systems are in place during transitions.

### **Recommendations for the Special Action Team**

- **Engage Staff Meaningfully:** Develop a transparent process for incorporating staff feedback into decision-making. This could help rebuild trust and ensure that voices are genuinely heard.
- **Conduct a Comprehensive Review:** Analyze current programs and departments for alignment with student needs and institutional goals. Consider consolidating similar programs to reduce redundancy.
- **Promote Institutional Identity:** Focus on marketing the university's strengths and unique offerings to enhance its reputation and attract prospective students.
- **Ensure Inclusivity:** Actively work to identify and remove barriers to access for all students, fostering a more inclusive environment.
- **Plan for Sustainability:** Approach restructuring with a long-term perspective, ensuring that changes are not only beneficial in the short term but also sustainable and supportive of the university's mission.

## **Outlier Summary**

### 1. **Disillusionment with Institutional Feedback:**

- One respondent expressed a strong sense of frustration, stating, "no one really cares what we think." This comment reflects a deep skepticism about the effectiveness of surveys and the decision-making process, suggesting a belief that staff input is routinely ignored. This level of disillusionment is more pronounced than in other responses, which generally call for caution or constructive change.



**2. Concerns About Administrative Structure:**

- A comment highlighted the increasing number of administrative positions, describing the situation as becoming “top heavy.” This perspective raises concerns about resource allocation and efficiency, contrasting with other responses that focus more on programmatic changes rather than administrative restructuring.

**3. Call for a Stronger Institutional Identity:**

- The suggestion to “give Chico State an identity back” is a passionate plea for the university to focus on its strengths rather than just its physical attributes. This comment stands out because it emphasizes a need for a clear and compelling narrative about the university, which is less commonly addressed in other responses.

**4. Specific Program Alignment Issues:**

- A respondent pointed out the confusion among students regarding program offerings, particularly in film and audio. This detailed observation about student needs and program alignment is more specific than general calls for consolidation or review, indicating a direct connection to student experiences.

**5. Unique Proposal for Name Change:**

- The suggestion to upgrade the university’s name to “CUSU Chico Polytechnic University” is a distinctive idea that reflects a desire for rebranding and modernization. This type of proposal is less common in the responses, which tend to focus on structural and procedural changes rather than branding.

**Summary of Outlier Characteristics**

- **Intensity of Emotion:** Some comments convey strong feelings of frustration or hope, setting them apart from more measured responses.
- **Specificity:** Outlier comments often provide detailed observations or proposals that address particular issues, rather than general suggestions.
- **Focus on Identity and Branding:** A few responses emphasize the need for a clear institutional identity, which is a less common theme in the overall feedback.

**Q2 What opportunities do you think could be leveraged in a restructuring Academic Affairs given the unique historical, cultural, regional, administrative, disciplinary and/or other characteristics of the university?**

**Summary**

**1. Creation of a College of the Environment:**

- Several respondents suggest establishing a **College of the Environment**, emphasizing the relevance of environmental studies in today's context. This aligns with regional priorities and the university's historical focus on agriculture and natural resources.

## 2. **Emphasis on Collaboration and Clarity:**

- There is a strong call for **increased collaboration** among departments and clearer navigation for students. Respondents noted the confusion caused by overlapping programs and suggested that restructuring should aim to eliminate redundancy and create more intuitive pathways for students.

## 3. **Streamlining Administrative Structures:**

- Many comments point to the need for a **simplified administrative structure**. Suggestions include reducing the number of committees and administrative positions to alleviate bottlenecks and improve efficiency. This reflects a desire to focus resources on teaching and student support rather than administrative overhead.

## 4. **Focus on Student Support Services:**

- Respondents emphasize the importance of hiring more **support staff** to assist students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. This aligns with the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion, suggesting that investing in personnel is crucial for enhancing student success.

## 5. **Historical and Cultural Context:**

- Some responses highlight the importance of maintaining ties to the university's **historical and cultural context**. This includes leveraging the university farm for research and community engagement, which can enhance the institution's role in addressing regional challenges.

## 6. **Cross-Disciplinary Programs:**

- There is a push for developing **cross-disciplinary programs** that reflect contemporary educational needs. Suggestions include creating thematic hubs (e.g., Health, Sustainability) that encompass various related disciplines, making it easier for students to navigate their options and understand the relevance of their studies.

## 7. **Enhancing Online Offerings:**

- Respondents advocate for prioritizing **online programs** to meet the needs of a diverse student body. This reflects a growing trend in higher education and the need for flexible learning options.

## 8. **Institutional Research and Assessment:**

- A call to **reintegrate Institutional Research** under Academic Affairs was made, emphasizing its importance in supporting assessment and accreditation processes.

This suggests a need for better alignment between research functions and academic goals.

### Recommendations for Leveraging Opportunities

- **Establish a College of the Environment:** This could position the university as a leader in environmental studies and sustainability, attracting students interested in these fields.
- **Enhance Collaboration:** Create structures that facilitate collaboration among departments, reducing redundancy and confusion for students. This could involve re-evaluating program pairings and ensuring that similar programs are housed together.
- **Streamline Administration:** Consider reducing the number of committees and administrative roles to focus on core academic functions. This could improve efficiency and reduce stress among faculty and staff.
- **Invest in Student Support:** Prioritize hiring additional support staff to enhance services for students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. This investment could lead to improved retention and success rates.
- **Promote Cross-Disciplinary Programs:** Develop thematic hubs that reflect student interests and industry needs, making it easier for students to navigate their educational paths.
- **Expand Online Offerings:** Increase the availability of online programs to cater to a wider range of students, providing flexibility and accessibility.
- **Reintegrate Institutional Research:** Bring Institutional Research back under Academic Affairs to ensure it plays a vital role in supporting academic goals and accreditation processes.

### Outlier Summary

#### 1. **Skepticism About Previous Changes:**

- One respondent expressed a strong skepticism about the effectiveness of past restructuring efforts, particularly criticizing the combination of music and theatre programs. They noted that such changes had “disastrous outcomes” and questioned the financial benefits, highlighting a belief that these decisions often lead to the firing of lecturers rather than meaningful improvements. This level of disillusionment is more intense than other responses, which generally focus on constructive suggestions.

#### 2. **Call for Administrative Downsizing:**

- A comment emphasized the need to scale back upper administration to save jobs for lecturers, arguing that one administrative salary could support multiple teaching positions. This perspective is more radical compared to others that suggest restructuring without addressing administrative costs directly.

### 3. **Creation of a Communications Division:**

- A unique suggestion was made to establish a dedicated **communications division** that aligns with university-wide goals. This idea stands out because it focuses on enhancing internal communication and collaboration, which is less commonly addressed in other responses.

### 4. **Historical Context and Innovation:**

- One respondent highlighted the importance of maintaining ties to the university's historical context while also pushing for innovation. They referenced John Bidwell's legacy and suggested that the university should leverage its agricultural roots to address contemporary issues. This dual focus on history and forward-thinking is less prevalent in the other comments.

### 5. **Cross-Disciplinary Hubs:**

- The proposal to create **cross-disciplinary hubs** (e.g., Health, Sustainability) is a distinctive idea that reflects a desire for a more integrated approach to education. This contrasts with more traditional suggestions focused on maintaining existing structures.

### 6. **Focus on Disability Inclusion:**

- A comment advocating for increased representation of students and faculty with disabilities is notable for its emphasis on diversity and inclusion. This perspective highlights a specific demographic focus that is not as commonly addressed in other responses.

