The California State University
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

CSU POLICY, PROCEDURE AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR PLANNING IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

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Policy Statement

Executive Summary

The 23 campuses of the California State University remain open and are steadfast in our commitment to inclusive excellence. We stand ready to meet California's higher education needs in the 2020-21 academic year by providing the best possible educational experience for our students while ensuring the safety and welfare of our faculty, staff, students and local communities in the COVID-19 era. This combination of factors leads us to a planning framework for course delivery that is necessarily virtual. As a result, CSU courses primarily will be delivered virtually for the Fall 2020 term, and on some campuses and in most academic disciplines, exclusively so. Limited exceptions for in-person instruction that cannot be delivered virtually, fall within the sphere of the university's core mission, and can be conducted within rigorous standards of safety and welfare will be considered. Likewise, campus requests to offer limited on-campus student housing, dining services, and intercollegiate athletics-related activities may be approved, provided that these activities also meet the spirit and intent of this policy.

Planning is complex, ongoing and will be informed by evolving regional data and circumstances in the months and years ahead. Campus plans should demonstrate how the campus is collaborating with local public health agencies to ensure compliance with operative screening and risk mitigation protocols.

While acknowledging the difficulty of planning in such a fluid environment, it is none-the-less imperative that all campuses plan to reduce the number of people on campus to a minimum, as the more an individual interacts with others and the longer the interaction the higher the risk of spread of COVID-19. The CSU policy is subject to change as facts change regarding the pandemic and its mitigation, and when Governor Newsom issues directives for higher education, anticipated at the time of this writing to be in June 2020. And austere budgetary considerations will play an important determinative role in what approach a campus can afford to take within available resources.

Background and Context

The California State University (CSU) remains open and is steadfast in our commitment to inclusive excellence and stands ready to meet California's higher education needs in the 2020-21 academic year. The CSU encourages all admitted and continuing students to enroll and is committed to providing the best possible educational experience for our students, enabling progress to degree completion, and ensuring the safety and welfare of our faculty, staff, students and local communities in the COVID-19 era.

In Spring 2020, in response to the rapidly emerging COVID-19 pandemic, the CSU quickly transitioned courses, academic support, and student services to virtual modalities to ensure the health and safety of faculty, staff and students, and to enable completion of the academic term. Many students left the residence halls, and employees – except essential employees – worked remotely or were placed on administrative leave. Intercollegiate athletics, intramural sports, and theater and musical performances were cancelled. We are grateful to faculty, staff and students for their alacrity, skill, commitment and perseverance during this massive pivot, and we trust that additional planning and the careful consideration of lessons learned will allow us to avoid sudden transitions in the future.

Indeed, with the benefit of ongoing planning and deep consultation with stakeholders, coupled with additional training and professional development during the summer of 2020, CSU faculty, staff and administrators will be prepared to deliver an even more comprehensive and robust virtual education experience for students in fall 2020, including extensive academic and student support. We expect bold, emerging innovations to leverage the power of the system within and across campuses, such that by working together in new, imaginative and creative ways, we will further enrich the experiences of our new and returning students in the coming academic year.

While the planning horizon is for the 2020-21 academic year, currently we have sufficient clarity to focus only on fall 2020. The planning framework for course delivery has been and will continue to necessarily be virtual at the undergraduate and graduate level. This planning approach is necessary because of the evolving data surrounding the progression of COVID-19 –

currently and as forecast throughout the 2020-21 academic year – coupled with public health and repopulation directives of governmental authorities. This approach is necessary because even if all restrictions were lifted and all courses could be offered face-to-face, we must be prepared to pivot to virtual instruction during the fall term, as a serious second wave of the pandemic is forecast for late fall. And this approach to planning is necessary because it might not be possible for some students, faculty and staff to safely travel to campus; thus, we should have the option of remote learning available throughout the curriculum, to every extent possible.

Said another way, this virtual planning approach preserves as many options for as many students as we can and is consistent with our guiding principle of meeting students where they are.

Consequently, this planning approach will result in CSU courses primarily being delivered virtually for the fall 2020 term, with limited exceptions for in-person instruction that cannot be delivered virtually, fall within the sphere of the University's core mission, and can be conducted within rigorous standards of safety and welfare. There will be variability across the 23 campuses due to specific context and circumstances; some campuses and most academic disciplines will be exclusively virtual in fall 2020. Decisions regarding the winter and spring terms in 2021 will be made and communicated at a later date.

