NOTE: This is a working DRAFT document developed for the purposes of campus
dialog during the winter quarter of 2009. Throughout this phase of the development, it is
anticipated that the plan will be revised after comments and feedback are received.
During spring 2009, the plan will be finalized and move through approval and adoption.
Implementation would begin fall 2009.

CAL POLY STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2014

PREAMBLE

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PREAMBLE
This Cal Poly Strategic Plan follows more than two years of planning efforts on campus including the CSU system-wide Access To Excellence strategic plan, a revised Mission statement, adoption of University Learning Objectives, study by five working groups on cross-cutting issues, and more recently, preparation for a forthcoming WASC accreditation visit. In parallel, colleges have developed strategic plans. As described in the Supporting Materials section at the end of the Plan, these activities have extensively involved faculty and staff to produce very many recommendations and these formed the foundation for the development of this Plan. Drawing on the outcomes of these preparation activities, this draft plan was developed for the campus dialog phase. As comments and input are received through the website and open forums, the draft will be regularly updated. In parallel, there will also be dialog with our external partners about the Plan. During spring 2009, the plan will be finalized and move through approval and adoption. Implementation would begin fall 2009.

The context for higher education is rapidly changing and presents several challenges. However, Cal Poly has several sustainable competitive advantages – including its many nationally renowned signature programs – that will allow Cal Poly to remain successful and significantly contribute to the resurgence of California and its citizens in the years immediately ahead. The Plan identifies seven strategic goals and associated objectives. In addition, the Plan presents appropriate metrics, and a monitoring and alignment process, to ensure that the goals of the Plan will be achieved.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plan Development
This Cal Poly Strategic Plan follows more than two years of planning activity on campus that includes the CSU system-wide Access To Excellence strategic plan, a revised Mission statement, adoption of University Learning Objectives, study by five working groups on cross-cutting issues, and more recently, preparation for a forthcoming WASC accreditation visit. In parallel, colleges have developed strategic plans. This draft plan has been developed for the on-campus and Cal Poly partner dialog phase. During spring 2009, the plan will be finalized and move through approval and adoption. Implementation would begin fall 2009.

Mission
Cal Poly fosters teaching, scholarship, and service in a learn-by-doing environment where students and faculty are partners in discovery. As a polytechnic university, Cal Poly promotes the application of theory to practice. As a comprehensive institution, Cal Poly provides a balanced education in the arts, sciences, and technology, while encouraging cross-disciplinary and co-curricular experiences. As an academic community, Cal Poly values free inquiry, cultural and intellectual diversity, mutual respect, civic engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

Context
The context for higher education is rapidly changing and presents several challenges, including increased global competitiveness and interdependence, shifts in education “delivery” methods, the internationalization of many universities, increasing accountability for demonstrated success, and sustainable funding of public universities. Meanwhile, universities have concerns about the college-readiness of P12 students, and Cal Poly is particularly concerned about their preparation in the “STEM” (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and other signature areas that are at the heart of many of our programs.

Competitive Advantages
Cal Poly has several advantages that will allow it to remain successful. The faculty is of excellent quality, dedicated to the instructional mission and with a strong learn-by-doing focus. Cal Poly attracts high quality, well-prepared students, and its graduates are in high demand by employers. Cal Poly alumni are successful, loyal and committed to the success of the institution. Cal Poly has a high ranking and is recognized for its very strong undergraduate focus, Learn-By-Doing pedagogy, polytechnic breadth and a unique mix of many nationally ranked technology-oriented signature programs. Cal Poly can contribute significantly to providing and developing human resources critical for the future economic development of California.

Primary Strategic Goals
PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS: Cal Poly graduates will be prepared for full and enriching lives, ready for entry into their chosen careers or advanced study, and prepared to become leaders in their fields.
SECURE INSTITUTIONAL FUNDING: Cal Poly will have long-term, stable, and sustainable resources strategically allocated to achieve the unique polytechnic Mission and Vision of the University and the Goals of this plan.

BE THE 21st CENTURY POLYTECHNIC: Cal Poly will be the Polytechnic University for the needs of the 21st Century with an integrated and balanced education in the arts, sciences, technology and our signature disciplines, a Learn-By-Doing approach, and applied interdisciplinary research.

INVEST IN FACULTY AND STAFF EXCELLENCE: Cal Poly will develop and support faculty and staff members in attaining excellence and achieving recognition as leaders and innovators in their fields.

BUILD AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY: Cal Poly will build a diverse community characterized by mutual respect for different life experiences and perspectives, and a shared sense of belonging, in support of academic excellence and student success.

LEAD IN SUSTAINABILITY: Cal Poly will lead in sustainability through the educational preparation of our graduates, the research and scholarly contributions of our faculty, and the practices used throughout the University.

ENGAGE EXTERNAL PARTNERS: Cal Poly will be an internationally recognized University, focused to help meet the future needs of California in a global environment, reinforced by strong and enduring relationships with a broad variety of engaged external partners.

Success Metrics, Progress Monitoring, Institutional Alignment
Success metrics will be developed at the University level, and augmented at the College, Department and unit levels. Monitoring of progress will be continuing and reported on a quarterly basis. Each college, and each administrative and support unit will review their strategic and other operational plans and develop implementation action plans to align with this institutional strategic plan. Action plans will include reviews of programs, processes, policies and procedures for effectiveness, efficiency, consistency and alignment. Conflicts will be resolved on the basis of alignment with the institutional goals and corresponding objectives. Action plans will include timelines and responsibilities and an assessment of the budgetary and other resource impacts.