## **Summary of Outlier Characteristics**

- **Intensity of Emotion:** Some comments convey strong feelings of frustration or hope, setting them apart from more measured responses.
- **Specificity:** Outlier comments often provide detailed observations or proposals that address particular issues, rather than general suggestions.
- **Focus on Identity and Branding:** A few responses emphasize the need for a clear institutional identity, which is a less common theme in the overall feedback.

## **Q3 What challenges and/or concerns do you foresee in restructuring Academic Affairs?**

### **Summary**

#### **1. Resistance to Change:**

- A significant concern is the **resistance to change** encapsulated in the phrase, "We've always done it that way." Many respondents express that pride in existing

programs and structures can lead to pushback against proposed changes. This sentiment indicates a deep-rooted attachment to current practices, making it challenging to implement new ideas.

2. **Budgetary Constraints:**

- Respondents highlight that the current **budget models based on Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)** hinder collaboration across departments. There is a recognition that a one-size-fits-all approach does not accommodate the diverse needs of different colleges and programs, complicating efforts to foster cooperation.

3. **Impact on Non-Faculty Staff:**

- Concerns are raised about the **overlooked needs of non-faculty positions** (e.g., ASC, AAS, SSP). Respondents emphasize that changes in curriculum and structure can significantly impact staff workloads, yet these roles often lack the same level of communication and support as faculty.

4. **Balancing Curriculum Needs:**

- There is a tension between providing a **well-rounded student experience** through General Education and meeting the specific needs of major curricula. Respondents stress the importance of exposing students to various fields while ensuring that the curriculum aligns with industry requirements.

5. **Morale and Workload Issues:**

- Many comments reflect concerns about **morale drops** and the potential for layoffs or redundancies. Respondents fear that restructuring could lead to increased workloads for remaining staff, further diminishing morale and negatively impacting the student experience.

6. **Turf Wars and Silo Mentality:**

- The existence of **“turf wars”** within the organization is noted as a significant barrier to effective restructuring. Respondents indicate that entrenched interests and departmental silos can obstruct collaboration and hinder progress.

7. **Perception of Upper Administration:**

- There is a strong sentiment that upper administration may be out of touch with the realities faced by faculty and staff. Concerns are voiced about decisions being made without adequate input from those directly affected, leading to skepticism about the motivations behind proposed changes.

8. **Workload and Change Fatigue:**

- Respondents express anxiety about the **sheer workload** that any restructuring will entail. Many faculty and staff feel stretched thin already, raising concerns that additional changes could exacerbate stress and lead to burnout.

## 9. Cultural and Emotional Attachments:

- The emotional aspect of restructuring is highlighted, with comments about the difficulty of navigating personal relationships and attachments within the community. Respondents worry about the impact of changes on their colleagues and the potential for broken relationships.

### Recommendations for Addressing Challenges

- **Foster Open Communication:** Establish transparent channels for communication that include all staff levels, ensuring that concerns and suggestions are heard and considered in the decision-making process.
- **Tailor Budget Models:** Consider revising budget models to better reflect the unique needs of different programs, promoting collaboration rather than competition for resources.
- **Support Non-Faculty Roles:** Acknowledge and address the needs of non-faculty staff in restructuring plans, ensuring they receive adequate support and recognition for their contributions.
- **Engage in Collaborative Planning:** Create opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration to break down silos and encourage a more integrated approach to restructuring.
- **Monitor Morale and Workload:** Implement strategies to assess and support staff morale throughout the restructuring process, ensuring that workloads are manageable and that staff feel valued.
- **Emphasize the Big Picture:** Remind all stakeholders of the overarching goals of restructuring, focusing on the benefits for students and the community to foster a shared vision.

## Outlier Summary

### 1. Strong Resistance to Change:

- One respondent emphasized that the biggest challenge would be the mindset of **“We’ve always done it that way.”** This comment reflects a deep-rooted resistance to change, highlighting the pride programs have in their existing structures. This sentiment is more pronounced than in other responses, which generally acknowledge resistance but do not emphasize it as a primary challenge.

### 2. Critique of Upper Administration:

- A particularly critical comment described the ideas being floated as **“unrealistic and untenable,”** suggesting that upper administration is out of touch with the struggles faced by faculty and staff. This level of skepticism about leadership decisions is more intense than the general concerns expressed by others, indicating a significant distrust in the administration’s approach.

**3. Concerns About Layoffs and Morale:**

- The fear of **layoffs and redundancies** leading to decreased morale is articulated strongly in one response. The comment suggests that restructuring could result in the same workload being distributed among fewer people, which could further harm morale and the quality of the student experience. This concern is echoed in other responses but is presented here with a heightened sense of urgency.

**4. Emotional Attachments and Accountability:**

- A unique perspective was shared regarding the emotional attachments within the community, noting that “**most of us at Chico State are terrible at holding each other accountable.**” This comment highlights a cultural aspect that may complicate restructuring efforts, as it suggests that personal relationships can interfere with professional accountability. This level of introspection about workplace dynamics is less common in other responses.

**5. Skepticism About Necessity of Change:**

- One respondent expressed a strong belief that restructuring feels like a “**if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it**” moment, arguing that the current system is functioning adequately. This skepticism about the necessity of change contrasts with other comments that recognize the need for improvement but do not question the restructuring itself as fundamentally unnecessary.

**Summary of Outlier Characteristics**

- **Intensity of Emotion:** These comments convey strong feelings of frustration, skepticism, or attachment, setting them apart from more measured responses.
- **Specificity:** Outlier comments often provide detailed observations or critiques that address particular issues, rather than general suggestions.
- **Cultural Insights:** Some responses delve into the cultural dynamics of the institution, highlighting how personal relationships and emotional attachments can complicate professional decisions.

# Faculty Unofficial Committee Grp and Other Partners (Only a few responses)

Q1 Given the charge the Special Action Team was provided, what broad ideas would you like to share to inform our work?

## Summary

### Key Themes and Ideas

#### 1. **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:**

- There is a strong emphasis on maintaining the cohesion of social sciences within the Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS) college. Respondents advocate for keeping most, if not all, social science programs together to leverage their collective strength and growth, particularly in online education.

#### 2. **Program Growth and Efficiency:**

- The Social Science Program is highlighted as a model of efficiency and interdisciplinary collaboration. It utilizes a core curriculum that integrates courses from various departments, showcasing its adaptability and appeal to a diverse student body. The program's growth, particularly in enrollment, is noted as a positive indicator of its relevance and effectiveness.

#### 3. **Investment in Successful Programs:**

- Respondents suggest that larger and faster-growing programs should receive more investment and support. There is a call for evaluating the viability of smaller programs, with the idea that some may need to be consolidated or restructured if they do not attract sufficient enrollment.

#### 4. **Encouragement of Interdisciplinary Approaches:**

- The document mentions the importance of interdisciplinary programs, particularly the Social Science Program, which combines courses from 32 different departments. This approach not only enriches the curriculum but also provides students with a broader educational experience.

#### 5. **Future Directions:**

- There is a clear desire for the BSS to continue expanding its offerings, particularly in online formats, to meet the evolving needs of students. The potential for integrating additional programs from other colleges is also suggested, indicating a willingness to collaborate across disciplines.



