40 Years at CSUB: Creating Opportunities in Challenging Times

University Day Address

President Horace Mitchell
CSU Bakersfield
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Good morning. I join each of the previous speakers in extending a warm welcome to each of you – our new, continuing and returning faculty and staff from our main campus here in Bakersfield and our Antelope Valley Center – as we begin the 2009-10 academic year. I hope you had an enjoyable summer with some time for relaxation, to enjoy the company of family and friends, to be re-energized, and for renewal of your spirit as we begin our work together in creating opportunities in challenging times.

Please join me in a moment of silence as we honor the memory and spirits of those members of our campus community and the greater community who have passed since our last University Day. Thank you.

You have already met two members of the President’s Cabinet this morning – Dr. Soraya Coley, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Mike Neal, Vice President for Business and Administrative Services. Let me now introduce the other three members of the Cabinet – Ms. Beverly Byl, Vice President for University Advancement; Dr. John Hultsman; Interim Vice President for Student Affairs; and Ms. Evelyn Coyle, Executive Assistant to the President.

“University Day gives us the opportunity to come together to reflect on our progress to date, identify the significant challenges and opportunities ahead, and outline our priorities and plans. It reinforces our tradition of working collaboratively toward the continued advancement of our vision for excellence.”

The August 31st issue of the President’s Monthly Campus Update contains the latest information on a broad range of issues of importance to the campus community. You can access the update on our homepage, and I suggest that you do so, since I will not cover all of those topics in this presentation.

However, I will mention, toward the end, three items, which involved significant campus-wide committees and engagement during 2008-09. Those are: Strategic Planning, WASC and the NCAA self-study.

Our theme for this University Day, “40 years at CSUB: creating opportunities in challenging times,” challenges all of us to create and implement strategies that will assist us in continuing to make progress toward realization of our vision in spite of being hit hard by state budget reductions brought on by mis-governance at the State level and the worst economic crisis in California since the Great Depression. That being said, it is
appropriate that I begin my consideration of about a dozen issues by starting with the budget.

**Budget**

I will give only a brief overview of our budget this morning. I plan to cover the 2009-10 and 2010-11 budgets in detail at the Town Hall meeting this afternoon.

As you know all too well, the State budget has been in crisis over the last few years. In an effort to keep the campus community informed about how the CSU and CSUB might be affected, we held three campus budget forums – in April, June and July. We titled those forums “Information and Dialogue in the context of significant long-term reductions in state funding.” In each forum I presented information on the then-current status of the state budget crisis; the CSU and CSUB priorities (i.e., “to preserve as many jobs as possible for faculty and staff, and to serve as many students as possible without sacrificing quality”) and the then-current proposed solutions.

The final 2009-10 budget approved by the Legislature and Governor was consistent with what was presented in the last budget forum with one exception. And this is the only good news. It was pointed out to the Governor’s office by the Chancellor’s office that there was one place in the budget where the CSU was not treated in the same way the UC was treated. That fact was acknowledged and the CSU budget cut was reduced by $20 million as an “equalization” adjustment, as it was termed. Even better news is that as a result of our campus advocacy to the Chancellor’s office we were able to secure more than our usual share of the $20 million. Our usual share would have been between $400,000 to $500,000. Instead, we received $1.9 million. This represents a reduction of $1.9 million to our budget cut for 2009-10. Therefore, the additional campus budget reductions we will need to make after the labor cost reductions (e.g., furloughs) will be $2.5 million rather than $4.4 million.

The Vice Presidents will be making presentations to the Cabinet and the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) regarding their proposed strategies for bringing their budgets in line with the reduced resource base. For those proposed reductions that might involve academic programs, the Academic Senate and its appropriate committees will be consulted, consistent with our commitment to shared governance. After receiving feedback from the Academic Senate, BAC and other campus constituencies, I will approve our campus budget for 2009-10. I expect that to be done by the end of the Fall quarter.