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MISSION
Cal Poly fosters teaching, scholarship, and service in a learn-by-doing environment where students and faculty are partners in discovery. As a polytechnic university, Cal Poly promotes the application of theory to practice. As a comprehensive institution, Cal Poly provides a balanced education in the arts, sciences, and technology, while encouraging cross-disciplinary and co-curricular experiences. As an academic community, Cal Poly values free inquiry, cultural and intellectual diversity, mutual respect, civic engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

VISION
Cal Poly will be the premier polytechnic university, rooted in its technological disciplines, dedicated to the application of knowledge, and committed to educational innovation. It will provide the highest quality education, and conduct research, scholarship, and creative activity in concert with the California State University mission. Respect for individuals, their diversity, and their idea will be the cornerstones of the Cal Poly community. A balance of theory and practice in our learn-by-doing pedagogy is the curricular foundation.

POSITION
California Polytechnic State University is a nationally renowned institution dedicated to educating students to be technologically literate graduates. It is a vibrant community for learning and discovery where the arts, sciences, and technology intersect. Its graduates are prepared to be leaders in agriculture, architecture, the arts, business, education engineering, and the sciences.

VALUES
Our hallmark learn-by-doing is the foundation for our undergraduate and graduate education. Cal Poly embraces the pursuit of learning outcomes that prepare graduates for careers and successful lives. Our graduates are proficient in technology, understand its application to culture and society, and aspire to become wise professional and civic leaders. Cal Poly embraces the teacher-scholar model of teaching excellence and substantive engagement in scholarly pursuits.

CONTEXT
It is clear that during the past decade, there have been many substantial changes in the context that will significantly affect higher education. Increased global competitiveness and interdependence in the world economy, shifts in education “delivery” methods and the internationalization of many universities, increasing accountability for demonstrated success and sustained state funding of public universities are all significant challenges particularly at the time of developing this current strategic plan. The US and California economies need broadly educated graduates with a comprehensive set of skills preparing them for these new challenges. Meanwhile, universities have concerns about the college-readiness of P12 students, and Cal Poly is particularly concerned about their preparation
in the “STEM” (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and other signature areas that are at the heart of many of our programs. Nevertheless, the changing context also provides opportunities to develop new programs in emerging areas and in professions that are increasing their life-long requirements for continued licensure.

**PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS**

This strategic plan has been developed with the assumptions that follow.

- The “STEM” disciplines science, technology, engineering and mathematics will remain of critical importance to the California and US economies.
- Cal Poly will retain its polytechnic identity with the STEM disciplines remaining central to Cal Poly.
- Cal Poly will remain a nationally renowned and highly ranked institution, viewed as one of the leading institutions within the California State University system and a peer of many of the institutions within the University of California system.
- Cal Poly will remain recognized and valued for its Learn-By-Doing pedagogy.
- Demand for admission to Cal Poly by high quality and properly prepared students will continue to grow and thus Cal Poly must continue to be highly selective within the available institutional capacity.
- A Cal Poly degree will remain highly valued by potential students; employers will continue to value Cal Poly graduates because of their entry-level readiness and long-term potential.
- A Cal Poly education will continue to remain cost-competitive.
- While Cal Poly will continue to be predominantly supported by state funding, sustaining levels of that funding to achieve the unique mission of the institution is an immediate and significant challenge.
- As part of the Access to Excellence strategic plan, the CSU will substantially increase the number of degrees awarded system-wide and Cal Poly will contribute in that goal appropriately.

**SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES**

Cal Poly has a sustained and growing applicant pool of high quality, well-prepared students. Graduates are considered “market-ready” and are in high demand by employers. The Cal Poly faculty is of excellent quality and well-qualified, dedicated to the instructional mission and with a strong learn-by-doing focus. Cal Poly alumni are successful, loyal and committed to the success of the institution.
Cal Poly has a high ranking and is recognized for its very strong undergraduate focus, Learn-By-Doing pedagogy, polytechnic breadth, and is perceived as one of the best institutions in the CSU system and a peer of a number of UC institutions. Indeed, Cal Poly is often cited as a “peer” or “aspiration peer” by a number of master’s-level, comprehensive universities. Three of Cal Poly’s colleges – the Colleges of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, of Architecture and Environmental Design, and of Engineering – are among the largest in the nation. Several Cal Poly programs are nationally ranked and many are nationally recognized.

Cal Poly has extensive land holdings and has several new buildings developed under the current Master Plan. Cal Poly is state-funded and receives income from the Cal Poly Plan and College-based fees.

The unique mix of the Cal Poly programs, including the STEM disciplines and our other signature disciplines, in addition to the increasing life-long learning requirements for many of the professions in these disciplinary areas positions Cal Poly to contribute significantly to providing and developing human resources critical for the economic development of California.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

PRIMARY STRATEGIC GOALS

PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS:
Cal Poly graduates will be prepared for full and enriching lives, ready for entry into their chosen careers or advanced study, and prepared to become leaders in their fields.

