

Executive Summary of Provosts' "Role of Research in the CSU" for Presentation at Executive Council – 8/29/07

In April 2007, the CSU Academic Council adopted a statement affirming the role of research, scholarship, and creative activities as integral to the mission of each university within the system. Citing the 1990 revision of the California State Education Code that broadened the original CSU mandate to include “research, scholarship, and creative activity in support of its undergraduate and graduate instructional mission,” the statement notes that during the 1990s and into the current decade, research and scholarly activities have increased within the CSU, not at the expense of its educational mission, but in support of it. Expectations of the CSU by California’s citizenry have expanded. Workforce development and creation of new knowledge are now viewed as essential roles of the CSU. As a result, non-state funding to support faculty and student research has increased, centers and institutes have proliferated, and recognition of student and faculty research and creative activities has multiplied. Furthermore, as research has become vital to students’ educational success, it has also become essential to the development of an educated workforce and the maintenance of economic vitality for California. The provosts believe that the current strategic planning effort—*Access to Excellence*—provides a propitious opportunity to acknowledge the gains that have been made and to lay the foundation for increased capacity in research and creative activity in support of the CSU’s mission.

The provosts’ statement discusses the value of research and creative activity to the CSU and to the State of California in five key areas. (1) Faculty research enhances student learning, not only by providing students with up-to-date knowledge, but also by engaging students’ creative and critical abilities and broadening their professional opportunities. (2) Students, particularly those from traditionally underrepresented groups, tend to have better success rates when actively engaged in their education through research experiences and are more likely to pursue advanced degrees. Thus, research and creative activities help diversify the professoriate and the professional workforce. (3) Research and creative activities benefit our campuses through external support including grants, contracts, and gifts. (4) Encouragement and support of research and creative activity allows the CSU to compete effectively in the recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty. (5) The needs of our state’s industries and government agencies for applied research have increased tremendously, leading to increased importance and rising expectations for the CSU’s contributions. As indicated in the *CSU Economic Impact Report*, “CSU research has attracted public and private research investments . . . that drive California’s knowledge-based economy.”

The Academic Council’s statement concludes with a set of recommendations to support and enhance continued research and creative activity in the CSU.

- Examination of current research, scholarship, and creative activity expectations in light of the teacher-scholar model.
- Provision for strengthened research infrastructure at both the system and campus level.
- Leveraging of specialized legal and business expertise existing on certain campuses to benefit all campuses and support response to research compliance issues, with a particular focus on intellectual property and technology transfer.

In terms of general policies, procedures, and resource allocation, the Academic Council recommends:

- Active and intentional articulation of the benefits deriving from research in the CSU to multiple internal and external stakeholders
- Individual campus consideration of strategies to support research and to reflect the full spectrum of faculty responsibilities.
- Development of effective incentives to encourage increased faculty and student involvement in research and creative activities.
- Development of infrastructure and financial resources to support scholarly activities.