

**President John D. Welty**  
**Spring Assembly address**  
**January 12, 2011**

Good morning and welcome to our Spring 2011 Assembly.

It doesn't seem possible to me that we have arrived at 2011. As you know, it's not just another new year -- it's THE year that we have been talking about and anticipating for quite some time -- our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year! A year in which we will continue to celebrate our Centennial with our campus family and our entire region. And it's a year in which we will graduate Fresno State's 100<sup>th</sup> class.

We had a fall semester full of Centennial activities and I know that we'll have many exciting events and wonderful moments ahead this spring. Check our website, [www.fresnostate100.com](http://www.fresnostate100.com) for details. Please mark May 14 on your calendar and plan to attend our Grand Centennial Gala at the Save Mart Center -- one week before our 100<sup>TH</sup> Commencement.

Yes, our Centennial is a very special year. If I had a magic wand, I would wave it to create blue skies, big budgets and problem-free days throughout the year.

Since I can't do that, we must rely on our usual Bulldog spirit of hard work, innovation and working together as we face what will probably be one of the most challenging periods in our 100-year history.

With that in mind, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their patience, understanding, flexibility and good work during the past six months. I know it has been a time of transition and change as we have said "goodbye" to many colleagues. Many of you have accepted new positions or additional responsibilities as we have tightened our collective belt to meet budgetary constraints. Our community has moved through this period with dignity and civility, and again, I sincerely thank each of you for your sacrifices and contributions.

I wish I could report that the fiscal situation was improving. It is not. In fact, it has gotten worse.

As you probably know already Governor Brown announced Monday that the state's projected deficit will reach \$26 billion, which is almost one-third of the state's budget.

He has committed himself to resolving this deficit by reducing state expenditures by \$12.6 billion any by asking the voters to approve temporary tax increases and closing some loopholes which would increase revenue by \$10 to 12 billion.

As he pointed out, the steps to be taken are extraordinarily painful. As part of the reduction, he is proposing that expenditures for higher education be reduced by \$1.4 billion. The UC and CSU and systems would each be reduced by \$500 million and the community colleges by \$400 million. To put this in context it amounts to an 18% reduction for our CSU system total state budget appropriation.

This reduction -- on top of what we have already experienced -- is devastating.

Fresno State's gross share of this reduction will be approximately \$28 million.

On the positive side, there will be no mid-year reduction in our budget this year and we will realize approximately \$8 million in new revenue from the tuition fees increase already adopted by the board of trustees for next year. It is too soon to determine the exact reduction, because the Governor's workpapers have not yet been released, but I anticipate an approximate reduction in 2011-12 at about \$20 million for Fresno State.

There are still many unknowns that will impact our actual reduction. However to help you understand the order of magnitude, remember that in 2009-10, the campus furlough reduction targets were approximately \$12.9 million.

Also keep in mind that the \$500 million CSU reduction is – in essence – a “best case” scenario. If California voters do not agree to extend a series of temporary sales, income and vehicle license taxes, spending cuts are likely to be even deeper.

Unfortunately we cannot accomplish this reduction without making extraordinary changes. Everything must be on the table as we examine the future. We also must act now to minimize the level of disruption for the future.

Therefore, I am directing the following actions today:

1. All position vacancies are frozen and current searches will be reconsidered. I will consider these on a case-by-case basis, and I intend to close searches that do not reflect high-priority needs, health and safety or instances where appointments are about to be made.
2. We will place restrictions on travel similar to those of a year ago.
3. We will limit or postpone major purchases and deferred maintenance.

Vice-President Matson's office will issue specific directions within the week on all fiscal and position restrictions.

4. We will not operate a state funded summer school this year. We will operate a self-funded summer program through the Continuing and Global Education division.
5. We will immediately examine the impact of these budget reductions on our enrollment for next year. I will try to reach decisions on how we will address enrollment by February 1. It's safe to say our enrollment next year will be substantially less than this year.
6. By early February, I will announce the process we will follow to determine other measures needed to achieve the proposed reductions. We will follow a shared process of

decision-making, which we have used in the past. It is my hope that we can get to a plan by early- to mid-April.

