

Access to Excellence

Report for **Domain 6**: Now and in the Future: Campus/System Identity
College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES)
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Proposition

Cal Poly's core strength and identity must be maintained as a comprehensive polytechnic state university for the entire state. The CSU system identity should be compatible with this, and ideally will include some of these same strengths. For CAFES specifically, the following fundamental propositions are offered: 1) the future of civilization rests squarely on the shoulders of agriculture – no civilization has survived without it; 2) the kind of agriculture we have practiced in the USA for the past 100 years has taken advantage of our ability to pull more carbon from below the surface of the earth, eventually to be released into the atmosphere, than we have put back; 3) according to the overwhelming majority of scientists, increasing amounts of carbon in the atmosphere are creating severe challenges for the future of civilization.

Cal Poly's strengths:

- Pleasant, comfortable physical atmosphere that facilitates learning
- Land, as a resource for experimentation; for example, at Cal Poly students can learn about sustainable food systems by living and working in a local food web.
- Residential nature of the university promotes networking among students and building a sense of community

Cal Poly's Unique Identity:

- Interdisciplinary courses
- Senior projects as a current, relevant experience
- Enterprise projects as a living laboratory

Action

Aggressively move toward new curricula in sustainability, curricula that “teach globally” on topics such as water, renewable fuels, and global warming. Continue to improve staffing and funding policies that have hindered the creation of interdisciplinary courses and programs. Aggressively attract students of diversity. Implement Master Plan elements that conserve water and energy. Revise the Master Plan as needed to include more and more such elements.

Some Ideas

Cal Poly must play a role in educating students to better use all tools (including but not limited to technology) to put more carbon back below the surface of the earth than we release into the atmosphere.

Cal Poly should play a role in educating students how to create economies that provide incentives to those who enhance the future of civilization and disincentives for those whose activities lead to the demise of civilization.

Cal Poly has an obligation to produce graduates who treasure and value the diversity of peoples and other life forms, realizing that only through those values might we have social stability.