

Kennedy Library leads CSU Information Competence Project

by Sallie Harlan and Sariya Talip Clay, Reference Librarians

As information proliferates and technology becomes more sophisticated, Cal Poly students must be able to find, evaluate, use, and communicate information efficiently and effectively. To this end, the Robert E. Kennedy Library is embracing new technologies and electronic media that incorporate "information competence" into the core curriculum and library instruction to help meet academic needs and enable students to become informed and productive citizens.

For the past 20-plus months, the Kennedy Library has spearheaded the California State University Information Competence Project, funded by the CSU Commission on Learning Resources and Industrial Technology. The project comprises the following:

Information Competence Course: In this 3-unit class undergraduates learn how to use information in all its various formats. The course transforms a traditional library skills syllabus by incorporating computer and technological literacy as well as critical thinking skills. Sessions on authoring and communicating information using PageMill and PowerPoint are interspersed with sessions on locating, evaluating, and using print and electronic resources, and

discussions on ethical issues such as copyright, privacy, and censorship.

Web Instructional Modules: An interactive WWW-based electronic workbook (under development) will consist of several self-paced instructional sample pages, excerpts from full-text sources, citations, and other relevant materials to provide a realistic learning environment. Students will be able to view instructional tips and examples and complete interactive practice exercises that provide feedback and self-evaluation.

Classroom Multimedia Presentations: To support and enhance the Information Competence Course, multimedia presentations created with Macromedia Director are also being developed. Concepts and skills are highlighted with graphics and step-by-step instructions.

SET (Student-Centered Electronic Teaching)

Classroom: The new SET classroom is a combination electronic classroom, information concourse, and multimedia laboratory. The design of the study tables and computer workstations facilitate active and collaborative learning. **CP**

*Legendary
funnyman
Bill Cosby is
the kind of
performer
Cal Poly Arts
brings to
San Luis
Obispo as
part of its
Center Stage
Series.*



Open House to celebrate tradition

Make plans now to attend Cal Poly's Fifth Annual Open House on April 17-18. This year's theme, "Poly Classic," honors university traditions.

Friday, April 17, is the annual Admitted Student Day, where newly admitted students attend a pancake breakfast and then spend the day with their prospective colleges. Saturday, April 18, is open to the public. Guests can visit more than 100 booths featuring campus clubs and organizations and observe the long-standing traditions of the tractor pull and rodeo.

The Cal Poly Alumni Association invites alumni to visit its new check-in booth to meet with their college representatives and learn about other special events. For more information on Open House, contact Student Life and Activities at 805/756-2476 or the Alumni Relations office at 888/CAL-POLY. **CP**

STUDENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Career Services mission control for career planning

by Richard Equinoa

Director, Career Services

Almost 9,000 students register annually for services at the Career Services department, the primary centralized campus resource that helps students and alumni formulate and implement their career plans. Career Services is also the first point of contact for graduate schools and employers interested in recruiting or hiring.

In employment assistance, the driving philosophy is to provide services that make it as easy as possible for employers and students to connect. More than 500 companies participate in the campus interview program, conducting almost 11,000 student interviews on a pre-select or open sign-up basis. Many list positions on the 24-hour Job Line, supply the Career Resource Center with company videos or hard-copy publications, order electronic resume books, participate in job fairs and career days, conduct employer information sessions, and link company home pages to the Career Services home page at <http://www.careerservices.calpoly.edu>.

Emphasizing access to services and resources, two major efforts were launched last year.

The **First Year Initiative-Career** takes Career Services into the residence halls to stimulate students' early thinking about their majors and prospective career directions through on-line career planning, selected workshops and programming, and the creative use of technology.

Web Walk Up, providing 24-hour on-line access to registration and interview scheduling, was introduced in fall 1997. Student participation is high, and staff members continue to improve software and service.

Historically, Cal Poly has placed a heavy emphasis on the career dimension of its university experience, both in and out of the classroom, and the university's support for Career Services is just one indication of its commitment to a successful career transition beyond Cal Poly. For more information on the Career Resource Center, call 805/756-2501. **CP**

Smoothing the way for first-year students

by Patricia Ponce

FYI Coordinator, Student Academic Services

Do you remember your first year at college?

Did you wonder if you would fit in, what your roommate would be like, whether you would make friends like the ones back home? Did you worry about making it academically, getting along with your professors?