## Outlier Summary

Based on the survey responses provided, here are some observations regarding potential outlier comments:

### Outlier Comments

#### 1. Integration of Other Programs:

- One comment suggests that the BSS could welcome programs from other colleges, such as History. This idea contrasts with the predominant focus on maintaining the integrity of existing social science programs. While most responses emphasize keeping social sciences together, this suggestion indicates a willingness to explore interdisciplinary integration beyond the current framework.

#### 2. Efficiency and Viability of Smaller Programs:

- There is a mention that some programs may not need to remain standalone if they do not attract enough majors or full-time equivalent students (FTES). This perspective might be seen as an outlier, as it challenges the status quo of maintaining all existing programs regardless of their performance. It suggests a more pragmatic approach to program management, which may not align with the more traditional views of preserving all academic offerings.

#### 3. Focus on Online Programs:

- The emphasis on the growth of online programs is notable. While many responses highlight the importance of traditional in-person education, the strong focus on expanding online offerings could be seen as an outlier, especially if other comments do not prioritize this mode of delivery.

**Q2 What opportunities do you think could be leveraged in a restructuring Academic Affairs given the unique historical, cultural, regional, administrative, disciplinary and/or other characteristics of the university?**

## Summary

### Key Themes and Opportunities

#### 1. Growth of Online Programs:

- Respondents emphasize the importance of leveraging the growth of state-supported online programs. These programs have shown significant enrollment increases, with Sociology, Liberal Studies, and Social Science experiencing growth rates of **32%**, **31%**, and **49%**, respectively. This trend suggests that the university

should continue to support and expand these online offerings rather than merging them with other programs, as they represent a vital area for future growth.

**2. Administrative Challenges:**

- The complexity of managing combined in-person and online programs is noted as a challenge. Respondents advocate for maintaining the distinctiveness of robust online programs to ensure they can continue to thrive. This indicates a need for administrative structures that can effectively support the unique demands of these programs.

**3. Equity in Faculty Workload:**

- A significant opportunity identified is addressing the inequity in teaching loads among tenure-line faculty across different colleges. Specifically, faculty in the College of Business teach fewer courses per semester compared to their counterparts in other colleges. Addressing this disparity could lead to substantial savings on lecturer costs and improve overall resource allocation within the university.

## Outlier Summary

**1. Focus on Online Programs:**

- The strong emphasis on the growth of online programs could be considered an outlier if most responses do not prioritize this area. While many respondents may acknowledge the importance of online education, the specific call to maintain and expand these programs without merging them with others suggests a unique perspective that may not be widely shared.

**2. Equity in Faculty Workload:**

- The comment addressing the inequity in teaching loads among tenure-line faculty, particularly in the College of Business, stands out. This perspective challenges the status quo and suggests a significant restructuring of faculty responsibilities, which may not align with the more traditional views held by other respondents who might prioritize preserving existing structures over addressing inequities.

**3. Administrative Challenges:**

- The acknowledgment of the complexities involved in managing combined in-person and online programs is another potential outlier. While some may recognize these challenges, the specific recommendation to keep robust online programs separate for continued growth indicates a proactive approach that may not be reflected in all

## Q3 What challenges and/or concerns do you foresee in restructuring Academic Affairs?

### Summary

#### 1. Inefficient Distribution of Resources:

- A significant concern highlighted is the **inequitable distribution of tenure-line faculty** across various programs. Some departments have a high number of faculty but low enrollment (e.g., a department in Humanities and Fine Arts with 9 faculty and only 138 majors), while others, like the Social Science program, have many majors but no tenure-line faculty. This disparity raises questions about resource allocation and efficiency.

#### 2. Specialization of Faculty:

- The specialization of faculty presents a challenge for restructuring efforts. Faculty members are experts in their respective fields, making it difficult to reassign them to programs or departments that may need additional support. This specialization can hinder efforts to maximize the effective distribution of faculty resources across the university.

#### 3. Addressing Teaching Load Inequities:

- There is a long-standing issue regarding the **teaching loads of tenure-line faculty** in the College of Business, who teach fewer courses compared to faculty in other colleges. While some have justified this disparity due to accreditation requirements, there is a lack of evidence supporting this claim. Addressing this inequity is seen as crucial for improving resource allocation and addressing the current budget deficit in Academic Affairs.

### Outlier Summary

Based on the survey responses regarding challenges in restructuring Academic Affairs, here are some observations about potential outlier comments:

#### 1. Specificity of Resource Allocation Issues:

- The detailed examples provided about the **inefficient distribution of tenure-line faculty** across various programs could be considered outliers. While many respondents may acknowledge resource allocation as a concern, the specific mention of departments with high faculty counts but low enrollment (e.g., Humanities and Fine Arts with 9 faculty and only 138 majors) adds a level of specificity that may not be present in other responses. This highlights a clear disparity that may not be universally recognized.

#### 2. Challenges of Faculty Specialization:

- The comment regarding the difficulty of moving faculty due to their specialization is another potential outlier. While some may recognize the challenges of faculty mobility, the explicit acknowledgment that faculty are specialists in their fields and that this complicates restructuring efforts provides a unique perspective that may not be echoed in all responses.

### 3. **Addressing Teaching Load Inequities:**

- The focus on the **inequity in teaching loads** between the College of Business and other colleges is a significant point of contention. The assertion that there is no evidence supporting the need for lower teaching loads in the College of Business, despite past arguments, could be seen as an outlier. This challenges long-held assumptions and suggests a need for reevaluation, which may not be a common sentiment among all respondents.

**Q1: Describe the distinctive or unique strengths of your unit/department/program/college. What do you think your unit/department/program/college does to contribute to Chico State as a forward-facing and academically distinctive university?**

## Summary

### College of Business (COB)

- **Entrepreneurial and Growth-Oriented:** Leaders in online programs and new initiatives like the STEM-certified MSBA and Accounting Winternships.
- **Accreditation:** Only 6% of business schools worldwide are accredited, attracting highly qualified faculty.
- **High Student-Faculty Ratio:** Despite a high ratio, the college maintains high-quality, individualized instruction.
- **Research Productivity:** Significant intellectual contributions, including peer-reviewed articles, conference presentations, and research awards.

### Biological Sciences

- **Hands-On Training:** Offers practical lab experience, giving graduates a competitive edge in biotech employment.

### Kinesiology

- **Exercise Physiology:** Strongest major, preparing students for various allied health careers.

### Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA)

- **Nationally Recognized Faculty:** Expertise in art history, education, studio, and interior architecture.
- **Specialized Facilities:** Unique labs and studios, including glass blowing and printmaking.
- **Community Engagement:** Strong connections with local art organizations and innovative programming.

### Environmental Programs

- **Outdoor Experiences:** Use of local environments for hands-on learning and place-based labs.

### Social Sciences

- **Interdisciplinary Identity:** Emphasis on interdisciplinary work and shared goals.
- **Civic Engagement:** Commitment to service learning and community involvement.
- **Flexible and Accessible Programs:** Online degree options and a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

### Computer Engineering

- **AI and Quantum Computing:** Emphasis on cutting-edge fields and preparing students for future technological challenges.

### Art and Art History

- **Public Engagement:** Numerous exhibitions and events that involve the campus and community.
- **Unique Facilities:** Janet Turner Print Museum and specialized gallery spaces.

### **School of Education**

- **Credentialing Hub:** Serving a large region with innovative clinical practice and internship opportunities.

