

[Skip to Content](#) ?

[my CalPoly login](#)



News

University News & Information

[Admissions & Aid](#)

[Majors & Colleges](#)

[Research](#)

[Alumni Community](#)

[Campus Life](#)

[Athletics](#)

[About](#)



Sept. 16, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Matt Lazier

805-756-7109; mlazier@calpoly.edu

New Academic Year Brings Focus on Growth and Financial Stability at Cal Poly

President Jeffrey D. Armstrong Calls for More Access, Improved Graduation Rates, Professional Development for Faculty and Improved Campus Climate in 2013 Fall Conference Address

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly faculty and staff began the new academic year Monday with the kickoff to the university's annual Fall Conference, which precedes the start of classes on Sept. 23.

Monday's activities included a state-of-the-university keynote address from Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong, who welcomed faculty and staff to the new school year and outlined near-term strategic goals.

Among his goals and initiatives, Armstrong announced that the university will investigate how it will increase enrollment to respond to California's needs for more four-year college graduates.

"Enrollment growth is essential. California — really, the country — needs more Cal Poly graduates," Armstrong said. "However, the extent, nature and timing of growth are questions that we need to investigate with all of Cal Poly's stakeholders — on campus and off campus.

"This includes evaluating our master plan, engaging the Academic Senate, as well as consulting with our city and community leaders. We must work together in asking and answering the right questions."

Among the questions, he said, would be an assessment of what the impact would be on the community as well as what the economic impact would be on the city and region. At the campus level, he said, there are many complexities, including what facilities the campus would need for classes, labs, and offices as well as for student housing and dining.

Enrollment this fall will be about 19,800 students, including graduate students. Armstrong said Cal Poly should consider growing by as much as 4,000 to 5,000 students over the next few years, depending on state funding, private support and the ability to physically accommodate new growth.

Armstrong also outlined four goals for the university to focus on this year and the next few years:

— Improved graduation rates. "Improving Cal Poly's four-year graduation rate would be our most effective response to the demands by legislators, parents, and students to improve higher education's accessibility, affordability, and accountability," Armstrong said. Currently, about 75 percent of students graduate within six years, while about 31 percent graduate in four years. Armstrong said Cal Poly's six-year graduation rate needs to be at least 90 percent by 2022, and the four-year graduation rate must at least double.

— Further implementation of the Teacher-Scholar Model, which encourages faculty

to undertake more applied research and scholarly projects that can enrich their teaching. "I see implementation of the Teacher-Scholar model as a key driver of students' success, as a way to bolster Learn by Doing, and a key to professional growth for faculty," Armstrong said.

— An enhanced campus climate that will help the university increase the diversity of students, faculty and staff, which in turn would help the university better prepare its graduates for success in the global workforce. "Anecdotal information indicates that we have work to do. Our campus climate can be improved," Armstrong said. In terms of increasing racial and ethnic diversity, Armstrong said: "We have made progress in attracting more Latino students to campus, which is appropriate as Latinos are California's future majority. If we are to remain a top institution, however, we must make more progress with Latino students and all other under-represented groups."

— Increasing private support to strengthen Learn by Doing and sustain the university's national reputation for excellence.

"These goals are intertwined and interdependent," Armstrong said. "If we are to succeed on any of our goals, we must increase private support. This means increasing gifts from individual donors as well as expanding public-private partnerships well beyond what we have ever contemplated in the past."

As an example of the benefits of public-private partnerships, Armstrong cited the opening this week of the \$120 million Warren J. Baker Center for Science and Mathematics. The state-of-the-art building, which opens to students this fall, was financed through \$100 million in state bonds and \$20 million in private support from Cal Poly alumni and friends.

The building is named in honor of Emeritus President Warren Baker who served as Cal Poly president for 31 years until his retirement in 2009. Baker was present for a moment of special recognition during Armstrong's remarks.

Armstrong said that Cal Poly enters the year "with excellent momentum on several strategic fronts."

This fall's freshman class not only has the highest overall grade-point average and test scores in Cal Poly history, it also will be the most racially and ethnically diverse, continuing a trend of the last several years. Cal Poly also will welcome the largest incoming class of transfer students in more than a decade.

For the first time since 2007, Cal Poly is not facing cuts in state funding. "In fact, thanks to voters' resounding approval of Governor Brown's Proposition 30, we are receiving a modest restoration of a portion of the state funds that had been cut over the years," Armstrong said. "Appropriately, the CSU used some of the money to rollback tuition. Equally significant, the CSU has earmarked some of that money to enable us to enroll more California students for the first time in four years."

He also cited the university's successful efforts the past year to increase private support. For the fiscal year that ended June 30, Cal Poly raised nearly \$43 million in cash, bequest intentions and pledges, nearly a 50 percent increase over the prior year and the best year since the Centennial Campaign a decade ago.

In closing, Armstrong called on the faculty and staff to honor the past. "When Cal Poly welcomed its first class of students 110 years ago this fall, there was no guarantee that the school would grow into the premier university that we are so proud of today.

"Our university's success is due in large part to our predecessors' relentless quest for constant improvement. Let us continue their tradition of excellence."

Fall Conference continues all week and includes college and department retreats, meetings, orientations and receptions. For more information and the full text of Armstrong's prepared remarks, visit <http://fallconference.calpoly.edu/>.

Fall quarter classes begin Monday, Sept. 23.

#



[CP Home](#) | [Directory](#) | [Campus Maps & Directions](#) | [Bookstore](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Employment](#) | [Campus Policies](#) | [Contact Us](#)

CAL POLY

[Get Adobe Reader](#) | [Microsoft Viewers](#)

© 2012 California Polytechnic State University | San Luis Obispo, California 93407
Phone: 805-756-1111