



San José State
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Academic Senate

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SS-F99-6

At its meeting of November 29, 1999, the SJSU Academic Senate unanimously passed the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Pam Stacks for the Special Drafting Committee.

**SENSE OF THE SENATE RESOLUTION
"OUT OF CRISIS--REFORMING GOVERNANCE OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE
UNIVERSITY"**

Whereas, This is the era of "reinventing government" and the state has already begun this task by reforming the K-12 sector of public education; and

Whereas, Educational reform in the CSU has focused overwhelmingly upon faculty and has ignored the role of Central Administration and the Trustees; during recent years faculty have implemented mandatory peer review, mandatory student evaluation of teaching effectiveness, mandatory post-tenure review, and a merit pay-plan (PSSIs and now FMIs) but there have been no commensurate reforms to assess the performance of CSU System Managers, and

Whereas, For fiscal year 1999-00, \$211,987,983 of the total General Fund money for the CSU was allocated "off the top" to support the central administration and centrally administered programs, an amount larger than the support for any campus.

Whereas, The Central Administration and the Board of the CSU were unable to prevent the system from being plunged into a crisis unparalleled in its history--a crisis provoked by deep divisions in the way the system and the way the faculty perceive their respective roles in higher education; and

Whereas, Crises can be used as opportunities to bring about positive change; this change may be beginning--catalyzed in part by the May draft of this paper. Evidence of seminal change is the visit of Executive Vice Chancellor Spence to the San José State University campus to discuss the May draft of this document, the scheduling of a Board of Trustees meeting on the SJSU campus, March 2000, and the addition of performance areas and indicators for the System, Chancellor's Office and Board of Trustees to the CSU Accountability Process; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Academic Senate of San José State University endorses the attached white paper: "Out of Crisis: Reforming Governance of the California State University" to be used as point of reference in an ongoing conversation.

- Resolved, in order to formalize this conversation, we request the CSU Central Administration establish a task force to review the operations and budget of the CSU, at the system and campus levels, to determine if we are managing operations in the best way possible for the system as a whole and for each campus, for the express purpose of recommending approaches, policy, and processes to improve said operations; and be it further
- Resolved, That copies of this resolution and the attachments be distributed to the members of the Board of Trustees, the CSU Central Administration, to the Statewide Academic Senate, and the local campus senates.
- Resolved, That the SJSU Academic Senate calls upon all local Senates and the Academic Senate CSU, to endorse this white paper as a starting point for reform of the CSU.

1 ***From crisis to reform***
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3 In the spring of 1999 there were signs of crisis in the CSU. Two of the signs, the
4 imposition of working conditions against the express protests of faculty and the disparagement
5 of faculty by the CSU administration, were symptoms of deeper problems that continue to need
6 redress. Some of the actions of the System Administration led to divisiveness among the many
7 constituencies of the CSU and ignored our acknowledged common cause: educating the people
8 of California.
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10 It is our hope that with the passing of last spring's crisis constructive lessons can be
11 learned that will improve our ability to provide high quality education to our students. Our
12 resolution and this accompanying white paper focus upon the need for structural and cultural
13 reform of the California State University central administration and its Board of Trustees. In
14 making these recommendations we do not mean to imply that other reforms within the CSU
15 that focus more upon faculty or students are unworthy of consideration. However, more than a
16 decade of faculty-oriented reforms have already been implemented and have led to mandatory
17 peer review of teaching, mandatory student evaluation of teaching effectiveness, mandatory
18 post-tenure review, and most recently a vigorous debate over the appropriate nature of a merit
19 pay system for faculty. During that time there has been no serious or sustained discussion of
20 reform of the central administration of the System (Chancellor's Office and Board of Trustees).
21 The time for such a discussion has more than come; it is past due.
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23 ***Faculty culture and system culture: mutual support or mutual conflict?***
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25 There is a serious cultural divide between the faculty and the System Administration.
26 This divide has become highly visible in the conflicts over top-down initiatives coming, for the
27 most part, from the Chancellors, backed by the Board. Chancellors and their faculty critics
28 have contributed to an "us versus them" mood, especially in recent episodes where the faculty
29 have been accused of resisting change. There exist two cultures – "academic" and "business" –
30 that respond very differently to change. Faculty are less likely than business people to react
31 precipitously. Core academic values – like other established, traditional cultural values –
32 change very slowly indeed. In recent years Chancellors, backed by the Board, have initiated
33 rapid changes (see Appendix), sometimes with inadequate thought to their consequences or
34 effects. Faculty are inclined to approach change according to the mores of academic culture.
35 We faculty educate our students about change, and we respond responsibly to change by
36 anticipating its consequences. On the other hand, the Board of Trustees is fundamentally
37 shaped by the life-experiences of its members, who have very limited faculty experience. The
38 System Administration, and not the faculty, has ultimate power in the system, and they use it to
39 implement policies that reflect their personal world-views. Their experiences are
40 overwhelmingly derived from their work in the private, corporate sector. This experience may
41 be beneficial to the system in overseeing resource allocation, but it also narrows System
42 administration perspectives when it comes to understanding faculty and academic issues.

