

College of Business and Economics

2008-2009 College Planning Initiatives: A Summary

1. Plans relating to the College's mission/vision.

Our annual budget plans and initiatives are derived from our Mission/Vision and our recently completed strategic planning priorities. We are using this budget process to help us support our mission/vision and achieve our long range priorities and objectives. Our Mission and Vision can be found at the following URLs: http://www.csun.edu/busecon/pdfs/Mission_Statement.pdf and <http://www.csun.edu/busdean/pdf/Vision.pdf>.

Our plans and initiatives described below support our Mission/Vision and our strategic plan priorities primarily by focusing on three interrelated areas:

1) High Quality Education: We continue to focus our resources on making our programs more learner-centered through assessment and on doing a better job of advising, informing, and serving our students. We are increasingly encouraging faculty to experiment with differing pedagogies, new learning objectives, cross-functional and team-taught classes, and innovative online/hybrid course design. This experimentation is supported by our growing use of assessment. We have begun to move beyond the stage where assessment is simply a measurement process; we are using assessment to improve our curriculum, to find out what is working well or not, and to find better ways to help our students learn.

Growth and improvement of our internship program provides students with unique opportunities to apply learned concepts and help us improve our community involvement. In addition, we dedicate resources to the Business Honors Program in order to attract top students from across the country. At the graduate level, our long range priority is to grow and improve our current evening MBA program and develop new master levels programs, including an executive MBA program.

2) Faculty Development: We continue to promote scholarly research and involvement in professional organizations. We are working to establish a culture where faculty are actively involved in scholarly research not simply to satisfy requirements of AACSB (although that is important) or to gain promotion/tenure (and we do want our new faculty to be promoted/tenured), but because maintaining and improving our faculty's human capital/intellectual capital will help our faculty be better teachers, mentors, advisors, and colleagues. Our research emphasis on applied and pedagogical research also fits well with our encouragement of cross-functional and innovative teaching.

3) Community Partnerships: We continue to establish more and better ties to the business community. We believe greater involvement of executives in the classroom and more effective use of our internship and service learning programs will help us graduate students who are better prepared to use what they have learned and better prepared to make significant contributions in business and society. Additionally, building community partnerships and involving business executives in our programs should help us achieve greater development and fundraising success. Support and development of our new College of Business Advisory Board are a priority.

2. ACADEMIC QUALITY

a) Assessment

Explain how the college intends to assess the outcomes of the planning initiatives: setting benchmarks, assessing against them, using results, etc.

A. Program Assessment

The College of Business and Economics is strongly committed to the improvement of student learning through the assessment of our undergraduate and graduate programs.

All of our degree programs have an established set of learning goals. Every program uses embedded measures of student learning in core courses, and collects stand-alone (e.g., ETS-MFT exam) and indirect (i.e., employer, alumni, and student satisfaction surveys) measures of student performance.

We are reviewing our testing procedures this semester. The exam is administered in evening Capstone sections and it is not part of the student's course grade, which makes student motivation problematic. The College also plans to investigate appropriate rewards for student performance on the exam (e.g., include the ETS-MFT in the Capstone grade).

B. Advisement and Internships

The College expects to see improved EBI sub-scores for advisement because of a continuously improving capacity to advise students and move them from programs to employment through internships. The College expects 300 new internships in the community by the close of the 2008/2009 academic year.

1) Faculty Development

The College expects to sustain faculty publication at the level of at least 2 publications every 5 years for at least 95% of the tenured/tenure-track faculty. We track faculty publications and scholarly activity through Digital Measures. The College will continue to encourage and support faculty leadership in professional organizations. College faculty currently hold executive positions in four major national and/or regional professional associations.

2) Community Partnerships

The College will measure its enhanced community connection by the number of executives we bring to the classroom, the number of new and sustained internships available, and the number of high quality community service learning projects delivered by our undergraduate and graduate students. We will also seek to sustain and enhance the programs of our Centers that deliver value to the community.

The College expects that these successful community partnerships, including the College Advisory Board, will result in enhanced gifts and sponsorships for our programs.

b) The Learning-Centered University

CSUN faculty and staff have developed pedagogies and learning objectives that take into account the different ways and paces by which students learn, as well as the different media and formats that suit different disciplines and levels of instruction. Recently, we have especially encouraged the replacement of seat time—hours as a measure of learning—with indices and supplementary experiences which allow students to proceed faster, if they can. Record the major ways in which the college has implemented—and will implement—several principles of a learning-centered and/or innovative university. Indicate, too, the extent to which funds have been redeployed to these ends.

The brief list below highlights College programs and areas where learner-centered activities are progressing.

- 1) Continued assessment and enhanced use of results to inform program improvements and learner-centered outcomes.