### **Social Science Program (SOSC)**

- **Online and In-Person Options:** Meeting the needs of nontraditional students with flexible degree completion options.
- **Interdisciplinary Curriculum:** Broad academic experience with a focus on equity and inclusion.
- **Teacher Preparation:** Pathways to teaching credentials and strong advising support.

### **Chemistry and Biochemistry**

- **Hands-On Lab Experience:** Extensive lab hours and one-on-one research opportunities.
- **Project-Based Learning:** Successful placement of students in top programs and local industries.

### **Women's Studies and Ethnic Studies**

- **Activist Component:** Focus on social justice and community engagement in times of national challenges.

### **Speech-Language Pathology**

- **Community Services:** Providing no-cost services to those in need while training future professionals.

## **Key Themes**

### **1. Entrepreneurial and Growth-Oriented Initiatives**

- **College of Business (COB):** Leadership in online programs and new initiatives like the STEM-certified MSBA and Accounting Winternships.

### **2. Accreditation and Quality**

- **COB:** Accreditation that attracts highly qualified faculty.
- **Chemistry and Biochemistry:** Hands-on lab experiences surpassing those at R1 and R2 universities.

### **3. High Student-Faculty Ratio and Individualized Instruction**

- **COB:** High student-faculty ratio while maintaining quality instruction.

### **4. Research Productivity and Innovation**

- **COB:** Significant intellectual contributions and research productivity.
- **Computer Engineering:** Emphasis on AI and quantum computing.

### **5. Hands-On Training and Practical Experience**

- **Biological Sciences:** Practical lab experience for biotech employment.
- **Environmental Programs:** Use of local environments for hands-on learning.
- **Chemistry and Biochemistry:** Extensive lab hours and project-based learning.

### **6. Community and Civic Engagement**

- **Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA):** Strong connections with local art organizations and community engagement.

- **Social Sciences:** Commitment to civic engagement and service learning.
- **Speech-Language Pathology:** Providing no-cost services to the community.

#### 7. Interdisciplinary and Flexible Programs

- **Social Sciences:** Interdisciplinary identity and flexible, accessible programs.
- **Social Science Program (SOSC):** Online and in-person options, interdisciplinary curriculum, and teacher preparation.

#### 8. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- **Social Sciences:** Focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Women's Studies and Ethnic Studies:** Activist component and focus on social justice.

#### 9. Public Engagement and Specialized Facilities

- **Art and Art History:** Public exhibitions, unique facilities like the Janet Turner Print Museum.
- **HFA:** Specialized labs and studios, innovative programming.

#### 10. Teacher Preparation and Credentialing

- **School of Education:** Credentialing hub with innovative clinical practice and internship opportunities.
- **SOSC:** Pathways to teaching credentials and strong advising support.

## How do these benefit students

#### 1. Entrepreneurial and Growth-Oriented Initiatives

- **Enhanced Opportunities:** Programs like the STEM-certified MSBA and Accounting Internships provide students with cutting-edge skills and knowledge, preparing them for high-demand careers.

#### 2. Accreditation and Quality

- **High Standards:** Accreditation ensures that students receive education that meets rigorous standards, attracting top faculty and enhancing the learning environment.

#### 3. High Student-Faculty Ratio and Individualized Instruction

- **Personalized Learning:** Despite high student numbers, the focus on individualized instruction ensures that students receive the attention and support they need to succeed.

#### 4. Research Productivity and Innovation

- **Academic Excellence:** Active research environments expose students to the latest developments in their fields, fostering a culture of inquiry and innovation.

#### 5. Hands-On Training and Practical Experience

- **Career Readiness:** Practical lab experiences and project-based learning equip students with the skills and confidence needed for the workforce, making them competitive job candidates.

#### 6. Community and Civic Engagement

- **Real-World Impact:** Engagement with local organizations and service learning projects allow students to apply their knowledge in real-world settings, enhancing their educational experience and community connections.

#### 7. Interdisciplinary and Flexible Programs

- **Broad Learning:** Interdisciplinary programs provide a well-rounded education, allowing students to explore various fields and tailor their studies to their interests and career goals.
- **Accessibility:** Flexible online and in-person options make education more accessible to nontraditional students, supporting diverse learning needs.

#### 8. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- **Inclusive Environment:** A focus on equity and inclusion ensures that all students feel valued and supported, fostering a diverse and welcoming campus culture.

#### 9. Public Engagement and Specialized Facilities

- **Enhanced Learning Resources:** Access to unique facilities like specialized labs and museums enriches the educational experience, providing students with exceptional resources for learning and creativity.

#### 10. Teacher Preparation and Credentialing

- **Professional Development:** Strong teacher preparation programs ensure that students pursuing careers in education are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge, contributing to their professional success.

## Outliers

#### 1. Game Development and Animation Production

- **Unique Program:** The game development option is not embedded in computer science, making it more accessible to students who do not want to focus on programming. This program offers a comprehensive curriculum in game scripting, production, 3D modeling, and animation, which is unique within the CSU system.

#### 2. Janet Turner Print Museum

- **Specialized Focus:** The museum's focus on printmaking is unique within university museums in California and possibly the nation. It provides students with firsthand exposure to historic and contemporary art and serves as a training ground for curatorial internships.

#### 3. Environmental Programs

- **Place-Based Labs:** The use of local environments, such as the BCCER, for outdoor labs and activities is a distinctive feature that enhances hands-on learning about the local ecosystem.

#### 4. Women's Studies and Ethnic Studies

- **Activist Component:** These programs emphasize activism and social justice, focusing on women's rights, racial justice, and LGBTQ+ issues, which are particularly relevant in the current socio-political climate.

#### 5. Speech-Language Pathology

- **Community Services:** The program provides no-cost services to children and adults who may not have other treatment options, highlighting a strong community service component.

#### 6. Social Science Program (SOSC)



- **Online Degree Completion:** The program's fully online BA degree completion option is one of only two in the state, making higher education accessible to nontraditional and diverse students. This flexibility and focus on equity are distinctive strengths.

#### **7. School of Education**

- **Credentialing Hub:** Serving a large region with innovative clinical practice and internship opportunities, the School of Education is a critical resource for teacher preparation in the North State.

**Q2: From your perspective, what kinds of teaching, learning, or other experiences are students seeking in your unit/department/program/college?**

## Summary

### 1. Career Preparation and Practical Skills:

- Students desire hands-on, practical experiences such as internships, real-world projects, and laboratory work to gain a competitive edge in the job market.
- There is a strong focus on early career success, job placement, and developing durable skills like teamwork, critical thinking, and leadership.

### 2. Support and Mentorship:

- Students value strong advising, mentoring, and support systems to help them succeed academically and professionally.
- There is a need for more personalized support, especially in large classes where individual attention is limited.

### 3. Mental Health and Financial Challenges:

- Addressing mental health and financial challenges is crucial, especially in the post-COVID era.
- Many students juggle part-time jobs and education, creating a conflict between immediate financial stability and long-term career benefits.

### 4. Engaged and Experiential Learning:

- Students seek engaging, meaningful, and job-relevant learning experiences.
- They appreciate opportunities for hands-on learning, such as studio access for art students and practical projects in various disciplines.

### 5. Community and In-Person Interaction:

- There is a strong desire for in-person teaching and learning experiences, fostering a sense of community among students, faculty, and staff.
- Students miss the vibrancy of in-person interactions and feel sidelined by hybrid or online-only formats.

