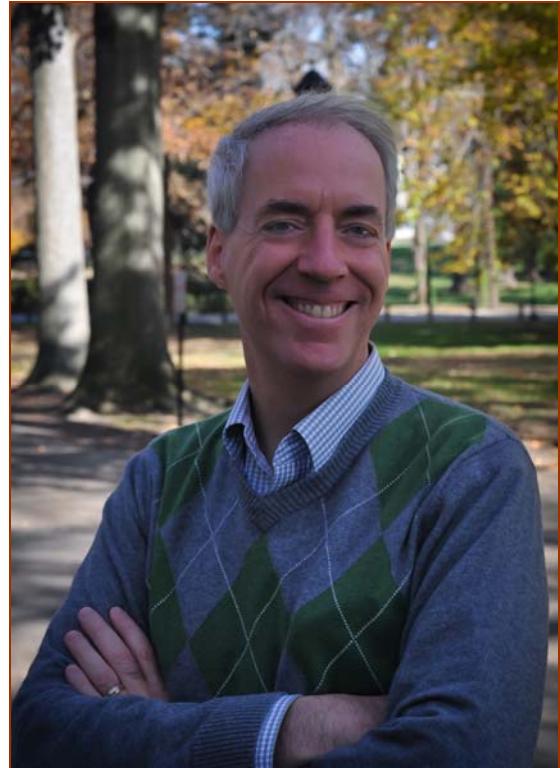


Ken O'Donnell biography

revised September, 2012

diffusionoflight.wordpress.com



Ken O'Donnell works in Academic Affairs at the Office of the Chancellor of the California State University.

The CSU is the world's largest public system of four-year universities, enrolling over 400,000 students on 23 campuses around the state. Situated between the open-enrollment community colleges and the selective UC system of research universities, the CSU is the state's engine of economic growth and upward mobility, making high-quality education affordable and accessible. Many of its students are underrepresented minorities, economically disadvantaged, or the first in their families to attend college. 60% of each graduating class transfers in from somewhere else.

In this context Ken works on statewide curriculum, with a focus on student engagement and success and the state's shared coursework in general education. All students take GE, regardless of their major or college of origin. This learning often comes early in their path to degree, and sets the pace for the rest of their time in college.

In 2008 he was named by the Executive Vice Chancellor as state liaison to the AAC&U's national project *Give Students a Compass*, which seeks to infuse high-impact educational practice into the lower-division college curriculum. In 2010 he was appointed to the NASH/EdTrust campaign *Access to Success*, a national effort to raise graduation rates and reduce achievement gaps. In 2011 his portfolio was expanded to include implementation of a new law streamlining transfer in popular majors.

In 2012 Ken was asked to create a new department in the Office of the Chancellor, leading system office work around Student Engagement and Academic Initiatives & Partnerships. His day to day work is with faculty and administrators throughout the California State University, with a professional interest in ePortfolios, learning outcomes assessment, and engaging, student-focused pedagogy and curriculum. He has addressed numerous conferences and workshops around the country on general education, and the role of public state systems in educational reform.

For ten years before coming to the CSU Ken was a member of the screenwriting faculty and an assistant dean at the film school at Chapman University. He and his wife Cyndi live in Southern California.