All of these "transitional" issues are common to first-year college students. Under the

Division of Student Affairs' mission to "advance and encourage the learning and personal development of students," they are being addressed at Cal Poly by a new First Year Initiative (FYI) that unifies all freshmen and transfer student programs.

These include traditional Student Affairs programs such as Open House, Summer Advising,

Week of Welcome, and Housing and Residential Life, as well as revamped coordinated programs such as First Year Seminars, Math Workshops, Supplemental Instruction, Study Group, and Career Access that equip students with improved skills for competing in a rigorous academic environment and in their later professional lives. **CP**

CSUMentor helps students make best college choice

A new Internet-based information system established by the California State University system is making it easier for prospective college students to explore admission options at the 23 CSU campuses.

Free access to the Web site — www.csumentor.edu — allows high school students to enter personal and scholastic data into a program that will help them

choose the CSU best matching their needs and abilities. To help students meet minimum CSU entrance requirements, CSUMentor specifies high school courses, required grades, and SAT and ACT testing times and locations. When students are ready to apply to a CSU campus, the Internet system can transfer completed applications and forms electronically.

The secure CSUMentor database is maintained throughout students' high school and college careers. It includes a private e-mail account, financial aid information, and virtual tours of CSU campuses. XAP Corporation, which designed and developed the system, plans to apply similar versions to university systems nationwide. **CP**

President Baker heads seminar, honored by alma mater

Stepping into the classroom again winter quarter, President Warren J. Baker led a select group of students in studying how changes in society and scientific discoveries are altering the face of higher education.

"The President's Seminar: Science, Society, and the University" looked at such issues as how universities must change to meet the challenges of the 21st century, the effects of demographic and funding patterns on higher education, and the role of universities in addressing social problems.

Among scheduled speakers were Joseph Platt, president emeritus, Harvey Mudd College; David Goodstein, Caltech vice provost; Jim Considine, California State University trustee, and Jack O'Connell, California state senator.

Last fall Baker was awarded the University of Notre Dame's Cavanaugh Award, the highest alumni honor, for "outstanding service in the field of government, patriotism, public service, and local, state, and national politics." In announcing the award, Charles F. Lennon Jr., alumni association executive director, told Baker, "You fit all categories."

Baker's daughter, Carrie, is also a Notre Dame

graduate, and his father-in-law, Matthew Fitzsimons, taught at that university for 50 years.

Baker earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Notre Dame in 1960 and his master's two years later. He received his doctorate in civil engineering from the University of New Mexico in 1966.

After joining the University of Detroit faculty in 1966, Baker moved on to become dean of the College of Engineering and vice president for academic affairs. He was named Cal Poly's president in 1979.

In 1983 Baker was appointed to the Agency for International Development's Board for International Food and Agriculture Development, and in 1985 began a nine-year term on the National Science Board, which included serving as chair of the Polar Research Committee. In 1995 he was named co-chair of the California Joint Policy Council on Agriculture and Higher Education.

Under Baker's leadership, Cal Poly has seen more than \$170 million in capital improvements made to the campus, including the development of 17 major buildings, and has become recognized as one of the best polytechnic universities in the nation. **CP**



During summer 1997 both the campus El Corral Bookstore (top) and Cal Poly Downtown (bottom) in San Luis Obispo were given shiny new looks with remodels that added space and increased efficiency. (Photos by David Wood)

