

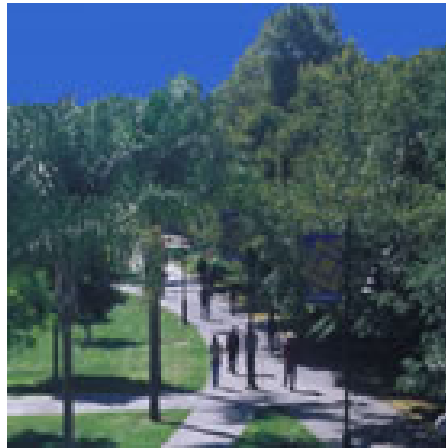


**Critical Issues
for the
Future of
San José State University**



**A Document of the
SJSU Academic Senate
Spring 2006**



San José State University, the oldest of the California State Universities, is located on 154 acres in Silicon Valley. The university offers the excitement of studying at a large, metropolitan campus where many cultures meet. Yet students receive personal attention from faculty members in the smaller setting of the university's eight colleges.

**For more information, visit
<http://www.sjsu.edu/>**

The critical issues explained in this brochure all fall within the most critical issue of serving our students so that they can best succeed at achieving the learning outcomes expected for a baccalaureate or graduate degree.

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Vision 2010

San José State University will be a prominent student-centered campus. By creating a vibrant educational institution focused on academic rigor, social responsibility and mutual respect, San José State University will be a university of choice – a desirable place for study and work. The University will be known for the value it places on the integration of liberal and professional education and theoretical and applied knowledge. The University will also be known for providing a welcoming, inclusive environment and exemplary student support services from application to graduation. Through the high quality of its graduates and the scholarship, research and service of its faculty and staff, San José State University will be viewed as a crucial resource for Silicon Valley and an important contributor to the region, the state and the world.



In collaboration with nearby industries and communities, this faculty and staff is dedicated to achieving the University's mission as a responsive institution of the State of California.

SJSU Mission Statement

To enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.

Goals

For both undergraduate and graduate students, the University emphasizes the following goals:

- in-depth knowledge of a major field of study.
- broad understanding of the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and the arts.
- skills in communication and in critical inquiry.
- multi-cultural and global perspectives gained through intellectual and social exchange with people of diverse economic and ethnic backgrounds
- active participation in professional, artistic, and ethnic communities.
- responsible citizenship and an understanding of ethical choices inherent in human development

Critical Issue #1 Providing a High Quality Liberal Education Experience

Issue

Many students who enter the CSU are not prepared for university level work. At SJSU, approximately 60% of entering freshmen must take non-credit remedial math and/or writing courses. Faculty often find that students are weak in knowledge of history, arts, and science. Budget reductions and talk of reducing units to graduation only exacerbate an already challenging endeavor to help CSU students obtain a high quality university education.

The Situation

- Often well meaning legislative proposals can generate unintended negative consequences.
- Current K-12 education in California is not adequately preparing students for university level work.
- There is a great need today for students to obtain a strong liberal education. The Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) has called for collaborative leadership among all stakeholders to ensure that university students achieve the following outcomes:
 - Knowledge of human cultures and the natural and physical world;
 - Intellectual and practical skills including communication, critical and creative thinking, quantitative literacy, information, and problem-solving skill;
 - Individual and social responsibilities including civic knowledge, ethical reasoning and motivation and skills for lifelong learning; and
 - Integrative learning to enable students to adopt skills and knowledge to new situations.

[<http://www.aacu.org/advocacy/>]

Possible Remedies

- Ensure a strong general education curriculum in the CSU.
- Provide sufficient resources to enable K-12 schools and the CSU to provide the appropriate education that students at all levels need today.

Critical Issue #2 **Making College Affordable**

Issue

The high cost-of-living in Silicon Valley requires many students to work to pay for education and living expenses. These students face difficult trade-offs: working, which can result in loss of eligibility for financial aid and a longer time to graduation versus struggling to live on borrowed money and attend college with limited financial aid.

The Situation

- About 45% of SJSU students receive some type of financial aid. This percentage has grown from 34% in 1994.
- Over \$55 million in financial aid is distributed to SJSU students annually. An increased number of students have sought financial aid in the past few years due to family unemployment.
- Most financial aid eligibility requirements follow federal guidelines which are based on the western U.S. as a whole, rather than on living costs in specific cities.
- For over 20 years, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) grants have been capped at \$1,000/year. Due to insufficient funds, SJSU is unable to issue students this maximum amount.
- While the federal Stafford Loan Program provides loans to any student, the maximum amounts are often insufficient for SJSU students (\$2,625 freshman, \$3,500 sophomores, \$5,500 juniors and seniors).

Possible Remedies

- Increase the maximum EOP grant and index it for inflation and have it reflect cost-of-living differentials. Increase EOP funding.
- Adjust State University Grants (SUGs) to reflect cost-of-living rather than fees.
- Provide tax incentives for the provision of corporate and individual scholarships.
- Increase funding for reduced cost student housing.

Critical Issue #3 **Finding and Keeping High Quality Faculty**

Issue

The CSU pay scale does not compensate faculty who teach in high cost-of-living areas such as San Jose. SJSU competes for faculty against institutions in areas with much lower living costs, as well as smaller teaching loads. When academic programs cannot successfully recruit and retain faculty, they cannot offer classes that students want and need.