SECURE INSTITUTIONAL FUNDING:
Cal Poly will have long-term, stable, and sustainable resources strategically allocated to achieve the unique polytechnic Mission and Vision of the University and the Goals of this plan.

BE THE 21st CENTURY POLYTECHNIC:
Cal Poly will be the Polytechnic University for the needs of the 21st Century with an integrated and balanced education in the arts, sciences, technology and our signature disciplines, a Learn-By-Doing approach, and applied interdisciplinary research.

INVEST IN FACULTY AND STAFF EXCELLENCE:
Cal Poly will develop and support faculty and staff members in attaining excellence and achieving recognition as leaders and innovators in their fields.

BUILD AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY:
Cal Poly will build a diverse community characterized by mutual respect for different life experiences and perspectives, and a shared sense of belonging, in support of academic excellence and student success.

LEAD IN SUSTAINABILITY:
Cal Poly will lead in sustainability through the educational preparation of our graduates, the research and scholarly contributions of our faculty, and the practices used throughout the University.

ENGAGE EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Cal Poly will be an internationally recognized University, focused to help meet the future needs of California in a global environment, reinforced by strong and enduring relationships with a broad variety of engaged external partners.
PRIMARY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS:

Cal Poly graduates will be prepared for full and enriching lives, ready for entry into their chosen careers or advanced study, and prepared to become leaders in their fields.

Rationale: The fundamental purpose and expectations of a Cal Poly education is to prepare graduates for full and enriching lives as individuals, being ready to pursue further study or enter chosen careers, and prepared to become leaders. Cal Poly will need to align all units and individuals with these primary outcomes expected of our programs. Cal Poly is fortunate to attract and receive highly qualified and high achieving students but retention and graduation statistics appear lower than would be expected of our entering classes or compared to peer institutions. Consistent with this strategic goal, Cal Poly needs to bring more students to graduation and in a shorter time than currently.

Objective 1: Cal Poly graduates will meet the University Learning Objectives as well as the Program Learning Objectives specific to their majors and this Strategic Goal.

Objective 2: Cal Poly will enhance progress to degree and improve graduation rates of all students to match expectations based on the academic preparedness and goals of entering students, helping prepare under-served students and reduce achievement gaps.

Objective 3: Cal Poly will become a more integrated institution in which all elements – programs, departments, offices and individuals – are better aligned to improve student success.

Objective 4: Cal Poly as a residential campus will continue to improve the quality of its living and learning environments to enhance the university experience for all students.

Objective 5: Cal Poly will enrich and broaden the educational experience of each student by developing opportunities in interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, international, project-based, co-curricular, service learning and other contexts.

Objective 6: Cal Poly will expand and increase funding sources to support scholarships and other financial support for students.

Objective 7: Cal Poly will work to expand and increase P12 student interest in, and their preparation and readiness for, the unique education we provide in critical areas of State need in STEM and our other signature programs.

Objective 8: Cal Poly will improve student learning by using evidence-based decision making at all levels.
SECURE INSTITUTIONAL FUNDING:

Cal Poly will have long-term, stable, and sustainable resources strategically allocated to achieve the unique polytechnic Mission and Vision of the University and the Goals of this plan.

Rationale: Cal Poly, throughout its history and consistent with its continuing mission, has focused on providing a concentration of technologically-focused and career-oriented disciplines including agriculture, sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics. Indeed, the Cal Poly mix and emphasis of majors is unique within the CSU system and unusual among universities in general. Meanwhile, demand for these Cal Poly programs remains extremely strong and growing, admission is highly competitive, and Cal Poly is highly selective. In addition, Cal Poly graduates are highly valued by employers. However, most of the programs that Cal Poly offers are more costly to operate than typical university programs. Thus, Cal Poly requires continuing long-term investments and sustained resources to provide the necessary specialized faculty, the associated support and service functions and operate the physical infrastructure appropriate for a polytechnic comprehensive master’s-level university. Nevertheless, the revenues that Cal Poly receives for its majors are below comparable national data for those corresponding majors. Cal Poly will need to improve the revenue stream while improving efficiencies and effectiveness.

Objective 1: Cal Poly will seek a new funding model better aligned with the real costs of achieving our unique polytechnic mission, critical role and contributions to the California economy, and consistent with being a leading comprehensive master’s-level institution with a growing applied research component.

Objective 2: Cal Poly will review internal policies, procedures and processes, and improve and simplify those that can increase effectiveness, reduce costs, remove inefficiencies and improve alignment with the Goals of this strategic plan.

Objective 3: Cal Poly will align internal budget structures, mechanisms and allocations of all resources with the Mission and the Goals of this strategic plan.

Objective 4: Cal Poly will adopt appropriate cost-effective technologies that enhance student success, and improve instruction and support services.

Objective 5: Cal Poly will expand existing and develop new revenue from multiple sources for academic programs, operations, and capital improvements.

Objective 6: Cal Poly will update and implement the Master Plan.

