CAL POLY

Strategic Plan 2019–2024

I am delighted to present to you the Cal Poly Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan brings together many other planning efforts into a single, comprehensive vision of what Cal Poly will be going forward and how we will keep track of our progress.

In the simplest terms, Cal Poly will continue to be an outstanding, comprehensive polytechnic university, grounded in the philosophy of Learn by Doing. Achieving that goal requires the coordinated effort of many people and institutions. The Strategic Plan identifies the big-picture strategies for how we will elicit and coordinate those efforts and harmonizes the many other plans on campus that feed into this overall goal.

I want to remind everyone that the Strategic Plan is and must be a living document. It reflects our current understanding of how to make Cal Poly the best university, workplace and community that it can be. That understanding must change over time as new experience and new information lead to new ideas and insights. At the same time, a document only lives when people breathe life into it by undertaking the work of making the ideas a lived reality. Cal Poly can only become the university this document envisions if everyone in the campus community commits to making it that university. Please join us in making that happen.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone whose hard work has brought the Strategic Plan to fruition!

Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President, Cal Poly

Foundations

The Strategic Plan for Cal Poly is designed to provide direction for the future of the university through 2024.

This plan is grounded in Vision 2022, the Academic Plan for Enrollment and the Master Plan, as well as the university's mission, vision and values.

Mission and Values

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 nation's premier comprehensive polytechnic university, an innovative institution that develops and inspires whole-system thinkers to serve California and to help solve global challenges.

Vision 2022

Introduced to the campus by President Armstrong in May of 2014, Vision 2022 provided the groundwork for the master-plan process and several divisional strategic plans.

The following founding and guiding principles from Vision 2022 function as four dimensions along which strategic decisions will continue to be evaluated:
- Learn by Doing
- Student Success
- Excellence Through Continuous Improvement
- Comprehensive Polytechnic State University

These founding and guiding principles are the basis of the university's strategic plan, as are the vision's six strategic objectives:
- Enhance student success
- Create a vibrant residential campus
- Increase support for the Teacher-Scholar Model
- Create a rich culture of diversity and inclusivity
- Secure the financial future of the university
- Develop a greater culture of transparency, collaboration and accountability

Learn by Doing

Conceived as a Learn by Doing institution in 1901, Cal Poly was described at the time by journalist Myron Angel as a school that would "teach the hand as well as the head." Today Cal Poly remains committed to its Learn by Doing philosophy, which the Academic Senate has defined in this way: "Learn by Doing is a deliberate process whereby students, from day one, acquire knowledge and skills through active engagement and self-reflection inside the classroom and beyond it."

Learn by Doing at Cal Poly takes many forms. Through curricular and co-curricular experiences faculty and staff work closely with students to meet learning objectives through experiential learning and provide opportunities for students to participate, often simultaneously, in discovery learning through problem solving. For many students, the capstone senior project, which was introduced to the curriculum in 1942, exemplifies the intentional blend of experiential and discovery learning that is the signature of Cal Poly's Learn by Doing philosophy.

From the practice of the Learn by Doing philosophy emanates all success for faculty, staff, and students. Cal Poly students are motivated high-achievers who arrive with a commitment to a major, indicating that they have a clear vision of their academic and professional future, which they expect the university to support. The side-by-side Learn by Doing curriculum is designed to provide students with concrete experience in their majors and in general education from day one. Cal Poly faculty and staff have built programs that have positioned the university as one of the most selective public universities in the United States. Faculty hone their skills in the classroom, in co-curricular activities, in their research and creative activities and through collaborations with each other.

Teacher-Scholar Model

As practiced at Cal Poly, the Teacher-Scholar Model includes meaningful student engagement in faculty scholarly activity and inclusion of scholarship in teaching to create vibrant learning experiences for students. Scholarship is defined in general terms as the scholarships of discovery, application, integration and teaching/learning (Boyer, 1990), implemented in a discipline-specific manner while mindful of Cal Poly's mission.

Student Success

The outcome of Learn by Doing and the teacher-scholar model is student success. Cal Poly is uniquely focused on the student experience, both inside and outside of the classroom. Most easily defined through the Graduation Initiative 2025, the system-wide effort to facilitate student retention and timely graduation, student success at Cal Poly comes to life at annual commencement ceremonies, but it is also vibrantly on display on the athletic fields, in community service activity throughout San Luis Obispo, in student leadership opportunities and in senior projects among many other examples.