43 Faculty are not necessarily motivated by the same factors that motivate employees in
44 the private corporate sector. Most faculty are at the university because they first and foremost
45 like to teach, and secondarily do research and service. In fact, some faculty make conscious
46 decisions to shun the values of the corporate world--based upon competition for material

47 rewards--and instead see academia as a preferable alternative. Academic work must not be
48 dominated by conventional business concepts of productivity, growth, and competition for
49 “market share”, and it is no exaggeration to state that we generally give away our most
50 important “products”, i.e. access to our knowledge. Academic culture works because it is
51 based upon collegiality and community in the open search for knowledge and the desire to
52 educate others, rather than competition. The enormous historical success of the Western
53 university is evidence that there is something valuable about “a community of scholars and
54 teachers” that largely govern themselves.

55
56 The conflict between business culture and academic culture frequently arises in
57 American Universities, and it need not always be unhealthy. Faculty are not so naive as to
58 presume that collegial culture is “better” than business culture--but merely that it is uniquely
59 appropriate to the University. Usually, strict lines are drawn which direct Boards to deal with
60 the matters of finance and coordination. The business background of Trustees makes them
61 especially qualified to do this. On the other hand, faculty should deal with matters of education
62 and professional standards, which their advanced degrees and classroom experience uniquely
63 qualify them to do. By limiting each to its proper sphere, the conflict between the two different
64 cultures is minimized and the system receives the full benefits of both types of talent.

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66 The CSU, however, has substantially departed from the “separate spheres” model in
67 recent years, as the examples detailed in the Appendix show. Both the Board and the
68 Chancellors it has selected have made aggressive and intrusive efforts to impose corporate
69 values in the academic sphere. Both of our two recent Chancellors have been quite open about
70 this effort. One Chancellor, for example, was fond of telling his favorite joke about the CEO
71 who dreamed he had to run a corporation like a university--it was a nightmare. Another
72 recently expressed his “frustration” that he had been unable to change “the faculty culture” into
73 what he calls “the culture of quality” based upon a “pay for performance” system. Faculty
74 wonder why it is that System Administrators laugh at the incongruity of trying to run a business
75 like a university, but do not see the equal incongruity of trying to run a university like a
76 business. The two kinds of institutions have values that have historically developed to make
77 each a success; these values are different since the goals of a university and a business are
78 different. Business organizations focus on profits and, in some instances, investment and
79 capital formation. Colleges and universities “have potential for greatly enhancing our society,
80 not only by educating its increasingly diverse students, but by providing information,
81 enlightenment, public service, enrichment of the arts, and new knowledge to people” (Edward
82 M. Penson, “Board and President: Facilitating the Relationship,” American Association of
83 State Colleges and Universities, Washington, 1995, p. 3).

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85 Furthermore, the CSU is a public university in the State of California, where public
86 policy requires that “the people’s business and the proceedings of public agencies be conducted
87 openly” (Section 11120 of A.B. 1097, Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act). Such “openness” is
88 hardly foreign to what we refer to here as “faculty culture”, which includes decision-making
89 based on open, reasoned discussion and the development of consensus, as distinct from
90 centrally-determined policy imposed in a hierarchical or bureaucratic manner.

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92 ***Structural and Functional Problems in the CSU System:***

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94 We now ask whether it is possible that the way in which the current system is structured
95 tends to promote conflict, and if so, if structural reforms might be able to contribute to a lasting
96 solution.

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98 In fact, unproductive conflict is built into the structure of the CSU. It is a system that is
99 confused as to whether it is centralized or decentralized. The System Administration and
100 Trustees are organizationally isolated from the faculty and students of the CSU, has contributed
101 greatly to their lack of mutual understanding and respect. But more important, the cultural
102 differences between the way the Board and the faculty perceive higher education would not
103 matter, or would matter less, if there were clear functional distinctions between the Board and
104 the campuses. The problems described in the Appendix could have been avoided or mitigated
105 with either greater input from campuses or by simply turning the issues over to campuses. For
106 the most part these problems were turned into major conflicts when the System Administration
107 intervened in matters that would have been better left to campuses.

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109 The paradox of the CSU is that the System preaches the virtues of decentralization, and
110 yet it presides over a large, centralized bureaucracy. This bureaucracy seems bloated and
111 inefficient, at least to faculty. On the one hand, it consumes an enormous amount of resources
112 some of which could be more effectively expended at the local level. For Fiscal Year
113 1999/2000, General Fund appropriations to support the CSU System Offices and the system-
114 wide expenditures controlled centrally come to a total of \$211, 987,983. This amount is larger
115 than that allotted to any campus, double the amount of a medium-sized campus like Pomona,
116 and over four times that of small campuses like Dominguez Hills, Sonoma, or Stanislaus (*1999-*
117 *2000 Final Budget Allocation, Attachment A*).

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119 However, the true inefficiency of CSU's centralized administration is not entirely, or
120 even mostly, captured by its budget. Rather, it is characterized by the unproductive work it
121 creates for other people to do. In the act of expending its \$211 million the central
122 administration has produced a long string of top-down initiatives, a few of which are described
123 in the Appendix, which create huge workloads for faculty and local administrations, and deliver
124 few benefits. In effect it has a "multiplier effect" for unproductivity. It only takes a small
125 expenditure to decree that all faculty shall start elaborating assessment plans for their courses,
126 but this diverts huge amounts of time and talent of faculty statewide from other activities into
127 paperwork.