In addition to the COVID-19-related alterations in the university, the CSU is also facing significant budgetary constraints over the next several years. These constraints include a decrease in revenues – inclusive of those generated by auxiliary support enterprises – as well as increased costs associated with the mitigation of COVID-19, such as those related to sanitation, personal protective equipment, facility modifications, and enhanced technology to facilitate virtual learning, student services and business operations for the university.

It is this confluence of the demands of the pandemic and austere budget realities that makes our planning efforts complex and yet essential.

Limited Exceptions to Virtual Instruction

The granting of limited exceptions to permit in-person activities will be informed initially by consultation with academic senates, associated students, staff councils and union leadership, and align with local public health officials and government agencies, and will be based on compelling needs, while continuing to meet safety benchmarks. All exceptions require approval of the campus President, and the President shall seek final approval from the Chancellor in three areas: instruction, on-campus housing and dining, and intercollegiate athletics. This approach may result in the delivery of more limited in-person experiential learning occurring on some campuses and for a few academic disciplines. But it won't be as it was in the past. It will be different.

Limited exceptions may be permitted only in the continued presence of rigorous safety measures and training, and in consideration of resource availability and other matters of local context. Exceptions must also (1) be in accordance with local and state policy, (2) evidence alignment with the local department of public health, and (3) comply with mandates of other relevant regulatory agencies if applicable.

Meeting the rigorous standards of safety and welfare is a new and expensive reality: for those limited courses where in-person instruction is essential to meeting learning outcomes, and can be justified, the enrollment per section likely will be less; the distance between participants greater; the need for personal protective equipment appropriate to the circumstance prevalent; and the need to sanitize and disinfect spaces and equipment essential.

There will be limitations on the number of students occupying on-campus student housing and using dining services. Likewise, if intercollegiate athletic programs are allowed in the fall 2020 term, they too will be limited to comport with public health guidelines for student athletes, coaches, support staff, and spectators.

The CSU acknowledges that these decisions positively affect the communities with which our campuses are interconnected by minimizing the spread of COVID-19, and yet also negatively affect local economies by impacting commerce and reducing the availability of cultural and athletic events.

Campus Planning

Our planning and execution strategies should endeavor to pass the test of reasonableness. The progression of this pandemic – coupled with evolving federal, state and local directives of government authorities and a declining state economy – necessitate substantial fluidity in planning. Thus, we will stay nimble and adjust plans over the summer, throughout the 2020-21 academic year and thereafter as necessary. Planning, decisions and subsequent alterations shall be science-based, medically sound and data-driven.

Campus planning, informed by guidelines and the local department of public health, will be tailored to specific circumstances. The appendices below provide links to relevant guidelines and resources, including those of the *American College Health Association* and several governmental agencies.

Communications

Students and families, along with faculty and staff, will receive preliminary information in May and June 2020 from their respective CSU campuses regarding the fall 2020 term. Based on the approval protocols noted above, as well as campus consultation, feedback and the pandemic's progression, CSU campuses will continue to communicate with students, families, faculty and staff throughout the spring, summer and fall to provide further details on instructional modality, student housing availability and academic support services. Policy concerning

instruction in the winter and spring terms will be communicated as soon as practicable, likely in October 2020.

Despite the complicating factors of COVID-19, campuses should communicate vigorously that, for most students, this is not the time to pause or decline an opportunity to attend a CSU campus, and that robust financial aid remains available. This is the moment to persist, to take that very important first or next step to a degree that promises a lifetime of upward economic and social mobility for students, their families and their communities. Be assured that the CSU will promote student engagement with the community and will be a vital building block for post-COVID-19 California – its regional economies, society and the environment.

Procedures for Approval of Campus Plans

The overall goal is for each CSU campus to summarize and submit a plan to the Chancellor for review and approval of the approach they will follow that comports with this policy direction. Campus plans that emerge following stakeholder consultation for in-person activities in these three areas (instruction, on-campus housing/dining, intercollegiate athletics) may be rejected by the Chancellor out of concern for the health, safety and welfare of students, employees, guests and the local community as these are first-order requirements for the CSU. Campus plans for the fall 2020 term should be submitted to the Chancellor over the President's signature as soon as the campus planning process is complete. Relevant team members in the Chancellor's Office will then review submittals and provide feedback to campuses and make recommendations to the Chancellor. This expedited review will be conducted in the order the plans are received. The University will respond to the pandemic as it evolves, therefore, related policy, procedures and considerations may be revised from time to time by the Chancellor's Office.

The submitted campus plans for fall 2020 should provide at a minimum the following information, presented in the order and with the numbering set below:

1. An executive summary of the strategies to address the safety and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. In this regard, campuses must describe how the campus is collaborating with local public health agencies to ensure compliance with operative screening and risk mitigation protocols.