**Enrollment**

The State budget crisis has had a direct impact on our enrollment. A core assumption on which our vision is based is that we would have enrollment growth between 2005-06 and 2014-15 averaging 2.5 – 5% annually. I have said that our desire to increase our enrollment is not simply for us to become a larger campus. Instead, it is based on the fact that increases in State funding were expected to be based largely on enrollment growth.
In turn, increases in State funding would provide the resources necessary for us to add new academic programs to serve our students and meet the needs of this region, and new academic buildings. In addition, the assumption of enrollment growth was part of our planning for non-state facilities and programs. For example, the financial pro-formas for our planning for new student housing, for the Student Recreation Center and for our move to NCAA Division I were based on enrollment growth.

This is where we are in terms of enrollment. As you know, State funding is based on budgeted full time equivalent students (FTES) not headcount or number of students enrolled.

As of 2008-09 CSU was over-enrolled by more than 12,000 FTES in relation to its budgeted enrollment, that is, the enrollment for which the State provides funding. In response to the State budget reduction for 2008-09, the $864 million reduction in 2009-10, and the anticipated significant reduction for 2010-11, the CSU is reducing its enrollment to match the level of State funding. Therefore, the CSU is reducing its enrollment by 40,000 FTES by 2010-11. CSUB has been assigned a reduction of 413 FTES (6%) for 2010-11. Over the past three years our budgeted enrollment has been flat:

- In 2007-08 our budgeted FTES was 6885
- In 2008-09 our budgeted FTES was 6885
- In 2009-10 our budgeted FTES is 6885
- In 2010-11 our budgeted FTES will be 6472, with the 6% reduction.

Over the four-year period, including next year, we will have lost more than $15 million in actual budget cuts, as well as potential revenue increases of more than $8 million, based on even conservative projections of our possible enrollment growth over that period. Combined, that is more than $23 million in funding that has not been available to support our efforts toward realization of our vision by 2015. In light of this fact, it has been suggested that we should consider extending the time horizon for our vision. I will ask that this issue be deliberated in the context of our University-wide Strategic Planning Committee during this academic year.

**Academic Realignment**

This third topic I want to touch on is academic realignment. To be sure, we are also considering administrative realignments, but academic realignments require much more time and far more extensive consultative processes.

Where do we begin? With the deans of two schools stepping down at the end of the 2007-08 academic year, the Provost and I, along with many others on campus, thought it would be an opportune time to consider realignment of schools since that had been a topic of discussion over the past few years. Such considerations were necessary, as well, so that we could initiate searches for new deans. Ed Sasaki agreed to serve as Interim Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences for 2008-09, and Craig Kelsey agreed to serve as Interim Dean of Education during that year.
Following some consultation, the Provost and I developed a draft proposal which was discussed broadly within the schools and by the Academic Senate. Feedback on that proposal was provided from across the campus, and alternative proposals were developed and discussed. As a final step in the review process, the Academic Senate appointed a task force which provided its recommendations at the end of 2008-09.

Where are we now? What full consideration of all feedback from the consultative processes, the Provost and I have developed a final draft plan which we will discuss with potentially affected faculty and departments tomorrow in a series of scheduled meetings. With great encouragement, expressions of deep appreciation for their service, and a little arm twisting, Interim Deans Kelsey and Sasaki have agreed to continue to serve for one final year. During that time we will finalize the realignment and initiate national searches for new deans who would be expected to take office for the 2010-11 academic year. You will hear more about this in the coming weeks.

Academic Program Scans
Another area of significant consideration during 2008-09 was the development of Academic Program Scans. I want to express my great appreciation to our faculty and department chairs for their development of these important profiles of our academic programs. I want to thank Laura Hecht and her staff for compiling the essential statistical information which assisted programs in completing their scans. Along with Provost Coley, Deans Blanco, Emery, Kelsey, and Sasaki gave me briefings on the scans for their schools in a series of four two-hour meetings last week. Provost Coley will present an overview of the Academic Program Scans this afternoon, as noted on the University Day Agenda.