### 6. Flexible and Accessible Education:

- Non-traditional and adult learners seek flexible, accessible educational options, including online degree programs and courses that accommodate their diverse life circumstances.
- Programs tailored for working adults and those with family obligations are highly valued.

**7. Interdisciplinary and Innovative Approaches:**

- Students are interested in interdisciplinary, place-based courses that provide practical skills applicable to their future careers.
- Innovative teaching methods, such as team teaching and cohort-based learning, are appreciated.

**8. Cultural and Social Awareness:**

- There is a growing interest in multicultural awareness and engaging with diverse perspectives.
- Students seek to understand and contribute to social change, emphasizing the importance of community and societal impact.

## Outliers

Here are a few responses that stand out as different from the main themes:

**1. Art Students' Needs:**

- "Art students are seeking more studio access after hours and more physical space to work on their art projects both inside and outside of class."

**2. Desire for Enjoyable Classes:**

- "I think they want to enjoy their classes (have fun) while getting training that will help get jobs that will pay well."

**3. Focus on In-Person Community:**

- "In my experience, students are craving in-person teaching, learning, and other experiences. They are craving community with each other, with their professors, and with university staff and administrators."

**4. Challenges with Technology:**

- "They are challenged with technology which naturally introduces problem-solving and critical thinking."

**5. Unique Program Features:**

- "One of the more unique aspects of our program, which we use for recruitment, is that our students will leave our program with three commercially viable 'shipped products!'"

**Q3 Describe how the needs of students changed over the past five years (i.e. teaching modality, academic interests, social/emotional needs, resources, skill sets, etc.). In light of those changes, in what ways does your unit/department /program/college provide what students need or seek now?**

## Summary

The survey responses highlight several key changes in student needs over the past five years and how various units, departments, programs, and colleges have adapted to meet these evolving needs:

### **Changes in Student Needs:**

#### **1. Teaching Modality:**

- Increased demand for flexible learning options, including both synchronous and asynchronous online classes.
- Preference for hybrid models that combine in-person and online elements.
- Some students prefer fully in-person classes, while others seek fully online programs.

#### **2. Academic Interests:**

- Growing interest in majors aligned with job market demands, particularly those offering higher salaries.
- Increased focus on practical, hands-on skills and experiential learning opportunities.

#### **3. Social/Emotional Needs:**

- Higher need for mental health support and counseling services.
- Greater emphasis on creating a sense of community, both for in-person and online students.
- Increased need for emotional support and resources to balance school and life challenges.

#### **4. Resources:**

- Demand for affordable, state-supported online degree completion programs.
- Need for more flexible attendance policies and support for students with diverse schedules and responsibilities.
- Challenges in providing consistent, high-quality instruction due to reliance on part-time lecturers.

#### **5. Skill Sets:**

- Decline in students' preparedness, particularly in math and academic skills.
- Increased need for support in developing study and organizational skills, as well as effective communication with faculty.

### **Adaptations by Units/Departments/Programs/Colleges:**

#### **1. Curriculum Redesign:**

- Comprehensive updates to curricula to make them more developmental, inquiry-driven, and responsive to student needs.
  - Expansion of program offerings for distance education students.
2. **Flexible Learning Options:**
    - Integration of both synchronous and asynchronous learning methods.
    - Offering hybrid courses and evening/weekend options to accommodate diverse student schedules.
  3. **Support Services:**
    - Increased mental health and financial support services.
    - Development of hands-on experiences through campus-based centers, labs, and clinics.
    - Provision of snacks, printing allowances, and other resources to support students' basic needs.
  4. **Faculty and Staffing:**
    - Need for more full-time lecturer faculty to provide consistent teaching and support.
    - Efforts to retain quality lecturers who can accommodate students' needs.
  5. **Community Building:**
    - Intentional efforts to create community for both in-person and online students.
    - Support for student clubs and activities to enhance social interactions and engagement.
  6. **Practical Skills and Career Preparation:**
    - Emphasis on practical, skills-building classes and assignments.
    - Collaboration with industry to provide real-world experience and insights.

Overall, the responses indicate a significant shift towards more flexible, supportive, and practical educational approaches to meet the diverse and evolving needs of students.

## Outliers

1. **Faculty Workload and Expectations:**
  - One response highlighted the increased workload on single faculty members, who are now expected to do the work of publishing teams. This response emphasized the personal toll on faculty and the need for more reasonable expectations.
2. **Decline in Student Preparedness:**
  - Several responses mentioned a decline in students' academic preparedness, particularly in math and general academic skills. This was attributed to inadequate preparation at the K-12 level and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. **Specific Program Challenges:**
  - Some responses detailed specific challenges faced by particular programs, such as the need to omit topics from the general chemistry curriculum due to declining math readiness, and the impact of these changes on subsequent courses.
4. **Student Engagement and Involvement:**

- A few responses noted a decline in student involvement in clubs and events, as well as a lack of time management skills among students, particularly in online learning environments.

**5. Resource Utilization:**

- There were mentions of students not making good use of available resources, such as supplemental instruction (SI) sessions, despite the availability of these resources.

**Q4 What units/programs/departments/colleges do you currently collaborate with? What units/programs/departments/colleges would you like to collaborate with? Describe potential cross-disciplinary opportunities that do not currently exist at the university that could contribute to the student experience, research opportunities, and community building on campus.**

## Summary

The survey responses highlight a wide range of current and desired collaborations across various units, programs, departments, and colleges at the university. Here are the key points:

### Current Collaborations

1. **College of Business (COB):**
  - Collaborates with Professional & Continuing Education (PCE), International Education & Global Engagement (IEGE), Graduate Studies, and other academic departments like health, economics, art, math, and agriculture.
2. **Social Science:**
  - Works closely with departments within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS) and also with Agriculture, Business, Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA), Communication and Education (CME), and Natural Sciences.
  - Coordinates with 32 departments and programs across campus.
3. **Biology:**
  - Collaborates with Nutrition, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Agriculture, and Mathematics for teaching and research.
4. **Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA):**
  - Engages with Graduate Studies, Art/Art History, and other interdisciplinary programs like Latin American Studies, Asian Studies, Humanities, and Multicultural and Gender Studies (MCGS).
5. **Computer Animation and Game Design (CAGD):**
  - Recently moved to the College of Communication & Education (CME) and collaborates with Art, Music & Theater, Computer Science, Anthropology, and Business.
6. **School of Education:**
  - Works closely with Liberal Studies, Child Development, Agriculture, and Graduate Studies.

### Desired Collaborations

1. **Expansion of Existing Collaborations:**
  - Many respondents expressed a desire to expand their current collaborations to include more departments and programs within their colleges and across the university.
2. **New Cross-Disciplinary Opportunities:**

- **Environmental Studies:** Potential for collaboration in environmental sustainability and stewardship programs.
- **Public Health and Community Planning:** Opportunities to create interdisciplinary programs that address public health and community planning.
- **Social Justice:** Programs that integrate social justice themes across various disciplines.
- **STEM Education:** Formation of faculty learning communities to incorporate best practices in STEM education and grant writing subgroups to enhance research opportunities.

### Challenges and Suggestions

#### 1. Resource and Time Constraints:

- Faculty highlighted the need for more time and resources to plan and implement collaborative projects.
- Suggestions included course buyouts for planning service learning projects and support for team teaching.

#### 2. Administrative Support:

- Some respondents mentioned the need for better administrative support to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaborations and to overcome bureaucratic hurdles.