- 2) Innovative use of large lecture hall sections of core classes. Support of TAs is essential in maintaining the appropriate level of interaction with students and the ability to assign “learner-centered” assignments.
 - 3) Longitudinal assessment of student interests and needs to support “learner-centered” concepts. In order to focus on the students, we need to know more about them in order to implement useful learning strategies. This includes both input and output information. Ongoing assessment activities could include validity test on BUS 302L exams as well as core class impact on performance in our capstone courses (BUS 497A and 497B).
 - 4) Enhance and expand critical experiential learning activities (BUS 491, 497A, 497B), our Internship courses 498 or 494 series, and our graduate field studies program.
 - 5) Expand and integrate department and OSSA advisement activities. This includes some faculty reassignment to work with OSSA to subsequently train faculty colleagues in the departments.
 - 6) Support learner-centered concepts in the College by establishing appropriate student/staff ratios.
- c) **Research and Creative Activity**
Colleges and other units should report initiatives that will: (1) “incentivize” research, (2) require matches, in-kind support, or enhancements to facilities, (3) respond to regional needs, (4) revamp the delivery of the curriculum and/or the involvement of students as research/creative apprentices, and (5) or require reforms in RPT that, for instance, clarify the standards for early promotion and specify how alternatives to publication will be appraised. (6) Pay special attention to opportunities, through grants and contracts, to enhance the General Fund support of units and the total compensation of faculty.
- d) **On-Going Programs**
What changes do you anticipate? In particular, how will change to existing programs support growth and quality improvement? How will the proposed change be supported: with new and/or repurposed resources? Will it entail experiential learning, reduce seat time, reinforce GE, and/or respond to regional needs or accreditation reviews? Will it reflect an entrepreneurial direction to enhance General Fund and total compensation?

Increase or improve classroom activities involving experiential learning. This initiative supports the experiential learning plans of various departments, including case study analysis (BLAW, SOM), simulations (MGT), service learning (MKT, IS), and consulting projects (MKT, MBA). A continuing high priority involves our students in hands-on experience providing consulting services to business through such courses as BUS 491 (Small Business Consulting) and GBUS 691 (Small Business Consulting, a culminating experience class for our MBA students).

3. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Describe how your unit will contribute to the CSUN effort to engage, retain, stimulate, and graduate its students. Specifically, concentrate on plans to improve first to second year retention, reach out to K-12 pupils and teachers, make advising more consistent in practice and policy, and improve the support structures for students in courses with high failure rates. Finally, if pertinent, describe plans to mentor and channel undergraduates into post-baccalaureate study.

Advisement in the College of Business and Economics has been identified through assessment and other inputs as requiring improvement. The Office of Student Services & Advisement (OSSA) has implemented several new procedures that have assisted in this area, but more can be accomplished. We propose to develop the following programs that will further help with the improvement and satisfaction of advisement and, in turn, assist in increasing retention and graduate rates.

1) A Developmental Advisement Program

- A more flexible scheduling format for advisement has been phased in. A new process for screening advisement appointments for prescriptive and developmental advisement needs will continue to inform the scheduling process. Students with apparent developmental advisement needs, whether EOP or not, are afforded an opportunity for longer and more intense advisement meetings. Likewise, the more common prescriptive needs for advisement are handled by the more efficient and shorter drop-in advisement process.
- The College participated in the new CSUN-wide “Preview Day” on Saturday, Oct. 20th. This event provides information for potential freshman and transfer students before they even apply. This year we will work on improving our materials for this event next year.

2) Mentor Program for Freshmen: The University EOP office and our OSSA office in COBAE have developed a proposal for College approval.

3) Faculty Involvement

- Members of the faculty will continue to advise probationary students.
- In subsequent years probationary student advisement will shift to OSSA while upper division program advisement (after the major is declared) will move to the departments.
- Members of the faculty provide mentoring through internships. The Department of Marketing has added a required internship to its curriculum. This program is being rolled out this year. The Department of Management already requires internships of its majors. The College Internship Office will increase its role in finding and qualifying internships for students.

Various departments in the College are involved in K-12 outreach programs, efforts to deal with high failure rate classes, and efforts to mentor students for graduate school.

4. SHARED VALUES

Discuss how proposed initiatives reflect the shared values of the university and your college’s core values. What philosophy—what thread—ties together these efforts? Indicate how they respond to assessment reports.

The College overlays three themes that together express a clear emphasis (high quality education) and the critical support mechanisms (faculty development and community partnerships) needed to address this priority. Our primary vehicle for delivering high quality education is active management of our programs and their outcomes, providing appropriate student support opportunities through effective advisement, mentoring and job placement support through internships. The College acknowledges that a professionally engaged and intellectually productive faculty is essential to delivery of high quality programs. The College encourages and supports the ongoing development of our faculty.

The College of Business and Economics believes that partnerships with the community are a vital activity. These partnerships offer our students experiential learning opportunities that distinguish our programs. Further, the community recognizes our faculty for the expertise brought to the community. Specifically,

we operate a number of centers and programs that connect faculty and students with local residents, organizations, and businesses:

1) The ***Wells Fargo Center for Small Business and Entrepreneurship*** involves students, under the direction of faculty, to provide project work and consulting services to the University, organizations and businesses. The Center has increased its engagement with the community and the number of applications for consulting from small business has increased more than ten-fold over the past year.

2) The ***Colmer Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program*** where students get community service learning opportunities by providing tax information and income tax preparation services to the local community at no charge. In the previous year, VITA involved over 200 students and served over 1,600 clients.

3) The new ***Bookstein Institute for Higher Education in Taxation***, which as part of their activities will provide a clinic for low-income individuals with tax controversies.

4) The ***Center for Management and Organizational Development (MOD)*** provides customized research and program design for regional organizations. In the previous academic year MOD has taken on a number of new projects along with continuation of ongoing activities. New projects have included the facilitation of First Five California's strategic planning process and a long-term organization change project for the State of California Legislative Counsel Bureau. MOD continues to provide administrative and academic support for the Los Angeles County Learning Academy.

5) The ***San Fernando Valley Economic Research Center and the Center for Real Estate***, partner with the community for an annual economic summit each spring, the last one drawing in excess of 500 attendees.

The College is also working to increase the connection between students, businesses, and the University through a number of activities.