Objective 7: Cal Poly will review and improve policies and procedures about approval of new programs and initiatives to ensure consideration of the necessary resources for personnel, operations and facilities.
BE THE 21st CENTURY POLYTECHNIC:

*Cal Poly will be the Polytechnic University for the needs of the 21st Century with an integrated and balanced education in the arts, sciences, technology and our signature disciplines, a Learn-By-Doing approach, and applied interdisciplinary research.*

**Rationale:** Cal Poly has continually evolved and matured as an institution of higher education. However, the challenges facing our graduates in the future will require them to have a broader education than previously. Accordingly, our programs need to provide appropriate breadth while ensuring sufficient depth. Thus, there needs to be better and balanced integration of the elements of all Cal Poly programs including general education and the STEM foundation of most programs. Expanding interdisciplinary opportunities and approaches, and increasing applied research will help diversify and enrich Cal Poly and its graduates.

**Objective 1:** Cal Poly will retain and build upon its core polytechnic identity to increase its impact as a leading academic university in agricultural, technologically-based and other signature disciplines.

**Objective 2:** All Cal Poly graduates will have sufficient breadth and depth in mathematics, science and technology to understand how developments in science and technology impact individual, cultural, and social change in the 21st century.

**Objective 3:** All Cal Poly graduates will have sufficient breadth and depth in the arts, humanities and social sciences to facilitate their development as broadly educated individuals.

**Objective 4:** All Cal Poly graduates will develop communication skills, global perspectives, creativity and critical thinking necessary for enriching lives and successful careers.

**Objective 5:** All Cal Poly graduates will be able to effectively use information technology in their disciplines and as lifelong learners.

**Objective 6:** Cal Poly will develop new interdisciplinary Master’s degree, five-year professional Master’s degree, and applied research programs that build on our unique strengths and infrastructure, take advantage of external opportunities, enhance and support our undergraduate programs, and subject to resource constraints.
INVEST IN FACULTY AND STAFF EXCELLENCE:

Cal Poly will develop and support faculty and staff members in attaining excellence and achieving recognition as leaders and innovators in their fields.

Rationale: Members of faculty are the primary individuals who deliver instruction, create and develop courses, and collectively design academic programs. Thus, the quality of the faculty is a principal factor affecting the quality of the education provided by the university. Accordingly, building and retaining a faculty is the primary long-term investment of a university. Well-qualified faculty must be successfully recruited in an increasingly competitive environment. Thereafter, faculty should be developed as life-long learners, and supported in their role as teachers and scholars with opportunities for continued growth throughout their careers. Furthermore, a high quality staff is essential support to enabling faculty in their roles, and to students in their progress toward their degrees and in their extra-curricular activities. A high quality staff needs to be continually developed as individuals and as members of their respective support teams.

Objective 1: Cal Poly will provide appropriate resources and incentives for faculty to pursue ongoing intellectual growth and engagement in and beyond their fields.

Objective 2: Cal Poly will develop a diverse community of teacher-scholars, valuing multicultural and international experience as well as multilingual fluency, and interdisciplinary activities.

Objective 3: Cal Poly will continue to develop state-of-the-art teaching methodologies and the corresponding infrastructure and technologies.

Objective 4: Cal Poly will broaden opportunities for interdisciplinary programs and facilitate collaboration across colleges and departments.

Objective 5: Cal Poly will develop new graduate programs in selected areas and will facilitate expansion of faculty applied research.

Objective 6: Cal Poly will continue to recruit and retain high quality support staff to further the University Mission.

Objective 7: Cal Poly will promote appropriate professional development of support staff.
BUILD AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY:

Cal Poly will build a diverse community characterized by mutual respect for different life experiences and perspectives, and a shared sense of belonging, in support of academic excellence and student success.

Rationale: For many students, the university is their first experience outside of their own community and culture. Later, as graduates, they enter a much broader, diverse, international and global environment. The university provides a bridge between those different experiences, expanding the perspectives of students and preparing them for a broader world than they had known. Mutual respect and a shared sense of belonging by everyone in a diverse community support the academic excellence of all our students and strengthen the future success of all our graduates.

Objective 1: Cal Poly will implement the Inclusive Excellence model developed by Association of American Colleges and Universities, drawing on best practices used by other participating universities.

Objective 2: Cal Poly will translate into measurable learning outcomes and integrate into all programs, the Diversity Learning Objectives, assess progress toward achieving these outcomes, and use the assessment results on a continuing basis to achieve improvements.

Objective 3: Cal Poly will intensify its efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty and staff.

Objective 4: Cal Poly will intensify its efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse student body and to make all students successful.

Objective 5: Cal Poly will identify and address variations in academic performance among students with different demographic characteristics.

Objective 6: Cal Poly will develop and implement a continuous improvement plan to enhance the campus climate that will promote mutual respect and increase a sense of belonging and safety, including professional development and training plans for faculty and staff for this Goal.
LEAD IN SUSTAINABILITY:
Cal Poly will lead in sustainability through the educational preparation of our graduates, the research and scholarly contributions of our faculty, and the practices used throughout the University.

Rationale: Sustainability is one of the primary global challenges. Cal Poly can be an important contributor to improving sustainability because of our considerable program strengths in the agricultural, architectural, business, science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines. Cal Poly can prepare graduates, many with considerable depth of expertise, for this challenge. In addition, Cal Poly faculty expertise, applied research and scholarship in sustainability can be further focused and contribute in this area. Building on this expertise and working with external partners as appropriate, Cal Poly can become a leader by developing and adopting innovative practices throughout the institution.

Objective 1: Cal Poly will develop Sustainability Learning Objectives.