128 129 **Solutions**

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131 Until now, problems in the CSU have been addressed by attention to the resource base,
132 to student preparation and programs, and to faculty roles and rewards. Assessment and
133 accountability have been centered on students and faculty, and on individual campuses. It is
134 time to enlarge the agenda and to examine the roles and responsibilities of the System
135 Administration, the Chancellor's Office and the Board of Trustees. We believe that the roles of
136 the System Administration and Board should be clearly and sharply defined as far narrower and
137 more limited than current practice. An audit should be conducted, at least every 3 years, by an
138 external agency examining the productivity of the system in relation to resources expended.

139 This report should be given to the Trustees, the Statewide and the Statewide Academic Senate.
140 The San José State University Senate notes with appreciation that – perhaps even in response to
141 discussion of earlier drafts of the present document – the Trustees on November 17, 1999
142 adopted some accountability measures that include reports from the central administration to
143 the academic senates. Further adoption of our suggestions would improve the Board’s
144 understanding of faculty culture; it would reduce the confusion and conflict that has
145 accompanied its intrusion into academic life; and it would more effectively expend system
146 resources.

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148 A. ***Sharply define and limit the role of the central administration.*** The State should limit the
149 role of the CSU administration to only a few essential functions. Those functions should
150 include:

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152 (1) Government relations;
153 (2) The maintenance of predictable, fair, and consistent funding formulas for distributing
154 resources between campuses;
155 (3) Coordinating relations with other systems and entities;
156 (4) Leading the efforts to hire and evaluate the Chancellor and the Presidents;
157 (5) Negotiating general terms of employment with the faculty union, while leaving issues
158 of professional standards (such as the evaluation of merit) to local collegial
159 governance;
160 (6) Supporting the Trustees and the Statewide Senate;
161 (7) And other functions that are more effectively carried out centrally as determined by a
162 thorough review of all those tasks that are currently performed by the central CSU
163 administration.

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165 Local university administrations should take on most tasks. National and regional
166 accrediting bodies will assure quality and accountability, as they do now. Regional or
167 statewide agreements between campuses can be created as needed to take advantage of various
168 opportunities and/or economies of scale, without the need to dictate participation for all twenty-
169 two campuses from the System Administration. Individual campuses should generate their
170 own solutions to problems that are truly appropriate to their local circumstances.

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172 B. ***Redistribute much of the system-wide budget to the campuses.*** As part of the review
173 noted above (A.7.), the budget for the CSU headquarters and system-wide programs should
174 be carefully examined and be redistributed to the campuses and, where appropriate,
175 redistributed within the System Administration.

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177 C. ***Establish a Task Force.*** This task force would be charged to look for budget and authority
178 that are now held centrally that were once held locally, or that might be better held locally,
179 for the express purpose of recommending decentralization measures and possible
180 restructuring of the CSU system administration, and redistribution of the budget.

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182 There are other possible permutations for the composition of the Task Force and its Timeline,
183 but one set of suggestions is the following:
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1. Composition of the Task Force.

- a. The Chancellor or designee and nine other members selected by the Board of Trustees. Perhaps these members might include Trustees, Campus Presidents, Provosts, and Campus Executive Vice Presidents.
- b. Ten members selected by the campuses to include: 4 Campus Senate Chairs chosen at a meeting of the assembled Campus Senate Chairs; 2 representatives from the statewide Senate (the statewide Senate Chair or designee and one at-large Senator); 2 Associated Students Presidents selected by the CSSA; and 2 members of the Out of Crisis Writing Committee.

The composition of the committee should be representative of the diversity of the CSU campuses and should include members from both large and small campuses and from northern, southern, and central regions.

2. Timelines

No later than March 1, 2000:	Task Force established and convened. Central CSU Administration has the following preliminary documents available for the Task Force: 1) an Organizational Chart of the Central CSU, 2) budgets for previous years that detail all the expenditures of the Central Administration including funds distributed to campuses for targeted initiatives, 3) flow diagrams showing where targeted initiatives originated and how they were “moved” through the system toward implementation, and 4) other documents that might be useful for conducting the review.
No later than September 1, 2000:	The report of the Task Force and its preliminary recommendations are submitted to the CSU Academic Senate, the Campuses and Local Senates.
November 1, 2000:	Campus responses to the report and recommendations are forwarded to the Task Force
Late February 2001	Public hearings on the recommendation of the Task Force are held on the San Jose State Campus (or the Sacramento Campus)
No later than April 30, 2001	A detailed plan to implement the final recommendations of the Task Force are presented to the Campuses and Legislature by the Chancellor’s

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D. Localize Board meetings and foster communication with all constituencies. The Board should meet from time to time on local campuses. This would help to bring about greater contact between Board members and a wide cross section of faculty and students, as well as to familiarize them with local facilities and concerns. During a Trustee’s eight-year term he or she should visit every campus. As stated in an essay based on a 1994 discussion sponsored by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB “Priorities,” Number 4, Summer 1995, “A Calling to Account,” p. 9): “Trustees and faculty need to know one another better, to have repeated contacts, and to come together as working partners. Each party needs to become more comfortable with the other’s perspectives and motivations.”

The Board should also seek broad-based faculty and student input when hiring a Chancellor or making other decisions that are of major concern to the entire institution.

