



September 1, 2016

Dear San Francisco State community,

As we begin a new academic year, my fifth at San Francisco State, I want to welcome you back to the university during a time of great change and growth for our community. The 2015-16 academic year brought significant opportunities to examine who we are as an institution, and who we aspire to be. Our next steps forward will be important.

As I shared at the faculty convocation earlier this week, our challenges this year remain strong if not more complex and difficult than in years past. Higher education in the U.S. faces new challenges, deeper scrutiny and increasing student activism, and our campus is no exception. Today's students, rightfully so, have asked that their university education be relevant, meaningful, and affordable. I would add that they also deserve an education that is challenging, value-driven, and above all, provocative.

To that end, I will be focusing on four areas this year.

### **Campus Safety**

We will do our best to provide a safe environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors through improved practices, training and awareness. We will also create a new "campus awareness" team to work with and alongside our Emergency Operations Center and the cabinet as we improve our awareness of campus events. Remember, campus safety is all our responsibility.

### **Student Success Graduation Initiative**

Implemented by Chancellor White in response to legislative priorities connected to our budget appropriation, the Student Success and Graduation Initiative will engulf all 23 campuses of the CSU. The "SSGI" clearly signals not only a renewed emphasis on academic progress and graduation, but the linkage of these factors to budget considerations is new and critical.

### **The Budget**

We are re-structuring and re-benching the budget allocations to the six academic colleges for greater clarity and transparency. We have made every effort to "make whole" the budgets of all six academic colleges, while making clear the expectation of more responsibility and accountability on the part of the deans. To support this effort, I am asking the Strategic Issues Committee of the Academic Senate to take up this new model and ask "how might this model plus any improvements help us re-design and improve the student experience?"



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### **Decision-making and Collaboration**

I have not been satisfied with the collaborative and decision structures, most notably within the President's domain.

I have restructured my interactions with my direct reports, and I've chosen to create two new groups. A "campus awareness group" composed of 10 critical individuals will focus on anticipating the University's needs of today and tomorrow. I am also forming a "group of 40" that focus on topics such as the health, morale, effectiveness, operations and issues facing the campus.

Last, but not least, I want to give kudos to the Advancement team for their success in the 2015-16 fiscal year. The University raised a record-breaking \$22+ million in support of students and faculty and more than \$54 million overall as a part of the "Bold. Thinking." comprehensive campaign.

Just as we all have a part to play in safety in our community, we all have a role to play in student success, and in supporting our campus community to be the best it can be. I look forward to our work together.

Go Gators,

Les Wong  
President