

President's Weekly Video November 18, 2013

Last spring, I shared that the CSU system has decided its 23 campuses will follow a semester calendar. We are among 6 campuses that will convert from quarters to semesters.

At its heart, this change will be a gift to future generations. The benefits of conversion are very clear, especially in supporting our student success initiatives.

The semester system allows for more in-depth projects, richer learning experiences, and closer relationships between faculty and students.

A semester calendar better aligns us with other colleges and universities. Virtually all community colleges are on semesters, enabling students to more easily transfer course credits and complete their degree. Students can also take advantage of more summer internships and research experiences. Faculty will find more sabbatical and academic opportunities.

Finally, collaboration is greatly augmented. It will be easier to share programs with other CSU campuses and partner in grants, research, and academic initiatives.

Transitioning to semesters is a lengthy and intensive process.

Our strategy is to spend this year planning the conversion. We will collaborate across departments and divisions to identify steps, and determine the budget required for each task. This involves anticipating the needs of our current students, prospective students, faculty, and staff.

Over another three years, we will adjust our curriculum, train staff, and convert our programs and processes. Most important, we will advise each of our students.

We pledge that each student who meets with an advisor and creates an Individual Academic Plan should suffer no loss in academic credit or progress to degree.

The official switch to semesters will take place in Fall 2017.

For years, our university has discussed the merits of conversion. In fact, three years ago, an ad hoc committee recommended conversion to a semester calendar because

of its benefits. However, the Academic Senate expressed concern over the expense and recommended against it.

Now that the Chancellor's Office is covering most of the cost of conversion, we are well positioned to make this change.

Conversion to semesters will demand the engagement of everyone in the Cal Poly Pomona community. With our extensive planning and thoughtful collaboration, I expect that our transition will be the best effort in the CSU because that is who we are and that is what we do on behalf of our students.

For more information, visit the semester conversion web site on your screen. (www.csupomona.edu/~academic/cal_conv/)

Earlier this month, Betty Faye and I volunteered through the Insan Foundation to feed the local homeless. We were honored to join about 25 of our students working with the foundation to build a stronger community.

Our Center for Community Engagement offers many opportunities for members of the Cal Poly Pomona family who would like to support their local communities.

For example, last month, a group of our volunteers packaged nearly 800 boxes of food and other essentials for families at a charity event in Ontario. And next month, Cal Poly Pomona volunteers will help out at the Pomona Christmas Parade.

Here again, this is who we are!

For more information about this and other volunteer opportunities, contact the Center for Community Engagement. [<http://www.csupomona.edu/~cce>, (909) 869-4269]

Many of you have chosen to give back by participating in the Faculty/Staff campaign at Cal Poly Pomona. Thank you for your involvement. You have lifted participation to 21%!

Remember, this campaign isn't about how MUCH you give. It's about coming together in this campus-wide effort -- whether by giving \$2 a month or \$10 each year. Believing in our academic mission and choosing to participate is what matters.

There is so much to be thankful for.

We will soon welcome home alumna Hilda Solis, the former U.S. Secretary of Labor. This is a rare opportunity to have someone with Hilda's long record of experience in public service come and be part of our learning community. That she is one of our alumni makes it all the more sweeter. We are delighted to have her join us beginning this Winter.

In other news, we held the ceremonial groundbreaking on November 7th for the new Collins College expansion.

The 10-million-dollar expansion will feature much needed space for the college's graduate program, a social space for students and additional offices that will allow for growth over time.

The expansion was made possible by longtime supporters of the college, including: college namesakes Carol and Jim Collins; Panda Restaurant Group founders Andrew and Peggy Cherng; The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation; Inland Empire businessman and alumnus Eugene Park; and Richard N. Frank and the late Mary Alice Frank.

We also just awarded emeritus status to 32 retired staff who served a minimum of 10 years of dedicated service to our university and demonstrated outstanding performance in their position.

It's always sad to see these special employees retire, but with emeritus status, we officially recognize that they will be Broncos for life.

Deep thanks are also in order for Dawn Taccone and her staff at the Farm Store. We know how busy they were during the Pumpkin Festival. But most people don't

realize they have practically hosted mini Pumpkin Festivals each day from October through November. Tens of thousands of people have been through the farm store, and we could not ask for better campus ambassadors!

Students, faculty and staff have one week left to apply for the Cross Cultural Retreat planned for Jan. 17-19 at the Kellogg West Conference Center.

Now in its 24th year, the annual retreat is an opportunity for honest dialogue about issues related to diversity and ways to build effective alliances across cultures.

This year's theme is "Power and Privilege: May the Odds Be Ever in Your Favor!"

The application deadline has been extended to Monday, November 25th. Visit the website below for details. (<http://dsa.csupomona.edu/osl/CCR.asp>)

Congratulations and best wishes to our men's cross country team. They will be competing at the Division II National Championships in Spokane, Washington.

They earned a spot at nationals after placing third overall in the West Region Championships last week.

This marks the program's 16th appearance at the national championships.

There are a number of music and theater events to enjoy in the coming weeks, including a main stage performance of the comedy "Bedroom Farce" running through November 24th.

For details, visit the university home page and click on Calendar.

Thanks for tuning in. See you next week!