E. Restructure the Board to internalize communication and improve qualifications. While the limits on central authority will help keep all parties focused on the roles they are best able to perform, it would still be beneficial to lessen the cultural gap between faculty and system managers by providing built-in opportunities for communication. We suggest instituting some better means of communication between local campuses and the Board of Trustees. The number of campuses (23) is now roughly equivalent to the number of Trustees. We suggest that Trustees (other than ex officio members) can be assigned a special relationship with one (or some cases two) campuses. While this would not be in any way a matter of official or even unofficial representation, the relationship should be formal enough to foster increased communication between that campus and the Board, by encouraging personal visits and correspondence. Such a special relationship between particular Trustees and particular campuses would lead to a deeper understanding of problems and possible solutions on both sides. In any case, it is likely to put a human face on each side.

An historical problem with the Board of Trustees is that, for many years, governors of both parties have tended to use Board appointment as a means of rewarding political supporters rather than as a means of serving California’s largest institution of higher learning. While the Board is not, and ought not to be, made up solely of education professionals, improving the collective quality of the Board, in terms of its understanding of higher education, is a necessary prerequisite to a high quality university system.

We urge that there be a modification of the process of selecting Trustees and that some serious thought be given to variety of alternatives. We have ourselves discussed pros and cons of increasing the number of faculty Trustees and/or having Trustees elected by the general public or by specified stakeholders such as faculty, students, and alumni. We are mindful that such proposals might result in the Board being even less independent and responsible than it currently is with a system of political appointment, and we hesitate to prescribe an “ideal” solution to the problem. We do not wish to diminish the Board’s fundamental role as an independent overseer of a public agency. On the other hand, we can imagine that some slight changes to the present system could improve in the nomination and selection process of a group charged with the well being of a vast system of higher education. If interested parties –

249 including the faculty (senate and union representatives) and others involved with the “faculty
250 culture” discussed in the present document -- were to attend confirmation hearings for the
251 Governor’s nominees, were first to interview (and, incidentally, “orient” them) and provide (or
252 withhold) a “stamp of approval,” this could result in an enhanced process of communication
253 between the “two cultures” described here. Such initial involvement could be followed up by a
254 more formal orientation process in which representatives of the Academic Senate should
255 participate.

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257 ***F. Considerations for Board Appointments.*** We urge that in making Board appointments, the
258 Governor attempt:

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260 ◆ To select Trustees with an eye for their ability to understand faculty and student culture and
261 concerns, the ability to win the respect of those who must implement change in the
262 classroom, and the ability to garner the resources necessary to enable faculty to do their
263 jobs properly and at a high level of quality.
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265 ◆ To draw the Board from a much broader variety of professional backgrounds and life
266 experiences than is currently the case--so that more members of the Board will have a basis
267 for understanding the diverse academic disciplines represented in the CSU, and perhaps to
268 increase the number of faculty and student Trustees so as to increase diversity of
269 representation (e.g. ensuring representation from large and small campuses as well as from
270 both graduate students and undergraduate students).
- 271
272 ◆ To adjust the length of terms of service so that faculty Trustees and gubernatorial
273 appointees alike have terms of the same length (of no longer than eight years). Again,
274 rather than insist on details of a change, we urge that an appropriate change be at least
275 considered so that both diversity of personnel and familiarity with issues pertaining to
276 higher education be maximized.
- 277
278 ◆ Apply performance evaluations to Trustees, perhaps after the second, fourth, and sixth year
279 of a Trustee’s term. Eight-year review would only be completed if a reappointment were
280 requested and then in coordination with reconfirmation. For each review the System
281 Administration should document the attendance of Trustees for Board and committee
282 meetings to the Legislature.
- 283 ◆ Surveys of Trustee effectiveness should be completed by the remaining Trustees, the
284 Presidents, and the Statewide Senate with the results provided to the Trustee and the
285 Legislature.
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287 ◆ The Trustee under evaluation should be allowed to submit a statement of his or her other
288 accomplishments over the previous two-year period and attach the texts of documents or
289 other items to which he or she made substantial contributions.
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291 ◆ The State Legislature should provide regular oversight of Board performance and
292 accountability.
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294 We note with interest that in 1999 the System has been working on an “accountability”
295 process for use in stabilizing State funding of the CSU, in response to concerns of the WASC
296 accreditation agency. We note that “institutional effectiveness” and administrative functions
297 are not to be immune from scrutiny. We are less impressed, however, with the idea that the
298 focus is to be on the performance and effectiveness of individual campuses, while the
299 chancellor’s office is to be “responsible” only for “performance areas and indicators” in the
300 realm of funding, admission, transfer, and teacher education. Central “performance areas” are
301 also to include a “desired distribution of decision-making between the system and campuses”
302 and “efforts to respect, preserve, and advance campus uniqueness and autonomy,” but no
303 performance measures are currently proposed. In particular, there are no annual responsibility
304 indicators or mandated reports for the Board or System’s proposed areas of responsibility,
305 although campuses are to be required to file extensive annual reports.
306