2. Information on the total number of academic courses (including in an appendix the course titles and course numbers) and other student learning activities that the campus plans to offer on campus, and the percentage of the total fall semester course offerings those on-campus courses constitute as compared to fall 2019.

3. Recognizing at this time this is an estimate, information on the anticipated total number of students to enroll in these in-person courses and related instructional activities.

4. Recognizing at this time this is an estimate, information on the anticipated total number of faculty and other staff on campus to deliver the in-person instruction and related activities during the fall 2020 term.

5. Plans for employees and students who, because of COVID-19 induced concerns, cannot safely travel to campus.

6. A summary of preparedness of on-campus courses to switch to virtual or be ended during the course of the term if it becomes necessary to further decant the campus.

7. An explicit attestation by the campus president that the undergraduate and graduate courses planned to be delivered on-campus were carefully evaluated and determined to be incapable of being delivered virtually.

8. An executive summary of the campus plan for on-campus housing, including the approximate number of employees required to staff the operations, the expected number of students who will reside in on-campus housing, expressed in absolute numbers and as a percentage of fall 2019, and an overview of the campus plan to offer safe housing to students.

9. An executive summary of the campus plan for on-campus dining services, including how many employees are expected to be required to staff the dining function, and the estimated number of students who will be offered meal service, expressed in absolute numbers and as a percentage of fall 2019.

10. An executive summary of the campus plan for intercollegiate athletics, including the estimated number of employees required to staff the athletics function, and how many students will participate, expressed in absolute numbers and as a percentage of fall 2019. The campus should provide further context about the plan to provide safe and effective athletics programming and should provide context regarding any athletic conference or contractual obligations as well as confirmation that the plan will ensure gender equity under Title IX.

11. The name and contact information of the campus liaison and the local public health official who has been consulted regarding the campus plan should be included.

12. An executive summary of the campus resources available to execute the plan, in light of the proposed 10% reduction to CSU's state appropriation.

Campus Self-Study

To provide the campus president assurance of rigor in campus planning, the campus may wish to conduct a self-study to determine:
- whether an exemption is warranted under the circumstances (helpful information may be found in *Appendix B: Considerations for Instruction and Learning Environments*);
- whether the proposed in-person instruction and any ancillary operations, programs and services that are essential to support such instruction can be safely and effectively offered and delivered as a practical matter (helpful information may be found in *Appendix C: Consideration on Non-Instructional Operations, Programs and Services*); and

- the measures that will need to be taken in order to promote the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and administrators involved for both in-person instruction and any related ancillary programs and services.

Chancellor's Office subject matter experts are available for consultation, as needed.

Appendices

The following appendices are designed for consideration by the campuses as tools and information to be used as part of their internal planning process and are not intended to be submitted to the Chancellor's Office. They may be helpful to assist campus planning and requests for exception.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, the guidance from these organizations will be updated, so campuses should continue to refer to these resources on a regular and frequent basis.

Appendix A: Guidance and Considerations from Federal, State, Local and Other Agencies

Requests for exceptions should confirm that federal, state, regional, and local regulations or orders will be met. Each campus should work closely with local city and county public health departments to coordinate actions related to resumption of on-campus activities. Specific guidance documents that campuses are encouraged to review and consider include:

- The American College Health Association's *Considerations for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era* published on May 7, 2020.

- Federal guidance published by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with specific guidance for institutions of higher education, , as well as by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency.

- State guidance concerning COVID-19 published by the California Department of Public Health and the California Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response *Resilience Roadmap*.

- Local health department guidance (a list of departments is maintained by the National Association of County Health Officials with contact information.

Additional guidance specific to on-campus housing, dining services, and intercollegiate athletics can be found at:
- Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) guidance, *COVID-19 Future of Housing Checklist*
- CDC's *COVID-19 Guidance for Shared or Congregate Housing*

- National Association of College and University Food Services (NACUFS) guidance, *Collegiate Dining's Response to COVID-19*

- NCAA Sport Science Institute's Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance, including the *Core Principles of Resocialization of Collegiate Sport*

Appendix B: Considerations for Instruction and Learning Environments

On a very limited basis, the Chancellor may grant exceptions to allow courses to be offered in-person based on space or specialized equipment requirements, external mandates, and/or pedagogical needs (e.g., learning outcomes that cannot be met by adjusting pedagogy, appropriate replacement for use of specialized equipment cannot be found, accreditation requirements, potential loss of grant funding, issues that are unique to certain academic programs, etc.). No academic field or discipline warrants automatic exceptions. Note that courses that do not allow for physical distancing in the relevant instructional space should not be considered for in-person instruction unless there is compelling evidence that appropriate measures are in place to protect health and safety.