Every person who works and supports Cal Poly is dedicated to student success. Our faculty and staff operate in a collective partnership designed to maximize each other's expertise in advancing the student experience. As we continue to remain focused on student success, we emphasize student needs and their success as a decision-making factor over all others.

Student success cannot happen without a commitment to creating the most inclusive campus climate possible. Every person, no matter the identities they have, must feel welcome and valued at Cal Poly. This element of student success is critical because, at our core, Cal Poly is a collection of focused human beings who thrive on the collective impact we have when we support each other and our larger goals.

Strategic Priorities

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:
Enhance the Success of All Cal Poly Students

Goal 1A: Maintain and enhance Cal Poly's signature pedagogy of Learn by Doing.

Goal 1B: Assure that all students attain the knowledge, skills and understanding to thrive in a diverse, evolving and competitive environment.

Goal 1C: Ensure access to an excellent education for all California students by providing financial aid support for those with the greatest economic need.

Goal 1D: Improve first-year and transfer student graduation rates and eliminate achievement gaps for all students to meet the goals of the CSU's Graduation Initiative 2025.

Goal 1E: Provide an additional high-impact experience for every undergraduate student.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- Freshman and transfer student graduation rates, including equity gaps
- Engagement in High Impact Practices including undergraduate research and study abroad as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement and other indicators
- Percent of students receiving institutional scholarship aid and dollar amount of aid awarded
- Student debt load at graduation
- Tracking of career placement and/or graduate school enrollment post-graduation
- Collegiate Learning Assessment results
- Percentage of curriculum that is lab- or activity-based

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

Cultivate the Excellence of All Employees

Goal 2A: Recruit and retain the best employees.

Goal 2B: Foster inclusive and excellent teaching practices through continued faculty development.

Goal 2C: Encourage innovative scholarship in all its forms — discovery, application, integration and engagement, as well as teaching and learning.

Goal 2D: Promote professional development opportunities for all employees.

Goal 2E: Communicate and share more broadly the significant achievements of all employees.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- Faculty and staff retention rates both aggregated and disaggregated for sub-populations
- Faculty and staff wage gaps in comparison to peer and CSU institutions
- Tenure-density rates for faculty
- Professional development participation rates and satisfaction data
- Tracking of research, scholarship and creative activity in terms of grants applied/received as well as peer-reviewed publications and presentations
- Student participation in faculty research, scholarship and creative activity

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

Enrich the Campus Culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Goal 3A: Create an aligned and cohesive focus on diversity and inclusion across the university.

Goal 3B: Create and sustain a more diverse, equitable and inclusive university community that reflects and serves the diverse people of California.

Goal 3C: Prepare all students for their future through an education that includes diversity learning and reflects the principles of Inclusive Excellence.

Goal 3D: Further develop a campus climate that reflects the values of diversity, equity and inclusion as well as free inquiry and mutual respect.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- CPX Campus Climate Survey outcomes from one survey period to another
- CPX Action Plan including the Score Cards
- Student, staff and faculty demographics relative to the State of California
- Enrollment, retention and graduation of students from under-represented, low-income and first-generation backgrounds
- Frequency and number of bias incidents reported
- Donations received for diversity and inclusion initiatives

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:
Strengthen our Portfolio of Academic Programs

Goal 4A: Make the General Education program a distinctive, mission-driven experience that prepares students for their personal and professional lives.

Goal 4B: Develop innovative and sustainable undergraduate degree programs that meet the present and future needs of society and industry.

Goal 4C: Pursue innovative and sustainable initiatives in graduate, post-baccalaureate and alternative academic programs that build on the university's mission and expertise.

Goal 4D: Address real-world problems, such as environmental sustainability, through interdisciplinary and international experiences as well as community and industry partnerships.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- Student demand and completion of degree programs, subprograms and General Education pathways
- Tracking of career placement, starting salaries and graduate school enrollment post-graduation
- Measures of efficiency and productivity based on student credit units and weighted teaching units
- Number of new interdisciplinary programs and subprograms

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5:
Create an Engaged, Vibrant and Healthy Community for Students

Goal 5A: Encourage the development of an ethos of individual social responsibility in every student.

Goal 5B: Ensure that all students engage in effective, out-of-the-classroom experiences that prepare them for a life-long relationship with Cal Poly.

Goal 5C: Create the extracurricular facilities and co-curricular programs anchored in Learn by Doing that create a vibrant residential campus community.