307 *Ongoing involvement of the faculty.*
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309 The faculty, too, should bear some new responsibility in these reforms of System
310 governance. We suggest that there be a standing statewide committee to monitor and assess
311 central administration. At the same time, the faculty’s own roles, responsibilities, and
312 governance bodies should not be exempt from such scrutiny. The role of the senates in
313 proposing and evaluating system-wide and campus initiatives should be enhanced; this, too, is
314 a faculty responsibility. The present document of the San José State Academic Senate is meant
315 to serve as a catalyst for the improvement of performance measures for use in the
316 accountability of the Board of Trustees and chancellor’s office and the start of an open,
317 ongoing conversation discussing centralization vs. decentralization issues with Trustees,
318 Central Administration, Senates and faculty.
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320 **The ideas presented here are not intended to be either an ultimatum or a**
321 **prescription for change. We sincerely hope that our readers will not simply find fault**
322 **with our suggestions but will understand the seriousness of the situation in which the CSU**
323 **finds itself and will add their thoughts and voices to the conversation.**
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APPENDIX

Examples of problems created by faculty/System cultural differences and top-down management style:

Following is a brief compendium of some of the major incidents and programs that we believe exemplify profound cultural differences between faculty and system managers. Our criticism is intended constructively. It is not meant as an indictment of any particular Chancellor, any particular administrator, or any particular Board. The cultural divide that needs to be overcome is systemic and not personal; its transcendence will require greatly improved levels of understanding, communication, and some structural reform on the parts of many actors, institutions, and constituencies. However, we cannot expect to make our concerns understood if we dwell only at the level of abstraction. Genuine change demands that specific patterns of behavior be altered, and as advocates for change we have an obligation to show more precisely what those patterns have been so that they may be avoided in the future.

1. Project Delta (and other projects, including the “California Virtual University”).

When, in the early 90's, the system began warning that a “Tidal Wave” of students was on its way, it took the position that delivery of instruction through technology held the only hope for accommodating the increased enrollments with limited resources. Large sums of money were poured into “Project Delta” and its various successors to begin the planning for technological delivery of mass instruction. To us this was an assault on traditional faculty control of the curriculum, since the system appeared to be imposing a pedagogy based strictly upon budgetary criteria and without regard to its appropriateness for teaching the materials in our disciplines. The effort faltered, however, when it became clear that technology tended to increase the costs of education and not reduce them. Faculty, who had been pioneers in the use of multimedia and other advanced technologies, argued from the start that technology, while a desirable enhancement to their teaching, unfortunately increased their workloads and the need for continuously upgraded equipment. This message, however, is still not popular at CSU Central Offices. It may take administrative necessity to see the potential of technology, but it takes “hands on” experience to learn its limits.

Technology is a pedagogical matter. Its development, supervision, and regulation belong as much with faculty as does the writing, selection, and assignment of textbooks or utilization of any other teaching tools. The ill advised plans to use technology as a cost-saving device wasted precious resources, alienated faculty, and probably set back spontaneous local efforts to appropriately integrate technology into teaching.

2. Remediation.

The Board became alarmed by the numbers of high school students entering the CSU who have severe deficiencies in basic skills. Faculty expressed their frustration about the same phenomenon long before the Board decided to act. The Board initiated an effort to simply cut off remediation provided by the CSU to those students who enter with deficiencies. After protests, hearings, and resolutions this stand was relaxed somewhat to a phase-in period. To its credit, one positive outcome of the discussion was publicity that added some additional pressure on high schools to enforce standards. But an approach that seems to hold college

371 students hostage to try to force change at lower levels struck us as both unethical and
372 simplistic.

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374 Remediation is a curricular matter, in the purview of the faculty. The Board was right
375 to attempt to bring public attention to the problem and to seek to negotiate changes in K-12.
376 But faculty are in the best position to judge what their students need to know and whether or
377 not remediation is appropriate for the specific conditions on their campus.

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379 In response to an earlier draft of this document, the central administration noted,
380 “Remediation is a success story.” We do not interpret this remark to suggest that our incoming
381 students are adequately prepared or that the need for remediation has thus far decreased--such a
382 claim defies credulity. We suspect, based upon the context of the remark, that it was offered as
383 an example of a political success. The issue did bring together high schools, community
384 colleges, the CSU, and the legislature in a common effort to solve a serious problem.

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386 But the outcome of the great remediation debate is less relevant to this paper’s purpose
387 than is the conflict-ridden manner in which the debate was resolved. Faculty would gladly
388 have volunteered their time to help find solutions to a problem that vexes them on a daily basis.
389 But instead of soliciting faculty input, including the input of many CSU faculty who are among
390 the world’s leading scholars in this field, faculty were instead put in the position of responding
391 to a simplistic proposal to terminate CSU remediation. Only when faculty and local
392 administrations mobilized to fight a disastrous policy that could have cut enrollments at some
393 campuses in half was a genuine effort made to build consensus. Rather than the positive
394 collaboration between concerned faculty and a concerned Board that this issue should have
395 been, it was turned into a battleground.

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397 ***3. California Education Technology Initiative (CETI and other Technology Initiatives).***

398 CETI was a successor to the technology battles described above, but raised an entirely
399 new set of issues. As it became clear that the system did not have the resources to modernize
400 our technology base, it began to search for alternatives. It offered consortia from the private
401 sector the opportunity to acquire an exclusive monopoly on the right to supply the technology
402 needs of the CSU. The initial proposal was negotiated in complete secrecy, with all CSU
403 representatives required to sign non-disclosure letters. A single faculty member was allowed to
404 participate in the planning. When the accepted draft proposal (CETI) was made public it
405 immediately produced a firestorm of controversy. The proposal was vague but sweeping. It
406 appeared to give substantial control of the intellectual property created by faculty using system
407 technology to the consortium. It proposed that the consortium could derive enormous profits
408 by marketing “courseware” created by faculty for delivery via distance learning. And it
409 proposed that the consortium could increase efficiency by setting “standards” that would
410 particularly benefit PC—Microsoft technology. Ultimately all of these odious features were
411 abandoned, particularly after it was clear that the Legislature would intervene. CETI became a
412 “kinder, gentler” proposal--a proposal without profit in it, which was finally dumped by the
413 consortium.

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415 The secret, centralized approach, which characterized CETI in its early stages,
416 condemned it to failure. Technology and the “PC revolution” of the last twenty years is by

417 nature a decentralized phenomenon, with countless users experimenting with ways to apply
418 solutions to their unique problems. The original CETI proposal was oblivious to the
419 fundamentally decentralized nature of faculty and student needs, and overlooked dozens of
420 basic concerns. Had there been a way to more fully involve their input in the early planning--
421 so that the purpose of the consortium would be meeting local needs rather than imposing
422 central standards -- the outcome may have been considerably different.
423

424 The CSU has undertaken other centralized technological initiatives, many of which
425 have been – from the perspective of individual campuses – both controversial and costly. The
426 latest of these is the Collaborative Management System (CMS), which will not benefit all
427 campuses equally, assuming, of course, that this incredibly expensive, but untried system
428 actually works. Too often what are touted as economies of scale turn out to be large-scale
429 waste of scarce resources.
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431 ***4. Selection of the Chancellor.***

432 Upon the announcement of the previous Chancellor's departure, the Board was
433 rightfully concerned about attracting a new Chancellor with the experience and credentials to
434 lead our system. They introduced three changes in the search process. First, the job
435 description was rewritten to remove the language that required the successful candidate to have
436 a faculty-level terminal degree. Second, the number of faculty to be involved in the search was
437 reduced to only the faculty Trustee (previous searches had involved one or two additional
438 faculty). Third, the search was to take place in secret. The Board's public reasons for these
439 changes was that they wanted to be able to entice candidates to apply who would not want it
440 publicly known that they were considering leaving their current positions. Unfortunately, the
441 message that these three changes sent to the faculty was that the Board did not seriously value
442 substantial faculty input in the process.
443

444 Rejecting any substantial faculty input into the selection of the new Chancellor harmed
445 the system. Since many faculty distrusted the process that selected him, he was greeted with
446 some skepticism. At the very least, the opportunity to make the Chancellor's search a positive,
447 inclusive, unifying event that could bring together faculty, students, and Trustees was lost, and
448 with it an important opportunity for the new Chancellor to carry a "mandate" from faculty and
449 students for reform.
450

451 ***5. Cornerstones.***

452 Cornerstones was an effort to examine reforms for the CSU in four different categories
453 and it did attempt to involve faculty and students. In its "middle phase" an initial draft of the
454 document was circulated to a February 1997 conference where a large number of faculty and
455 students came together expressly for the purpose of reviewing it. This conference, sponsored
456 with the Statewide Academic Senate, should be a model of how the system administration can
457 reach out to faculty and involve them in key issues. The feedback from the conference was
458 mostly constructive and voluminous. (One frequent complaint was that the draft was filled
459 with corporate jargon--some of which was ultimately removed.) The campuses urgently
460 requested and received the opportunity to take the document back to the local level and solicit
461 more substantial feedback. Over the course of an additional six months campuses poured over
462 the document and produced reports, resolutions, and letters. After feeding this input to the

463 Cornerstones task force, a final draft was prepared and released which reflected some of the
464 input. After a change in administration and additional input from the statewide Senate, a new
465 document delineating how campuses were to implement Cornerstones was issued.
466

467 The draft implementation document, however, ignored most campus input. Notably, it
468 ignored Cornerstones Principle 10, which stated “campuses shall have significant autonomy in
469 developing their own missions, identity, and programs, with institutional flexibility in meeting
470 clearly defined system policy goals”. Rather than simply leaving the final Cornerstones report
471 as a set of “policy goals” in the hands of campuses, it decreed how they should implement it.
472 (See the chart attached to SJSU’s SS-F98-2 for a full detailing of the points of departure from
473 Cornerstones made by the draft implementation plan.)
474

475 As was made plain at the February 1997 Academic Conference, the Cornerstones
476 project features a “disconnect” between the expectation of improved access to an education of
477 high quality for a “tidal wave” of new students, and a resource base that can hardly keep up
478 with the future costs of access and quality. The basic contradiction in Cornerstones is summed
479 up in the expression “doing more with less”. The problem is that “doing more” (access for
480 more students, perhaps with more year-round operations and fewer required units for the
481 degree) might be done with resources at steady-state or in relative decline, but quality would
482 undoubtedly suffer. The “value-added”, from the student point of view, is not only the
483 acquisition of a degree or credential, but the fact that the quality of a CSU degree is higher than
484 that of some other degrees. Quality is indeed academe’s most important product; it is what
485 differentiates education from training. It must be added that academic productivity comprises
486 far more than student outputs, or even student learning outcomes: faculty also produce
487 knowledge (e.g. the product of research activities) and scholarship (e.g. publications), for
488 future use. The Academy – mainly through the faculty – also creates itself through faculty
489 governance activities and faculty professional development. Little of these facets of
490 productivity – much less the appropriate qualitative measures of it – is reflected in the
491 Cornerstones project.
492