As I said earlier, we will need to examine everything we do and take steps to maintain stability and to give priority to those students who are already enrolled. If you have creative ideas, I'd like to hear them! I've asked Associate Vice President Clint Moffitt to collect comments and forward them to me. Please send your ideas to [CMOFFITT@CSUFRESNO.EDU](mailto:CMOFFITT@CSUFRESNO.EDU).

The challenge we face is greater than any budget problem I have faced at Fresno State.

We are being forced to cope with the results of our state's ineffective solutions and the failure to courageously take steps to get California's house in order. Now as we work to do that, we also must help decision-makers remember that the future vitality of this state is dependent upon a well-educated work force and a strong economy. As a state, we must not lose sight of that fact as we seek to resolve this crisis.

Quoting [CSU] Chancellor Reed: "The reality is that there is no pain-free way to accomplish spending reductions of this magnitude, nor is it realistic to think that we can proceed to enroll as many students next fall as we had planned. With regard to our students, it is paramount that we preserve the quality of the academic programs, the quality of the academic experience and necessary support services to ensure students' success. Access to the university must mean authentic access, where we can provide adequate classes and services for our students. It will be important as we work through the next few months to educate the new Administration and the Legislature on the importance to California of preserving access that is authentic and to the need to be honest about necessary budgeting tradeoffs."

As you may be aware, enrollment planning during the past 18 months has been a roller coaster ride. However the skills and flexibility of our enrollment services staff – plus the dedicated efforts of Deans, Associate Deans and Department Chairs to create a schedule that meets student needs – have positioned us very positively for the Spring semester so we can receive enrollment growth money from the Chancellor's Office. The Spring enrollment target of approximately 20,250 headcount and 18,000 FTES is a very ambitious target but one that we hope to attain by census.

We expect to enroll approximately 1,200 new students in the Spring. This plus the addition of approximately 300 classes will help us meet our FTE target and will provide students with the courses they need to complete their degree programs in a timely manner. I urge everyone to make every effort to encourage additional student enrollments over the next days and weeks.

And as we face this latest set of budget challenges, let me stress the importance of maintaining our core values and priorities. The talent and dedication of everyone here, and the capacity of this great university to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of our students and in the life of our region, are, and will be the foundations for our future.

That future is already glowing with potential. Take, for instance, the Campaign for Fresno State, our comprehensive fundraising campaign. This is a crucial priority as we seek to diversify our sources of revenue and continue to build upon the quality of our campus.

Though fundraising during economic downturn is tough work, our Campaign for Fresno State, which seeks to strengthen key academic programs, has been persistent – and successful to date.

As of December 31, we have raised over 160 million dollars. That's 80% of our 200 million-dollar goal. More than 25,000 individuals and organizations have made 95,000 gifts.

More than 80 percent of the dollars raised are going to enhance academics, and the impact of gifts is felt throughout the university. As one example, Provost Covino reports that private giving has had a significant impact on the programs offered in the Lyles College of Engineering. Eight teaching and research laboratories were upgraded in 2010 as a result of gifts made to the College. The Lyles College is partnering with the Jordan College of Agriculture and the regional manufacturing industry in the development of a new University Center to Advance Manufacturing.

Since our Campaign started in July 2005, the entire university has benefited. When you entered you were handed a sheet that lists the major gifts we have received. As you can see, donors have provided scholarships and created scholarship endowments; funded financial literacy training for school-age children; supported faculty research, training for nurses, and faculty fellowships; and have improved facilities and renovated laboratories.

- Gifts also made a good library into a great one, and they've named two colleges (Jordan and Lyles). Important centers have been created.
- Gifts have made it possible for foster youth to realize a dream and go to college
- Our most recent major gifts include a \$1.5 million commitment to fund fellowships in the Jordan College; a \$500,000 commitment from Bronco Winery to fund a second professorship in viticulture and enology; a \$200,000 gift to be matched; and a \$200,000 honors college scholarship gift.

And there's more good news to come in the Campaign!