Contracts and Grants
The State of California funds less than 50% of the CSU budget. Other major funding sources include student fee income, fund raising, income from auxiliaries, and grants and contracts. CSUB Faculty members have done a tremendous job of increasing the number of grant applications and awards. Since the beginning of the 2008 academic year, faculty were awarded grants totaling $23 million, including:

- A $10 million grant for the first five years of the National Children’s Study, a 25-year longitudinal study of the effects of genetic, social, and environmental influences on the health and development of 100,000 children across the United States, following them from before birth until age 21. It will be the definitive study of child development during that time period.
- A $5 million college cost reduction access act grant from the U.S. Department of Education to Hispanic-serving Institutions;
- A $900,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to encourage talented Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) majors and professionals to become K-12 mathematics and science teachers;
• A $300,000 math and science partnership planning grant from the National Science Foundation geared to boost math and science partnerships between CSUB and high schools in Kern County

• A California Social Work Education Center grant of $1.3 million for our MSW program.

A Grant Writers’ reception was hosted by the Provost this Spring to recognize and congratulate all of our faculty who were awarded grants or submitted grant applications for 2008-09.

Strategic Planning
Any entity which seeks organizational excellence has a strategic plan – a set of action plans developed from the combined input of its stakeholders to transform the organization from what it currently is to what it desires to become. Our Strategic Plan was developed by the university community on our path to realization of our vision of excellence by 2014-15. It is a “living” document that is updated annually as new strategies and initiatives are developed and others are fully implemented. While the goals and objectives will remain fairly stable, strategies and initiatives will change over time.

For example, this year our Strategic Planning Committee recognized that in order to link our vision of excellence with our strategic goals and objectives, we needed a university statement of core values. After much discussion and collaboration on having a sense of campus community—a shared sense of purpose, belonging and mutual respect, and shared accountability for the future of CSUB, the following values statement was developed: “in order to honor our purpose and commitment to achieving our vision of excellence in all areas, we are guided by a set of core values that shape our work with students, with each other, and with the region we serve. These core values include the following commitments:

• Developing the intellectual and personal potential of every student

• Supporting the intellectual and professional development of all faculty and staff

• Nurturing a civil and collegial campus environment that values the diversity of persons and ideas

• Engaging one another with respect, trustworthiness, ethical behavior, and self-reflection

• Promoting active and informed engagement of faculty, staff, students, and community stakeholders in shared governance

• Being accountable to the public, alumni, students, and one another for achieving the mission, vision, and goals of the university”
Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation

We continue to move forward in the reaffirmation of our accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The four-year process involves three phases: 1) The Institutional Proposal; 2) The Capacity and Preparatory review (CPR); and 3) The Educational Effectiveness review. The WASC Proposal Review Committee accepted our Institutional Proposal in June 2007 with a number of accolades. I am pleased to report that we submitted our CPR report on August 11 and now are preparing for a site visit by the WASC CPR team from October 26-28, 2009. The Educational Effectiveness review will take place in Spring 2011. An overview of the WASC process, timelines, and our institutional reports, supporting documents, and resources, are available on our website at http://www.csub.edu/wasc/.

The accreditation reaffirmation process is a comprehensive undertaking which involves broad-based campus participation and engagement. I wish to thank Dr. Soraya Coley, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Ed Sasaki, Special Assistant to the Provost for planning and Interim Dean of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences; and the members of the WASC Steering and Planning Committees, and work groups for their tremendous efforts in preparing the university for the accreditation process.

I am now in my second three-year term on the WASC commission. I will participate as the institution’s CEO when the review of CSUB is undertaken by WASC, but, of course, recuse myself from the role of WASC Commissioner when the deliberations begin.