493 The System Administration has justified its issuance of the Cornerstones
494 implementation document on the grounds that virtually no campus in the system would
495 otherwise have been prepared to implement Cornerstones--and thus would have wasted the
496 huge effort that went into the project. This response itself reveals the differences in perspective
497 that so deeply divide the central administration from faculty and others who hold more local
498 views. On the one hand it shows a certain distrust of local administrations and local collegial
499 governance, since we believe that any well-functioning campus would naturally seek to
500 implement any parts of Cornerstones that it genuinely thought would work--with or without a
501 directive from the hierarchy. If it is in fact true that no (or virtually no) local campuses would
502 implement Cornerstones without being ordered to do so, then this is a reflection on the
503 difficulties and implausibility of implementing Cornerstones.
504

505 **6. Assessment.**

506 “Assessment” was a major topic of discussion during Cornerstones, with much faculty
507 criticism of the vocabulary used by the system. “Learning outcomes”, “learning productivity”
508 and associated terms evoke the assembly line rather than the University. However, the

509 dialogue on assessment was constructive and won over some faculty. Certainly some of the
510 premises of assessment, so far as that ambiguous term can be defined, are worthy: that faculty
511 can always use more information on how well their students are learning, and that faculty need
512 to think clearly about what it is they are trying to teach--these premises can serve as
513 constructive suggestions that should be built into faculty development. Unfortunately, leaving
514 assessment at that would not fulfill the system's underlying agenda for assessment.
515 Cornerstones clearly linked it to "accountability", or proving to the public that we are
516 adequately doing our jobs.

517
518 Faculty believe strongly in curricular accountability. In fact, we already have an
519 elaborate accountability system in the form of several layers of accreditation, curricular review,
520 and of course the venerable system of grades, units, programs, and degrees which provide
521 "labels" indicating what curriculum students have completed and at what level of quality. We
522 constantly "assess" the success of our programs through our curricular reviews and make
523 frequent modifications--adding, subtracting, modifying. While new assessment techniques may
524 offer ways to improve our teaching, bureaucratization of these techniques, especially without
525 concomitant reductions elsewhere, will do the opposite--by distracting faculty from their
526 teaching duties.

527
528 Assessment in its multifaceted forms is intimately related to the curriculum, to faculty
529 development, and to the improvement of instruction--all of which are areas appropriately
530 vested in the expertise of the faculty. The system's role should be to offer support to faculty
531 who can make use of any new innovations in assessment to improve themselves as teachers,
532 and to keep the bureaucratic distractions to teaching at a minimum.

533
534 Assessment in the sense of "performance review" must, if it is to be applied
535 anywhere, include assessment of the effectiveness of the administration and staff
536 who support the work of the faculty. We agree here with the Association of
537 Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges' "Statement on Institutional
538 Governance" (November 8, 1998), which states (on p. 8) that boards should "assess
539 their own performance and that of the chief executive every several years.
540 Performance reviews assisted by qualified third parties can contribute significantly
541 to the professionalism and objectivity of the process." Such review should include
542 performance of the System administration – Chancellor and Trustees—both
543 individually and collectively, along with the campus institutional accountability data
544 currently planned.

545
546 **7. Faculty Merit vs. Faculty Merit Pay.**

547 The most explosive example of the conflict between faculty/board cultures has been
548 disagreement over merit pay. This, after all, was largely responsible for the "state of strike"
549 and for various faculty members beginning job actions within the system. Faculty have done a
550 poor job articulating their objections to the system's merit pay imposition, with the result being
551 that the debate became centered on whether or not faculty believed "in merit." To make a long
552 story short, communication among concerned parties was poor, at best, for there were no
553 available channels of communication during the Collective Bargaining impasse and imposition
554 of terms and conditions of employment on Unit 3 faculty employees.

555

556 Faculty believe very deeply in a *merit system*, although they question a *merit pay*
557 *system*. Faculty undergo rigorous evaluations throughout their careers--some of which are far
558 more challenging and sustained than performance evaluations conducted in the private sector.
559 Competitive entrance to graduate school, general exams, dissertation defense, competition for a
560 tenure-track job, constant student evaluations and peer reviews throughout the entire span of
561 one's professional life, scrutiny every other year during a six-year probationary period by three
562 levels of committees and three levels of administration, blind peer-reviewed refereed journal
563 submissions, post-tenure reviews, etc. all add up to an enormous commitment to assure the
564 highest professional standards. The problem appears to be that Trustees do not believe that any
565 of these elaborate systems of review are serious unless they are connected with money. Those
566 who have not lived an academic life cannot know why faculty are not primarily motivated by
567 salary increases. One University President, Myles Brand of Indiana University, put it best
568 when he pointed out that:

569

570 "Professors are far more interested in gaining knowledge and communicating it to
571 others than they are in high salaries. It does not matter if the knowledge is a scientific
572 breakthrough, a new interpretation of a text, or a noteworthy performance of a classical
573 score. It is the activity itself and sharing one's results with students and colleagues that
574 faculty members find rewarding. Being a faculty member is not a job, it's a life."

575

576 Naturally, faculty do not want to be "cheated" by being paid less than the average, and they
577 need salaries sufficient to be able to afford to live reasonable lives near where they work
578 (which is not currently possible for young faculty at some campuses). The ultimate thrill of
579 academia is measured by success in teaching and scholarship, not in making more money than
580 one's colleague.