The Situation

- All CSU campuses use the same salary schedules for faculty.
- SJSU is located in one of the highest cost-of-living areas in the country. An assistant professor's salary of \$50,000 in Fresno would have to be \$66,000 in San Jose to provide a comparable living standard.
- The federal government adjusts its salary schedule to reflect cost-of-living in high cost areas. The largest adjustment made is 15% for the San Jose area.
- The California Postsecondary Education Commission reported in February 2002 that average CSU salaries would have to increase 13.1% to equal the average salaries projected for comparison universities for 2005/2006.
- The 8 course load per year of the CSU is out of line with comparable institutions where 6 is the norm.
- The inability to hire faculty can lead to impaction in certain programs which then limits access for students and creates funding difficulties for the entire campus.

Possible Remedies

- Adjust state employee salaries to reflect cost-of-living differences among California cities.
 - Provide some additional housing assistance for employees in high cost-of-living areas.
 - Close the CSU faculty salary gap.
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Critical Issue #4

Providing the Necessary Educational Infrastructure

Issue

The costs of delivering education are greater today than they were years ago. Also, older campuses tend to have greater maintenance costs than other campuses. SJSU has buildings dating back to 1910.

The Situation

- The incorporation of technology into teaching is positive, but adds additional cost to instruction.
- Costs of maintaining adequate library resources are high. The inflation rate is at least 8% for scholarly journals. 5% for books.
- The campus has a backlog of deferred maintenance projects, as well as electrical upgrades necessitated by the demands of computer laboratories and on-line education.
- The number of staff associated with daily maintenance and deferred maintenance projects has decreased during the past 10 years.
- Costs of renovation projects are high due to lead and asbestos abatement which generally must occur in buildings built prior to 1980. A majority of SJSU's buildings were built prior to 1980.
- A myriad of rules and procedures from various governing bodies exist with sometimes overlapping or redundant construction and safety protocols.
- The subscriptions to electronic databases, which are now the norm, are very expensive.

Possible Remedies

- Streamline existing rules and procedures on construction and maintenance to increase efficiencies in both time and costs.
- When budgeting for deferred maintenance, consider the age of facilities at different campuses and enrollments in programs that have specialized equipment and facilities needs, such as engineering, computer science, and laboratory sciences.

Critical Issue #5 Providing an Environment Where All Feel Welcome

Issue

SJSU has had ROTC on campus for decades. It has been a good partnership for our students and the military. However, with the creation of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy the presence of the ROTC and military recruiters results in a violation of our campus climate and equal opportunity policies. The “Solomon Amendment” poses the threat of loss of federal funds if we ask this discriminatory employer (the U.S. military) to leave the campus. The presence of an entity on campus that uses discriminatory practices is demeaning to students and employees and causes our campus climate to be one where not all students and employees can feel welcome.

The Situation

- SJSU’s current campus climate policy states that SJSU is “committed to creating a diverse community guided by core values of inclusion, civility, and respect for each individual. Such a community enriches the intellectual climate of the University and the educational experiences of its students, promotes personal growth and a healthy society, and supports a positive work environment.”
- Our campus climate policy specifically provides that employers using the SJSU Career Planning & Placement Center be equal opportunity employers.

Possible Remedies

- In the face of a recent Supreme Court decision, the CSU *system* should support challenging the required presence of recruiters and ROTC on campus, such as by joining lawsuits repealing the Solomon Amendment and/or efforts to encourage Congress to repeal the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy.
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Critical Issues: #6
Reorganizing faculty work to support student success.

Issue

Graduation rates in the CSU are below desired levels. Research into factors that support student success in college indicates that student/faculty contact (outside and inside the classroom) is one of the most important factors to support student success. It is very difficult for CSU faculty members to find time to significantly engage students outside the classroom with the current, annual 8- course load and high student/faculty ratio.

The Situation

- The current 8 course load (4 courses each semester) and high student/faculty ratio for faculty members in the CSU provides little time for quality student advising, mentoring, and support of students in their extracurricular activities (e.g., serving as advisors to student clubs and organizations, doing career and academic advising).
- The CSU Board of Trustees in its 22 Points to Facilitate Graduation indicated that quality advising is a significant element to increasing graduation rates in the CSU and decreasing the number of unnecessary units that students take prior to receiving their bachelors degrees.

Possible Remedies

- Redirect the faculty workload from the 4th course each semester to activities (intensive academic and career advising, contact with students outside class) that will support student success (student retention and students making more timely progress to their degrees).
- Provide funds for faculty members to hire student assistants to increase student/faculty contact and keep students on campus for their work.

Best Practices at SJSU!

- Student Success is one of them!

Expectations of the CSU Higher Education Experience

It is the intent of the Legislature that public institutions of higher education in California shall provide a collegiate experience which gives each student the skills of communication and problem solving, the ideas and principles underlying the major areas of modern knowledge, the ability to consider ethical issues thoughtfully, the understanding that learning is a continuous lifelong process, and the knowledge of democracy necessary for good citizenship. The Legislature further intends that an undergraduate education prepare students to think critically and independently, and to have the flexibility to adapt to changing economic and social conditions, new workforce needs, and demands of a multicultural society. It is also the intent of the Legislature that the segments of higher education recognize that quality teaching is the core ingredient of the undergraduate educational experience. The segments of higher education are encouraged to improve the quality of undergraduate education as a central priority of California's public colleges and universities.

Source: CA Education Code §66050

**For further information,
please contact**
senate.chair@sjsu.edu

SJSU Academic Senate

The SJSU Academic Senate is the principal agency for the formulation of University policy. The Senate and its committees communicate recommendations to the President on such matters as faculty affairs, curriculum, instruction, student affairs, finances and other matters relevant to the welfare of SJSU.

San José State University was the first California State University to have an official faculty representative body. The Faculty Council, established in 1953, became the Academic Senate in 1974.

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