#### 3. Interdisciplinary Programs:

- There is a call for the creation of more interdisciplinary degree programs, even at the graduate level, to stimulate research opportunities and enhance the student experience.

Overall, the responses indicate a strong interest in fostering collaboration across various disciplines to enhance the academic and research environment at the university. The potential for new cross-disciplinary opportunities is seen as a way to enrich the student experience, promote innovative research, and build a stronger community on campus.

## Specific Challenges Mentioned

### Resource and Time Constraints

- **Lack of Time and Resources:** Faculty mentioned the need for more time and resources to plan and implement collaborative projects. They suggested course buyouts for planning service learning projects and support for team teaching.
- **Administrative Support:** There is a need for better administrative support to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaborations and to overcome bureaucratic hurdles.

### Structural and Logistical Issues

- **Difficulty in Co-Teaching:** Some faculty noted that co-teaching classes with colleagues from different departments is challenging due to logistical issues, such as each faculty member needing to enroll an entire class on their own, effectively doubling the enrollment.



- **Interdisciplinary Program Development:** Creating interdisciplinary degree programs, especially at the graduate level, is difficult due to the lack of existing models and systems to support such initiatives.

#### **Perception and Cultural Barriers**

- **Fear of Department Mergers:** There is a concern among faculty that increased collaboration could be seen as a justification for merging departments, which might risk losing the distinct perspectives and strengths of each discipline.
- **Budget Constraints:** Some respondents felt that budget constraints might force "collaboration" or merging of departments, which would not inherently increase cross-disciplinary collaborative work.

#### **Specific Departmental Challenges**

- **Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA):** Faculty in HFA mentioned that their mission, especially related to graduate studies, is historically under-funded and often pushed to the back burner.
- **Computer Animation and Game Design (CAGD):** The CAGD program faced challenges related to tenure-track hires, marketing, and office space before moving to the College of Communication & Education (CME).

## **Outliers**

#### **Unique Collaborations**

- **Computer Animation and Game Design (CAGD):** The CAGD program recently moved to the College of Communication & Education (CME) after 18 years in the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management (ECC). This transition has already made the faculty feel more valued and welcomed. They collaborate with Art, Music & Theater, Computer Science, Anthropology, and Business, which is quite diverse compared to other departments.
- **Humanities Center:** Housed in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA), this center is a hub for research and brings exciting speakers to campus. It is currently funded by private faculty donations and grants, and there is a desire to expand it beyond HFA to create a broader scholarly community.

#### **Specific Challenges**

- **CAGD's Historical Challenges:** Before moving to CME, CAGD faced significant challenges in ECC, including lack of tenure-track hires, marketing, and appropriate office space. Despite these challenges, the program grew significantly over the years.
- **Fear of Forced Collaboration:** Some respondents expressed concern that budget constraints might force collaboration or merging of departments, which they believe would not inherently increase cross-disciplinary collaborative work.

#### **Innovative Ideas**

- **Super College of the Arts and Sciences:** One respondent suggested creating a "super" College of the Arts and Sciences by combining departments from HFA, BSS, Natural

Sciences (NS), and CME. This could create new interdisciplinary departments and enhance the General Education (GE) program.

- **Environmental Arts Option:** There are plans for an Environmental Arts option in a new Wildland Stewardship program, which could create unique interdisciplinary opportunities.

#### **Individual-Level Insights**

- **Personalized Collaborations:** Some faculty mentioned their individual collaborations, such as working with Earth Sciences, Agriculture, and Civil Engineering, or collaborating with the Kinesiology department due to shared clients. These personalized connections highlight the flexibility and openness of faculty to collaborate beyond formal departmental boundaries.

**Q5 Do barriers exist that prevent collaboration across units/departments/programs/colleges? If so, describe them. Please provide suggestions on how the university could support opportunities and/or remove such barriers for collaboration.**

## Summary

### Key Barriers to Collaboration

1. **Inconsistent Course-Sharing Agreements:**
  - Changes in departmental leadership often lead to inconsistencies in honoring course-sharing agreements, particularly affecting online courses with reserved seats for degree completion students.
2. **Review, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Processes:**
  - Lecturer faculty face challenges with RTP processes, including compiling dossiers for multiple departments and handling shared data between colleges.
3. **Funding Models:**
  - Current funding models prioritize the number of majors, which undermines interdisciplinary collaboration.
4. **Personal Connections:**
  - New faculty and staff find it difficult to make personal connections across colleges, often relying on word of mouth for collaboration opportunities.
5. **Workload and Budget Allocation:**
  - High workloads and historical budget allocation practices limit the time and resources available for new collaborations.
6. **Bureaucracy and Organizational Politics:**
  - Bureaucratic challenges, such as inefficiencies and rigid workload policies, hinder collaboration efforts.
7. **Team Teaching Challenges:**
  - Issues with team teaching include questions about who receives credit and the allocation of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions.
8. **Cultural and Structural Barriers:**
  - Resistance to innovative techniques, preconceived notions about disciplines, and imbalances in tenure density create barriers.
9. **Communication and Leadership:**
  - Lack of streamlined communication and leadership that emphasizes collaboration and communication.

### Suggestions for Improvement

1. **Formalized Agreements:**
  - Establish formal, binding agreements between departments to ensure continuity in course-sharing regardless of leadership changes.
2. **Centralized Support:**

- Provide centralized support for scheduling and course-sharing coordination to reduce administrative burdens.
- 3. **Research Forums and Networking Events:**
  - Create more opportunities for faculty and staff to hear about work in other departments through research forums and networking events.
- 4. **Adjust Workloads:**
  - Reduce teaching loads to allow faculty more time for interdisciplinary collaborations.
- 5. **Incentivize Team Teaching:**
  - Develop incentives for team teaching, such as allowing faculty from different disciplines to co-teach courses with normal enrollment caps and providing full credit to both departments.
- 6. **Improve Communication:**
  - Enhance communication through regular newsletters and updates from each college, and encourage department chairs to stay informed about their faculty's activities.
- 7. **Address Funding Models:**
  - Revise funding models to support interdisciplinary programs and reduce competition for student majors.
- 8. **Promote a Collaborative Culture:**
  - Foster a culture that values all disciplines and reduces perceived entitlement and superiority among faculty.
- 9. **Support for New Faculty:**
  - Provide structured opportunities for new faculty to connect with colleagues across the university.

## Outlier

Based on the survey responses, the outliers are those responses that indicated no barriers to collaboration. Here is the outlier identified:

- "Not at this time."

This response stands out because it contrasts with the majority of responses that identified various barriers to collaboration.

**Q6 From the standpoint of work and workload, are there any areas within your unit/department/program/college that need reorganization? If so, describe them. Please provide suggestions for reorganization and what those changes would accomplish.**

## Summary

### Inefficient Resource Distribution

- **Disparity in Faculty Distribution:** Some programs have many tenure-line faculty but few majors, while others, like Social Science, have many majors but few or no tenure-line faculty. This leads to inefficient resource allocation.
- **Social Science Program:** Despite having no tenure-line faculty, the Social Science program is highly efficient and growing, utilizing interdisciplinary courses from other departments. It needs additional tenure-line faculty and advisor staffing to sustain its growth.