Goal 5D: Cultivate a campus environment that emphasizes all aspects of personal and community wellbeing.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- Surveys of student engagement (National Survey of Student Engagement, National College Health Assessment, Housing Skyfactor, National College Bystander)
- Student satisfaction with campus dining and residential amenities
- Student participation in co-curricular programs
- Student focus group results
- Freshman and transfer student 4- and 6-year graduation rates

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6:

Leverage Data and Technology to Support the Institution's Mission

Goal 6A: Create a robust technological experience that enables engagement within and beyond the borders of campus, connects people with university data and resources, and provides a secure, stable and modern technological ecosystem.

Goal 6B: Build relationships locally, nationally and globally to showcase the power of collaboration, support and advance the university's mission, and create alignment in the vision, priority and pace of campus initiatives.

Goal 6C: Enable student success by creating an accessible digital environment that empowers learning, teaching and living at Cal Poly, while supporting the engagement of alumni and prospective students.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- Breadth and depth of use of learning management system
- Percentage of campus devices using the Information Technology Services desktop and server images and Information Technology Services managed firewall
- Percentage of campus data center services re-platformed to Amazon Web Services or outsourced to a cloud provider
- Number of students, faculty and community partners actively engaged in California Cybersecurity Institute (CCI) and Digital Transformation Hub (DXHub) challenges
- Replacement rate for faculty and staff computers
- Replacement rate for classroom technology
- Number of dashboards established to support data-driven decision making
- Percentage of Accessible Technology Initiative benchmarks above the baseline level

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7:

Secure Our Future by Improving Finances, Facilities and Systems

Goal 7A: Ensure the economic viability of the institution through a resilient and sustainable business model, including public and private partnerships that enhance revenue.

Goal 7B: Foster a robust culture of philanthropy that allows the university to generate private gifts in support of institutional goals.

Goal 7C: Develop and maintain facilities that promote a sense of pride and confidence in the campus environment.

Goal 7D: Ensure the sustainability of the whole campus environment by making it smart, resilient and carbon neutral.

Goals 7E: Ensure transparency of operations through clear and frequent communications at all levels.

Metrics we will use to measure progress

- Facilities Condition Index (Deferred Maintenance/Current Value of Facilities); 5-year trend analysis
- Actual Space Inventory/Predicted Space Needs (Per CSU guidelines and CP space model); 5-year trend analysis
- Monitor institutional finances through annual financial ratio trend analysis: Composite Financial Index, Operating Expense Ratio, Primary Reserve Ratio, Annual Operating Margin Ratio, Return on Net Position, Viability Ratio, Debt Burden Ratio
- Numbers of individuals and percentage of alumni who contribute philanthropically to Cal Poly
- Percentage of the Capital Campaign goal reached or exceeded
- Rates of increased communication from campus leaders

2019-2024 Strategic Plan Implementation

The President's Cabinet will serve as the Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan and will oversee all aspects of the development and implementation of the plan. This includes prioritizing the implementation of goals, obtaining resources to achieve success and making modifications to the plan as unforeseen conditions arise. Many goals will have natural overlap in tactics, and this consistency and focus is positive. The Steering Committee will ensure that where overlap exists, collaboration is occurring.

Each aspect of the plan will have an executive champion and senior sponsor(s).

Executive Champions are members of the President's Cabinet who will assume responsibility for selecting Senior Sponsors for the goals, establishing time lines for implementing the goals and determining the metrics of success for each goal.

Executive Champions, with the support of the Senior Sponsor(s) will also be required to report on an annual basis the status of implementation and progress towards success metrics for each goal under their responsibility, and the university will provide a comprehensive and transparent update on the progress made under this plan.

Senior Sponsors are members of university leadership with expertise relevant to the goal and are charged with creating cross-divisional/college implementation teams that do the work of operationalizing the goal towards success, convening their teams and making recommendations to President's Cabinet or other appropriate group when obstacles prevent achieving success or the context has shifted requiring a change in the goal.

Senior Sponsors report to the Executive Champion(s) for their goal and provide regular reporting on the progress of the implementation team.

Thank you

Many thanks to the Cal Poly community for their support in the development of this plan, which establishes the direction for university decisions, funding priorities and actions.

Cal Poly's strategic planning team was led by Keith Humphrey, vice president for Student Affairs, and included Mary Pedersen, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President; Bruno Giberti, associate vice provost, Academic Programs and Planning; and Amy Robbins, interim director of Strategic Initiatives for Academic Affairs.

The team consulted and were advised by the Budget and Long Range Planning Committee of the Academic Senate, chaired by Professor Sean Hurley. The President's Cabinet serves as the Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan.