

**The California State University Employee Update**  
**Friday, March 19, 2010**

**Trustees Adopt Early Start Program Initiative**

The CSU Board of Trustees has adopted an "early start" initiative to help students be better prepared in mathematics and English when they enter the CSU as incoming freshmen. Students will learn at the beginning of their senior year of high school whether their results on the Early Assessment Program test make them "CSU ready" in math and English. Students not "CSU ready" can then choose from various options to help them to become proficient.

"The goal is that more of our students will be completely prepared for college coursework or they will at least have begun working toward full proficiency," said Jeri Echeverria, CSU executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer.

The CSU will utilize its [Early Assessment Program \(EAP\) test](#), which provides high school juniors with an early signal as to whether they are ready for college-level math and English. In spring 2009, close to 370,000 high school students voluntarily took the EAP. Students admitted to the CSU as first-time freshmen must demonstrate they are ready for college English and mathematics by showing proficiency on the EAP test, passing the CSU's placement test or by obtaining a qualifying score on the SAT or ACT test. About 60 percent of first-time freshmen enrolling at the CSU each year do not show entry-level proficiency in these assessments and must attend remedial classes. [More information](#).

**CSU Addresses Transfer Admissions at Legislative Hearing**

The CSU has a longstanding commitment to transfer students, CSU's Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Academic Support Allison Jones told a legislative panel focusing on eligibility, articulation and coordination.

"About 75 percent of all community college students who transfer annually transfer to a CSU campus. We are the primary point of access," Jones said at the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education hearing March 10. In fact, Jones noted that the CSU has gone beyond the requirements of a Senate Bill which called upon the CSU to provide a clear degree path for community college transfer students. The bill stipulated that the CSU develop patterns for the top 20 majors; the CSU developed patterns for the top 44 majors, which represent over 90 percent of the majors that upper-division community college transfer students plan to enroll in.

Jones and other panelists agreed that there is a need for better intersegmental coordination, but also noted the impact of California's current budget situation on enrollment. "We are restricting access for the first time in our history," Jones said, pointing out that budget reductions have forced the CSU to reduce its enrollment by 40,000 students the last year which has impacted first-time freshmen and upper-level transfer admissions.

Jones also reported on his recent work on the Community College Transfer Taskforce which has focused on finding low-cost ways to improve transfer and articulation for students.

The Joint Committee's next meeting is March 24 to discuss accountability. Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer Jeri Echeverria will represent the CSU. State lawmakers are holding the hearings to determine whether the Master Plan, now 50 years old, is meeting its original goals of providing access to a quality college education and serving the state's students and its workforce.

**CSU Supports Governor's Budget Proposal**

The governor's budget proposal for 2010-11 is "encouraging" and includes approximately \$377 million in funding for the CSU, CSU Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer Benjamin F. Quillian told the Board of Trustees March 16. Despite the \$19.9 billion budget shortfall over the next 16 months identified in the

state budget, the governor has made higher education a priority, calling for restoration of \$305 million of one-time cuts made in 2009-10 and providing 2.5 percent enrollment growth. (The enrollment growth funds are contingent on the receipt of specified new federal funds for programs outside higher education.) "Our task now is to support the proposal and help it through the legislative process, but that will not be easy," Quillian added.

The results of the special legislative session called by the governor in January have "not been very encouraging" in terms of a timely resolution of the budget, noted Robert Turnage, CSU Assistant Vice Chancellor, Budget. There are a series of subcommittee hearings on the budget over the next two months, starting with an overview of the higher education budget in a Senate budget subcommittee held March 18. The CSU will stress how important the governor's budget support for higher education is for California's future and how timely passage of that budget means access for students into the CSU, Turnage noted. Still, the CSU does not anticipate any action from the committees until after the governor's May revise or later, he added.