General Considerations:

- For each course that is being proposed to be offered in-person, how many students and faculty will be in each class session? How long will each class session be? How many class sessions occur on a weekly basis?
- To the extent possible, does the campus plan allow for a rapid pivot back to remote/virtual instruction in the event of a resurgence of COVID-19 infections on campus or in the local community, as well as other reasons, e.g., wildfire, power outages?
- How will the academic course schedule[1] be adjusted to:
  - accommodate the likely need for more sections, since seating capacity will be limited, e.g., expand hours of instruction into the evening? expand hours of instruction into the weekend?
  - account for the need for more rigorous cleaning and sanitization protocols in between each class session?
  - accommodate those students who will be taking both in-person classes and other classes in online/remote/virtual modalities?

Public Health Considerations:

- What measures will be taken to promote physical distancing in the instructional space, e.g., seating removed or cordoned off, furnishings and equipment rearranged - keeping in mind that the nature of some instructional activities may require more than a six-foot radius between each student and between students and the instructor?
- What measures will be taken to ensure there is adequate physical distancing in the building hallways, stairwells, lavatories, elevators, and other common spaces during the time between class sessions?
- Has consultation taken place with Environmental Health and Safety, Facility Services and

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[1] These kinds of changes should only occur in consultation with the campus Office of Faculty Affairs and the campus Office of Human Resources.

other campus partners to determine what adjustments, if any, may need to be made to the building HVAC and other structures to increase air flow and improve air quality?

- What protocols will be adopted to reduce risk of COVID-19 infection and promote health/safety of students, faculty and staff involved with in-person instruction, e.g., provision of Personal Protective Equipment, hand sanitizers, etc., with reliable supply chain?

- Does the campus have adequate staffing to implement more frequent and more rigorous cleaning and sanitization regimens? Does the campus have an adequate supply and reliable supply chain for cleaning supplies and materials needed to disinfect sensitive lab equipment and other specialized items?

- Has the campus confirmed with the local health department how testing and contact tracing will be handled by the health department for students, faculty and staff who will be on campus as part of on-campus instructional activities?

- Has the campus consulted with the local health department regarding how quarantine and/or isolation will be managed for individuals who are suspected to be infected or been diagnosed with COVID-19?

- What communication strategies will the campus implement to promote public health practices, e.g., wearing face coverings, coughing/sneezing etiquette, hand hygiene, etc.? How will instructions be provided to students on the specific adjustments being made to support public health directives?

Ancillary Support Considerations:

- How will the campus address supplemental learning support? If these services are included as part of the course and cannot be delivered in remote/virtual formats, how will the campus institute physical distancing and be responsive to public health requirements?

- Has the campus consulted with Academic Technology Services, the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, and other relevant partners on how to best address the needs of students who will be remote learners?

- For students who will have to remain remote learners due to their age, medical condition or other reason, how will the campus work to ensure they have adequate computers? Do they have required software? Do they have reliable internet access?

- For students participating in-person, will any on-campus computer labs be open? If so, how will they be configured and/or managed, e.g., online reservation system, in order to support physical distancing and other local/county/state directives to promote public health?

- To what extent will campus libraries reopen or partially reopen to support in-person instruction? What will be the available hours of operation for students coming to campus for in-person instruction? How will the campus support the needs of students who are remote learners? If opening, what adaptations, if any, will be made to library facilities and library resources in order to support physical distancing and other local/county/state directives to promote public health, e.g., access to the library to be

limited, library support services only available on a by-appointment basis, curbside pickup available for library resources?

Accessibility and Equity Considerations:

- Has the Office for Services for Students with Disabilities been engaged as part of the planning process for all instructional offerings? For in-person courses, they should be consulted about accommodations for students who become ill or need to be quarantined or isolated. For remote/virtual courses, they should be consulted on the standards for providing accessible courses.
- Has the campus developed strategies to ensure that reasonable accommodations are instituted for students with a possible range of disabilities (including medical conditions) who wish to enroll in courses offered in-person but are unable to come to campus? This review should be done in consultation with the campus Office for Services with Students with Disabilities.
- Has the campus developed strategies to ensure that reasonable accommodations are instituted for faculty/staff with a possible range of disabilities (including medical conditions) who wish to teach or support the course(s) being requested for in-person instruction but are not able to come to campus? This review should be done in consultation with the campus Office of Human Resources.
- Has a strategy been developed to support timely faculty-student communication – consistent with FERPA and other applicable rules governing student privacy – regarding a student's health status and any changes in their ability to complete coursework and academic responsibilities via in-person modalities?

