

Domain 6. Now and in the Future: Campus/System Identity

In Attendance: Jack Collins (Kinesiology), Chad Immoos (Chemistry and Biochemistry), Al Jimenez (Mathematics), Dave Mitchell (Physics), Andrew Schaffner (Statistics), Bob Smidt (Statistics, Group leader), Kevin Taylor (Kinesiology), Dean Wendt (Biological Sciences)

There was agreement that Cal Poly was unique among the CSU system both because of its polytechnic mission and programs, and because it is not a commuter campus. Because of this uniqueness, Cal Poly needs to be able to identify its optimal strategies and modes of instruction and escape for formula-driven restrictions. As the educational landscape changes with technology entering the classroom and the curricula, there is little hope of Cal Poly continuing to fulfill its educational mission if the faculty is hampered by rules that best apply to more traditional institutions.

The following concerns were expressed by the members of the discussion.

- The student/faculty ratio needs to decrease if we are to continue to meet the needs of the students. (This would help assuage some of the problems listed below).
- Cal Poly has a unique curriculum and should be able to determine its calendar instead of having one imposed by the CSU
- The Cal Poly degree means something different from a degree from other CSU universities. Because of the nature of its programs, Cal Poly should not be held to the 186-unit limit.
- Cal Poly's "learn by doing" credo is not being well supported, especially with respect to senior projects. Senior projects require substantial time and effort on the part of faculty members and little is being done to support their effort. Some departments have an incredible number of students for the size of the faculty. Administration should work with faculty to decide how to support senior projects, both financially and otherwise.
- We are a public university system and should be sufficiently funded to meet our mission. Pursuit of non-state sources of funding should be necessary only for special programs that go beyond the basic mission of the university (e.g., Marine Research Institute) and not be an expected role of a faculty member.
- There are infrastructure problems with building usage. Not being a commuter campus, the archaic formulas used to allocate space and facilities unfairly penalize Cal Poly.
- There is little recognition or support for the innovative pedagogy being used at Cal Poly. Technology based classrooms are expensive and require more preparation time than traditional classrooms.
- Teaching has fundamentally changed. Innovative ways of delivering material needs to be supported by the system.
- More classrooms and laboratory space is necessary to meet the current demands and future growth. The size and configuration of such facilities should be determined by the faculty in order to best meet the needs of the students.
- Imagination needs to be used to attract excellent faculty to Cal Poly. The new faculty housing has been poorly planned and executed and will not attract new faculty. Perhaps supplying employment to spouses or other means can be used to make Cal Poly positions attractive to people capable of earning much greater salaries elsewhere.