We've also had significant success in the area of grants and contracts.

The Office of Community and Economic Development is administering a \$4 million HUD grant to develop sustainable communities, in partnership with a number of Central California cities, including Fresno.

The College of Arts and Humanities has received two prestigious grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, to support the Middle East Studies program, and to launch an interfaith dialogue series in Philosophy.

A \$3.1 million federal grant will help our efforts to close the gap between the number of Hispanic and Caucasian students who graduate. The developmental grant, awarded by the U.S.

Department of Education to Hispanic-Serving Institutions will fund a new program titled Commitment to Latina/o Academic Success and Excellence by providing specific resources for students and the university to improve upon graduation rates among Hispanic students. This grant will supplement efforts already underway to close the achievement gap between all groups of students.

A \$1.2 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to the Biology Department will fund a new program to research the correlation between pesticides and breast cancer among Latina farm workers. The grant creates the Cancer Biology Program, in collaboration with the Sanford-Burnham Medical Research in LaJolla.

We continue to advance two system-wide efforts:

1. Improving our students' six-year graduation rate, now with the help of a grant from the US Department of Education, and
2. Providing high school students with lower test scores in English and Math an "early start" toward strengthening their college level skills in these areas. Dean Dennis Nef and Professor Colleen Torgerson have developed promising initiatives with high school administrators throughout the region, in order to move this effort forward.

This year's six-year graduation rate (for new freshman entering in fall 2004) was the highest in record – 50.6%. The first-year retention rate for students entering in the fall of 2009 was the highest on record – 86.6%. It is clear that many efforts that we have put in place are working.

All of this points to the positive impact of your work as you support our students' efforts to succeed. Our graduation rate initiative has been commended by the Chancellor's office and what is most satisfying is that our students will continue to be the beneficiaries of your dedication in this important initiative.

Our student-athletes continue to excel on the playing field and in the classroom, with five Bulldog sports teams posting Graduation Success Rates of 80% or better, the highest number of sports to reach that level.

The Bulldog senior class had two players earn Academic All-America honors, the first time in school history that's ever happened.

We continue to develop new degree programs. Among them:

- The Craig School of Business is launching an accelerated bachelor's degree program in Business this month.
- Planning for two new independent doctorates is moving ahead and we look forward in fall 2012 to offering doctoral degrees in Nursing Practice and Physical Therapy. Notably, these new programs are planned to be self-supporting, as is the case for our Doctoral program in Educational Leadership.

- The Kremen School of Education has received approval for a new online Master's degree in Reading, and to offer our Educational Leadership Doctorate in Bakersfield.

We also are moving forward on several new programs and academic centers.

Funded by a generous initial gift, the College of Arts and Humanities will launch the new Center for Creativity and the Arts in March, with the participation of noted artist Margarita Cabrerias of El Paso, Texas, who will be creating the first interdisciplinary exhibit next fall, on Labor, Women, and Migration.

The College of Social Sciences and the Department of Geography have begun the Community and Regional Planning Center, whose mission is to serve as a planning-related knowledge clearinghouse for the Valley.

The College of Science and Mathematics is establishing a Computational Science Center that will allow students to receive training in high-performance computing. The center will offer projects that include bio-informatics, climate modeling and urban planning.

We continue our efforts to strengthen the learning environment and promote innovations in student learning. In November, we launched our Red Balloon project in conjunction with a national initiative that encourages universities to re-imagine and potentially redesign academics in higher education. Our campus Steering Committee is actively working on this project and in the next week, you will receive an email call for those interested to join one of five task forces that will meet over the Spring semester. They will brainstorm new ideas and solutions using the information generated from both the Red Balloon event and from our campus' Strategic Planning event.

A major priority this semester will be to update our Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee is working to set our campus' priorities for the next three to five years. A draft plan will be released to the campus community for comment early in February. Following this comment period the committee will finalize the plan and send it to the Academic Senate for endorsement in March.