Objective 2: All Cal Poly graduates will meet Sustainability Learning Objectives and attain “literacy” in sustainability sufficient to understand the major contemporary environmental issues facing our local communities and the global society.

Objective 3: Cal Poly graduates in several majors will be prepared for sustainability-focused careers by having the broad range of skills and abilities with the depth needed to address the causes, mechanisms, and solutions to problems of sustainability.

Objective 4: Cal Poly will support, promote and advance applied research and scholarship by faculty, staff and students that addresses sustainability problems.

Objective 5: Cal Poly will carefully steward all campus resources, and become a leader by developing and adopting innovative sustainable practices throughout the University, and working with our external partners.
ENGAGE EXTERNAL PARTNERS:

*Cal Poly will be an internationally recognized University, focused to help meet the future needs of California in a global environment, reinforced by strong and enduring relationships with a broad variety of engaged external partners.*

**Rationale:** Cal Poly has a strong reputation as one of the best comprehensive universities in the west and is a well-respected university of the CSU system. Many of its programs are of national standing. Indeed, Cal Poly appears on “peer institutions” lists of several comprehensive, master’s level institutions. Employers continue to seek out and value Cal Poly graduates for their excellent preparation and long-term potential as employees. Nevertheless, as the environment becomes more competitive, and as Cal Poly aspires to broaden graduate programs and applied research in strategic areas, stronger relationships will be needed with our existing external partners, and new relationships need to be developed. Our partners will help Cal Poly ensure continuing quality, and its preeminence and leading position.

**Objective 1:** Cal Poly will strengthen ties to industries, businesses, public agencies, NGOs and employers to provide a greater range of opportunities for students to learn about and experience the challenges and opportunities of the workplace while attending university, and for faculty to develop opportunities for collaborative applied research.

**Objective 2:** Cal Poly will facilitate collaboration with other leading and complementary educational institutions, including international partners, as pathways to innovative undergraduate and graduate educational programs and applied research opportunities.

**Objective 3:** Cal Poly will expand delivery of post-baccalaureate education directly to employees at major companies, agencies, and industry groups throughout California and in professional practice areas with higher levels of educational requirements.

**Objective 4:** Cal Poly will reach out to California schools, Community Colleges, parents and students to inform them about STEM and other career opportunities and State needs, and the unique education Cal Poly can provide.

**Objective 5:** Cal Poly will enhance our engagement by developing a clear focused institutional “brand”, building on, refining and integrating all aspects of our existing and aspirational identity, and then implement throughout the University and its communications.

**Objective 6:** Cal Poly will increase support from external partners for the financial and other resource needs of the University.

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METRICS AND MONITORING

SUCCESS METRICS AND MONITORING PROCESSES
Success metrics will be developed at the University level, and augmented at the College, Department and unit levels. Monitoring of progress will be continuing and reported on a quarterly basis. A peer institution set is being developed to be used for benchmarking against the selected metrics. The peer set will be a representative sample with each institution being similar in one or more of the following categories: program mix, student quality, enrollment/institutional size, Carnegie category, US News quartile, geographical distribution, and student diversity.

ALIGNMENT WITH COLLEGE AND UNIT PLANS
Each college, and each administrative and support unit will review their strategic and other operational plans and develop implementation action plans to align with this institutional strategic plan. Action plans will include reviews of programs, processes, policies and procedures for effectiveness, efficiency, consistency and alignment. Conflicts will be resolved on the basis of alignment with the institutional goals and corresponding objectives. Action plans will include timelines and responsibilities and an assessment of the budgetary and other resource impacts.


STRATEGIC PLAN PREPARATION

This section describes the many preparation activities prior to drafting this plan. Strategic planning preparation has been extensive and inclusive and it is from the results of these and other activities that this new Cal Poly Strategic Plan has been developed. The previous Strategic Plan was completed in 1995. The current cycle of strategic planning has been active since 2006. Cal Poly participated in the 2-year CSU system-wide Access to Excellence (ATE) planning. In addition, each College has developed or is developing a strategic plan. Meanwhile, Cal Poly developed and adopted seven University Learning Objectives. More recently, five working groups were charged to explore five specific “cross-cutting” campus-wide issues. In addition, preparation for the WASC accreditation has included analyzing the institution on the basis of four themes and these have a strong link to strategic planning. Summarized below are the key themes arising from these several activities.

Previous Strategic Plan (1995)

The previous Cal Poly Strategic Plan identified over 50 goals under the following eight groupings:

- Academic Programs
- Faculty Scholarship
- Staff Professional Growth and Achievement
- Student Satisfaction
- Diversity
- Governance and Collegiality
- Institutional Size
- University Relations and Image

Quantitative indicators for the goals were not developed. In addition, many of the goals represented statements of ongoing practices rather than oriented to a particular point in time.

Access To Excellence (ATE)

The ATE strategic planning process continued from September 2006 through May 2008 and involved each of the 23 member CSU institutions including Cal Poly. CSU identified six “domains” to shape the planning and provide consistency across the system:

- Assuring Access
- Connecting to P-12 Schools and Community Colleges
- Fulfilling Commitments to Multiple Stakeholders
- Ensuring Success in Student Learning
- Faculty/Staff Excellence to Promote Student Success
- Now and in the Future; Campus/System Identity

Accordingly, Cal Poly charged each college to respond to the six domains using a consistent structure, and an inclusive, collaborative, and consultative process. While faculty, staff and students were participants in all college groups, separate domain
discussions were also completed by student government leaders and by the Academic Senate. Six steering committees were formed to synthesize all the campus inputs. All of these activities culminated in a campus-wide, all-day workshop February 27, 2007 to select the highest priority domain propositions selected from the college-level and other group recommendations.

This process resulted in 62 recommended actions associated with the six domains from which the following key priorities were included in the final March 2007 Access To Excellence Cal Poly Summary Report:

- **Outreach and Awareness** –
  - Review efforts to reach out to P-12 students and their parents
  - Find ways to encourage more students to secure the requisite preparation, particularly first-generation students

- **Science and Mathematics Education** –
  - Continue to expand efforts to prepare and support the ongoing professional development of science and math teachers

- **Programs and Curricula** –
  - Assess trends in the external environment for the programs we offer, their curricula, and methods by which they are delivered

- **Liberal Education** –
  - Prepare students for successful careers and rich lives by integrating programs of study so that communications skills, global perspectives, creativity, and critical thinking are all developed

- **Student Success and Educational Accountability** –
  - Assess our effectiveness in fostering student success
  - Ensure relevance and quality of learning by focusing on learning outcomes and assessment and applying results of assessment to improve programs
  - Increase rates of retention
  - Minimize time-to-degree
  - Implement enhanced advising
  - Integrate and streamline curricula
  - Preserve and expand opportunities for hands-on learning including project-based learning

- **Faculty/Staff Excellence** –
  - Provide faculty with
    - Opportunities and resources to work at the frontiers of their fields
    - State-of-the-art teaching technologies
    - Adequate compensation
    - Robust graduate programs
    - Professional and skilled support staff

- **Campus Learning Environment** –
  - Review the Master Plan and academic resource plans to ensure they are responsive to needs including library resources, information and teaching technologies capability, advanced laboratories and advanced classrooms

- **Resources Strategies** –
  - Pursue multiple revenue streams including contributions from
• The State
• Individual and corporate donors
• Students and parents
  ▪ Update our advancement priorities, laying the foundation for a new comprehensive campaign

College Strategic Plans
At the time of preparation of this current plan, all Colleges had Strategic Plans completed or advanced stages of development and approval and copies are available through the respective colleges and websites. It is anticipated that many of the college plans will be reviewed and modified if necessary as part of the completion of the University Strategic Plan.

University Learning Objectives
The following seven University Learning Objectives were adopted and state that,

“All students who complete an undergraduate or graduate program at Cal Poly should be able to:
- Think critically and creatively
- Communicate effectively
- Demonstrate expertise in a scholarly discipline and understand that discipline in relation to the larger world of the arts, sciences, and technology
- Work productively as individuals and in groups
- Use their knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society
- Make reasoned decisions based on an understanding of ethics, a respect for diversity, and an awareness of issues related to sustainability
- Engage in lifelong learning”

Five Working Groups
Following on from the ATE process and in preparation for the current Cal Poly Strategic Plan, five “Working Groups” were constituted with a membership of a total of 80 faculty and staff drawn from all the colleges and appropriate support units. The groups were charged to explore the following cross-cutting issues:
- Global Perspectives
- Graduate Education
- Information Technology
- Interface Disciplines
- Project-Based Learning

The Working Groups recommended that Cal Poly and the Colleges:

For Global Perspectives:
- Promote the importance of global perspectives and experiences in undergraduate and graduate education through mission statements, learning objectives, and program outcomes
Recognize and reward international activity and accomplishments by faculty and staff, and students
Increase curricula flexibility to include courses with global perspectives, language study, and study abroad
Promote educational opportunities for and increase the number of international students
Encourage and promote international faculty exchanges, and support visiting international scholars and post-doctoral researchers
Value international experience and language fluency in addition to English as desirable faculty recruitment qualifications
Increase support the IEP office as international activities grow
Develop communications technology infrastructure to support international activities

For Graduate Education:
Foster multidisciplinary research collaborations to enable new and innovative “niche” graduate programs
Emphasize collaboration with other leading and complementary educational institutions, including international partners, as pathways to innovative graduate educational experiences related to polytechnic issues
Encourage joint Master’s programs and articulated master’s/doctoral programs
Expand delivery of post-baccalaureate education directly to employees at major polytechnic companies, agencies, and industry groups throughout California
Expand delivery of post-baccalaureate programs in professional practice areas that are moving toward higher levels of educational requirements
Review administrative changes to support growth and expansion of programs in admission, faculty workload credit, tuition waivers, etc

For Information Technology:
Improve data warehouse capabilities to support student success and assessment
Increase and improve the use of technology to support learning
Improve adoption of emerging technologies
Identify and make changes to IT organization to improve IT support for campus
Expand campus use of document imaging systems and provide centralized support of a common approach

For Interface Disciplines:
Reinforce existing mechanisms and programs, changing key restrictions and limitations on programs and faculty
Issue RFPs for new interdisciplinary projects, majors, courses, and other levels of interactivity
Create a clearinghouse for documentation of existing and proposed interface projects, interested faculty and expertise, and assessment tools for success measurement
Use CTL and other campus resources to enhance interdisciplinary faculty expertise and student preparation
Identify “cutting edge” fields for future development of interdisciplinary activity

