



“To see Oceania as a connected, fluid, moving body rather than a static collection of unconnected pieces is to understand Oceanic movement in the same way we understand that our bodies rely on constant rhythms and circulations of blood to survive.” (Kava, 2020)

I’m often inspired by the ocean, its calm, strength, and expansiveness. It holds so much life and gives tremendous sustenance, especially to all those who live along and within the Pacific Rim. Not until I came into administration did I begin to comprehend how San Francisco State is an ocean of its own, at times calm and at other times furious, providing a professional home for many and launching its inhabitants towards self-actualization. Leora Kava above theorized Oceania as a “connector” to resist tyrannical borders and advance liberation. And I imagine that many of our students feel the same way about the education they receive here. While Kava, a faculty member in Race and Resistance Studies, never intended the application that follows, I now ask all of you for a moment to apply Pacific Studies in thinking about our university.

As you all know, we are in the midst of a tremendous storm, facing formidable swells of realignment these past two years. We’ve experienced this not because of any fault of one person or a singular failed approach, but the simple equation of fewer college bound students in a vastly more competitive environment than any of us have ever witnessed. This past fall we had 20,173 students, a 7.4% decrease since fall 2024, and an enrollment drop of approximately 8,000 students since our peak in 2018. As President Mahoney has reminded us, 8,000 students is the size of some entire CSU campuses such as Monterey Bay. We have managed to navigate the inevitable task of shrinking through the deliberate but painful work of offering fewer sections due to fewer students, reducing low enrolled courses, increasing class sizes, and rethinking our curricula. We are additionally investing in areas of growth. Departments are creating new certificates more directly tied to the workforce and streamlining their curriculum. The magnitude of what we have accomplished thus far, should not be underplayed. Still, we must continue to transform ourselves in order to hold steady against significant headwinds in our service to working Californians.

I write today to bolster all of us to stay strong, to resist an overwhelming tide of despondency, to refuse paralysis, while still acknowledging the difficulties we face. For now, we still have a future that we can, to some degree, define for ourselves, as we have been successfully shrinking to align with budget and enrollment. Most of us have been working concertedly, rowing in the same direction, even as our muscles have become sore. A number of programs have proactively shifted the teaching of GE and other graduation requirements to departments with fewer numbers of students. Other high demand programs have increased class size to serve more students within our new budget reality. Many departments have been planning schedules with the entire university in mind. This means acknowledging that offering a fewer number of courses through fuller enrollments has a positive impact on achieving a leaner curriculum as a whole.

The challenges in front of us are still significant. We continue to have too many general education courses, as well as a tenure density that is not financially sustainable. We in fact have 11% fewer first-time freshmen than last year and too many tenure stream faculty in many departments for the current number of students. While some have worried that a premature cancellation of classes will reduce seats for students, we actually saw 3,848 open seats in GE this semester, an increase from 2,661 open seats we had in spring 2025. A holistic approach when planning for our individual

program curriculum means imagining our university as a single connected ocean, a collection of interdependent islands that will survive only through consideration and collaboration. Chairs and faculty are therefore thinking beyond an individual class in a single department and considering instead how all classes scheduled impact one another across departments.

I cannot underscore enough the seriousness of our financial situation, a recognition that many of you who attend the University Budget Committee are already painfully attuned to. Among multiple initiatives to reduce costs such as administrative reorganization, we have implemented the [Voluntary Separation Incentive Program](#) to *voluntarily* reduce the financial burden a tenure dense faculty body brings. We are looking to meet a threshold that makes a meaningful impact on the budget, and thus far we are not there. I thank all of you who have already signed up. You are making a tremendous contribution towards the future of this institution as you take advantage of VSIP.

Now more than ever, I beg all of you to approach this institution with care and consideration for the collective, to free ourselves from our own individual fears and interests, as we continue to endure the biggest financial crisis our university has ever faced. As you climb to the top of Cesar Chavez Student Center, catch a glimpse of the Pacific Ocean and allow it to remind you of the power and beauty of an Oceania that refuses boundaries and seeks liberation through its commitment to the collective body.

In community,



Amy Sueyoshi
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