### Workload Equity

- **Teaching Load Disparities:** Tenure-line faculty in the College of Business teach fewer courses per semester compared to those in other colleges, who also perform more service without additional compensation. Establishing equitable teaching loads across campus is suggested to save money and promote fairness.
- **Lecturer Utilization:** Lecturers, who are paid less than tenure-line faculty, teach more courses. There is a call for better compensation and stability for long-term lecturers to ensure consistent course delivery and support long-term planning.

### Administrative and Support Staff Needs

- **Overburdened Leadership:** Department chairs and staff face increasing administrative responsibilities, leading to burnout. Additional administrative staff are needed to manage these tasks efficiently.
- **Support Staff:** There is a need for more staff positions to help with public events, advising, and maintaining facilities, especially in departments like Art and Art History.

### Specific Departmental Concerns

- **Clinical Practice Office:** The School of Education's Clinical Practice Office is understaffed, affecting the quality of student placements and overall program effectiveness. Additional funding and hiring are necessary to address this issue.
- **College of Agriculture:** Faculty in the College of Agriculture face excessive service loads due to a small number of tenure-track colleagues. More faculty hires are needed to distribute the workload more evenly.

### Suggestions for Improvement

- **Equitable Workload Policies:** Implementing equitable workload policies across colleges to ensure fairness and efficiency.
- **Retention of Assistant Professors:** Prioritizing course scheduling and other practices to improve the retention of Assistant Professors.

- **Streamlining Processes:** Simplifying administrative tasks, such as the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) process, to reduce unnecessary workload and improve efficiency.
- **Research Support:** Providing more space and resources for faculty interested in conducting research to enhance productivity and attract funding.

### Conclusion

Overall, the responses highlight the need for strategic reorganization and resource allocation to address workload disparities, support growing programs, and ensure equitable treatment of faculty and staff. Implementing these changes would promote fairness, improve efficiency, and enhance the overall effectiveness of the university's programs.

## Outliers

### Unique Departmental Concerns

- **Clinical Practice Office in the School of Education:** The specific issue of combining roles due to a hiring freeze, leading to one person effectively working two full-time positions, is a unique and significant concern that may not be as prevalent in other departments.
- **College of Agriculture:** The excessive service load due to a small number of tenure-track colleagues is a specific issue that might not be as common in other colleges.

### Specific Suggestions for Improvement

- **Retention of Assistant Professors:** The suggestion to redesign course scheduling to prioritize Assistant Professors for improving retention is a unique and targeted approach not widely mentioned.
- **Streamlining RTP Processes:** The detailed critique of the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) process and the call for a more streamlined and less burdensome system is a specific and actionable suggestion that stands out.

### Unique Workload Issues

- **3-Hour Labs and 2-Hour Activities:** The concern about 3-hour labs only counting for 2 Weighted Teaching Units (WTU) and 2-hour activities counting for 1.3 WTU is a specific workload issue that may not be as widely experienced across other departments.
- **Graduate Student Mentoring:** The suggestion to provide release time for faculty mentoring graduate students due to the significant time commitment required is a specific concern that highlights the unique workload of faculty involved in graduate education.

### Administrative and Structural Changes

- **Transition from Program to Department:** The suggestion to transition certain programs to departments to improve visibility and attract more students and faculty is a unique structural change not commonly mentioned.
- **Centralized Repository for Committee Meetings and Minutes:** The call for a centralized repository to manage committee meetings and minutes to reduce administrative burden is a specific and innovative suggestion.

### Compensation and Recognition

- **Lecturer Tenure-Track Conversion:** The idea of creating a tenure-track conversion pathway for long-term lecturers with terminal degrees is a unique and forward-thinking suggestion that addresses compensation and job stability in a novel way.

## Q7 Considering the changing enrollment landscape, how would you suggest the academic units of the university be reimaged or restructured?

### Summary

#### 1. Equity and Efficiency in Resource Allocation

- **Equitable Model:** Many respondents emphasized the need for a more equitable distribution of resources, suggesting that metrics such as faculty and student numbers should guide realignment.
- **Consolidation of Underperforming Units:** There were calls to consolidate underperforming units like Professional and Continuing Education (PCE) and international education to improve effectiveness and resource allocation.
- **Administrative Reorganization:** Suggestions included combining Undergraduate Education, Graduate Studies, and International Studies into a single unit to enhance efficiency and support student success.

#### 2. Maintaining Autonomy for Thriving Programs

- **Protection of Successful Programs:** Respondents stressed that programs and departments that are thriving, such as Social Science, should remain autonomous and not be merged, as they are crucial for enrollment growth.
- **College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS):** There was a strong sentiment that BSS, being the largest college with significant student numbers, should not be merged with other colleges due to its vital contribution to the university.

#### 3. Proposed Reorganization Models

- **Four-College Model:** A proposed model discussed by BSS Chairs suggested reorganizing into four colleges to balance the number of students, faculty, and leadership positions:
  - **Engineering, Computer Science, Construction Management & Natural Sciences (ECCM & NSC)**
  - **Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS)**
  - **Business & Agriculture**
  - **Communication, Media & Education (CME) & Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA)**

#### 4. Focus on Student Success

- **Student Success Lens:** Respondents recommended evaluating all units through the lens of student success, shifting resources to areas that most effectively promote and ensure student success.
- **Online Distance Education:** There was a proposal to create a new Online Distance Education unit to manage the growth of state-supported online programs, ensuring they receive appropriate support and leadership.

#### 5. Concerns and Skepticism

- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Some respondents expressed concerns about the lack of a cost-benefit analysis for restructuring and skepticism towards external consultants driving the process.



- **Administrative Efficiency:** There were calls to reduce administrative bloat and improve efficiencies, with some suggesting that high-paid administrative positions should be scrutinized for their value to the university.

## 6. Innovative Ideas and Rebranding

- **Distinctive Rebranding:** Suggestions included rebranding the university to highlight smaller class sizes, personalized attention, and community connections, similar to the open curriculum model at Brown University.
- **Interdisciplinary Programs:** Encouraging interdisciplinary programming and reducing major or general education requirements to allow for dynamic major combinations was proposed to increase efficiency and flexibility for students.

## 7. Opposition to Restructuring

- **Disruption Concerns:** Some respondents were opposed to any restructuring, citing potential disruption and the lack of evidence that previous reorganizations have been beneficial.
- **Focus on Core Strengths:** There were suggestions to focus on improving efficiencies within the current structure rather than undertaking major restructuring.

Overall, the responses reflect a mix of support for strategic reorganization to enhance equity and efficiency, alongside significant concerns about the potential negative impacts of restructuring. The emphasis on maintaining successful programs, focusing on student success, and ensuring equitable resource distribution were recurring themes.

# Summarize the Proposed Models

## 1. Four-College Model

This model aims to balance the number of students, faculty, and leadership positions across four reorganized colleges:

- **Engineering, Computer Science, Construction Management & Natural Sciences (ECCM & NSC)**
  - 14 departments, 3,759 students, 122 tenure-track faculty, 96 lecturers.
- **Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS)**
  - 11 departments, 3,306 students, 111 tenure-track faculty, 114 lecturers.
- **Business & Agriculture**
  - 4 departments, 2,519 students, 53 tenure-track faculty, 55 lecturers.
- **Communication, Media & Education (CME) & Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA)**
  - 15 departments, 2,969 students, 133 tenure-track faculty, 165 lecturers.

## 2. Administrative Reorganization

This model focuses on combining various administrative units to enhance efficiency and support student success:

- **Combine Undergraduate Education, Graduate Studies, and International Studies** into a single unit.

