

California's Call to Service



The California State University Responds

The California State University is a system of 23 institutions of higher education. It is the largest system of senior higher education in the country, extending across the state of California to serve approximately 370,000 students.

For more information, please contact:
Office of Community Service Learning
California State University Chancellor's Office
401 Golden Shore, 6th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802-4210
Phone: (562) 951-4749
Website: <http://www.calstate.edu/csl>



The Governor's Call to Service

In April 1999, Governor Gray Davis called for a community service requirement for all students enrolled in California's public institutions of higher education. This was formalized in a letter to each of the leaders of the public systems of higher education on July 15, 1999, calling on them to work toward the development of a community service requirement for graduation. The governor stated that the primary purposes of his initiative were to enable students to give back to their communities, to experience the satisfaction of contributing to those in need, and to strengthen an ethic of service among graduates of California universities. Governor Davis requested that faculty members from the California State University, the University of California and the California Community Colleges work through the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates to address the issue.

The CSU Responds to the Governor's Call

The CSU was the first segment of California's system of higher education to respond to the governor's call to service. The Academic Senate CSU, campus faculty senates, students, community partners, community service and service-learning coordinators, and the CSU Advisory Group on Community Service participated in months of intensive dialogues around ways to strengthen and build upon the service initiatives that have developed over decades.

Through these dialogues—as stakeholders across the CSU articulated their perspectives—an overarching view became clear: the CSU endorsed Governor Davis's interest in strengthening an ethic of service as an important part of undergraduate education. Community service, service learning, and community-based activity are longstanding traditions in the mission and purpose of the CSU, and the CSU has an ongoing interest in expanding opportunities for all students to participate in service. A 1999 CSU survey indicated that more than 135,000 CSU students perform community service annually. Additionally, 39 percent of CSU students have either taken or are interested in taking service-learning courses.

Following these deliberations, at its March 2000 meeting, the CSU Board of Trustees passed a landmark resolution on community service and service learning in the CSU (found in full text on the opposite page).

The CSU Service-Learning Curriculum and Infrastructure Development Initiative

The systemwide conversations also emphasized a consensus among campuses that successful programs which engage students in community service and service learning take time and resources to develop. The CSU submitted a funding proposal requesting resources to assist campuses in meeting the commitments articulated in the Board of Trustees' resolution.

In response to CSU's commitment and request for support, Governor Davis authorized \$2.2 million in the Fiscal Year 2000-2001 state budget to support the development of new service-learning courses and to create or expand service-learning offices on all CSU campuses. The CSU committed to matching the state funds with at least \$2 million from other sources. Through the CSU Service-Learning Curriculum and Infrastructure Development Initiative, in the fall of 2000 each CSU campus identified specific goals and outlined plans to achieve and assess those goals in order to develop service-learning courses and expand or create service-learning offices. As a result, the CSU developed over 320 courses with new service-learning components across its 23 campuses by June 2001. This process will continue each year through the 2003-2004 academic year. After 2004, \$1.1 million will continue to be available annually to CSU campuses to support and maintain service-learning infrastructure.

The California State University is committed to serving as a model for the nation's higher education institutions as we work to infuse service learning and community service into the educational experiences we offer our students. We are honored to carry out the call of the governor in collaboration with our community partners.

Community Service and Service Learning in the California State University

WHEREAS, The California State University has a tradition of such community-based activities as service learning and community service; and,

WHEREAS, Governor Davis has called on the CSU to establish a community service requirement for CSU students; and,

WHEREAS, The CSU endorses Governor Davis's interest in strengthening an ethic of service as an important part of undergraduate education; and,

WHEREAS, CSU Monterey Bay already has a service-learning requirement for graduation and a number of individual academic departments and programs throughout the CSU currently require community service or service learning; and,

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate CSU, the California State Student Association, and the CSU Advisory Group on Community Service have carefully studied the place of community service and service learning in the undergraduate-education experience; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the trustees of the California State University, that the chancellor require each CSU president to ensure that all students have opportunities to participate in community service, service learning (deemed academically appropriate by faculty), or both; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees, through the chancellor, endorse campus efforts to make service an expectation, condition, or requirement for the undergraduate-education experience; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the chancellor report to the Board of Trustees, on an annual basis, CSU's increasing efforts to provide those opportunities to all students.

March 2000