For Project-Based Learning:
- Define PBL as:
  - an academic effort in which students produce authentic work products that
    arise from behaving as professionals in their chosen disciplines,
  - possibly though not necessarily team-based, and/or multi-disciplinary
- Establish a campus-wide center or clearinghouse to
  - link faculty and students
  - gather, catalog and house curricular materials, student work product,
    assessment tools, best practices, etc.
  - coordinate fund-raising and supervise resource allocation.
- Provide appropriate resources, support and RPT recognition
- Integrate activity across disciplines and throughout the undergraduate curricula
- Secure high levels of buy-in from
  - all sectors and levels of the institution
  - external stakeholders

WASC Preparation
This strategic plan has been developed in parallel with the beginnings of WASC accreditation preparation. The overall theme of the WASC self-study will be, “Our Polytechnic Identity” and working groups are studying this from three contexts, “Integration and Student Learning”, “Learn-By-Doing”, and “Teacher-Scholar Model”.

Sustainability
Creating a sustainable world is the essential challenge and outstanding opportunity of our time. We are living through a confluence of serious and interrelated environmental issues: global climate change, widespread resource depletion, loss of habitat and natural diversity, and strained food supplies – problems that society must recognize, understand and confront. Meeting this challenge requires, foremost, sound science, new technologies, and applied research focused on the causes and solutions. We also must have an educated citizenry who understand the issues and who are involved in the solutions. Cal Poly, as public polytechnic university, is well-positioned to be a leader in these efforts. Cal Poly is a signatory to the Talloires Declaration which articulates the most important responsibilities of institutions of higher education with regard to sustainability. Resource sustainability is closely linked to social and economic systems; thus, the scope of our concerns extends beyond the natural sciences and applied technologies into the realms of economics, finance, public policy and social equity. Sustainability, in this wider sense, closely connects what may first appear to be disparate spheres of inquiry and action.

Cal Poly’s commitments to sustainability in its academic and operational spheres are summarized below:
- **Technical and Scientific Education.** Cal Poly will provide the best, appropriate scientific and technical education focusing on the causes, mechanisms, and solutions to problems of sustainability.

- **Educating for a More General Sustainability “Literacy.”** Sustainability now reaches beyond the “traditional” environmental and scientific fields and crosses a wide range of subjects. Consequently, every Cal Poly student will attain “literacy” in sustainability; this preparation, in turn, will lead to increasing awareness and civic participation.

- **Applied Research.** Applied research undertaken by Cal Poly’s faculty and students will continue lead to innovative approaches to solving sustainability problems.

- **Fostering Student Engagement.** Cal Poly students will be able to effectively promote solutions to sustainability issues in diverse social and cultural contexts.

- **Modeling Sustainable Practices in Operations and Facilities.** Cal Poly will carefully steward our campus resources, and continually strives to be a leader in sustainable practices. Our campus planning, development and operations will demonstrate sustainability whenever feasible and supportive of the University’s primary mission. These practices whenever practical will be accessible to our students and faculty, making sustainability in our operations an integral aspect of the Cal Poly teaching-learning environment. Cal Poly will also serve as a model for the broader community.

**STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

**Writing team**
In Fall 2008, a Writing Team was charged to prepare and edit successive drafts of the Strategic Plan for subsequent input and comment. Membership of the team included Erling Smith, Vice Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Planning, Chair, Dan Howard-Greene, Chief of Staff to President, Sandra Ogren, VP University Advancement, Michael Multari, Asst Director of Planning, Cornel Morton, VP Student Affairs, Tim Kearns, Vice Provost for Information Technology and CIO, David Conn, Vice Provost for Academic Programs & Undergraduate Education, Jim Maraviglia, AVP Admissions, Recruitment, Tom Jones, Dean CAED and Bruno Giberti, Director WASC Preparation. Working from all the documents cited in the Preparation section above the team identified common themes, strategic goals and objectives and developed a draft document with the following seven strategic goals:

- Prepare Our Students for Success
- Secure Institutional Funding
- Be the 21st Century Polytechnic
- Invest in Faculty and Staff Excellence
- Build an Inclusive Community
- Lead in Sustainability
- Engage External Partners

The draft document also included a number of primary objectives associated with goal.
Stakeholder participation
The draft document was distributed for comment during the Winter term 2009 using multiple venues. Campus faculty and staff were emailed along with a link to a website and to the strategic planning discussion/blog site. Comments and suggestions were reviewed by the Writing Team members. In addition, members of the Writing Team met with the following:

- Council of Deans
- Senate Executive Committee
- University Senate
- University committees for
  - WASC preparation
  - Inclusive Excellence
  - Sustainability
- Divisions of
  - Academic Affairs
  - Student Affairs
  - Administration and Finance
  - University Advancement
- Colleges
- Department chairs and heads
- ASI board
- University and College Advisory Board representatives

STRATEGIC PLAN FINALIZATION
In development
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, & THREATS

The following “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats” analysis was developed from individual college-based SWOT analyses.