- **Create a new Online Distance Education unit** to manage the growth of state-supported online programs.
- **Retain Professional and Continuing Education (PCE)** as a separate entity to focus on self-support programs.

### 3. Equity-Focused Model

This model emphasizes equitable resource distribution and representation:

- **Maintain autonomy for thriving programs** like Social Science and the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS).
- **Ensure equitable representation** on campus committees and organizations for larger colleges like BSS.

### 4. Interdisciplinary and Flexible Curriculum Model

This model suggests rebranding and restructuring to promote interdisciplinary programs and flexibility for students:

- **Reduce major or general education requirements** to allow students to double-major with interesting combinations across colleges.
- **Encourage interdisciplinary programming** to increase efficiencies and flexibility.

### 5. Specialized Schools and Colleges

This model proposes creating specialized schools within existing colleges to focus on specific areas:

- **School of METX (Media, Entertainment, Technology, and Immersive Experiences)** within the College of Communication, Media & Education (CME).
- **School of Stewardship** to encompass various academic units related to environmental and sustainability themes.

### 6. Minimal Restructuring with Focus on Efficiency

Some respondents suggested minimal restructuring, focusing instead on improving administrative efficiencies and cutting unnecessary expenses:

- **Reduce administrative bloat** and scrutinize high-paid administrative positions.
- **Streamline processes** to reduce bureaucratic overhead and improve functional efficiency.

## Outliers

### 1. Pay Cuts for High Earners

- **Salary Disparity:** One respondent suggested that individuals making over \$150,000 should take a pay cut to address salary disparities within the university.

### 2. Cal Poly Model

- **Cal Poly Conversion:** Another respondent proposed transforming Chico State into a Cal Poly-style institution, similar to what Humboldt State University did, to potentially boost enrollment.

### 3. Flagship University

- **Flagship Status:** There was a suggestion that Chico State should aim to become a flagship university within the California State University (CSU) system.

#### 4. Minimal Restructuring

- **Opposition to Major Changes:** Some respondents were opposed to any significant restructuring, arguing that the current structure is functional and that efforts should focus on improving administrative efficiencies instead.

#### 5. Graphic Design Program

- **Program Realignment:** One response suggested moving the graphic design major to the Art and Art History department, where it is more philosophically aligned, rather than its current college.

**Q8 If you have any additional comments or feedback, please share below.**

## Summary

### **Key Themes and Suggestions:**

#### **1. Diversity and Hiring Practices:**

- Concerns about the lack of diversity among staff, with a recommendation to review hiring practices to promote diversity.

#### **2. Resource Allocation:**

- Suggestions to prioritize resources for teaching and research over administrative hires.
- Calls for a freeze on administrative staff hires rather than faculty members.

#### **3. Departmental Structure and Mergers:**

- Strong opinions against merging or combining departments without thorough consideration.
- Emphasis on the potential negative impact on faculty morale and retention if departments are merged without proper consultation.

#### **4. Student Focus and Curriculum:**

- Observations that students are more focused on career paths rather than a general college experience.
- Suggestions to align curriculum changes with career-oriented goals to attract and retain students.

#### **5. Enrollment and Recruitment:**

- Concerns about declining enrollments and the need to understand the root causes.
- Recommendations to improve recruitment efforts, particularly by collaborating with community colleges.

#### **6. Support Services and Faculty Autonomy:**

- Calls for increased support services for students, including tutoring, advising, and counseling.
- Emphasis on maintaining faculty autonomy and leadership within departments.

#### **7. Transparency and Communication:**

- Frustration with the lack of clear communication about the purpose and goals of the reorganization.
- Requests for more transparency and evidence to support the proposed changes.

#### **8. Budget and Cost-Saving Measures:**

- Suggestions to offer early retirement incentives to senior faculty to save costs.
- Concerns about the impact of budget cuts on faculty and staff morale.

#### **9. Strategic Planning:**

- Need for a long-term strategic plan to address budget cuts and ensure sustainable growth.

- Criticism of the current reorganization process as being resource-intensive and potentially divisive.

**10. Miscellaneous Feedback:**

- Various specific suggestions related to departmental alignments, such as placing exercise physiology with health-related departments.
- Concerns about the effectiveness of current student services and administrative structures.

**Overall Sentiment:**

The responses reflect a mix of concerns and constructive suggestions, with a strong emphasis on the need for transparency, strategic planning, and a focus on core academic functions. There is a clear call for better communication and involvement of faculty and staff in decision-making processes.

## Most Common Suggestions

**1. Review and Improve Hiring Practices:**

- Conduct a thorough review of hiring practices to promote diversity among staff.

**2. Prioritize Resource Allocation:**

- Allocate more resources to teaching and research rather than administrative hires.
- Freeze administrative staff hires instead of faculty members.

**3. Avoid Merging Departments Without Proper Consultation:**

- Carefully consider the impact of merging or combining departments on faculty morale and retention.
- Ensure thorough consultation with faculty before making such decisions.

**4. Align Curriculum with Career Goals:**

- Focus on career-oriented curriculum changes to attract and retain students.
- Reduce the emphasis on general education requirements in favor of major-specific courses.

**5. Improve Recruitment and Address Enrollment Issues:**

- Understand and address the root causes of declining enrollments.
- Enhance recruitment efforts, particularly through collaboration with community colleges.

**6. Increase Support Services for Students:**

- Provide more support services such as tutoring, advising, and counseling to help students succeed.

**7. Maintain Faculty Autonomy and Leadership:**

- Ensure faculty have a significant role in departmental leadership and decision-making.

**8. Enhance Transparency and Communication:**

- Improve communication about the purpose and goals of the reorganization.
- Provide clear evidence and rationale for proposed changes.

**9. Implement Cost-Saving Measures:**

- Offer early retirement incentives to senior faculty to save costs.
- Review and potentially reduce non-essential administrative services.

**10. Develop a Long-Term Strategic Plan:**

- Create a strategic plan to address budget cuts and ensure sustainable growth.
- Avoid resource-intensive and divisive reorganization processes.

These suggestions reflect a desire for thoughtful, transparent, and strategic decision-making that prioritizes the core academic mission of the university.

## Outliers

**1. Exercise Physiology Department Alignment:**

- A specific suggestion to align exercise physiology with health-related departments like nutrition, nursing, and physical therapy, rather than keeping it with education.

**2. Concerns About PCE Courses:**

- Comments about the Professional and Continuing Education (PCE) courses being used to sell equivalent degrees and the need to integrate these courses back into the regular curriculum.

**3. Focus on Student Well-being:**

- Observations about students lacking peace and joy, with a suggestion to address root causes rather than just symptoms through counseling services.

**4. Merit, Enthusiasm, and Intelligence (MEI):**

- A proposal to incorporate the principles of Merit, Enthusiasm, and Intelligence (MEI) alongside Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

**5. Criticism of Graduate Studies Administration:**

- A suggestion to consolidate the Office of Graduate Studies under other administrative areas due to its primarily administrative functions.

**6. Social Science Program Autonomy:**

- A strong recommendation to keep the Social Science Program autonomous and not combine it with other programs or departments.

**7. Critique of the Reorganization Process:**

- Comments describing the reorganization process as a waste of resources and expressing skepticism about its benefits without clear evidence.

**8. Strategic Use of PCE Profits:**

- A suggestion to use profits from PCE courses to offer benefit buyouts or supplemental salaries to retain top faculty.