NCAA Division I Certification Self-Study

In addition to reaffirmation of our academic accreditation, CSUB also is engaged in the NCAA Division I Certification self-study as part of the transition of our Athletics Program to Division I. The self-study is part of a five-year transition process designed to ensure the integrity of collegiate athletics programs, compliance with NCAA standards and principles, and to increase awareness and knowledge of the Athletics Program to the broader campus and community. A cross-functional team of faculty, staff, students, and community members conducted an internal review over a one-year period of three areas defined by the NCAA: 1) Governance and Commitment to Rules Compliance; 2) Academic Integrity; and 3) Gender, Diversity, and Student-Athlete Well-being.

After completing our review, we submitted our 178-page Institutional Report in April 2009. As with WASC, we now will host an NCAA Peer Review Team who will evaluate our Athletics Program during a campus visit over a four-day period from October 4-7, 2009. Again, I thank Dr. Soraya Coley, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, for her leadership, as well as Rudy Carvajal, Athletics Director; Gloria Friedman, Senior Associate Athletics Director; Dr. Jacquelyn Kegley, Professor of Philosophy and Chair of Philosophy & Religious Studies, and the Faculty Athletics Representative, and the more than 70 faculty, staff, students, and community members who have worked tirelessly on the self-study subcommittees. Our Executive Summary and final institutional report are available on our website at www.csub.edu/ncaa.
H1N1
An additional challenge we face this year is a worldwide epidemic, or pandemic, of the H1N1 virus, commonly known as the “Swine Flu”. The Centers for Disease Control advises that H1N1 is a new flu virus, different from previous or current seasonal flu viruses that has not circulated among humans before. Just like the normal seasonal flu, H1N1 is transmitted by inhaling infected droplets expelled by coughing or sneezing or by touching contaminated hands or surfaces. H1N1 can cause moderate to severe illness and even death. The global spread of the virus has caused both the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization to raise the pandemic alert level to its highest level - phase 6 – widespread human infection. Those organizations anticipate that 30-50% of the U.S. population could contract the virus this fall and winter.

To help prevent the spread of the virus, each of us individually must bear responsibility to maintain such basic wellness habits as washing hands thoroughly and often with soapy water for at least 20 seconds; covering sneeze or cough with a tissue and washing hands thereafter; avoiding contact with people who are ill; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; and remaining at home when ill for at least 24 hours after the illness has passed.

As a campus, our Emergency Operations Center is active and has developed campus protocols and procedures in the event H1N1 cases are confirmed on campus. This information will be made available through a link on our home page. You may also visit www.flu.gov for more general H1N1 information.

On a broader community basis, our EOC is working with the Kern County Department of Public Health and Bakersfield College to provide flu shots to the public here at CSUB on October 30th. Students, faculty, and staff can receive a flu shot on a walk-in basis at the Student Health Center on October 30th. For more information, contact the Student Health Center. Let’s work individually and collectively to have a healthy academic year.

Spirit/campus culture
Before we get into the details of our approach to creating opportunities in the midst of these challenging times, I want to digress, slightly, for a few moments. You have heard me use the word “spirit” twice already during my remarks. What do I mean by “spirit”?

40th Anniversary
Forty years ago, “California State College Bakersfield” opened its doors for classes as the 19th campus in the California State College system. Our initial enrollment of 971 students marked the beginning of new opportunities for this region -- opportunities for its residents to improve their quality of life through higher education; opportunities to achieve better and higher employment, opportunities to welcome new industries and businesses into the region.

We have much to be proud of and many accomplishments to acknowledge in our 40-year history. We have grown from “California State College Bakersfield” to California State University Bakersfield, a regional comprehensive university with an enrollment of more than 7,800.
We are an economic and cultural driver, a center for intellectual thought in our community. Our presence makes a difference.

As we acknowledge our 40th year, severe budget cuts will not allow us to have as extensive a series of events as we would have had in a better budget climate. However, a number of events will be highlighted this next year to commemorate this milestone achievement, including a culminating event toward the end of the year. Details are being decided. I want to thank Vikash Lakhani for chairing the 40th Anniversary Celebration Committee.

Thank you.