STRENGTHS
Cal Poly has a sustained and growing applicant pool of high quality, well-prepared students. Graduates are considered “market-ready” and are in high demand by employers. The Cal Poly faculty is of excellent quality and well-qualified, dedicated to the instructional mission and with a strong learn-by-doing focus. Some Cal Poly programs are nationally ranked and many are nationally recognized. Some of the colleges are among the largest in the nation such as CAFES, CAED and CENG. Cal Poly has a high ranking and is recognized for its very strong undergraduate focus, Learn-By-Doing pedagogy, polytechnic breadth, and is perceived as one of the best institutions in the CSU system and a peer of a number of UC institutions. Cal Poly is often cited as a “peer” or “aspiration peer” by a number of master’s-level comprehensive institutions. Cal Poly has several new buildings developed under the current Master Plan and has extensive land holdings. Cal Poly is state-funded and receives income from the Cal Poly Plan and College-based fees. Cal Poly alumni are successful, loyal and committed to the success of the institution.

WEAKNESSES
Although Cal Poly students are of very high quality, the rates of retention, persistence and graduation rates are below that expected. It is conjectured that this underperformance may be due to perceived difficulties of changing majors and delays due to meeting the requirements of the new major. Cal Poly students are required to select a major at application. There is limited ethnic diversity of the students. The Cal Poly faculty has a significant teaching load and this restricts the degree of scholarly and professional development activities achievable. Faculty salaries and start-up packages are perceived as non-competitive while the local cost of living is high. There is limited diversity in the faculty. There appear to be curriculum redundancies. The process to review new programs and resource their implementation appears to be weak. CSU system curriculum requirements particularly in regard to general education are perceived as burdensome. There appear to be difficulties in implementing graduate programs because of the start-up investments and space and other resource requirements and identifying appropriate markets. The internal funding distribution model is perceived as inequitable and an obstacle to inter-college collaborations and developing and operating interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary programs. Many building are aging and becoming obsolete and the technology infrastructure is considered obsolete by many.

 OPPORTUNITIES
The unique mix of Cal Poly’s programs, including the STEM disciplines and our other signature disciplines, positions the institution to contribute significantly in providing important human resources critical for the economic development of California. In addition, the life-long learning requirements are increasing for many of the professions in the disciplinary areas of Cal Poly. Cal Poly has several new and recent hires which along
with potential retirements in the near future will allow for restructuring and the development of new directions and programs. Moving toward the Teacher-Scholar faculty mode would encourage expansion of undergraduate research including summer programs. There is capacity for increased financial partnerships with Cal Poly alumni and other external stakeholders.

**THREATS**

While student demand for Cal Poly is anticipated to increase, California demographic trends indicate a decrease in college-readiness of the future student pool. There is increasing competition from UC institutions for students in the “polytechnic” and STEM areas. There is also increasing competition from out-of-state and on-line non-residential institutions. Meanwhile, the CSU system has committed to increase the number of graduates produced system-wide and this will add to the pressure on Cal Poly. Future state funding at appropriate levels to maintain existing quality is increasingly uncertain particularly during the period of this plan. Future unfunded mandates will exacerbate the financial health of Cal Poly. In addition, increased regulations regarding facilities compliance will add further burden. Increasing accountability at national, state and system levels and the corresponding needs for assessment are perceived as potential threats. The cost of living in the San Luis Obispo region and the relative lack of services in this rural area exacerbate faculty and staff recruitment. Water and other resources are also a constraint.
PEER INSTITUTIONS
A peer institution set is being developed using program mix, student quality, enrollment/institutional size, Carnegie category, US News quartile, geographical distribution, and student diversity to “qualify” institutions as being similar in one or more category and to build a representative sample of institutions. Data from these institutions will be used with the selected metrics described in the Metrics and Monitoring section of this plan.

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* USNews
^ Carnegie: RU/VH = Research University, Very High
+ Agri – Agriculture, Arch – Architecture, Engr – Engineering

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES
[Section in development]

GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

Environmental Scan – is a review of the external situation and factors that might impact but are beyond the control of the institution. In our context this would include for example, trends in student demographics, higher education delivery modes and competition, state budgets, finances and economics.

Goals – the key long-term, continuous activities needed to achieve the vision.
Mission – summarizes the foundational, continuing and enduring core purpose of the institution – who we are and what we do.

Objectives – specific measurable and realistic performance targets related to the strategic goals.

Planning Assumptions – items, areas, activities that are assumed to remain constant or stable during the plan time period.

Planning Horizon – the time period of the Plan.

Position – briefly outlines the future state, the key elements of the Vision statement, set as the achieved “present” state, and also called a Positioning Statement; or alternatively, describes the actual present state of the institution relative to the key elements of the Vision statement.

Strategic Plan – describes where an institution is going and how it is going to get there during a defined time period in a changing context and operating environment. The plan should provide a consistent framework, focus and direction for policies, operations, and decision-making.

Strategy – actions to link institutional strengths to external opportunities, mitigate weaknesses, and protect against threats.

Sustainable Competitive Advantage – those activities that, throughout the duration of the Plan, the institution can continue to do better, more efficiently and/or more effectively than our peer and aspirant institutions – what we do uniquely, what we do well, what we do best, why we are the best.

SWOT – the strengths and weaknesses of the institution, and the opportunities available and threats potentially facing the institution. The strengths and weaknesses are internal and potentially controllable. The opportunities and threats are external and beyond direct control.

Values – represents the continuing and enduring principles used to help guide decision-making – what we stand for and believe in.

Vision – describes the future state of the institution – what we want to be and what we want to do.

END OF DOCUMENT