EXTRA CREDIT

- College of Agriculture Dean **Joseph J. Jen**, an expert in food enzymes and biotechnology, has been appointed by Gov. Pete Wilson to the State Board of Food and Agriculture.
- Physics Professor **Richard Frankel** has been awarded a \$275,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to further explore the controversial theory that life existed on ancient Mars. Frankel, an expert in bacterial iron oxides and iron sulfides, is leading one of several studies of the meteorite found in Antarctica that may contain evidence of life on Mars 2 to 3.6 billion years ago.
- **America Reads @ Cal Poly** is a collaborative project that is part of a nationwide program proposed by President Clinton to improve the reading skills of elementary school children. Student and community volunteers are trained as tutors to work in after-school, weekend, and summer reading programs. The Cal Poly project is sponsored by the Liberal Studies Program in the College
- of Liberal Arts, the University Center for Teacher Education, Student Community Services, and Financial Aid.
- **Gerald Smith**, a former department head and professor of landscape architecture, has been recognized as the 1997 Distinguished Member of the International Honor Society of Sigma Lambda Alpha for his vision, sense of duty, educational leadership, and sustained service. His areas of expertise are landscape history and evolutionary histories of regional landscapes; urban design; and site design, analysis, and planning.
- **Robert E. McCorkle**, a longtime agribusiness professor, is one of 200 national leaders in agriculture and natural resources to be named to the Centennial Honor Roll of Alpha Zeta, the nation's oldest professional agriculture honorary society. He is recognized for his efforts on behalf of the Peace Corps and his knowledge of international agricultural economic development issues.
- **L. Joe Glass**, a professor in the Bioresource and Agricultural Engineering Department, has been honored for his service by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. Glass earned a Director's Citation for serving 10 years as an adviser to officers in the ASAE National Student Club.
- Cal Poly's **agricultural systems management degree program** was recognized by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers in a process similar to accreditation. Cal Poly's becomes the first California program so honored and joins 21 other such ASEA-recognized programs nationwide.
- **Norman Pillsbury**, head of the Natural Resources Management Department, has been named to the California Spotted Owl Federal Advisory Committee, established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to resolve a long-standing debate about the kind of logging allowed to sustain the owl and its habitat. Pillsbury is an expert in forest inventory and measurement. **CP**

More student housing may be in the works

Studies by a Bay Area consulting firm should help Cal Poly decide whether and where to build more student housing and how to finance it.

By fall 1999 additional student housing may accommodate 600-plus currently enrolled students at Cal Poly. Gordon H. Chong & Partners spent several months conducting detailed site, market, and financial analyses, and gathering community

comment through the Student Housing Advisory Committee (a group comprising Cal Poly representatives), the San Luis Obispo City Council, Cuesta College, the Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Supervisors, the private Campus Housing Association, and Residents for Quality Neighborhoods.

The university hopes to have a final recommendation by this summer. **CP**

Cal Poly ranked tops fifth year in a row

U.S. News and World Report again ranked Cal Poly the best public regional university in the West, giving it high marks for academic reputation and the quality of its students.

Among all Western regional colleges and universities, both public and private, Cal Poly was rated third in reputation and quality and 11th overall, up two notches from last year. In "operating efficiently" — providing a high-quality education while spending relatively less — *U.S. News* ranked Cal Poly fourth.

Also according to *U.S. News*' "1998 Annual Guide to America's Best Colleges," the College of Engineering is rated the top public undergraduate engineering institution in the nation, as it was in 1997. **CP**



Integrated core program new approach to business

Cal Poly Plan dollars, two years of faculty planning, and the desire to reshape the undergraduate and graduate core curriculum in the College of Business have helped pave the way for a new "integrated" approach to teaching.

In fall 1997, the undergraduate Integrated Business Core Program merged the six core junior-level business courses into one curriculum team taught by eight faculty members over a two-quarter period. Lectures, case discussions, experiential exercises, computer laboratory sessions, and team projects were combined into one module designed to provide an interdisciplinary outlook on the business enterprise, helping students analyze and solve problems from a generalist and company-wide approach.

"We wanted real integration," says Michael Stebbins, area coordinator and professor of management. "In the design phase, we asked ourselves, 'What do we jointly want to get out of this?' And we answered, 'New things that have never been done before.'"

Stebbins and his team looked at 20 integrated programs at other universities to come up with one tailored for Cal Poly. "We're pushing the concept as far as we can take it, further than any other program we've seen," says Stebbins.

The graduate-level Integrated Business Core Program is also team taught by eight faculty members. However, its three-quarter schedule replaces the traditional first-year curriculum of MBA required courses.

David Peach, director of graduate management programs in the College of Business, says the two goals of the MBA integrated program are to reduce the size of the core curriculum from 48 units to 36 units and to offer more dual master's degree programs. "We want to do more with less," he says.

After completion of this experimental program, Peach says that students will have a better sense of how the different pieces of management relate to each other. "Students are learning how to learn differently," he says. "They'll see the synergistic effects, not just marketing."

According to William Boynton, dean of the College of Business, the program is a result of a huge development effort that, in addition to Plan dollars, wouldn't be possible without funding from private support. These funding sources allow the College of Business to hire additional lecturers and purchase specialized materials like case studies and videotapes.

"Change is alive and well at Cal Poly," Peach says. "It's not business as usual." **CP**