Dear Parents of New Cal Poly Students:

Enclosed is a letter I recently sent to all freshmen entering Cal Poly’s College of Science & Mathematics. As you can see, I emphasize responsible and safe behavior, studying and learning, and earning a degree in a timely manner. We care deeply about our students at Cal Poly and want them to succeed. We know that success isn’t automatic, and we will assist your student in any way we can. Ultimately, however, learning and academic success are the student's responsibility.

The average GPA of freshmen entering the college is 3.8-3.9, yet most students claim they studied only 3-5 hours per week outside of class in high school. If they double or triple that out-of-class time at Cal Poly, they will be studying independently more than they ever have and feel an understandable but false sense of pride and confidence. In fact, their total learning time in and out of class could be less than 25 hours per week, whereas in high school they were in class 35 hours per week and also studied after school. We want to encourage a much greater commitment.

Some years ago, I developed and initiated Cal Poly’s 25-35 program, which asks students to study 25-35 hours per week. The total time spent learning, including class time, is then equivalent to a 40-50 hour work week.

After implementing the program in the College of Science & Mathematics, the number of new students on academic probation at the end of fall quarter decreased and those on the Dean’s Honor List increased. This commitment requires students to devote some time every weekend to their academics. Those who go home frequently or party excessively often do not reach their academic potential, and some end up on academic probation. Though all Cal Poly students are capable, some of our top incoming freshmen end up on academic probation, while some who begin on the other end of the scale earn a position on the Dean’s Honor List. Academic success is a result of effort.

I ask you to help your student start thinking about academic success at Cal Poly by placing the enclosed 25-35 poster on your refrigerator. I really want our students to get off to a good start, as I know you do, and I thank you for your support in this critical area. My best wishes to your family in this exciting and important transition.

Sincerely,

Philip S. Bailey, Dean
College of Science and Mathematics

Enclosures

P.S. On the back of this letter is a copy of a memo about alcohol use that I provided to our new students.