Course Policy Considerations:

- Some students have health conditions that will require them to continue to shelter at home while the COVID-19 pandemic continues; they will not be able to attend an in-person class on campus. Do course attendance and grading policies for in-person instruction support student health? Can remote/virtual assignments be readily made available to all in-person students (where possible) as a regular practice?
- To what extent will class participation contribute to the assessment of students' performance? Are there provisions for how to adjust this in a fair, equitable manner to account for when students are not able to attend class for COVID-19 related impacts, e.g., need to care for parent aged 65+ or children enrolled in K-12 who are learning at home, COVID-19 quarantine or isolation, etc.

Allied Health Program Considerations:

- As applicable, have clinical settings been surveyed to ensure adequate COVID-19-related safety protocols?

- Has the campus assessed the number of nursing students who will still need to come to campus for in-person instruction for some portion of their clinical simulation experience in the campus nursing simulation lab?[2]
- Does the campus have a process for rotating student schedules for when they need to be in-person?
- Have other allied health programs consulted with their respective professional accrediting bodies to see how long accommodations will be made for the reduced amount of clinical practice available?

<u>Education Program Clinical Placement Considerations</u>:

- Does the Education program continue to work with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding flexibility related to required elements of the clinical practice?[3]
- Does the Education program continue to work with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding deferrals of testing requirements to begin clinical practice (e.g., CBEST and CSET)?
- Is the Education program coordinating with the Chancellor's Office to support programs (via information exchanges) as they implement alternatives to *in-situ* observations of clinical experience?

Appendix C: Considerations for Non-Instructional Campus Operations, Programs and Services

If campuses are granted approvals for limited exceptions to offer instruction and/or ancillary programs on campus, then they must necessarily consider the related impacts on other campus operations, programs and services. Except for on-campus housing, dining/meal services, and intercollegiate athletics, *authority to review and approve exceptions related to non-instructional operations, programs and services remains the responsibility of campus Presidents to manage and oversee.* These include academic support and student services;[4] research, scholarship and creative activities; international programs; libraries; information technology services; and all other administrative support and ancillary operations.

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[2] Note that the CSU Chancellor's Office is working with the Board of Registered Nursing to continue the expansion of simulation clinical experience through the fall 2020 semester.

[3] Note that the Chancellor's Office will continue to work with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to expand virtual clinical experiences through the fall 2020 semester, at a minimum, and beyond as necessary.

[4] Given the broad range of possible functions, programs and services encompassed specifically by **academic support and student services**, supplemental guidance regarding these areas is available upon request from the Division of Academic and Student Affairs in the Chancellor's Office. Please contact Dr. Luoluo Hong, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, in the CSU Chancellor's Office (email: lhong@calstate.edu).

In making their decisions, with the input and advice of their administrative and programmatic subject-matter experts, campuses should carefully consider the wide range of frequently evolving guidance issued by state and federal governmental agencies, as well as information regarding best practices from various national professional associations regarding their respective specialized functional areas. In addition, campuses should engage in ongoing consultation with local public health officials to campus incremental repopulation efforts are in alignment with their directives.

Campuses are urged to apply and incorporate the following general principles:
- The preservation and promotion of public health for all students, faculty, staff and administrators should be of paramount and foremost importance at all times.
- Operations, programs and services should be delivered primarily in online, remote or virtual formats to the greatest extent possible.
- Operations, programs and services that are approved by the President to be provided in-person may be permitted, as long as levels of service continue to honor the goal of reducing density of campuses.
- Operations, programs and services may be delivered using a variety of modalities – in-person and online/remote/virtual - to meet student demand and student needs, while also minimizing disparate outcomes for students.
- Campuses are encouraged to account for the fact that a considerable proportion of the campus workforce may need to continue to telecommute in order to comply with ongoing Stay-at-Home orders or to comply with restrictions targeted at individuals (1) age 65 and over, (2) with medical conditions who incur increased risk for more severe disease manifestation of COVID-19, and/or (3) with compromised immune systems who are therefore more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection. *Note that collective bargaining agreements provide guidance regarding staffing levels and working conditions.*
- Planning to ensure the health and safety of guests/visitors should also be considered.

Lastly, campuses are strongly encouraged to review operations, programs and services on a regular basis to ensure that density levels remain as low as possible and that public health risks are minimized; if there is evidence that COVID-19 infections may be increasing, campuses should immediately reevaluate their scope of functioning and make adjustments as needed.