581

582 Despite faculty misgivings about grafting "merit pay" onto our current "merit"
583 system, we took seriously political realities and approached the issue as scholars. In
584 1997 the CSU Academic Senate issued an extremely constructive report on merit
585 pay after a yearlong study in response to the urging of the then-Chancellor (the
586 Report may be read at [http://www.calstate.edu/acsenate/97-11-5-](http://www.calstate.edu/acsenate/97-11-5-MPTF_REPORT.html)
587 [MPTF_REPORT.html](http://www.calstate.edu/acsenate/97-11-5-MPTF_REPORT.html)). This report was based upon exhaustive research on the
588 2000 existing studies on merit pay, interviews with numerous experts, visits to all
589 campuses, etc. It listed twelve straightforward principles that need to be followed to
590 make a modern merit pay plan work, and suggested three models that would meet
591 those principles. Most faculty were prepared to accept merit pay if it were crafted
592 in a way that supported our existing academic merit system rather than undermined
593 it, if it were truly fair and open to appeal as our current system is, and if it were
594 implemented after the "salary gap"--the chronic underpaying of the entire faculty
595 relative to comparable institutions--was closed.

596

597 The faculty culture that is essential to making universities successful is very similar to
598 that of the "work teams" that are often the "reward unit" in corporate culture. It might be
599 appropriately noted that faculty successes (e.g., in the classroom, laboratory, or in publishing)
600 are generally supported by the work of colleagues, who assist with the design of courses,

601 advising of students, service on committees, etc. A strong case might be made that the
602 “default” category for “merit” raises should be “group awards” for this reason, and that
603 individual raises be the exception rather than the rule.

604
605 When the CSU Trustees imposed a merit plan in the spring of 1999, they did so against
606 the express advice of the Statewide Academic Senate and in disregard of the report of the Merit
607 Plan Task Force. The imposition managed to violate nearly all of the twelve principles, and did
608 not bear the slightest resemblance to any of the three models. The entire conflict over merit
609 pay was easily avoidable had the Senate’s principles been accepted. Instead, the Board was
610 united in insisting on the establishment of a merit pay system and did so with no apparent
611 concern for its value or purpose, and this position, coupled with intemperate remarks casting
612 aspersion on the worthiness of the CSU faculty, brought the CSU to the brink of crisis.

613 614 ***8. Regional Articulation Agreements.***

615 The case of regional articulation highlights a flaw in the way which the CSU sets its
616 agenda. Too often, system managers and Trustees set goals based upon anecdotes or political
617 pressures without first determining whether there is good evidence to justify a major reform
618 effort. This has two deleterious consequences. First, reform efforts launched without sufficient
619 preparation may simply waste system resources and faculty time if in fact they turn out not to
620 be justified. Second, even in the case of worthwhile reforms, the failure to build faculty
621 support in the earliest phases generates skepticism and resistance that lowers faculty morale,
622 slows the pace of change, and may condemn the reform in the long term. The obvious way to
623 prevent these two equally bad outcomes is to utilize faculty input when setting the agenda
624 rather than soliciting faculty input only after the agenda is set.

625
626 In the case of regional articulation the System Administration has begun to push for
627 “regional articulation agreements” that would standardize the lower division preparation within
628 20 of the system’s largest majors. Whether this kind of homogenization is good or bad can be
629 intensively debated, with reasonable arguments possible from both sides. Whether there are or
630 are not a substantial number of students who would benefit from such changes has similarly not
631 been publicly discussed. No data has yet been brought forward to indicate the scope of the
632 problem or the numbers of students affected. Nonetheless, with no effort to engage faculty
633 interest in this problem or to justify the enormous amount of work that regional articulation
634 agreements will demand, the system announced that regional articulation conferences will be
635 held in each of the 20 identified disciplines with the objective of finding a standard core
636 curriculum. It is to the credit of the System Administration that it has orally assured faculty
637 that faculty will make the final decisions about the curriculum. But regardless of how these
638 conferences turn out or what they accomplish, they are responding to an agenda that was not
639 derived from faculty input, they will generate considerable additional work for faculty, and
640 they will expend system resources and faculty time to solve a problem which at this point is
641 perceived only by a few in system. This is not a formula for success.

642 643 ***9. Other Examples of Cultural Differences.***

644 Still other examples of “cultural” differences in approach to the problems of the
645 University might be cited. Indeed, examples might be multiplied practically endlessly,
646 especially when “access” and cost” are valued over “quality”. Streamlining admissions,

647 establishing system-wide enrollment priorities, facilitating transfer, articulating courses,
648 standardizing course patterns within General Education and majors, etc. are all areas where –
649 unless the faculty are provided the authority that accompanies responsibility for central
650 academic discussions – the Trustees are liable to adopt “sensible” and “businesslike” policies,
651 at great detriment to the quality of academic programs and the ability of faculty to carry out the
652 educational mission of the CSU. Such areas of difference and potential conflict are certain to
653 come into view in the immediate future. It is our belief and hope that sensitivity to the
654 underlying cultural gap between faculty and the Trustees – our careful delineation of the role of
655 the System Administration both as agents of the Trustees and the “buffer” between faculty and
656 the larger polity represented by the Trustees – preclude further crises within the CSU
657 community

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Out of Crisis – Reforming Governance of the California State University

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