This strategic plan calls for the University to aggressively pursue innovation in its academic programs to improve student success, and to close the achievement gaps between all groups. It recognizes the critical importance of providing support for faculty to undertake the continued growth in stimulating learning and the need for faculty to engage in transformational scholarship.

At the same time, it recognizes the necessity for the University to develop innovative approaches to service delivery in order to reduce costs and to utilize the talent of existing staff and faculty time. To achieve success will require an increase in private support and creative approaches to developing new resources.

This year we are making significant efforts to provide professional development opportunities for our faculty and staff. For faculty, our Center for the Scholarly Advancement of Learning and

Teaching, or CSALT, and the Technology Innovations for Learning and Teaching, TILT, are rolling out a series of workshops and conferences for all faculty on course redesign, critical thinking assignments, and other teaching innovations.

Under the leadership of Vice President Matson, the campus is proactively advancing several new professional development initiatives for staff and managers. Last fall, 10 individuals were selected to be part of an inaugural one-academic year regional cohort group focused on leadership development.

Additionally, you may have heard about the Learning for Excellence and Development Program, or LEAD, which encompasses the knowledge building and enhancement of skills sets in five tracks – Technology Development, Customer Service, Navigating through Fresno State, Essentials for Managers, Chairs and Work Leads, and Wellness at Work.

Please watch for campus wide announcement and fliers of program offerings and online registration. There are significant efforts to provide opportunities for all employees. Managers are strongly encouraged to provide opportunities for staff to participate.

As I mentioned in my fall Assembly remarks, the campus has been on a quest to examine and streamline processes that exist in our everyday work life. Our first efforts looked at four critical processes that overlap in Academic Personnel Services, Human Resources, Payroll and Workers Compensation.

Subsequently, we have implemented an initiative known as the Lean University. This is not a weight loss program, but is a program that methodically assesses and focuses on eliminating unnecessary steps or processes. In view of what I mentioned earlier with regard to the budget, we must accelerate this effort.

Six campus teams are wrapping up their work on projects to:

- Improve the approval process for sponsored programs.
- Streamline the employment and payroll processes for university employees who receive additional employment through sponsored programs.
- Improve the timeframe involved in our gift acceptance policy.
- Improve the Advancement database.
- Improve or modify customer service requests and the work order process in Facilities.
- Reduce the number of graduation exceptions.

I am pleased with the work of all 10 groups who have engaged in this forward-looking approach to transforming processes and improving the outcomes of how we do business at Fresno State. The team leaders will be certified as Lean Facilitators and will be advising me on advancing initiatives across the campus.

We have provided you with an update on our campus facility projects in a brief handout. Some of these projects could be impacted as a result of my earlier comments on the 2011-12 budgets. Some projects are funded by capital or private dollars which we can't use for operating. Thus, they will proceed to completion.

And finally, as we continue in this Centennial year, we also should look to the future. It's time to create new traditions for the next 100 years. Plans are underway to introduce a new program called "STAR" – or Staff Training and Recognition Day.

This program will revitalize a number of existing activities like the service and retiree recognition luncheon and the annual picnic, and it will introduce new traditions around recognition for staff and managers. The STAR day will be happening in late May, and details will be announced in the coming months. I will be asking for campus-wide participation to celebrate employee accomplishments.

This semester will be a period of great challenge. It is important that we stay focused on our long-term future while we address the immediate problems presented by the state's fiscal crisis. It is important that all of us carry the banner for public higher education in this state.

Californians must come together and make sacrifices for the greater good and our future. That future must include a commitment to an educated population and support for public higher education.

As we engage in debate about our state's fiscal crisis in the coming months, I call on everyone to commit themselves to civility and reasoned discussion, without blaming individuals or groups for the situation. This past weekend, our country witnessed a tragedy which must not become the way we seek to resolve problems. Please join me in rejecting any effort to demonize or falsely accuse those who hold opinions different from ours.

Thank you for all that you do to make Fresno State a special place for our students. Your dedication and commitment provides them the opportunity to achieve their dreams and build a better life for themselves and their families. Our 100<sup>th</sup> Commencement will celebrate your work in transforming lives.

Thank you.

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