

## Kuipers continued . . .

---

awareness need — that knowledge is not discreet. For example, the university has a Department of Anthropology in the School of Social Sciences, but that does not mean that the knowledge that exists there is restricted to the department. On the contrary, it often relates to many other disciplines. Creating a context for interdisciplinary and multi-interdisciplinary activity that increases the intellectual productivity on campus is what academic affairs is all about.

### ***How would you describe the development of CSU, Fresno's undergraduate and graduate programs?***

This university, like many institutions in the country, has moved through several academic cycles over the years. During the 60s, students were eager to have a strong role in determining the courses they would take and therefore, faculty tended to perpetuate a "menu approach" to education. Today, there is tremendous emphasis on liberal and general education as the foundation for the well-educated citizen. In addition, there is an effort to create professional experiences that prepare students for a career after graduation. The challenge is to find a balance between the two. I think that we are recognizing that the arts and humanities, basic sciences, mathematics, computers, and languages provide a necessary undergirding for the competent professional. I believe that one of CSU, Fresno's major strengths is our extensive General Education Program.

Graduate programs have also evolved from a more general approach to specific disciplines. Because there is so much to master in a given discipline, specialization becomes essential. And yet, in a way, there is a paradox there. For example, in biology there is tremendous ferment in which you have people in biological science working with physicists, chemists, and bio-technologists. It follows then, that students at the graduate level need to have at least a basic background in areas related to their specialty. Obtaining an education at the graduate level is also more expected in today's society. In other words, it used to be that people who had completed their master's degree, and certainly a Ph.D. degree, were rare. Now it is rather expected that professionals will

continue their post-graduate education in order to move up in their career. This increased demand for the master's degree is evidenced by the increase in our graduate enrollment in the past two years.

### ***During the past 75 years, CSU, Fresno has evolved from a small state normal school to a thriving regional university. What are the most important academic goals for the future?***

Perhaps the most important goal is to hire the finest academic faculty that we can find in order to ensure excellence in the instructional process. And part of that goal includes recruiting outstanding women and minority faculty members because the fact is that 56 percent of the population that will be graduating from high school are minority students. If there are not more people on this campus for them to identify with, we will have distinct retention problems. A second goal is to incorporate continuous curriculum evaluation and modification to ensure relevant course content. In addition, we must create more opportunities for faculty to increase their research and scholarly activity because this fosters a mutual search for knowledge between teacher and student. And there are so many problems in today's world that desperately require research attention. Another important area in academic goals is the Extended Education Program. We must continue to offer our services to people in surrounding communities so that second career people and reentry students have access to life-long learning. And of course, I think it is vital to become more involved internationally, to continue our programs with China, Taiwan, Germany, and Mexico. Today, students have the opportunity to take course work in China and London from American and foreign professors who teach in the context of the international scene.

### ***Now that you have been here for more than two years, what are your impressions of CSU, Fresno?***

There is a definite sense of campus community here that I find to be refreshing. I have also enjoyed being on a campus where there are representatives from a variety of ethnic and foreign cultures. But I was even more pleased to find that the people here expect to change and grow. In every school on campus there are exciting new initiatives that are

addressing varying human resource needs, technological needs, and special problem needs — such as water resources or soil pollution. This kind of innovative focus and approach fosters truly stellar programs. The state of California needs the kind of applied research that our faculty is conducting. It needs progressive instructional programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that will produce well-educated people who can further the goals of the arts community, business community, health community, education community, scientific community, engineering community, political community, and, of course, the agricultural community. It is a very exciting time to be at CSU, Fresno.

### ***What advice would you give high school students who are establishing their educational goals?***

This is what I would say to any student: Take as much science, math, social science, and arts as you can in order to obtain a broad-based education in high school. Then take even more courses in the areas that you really enjoy. In other words, build on your strengths and seek knowledge to overcome weak areas. Don't worry about whether there are *too many* majors in an area, or whether there are *not enough* majors in an area. Figure out what you like to do, do it, and do it very well. It may lead you to something different because people are evolving, careers are evolving, and needs are evolving. The decisions you make now may be quite different from the ones you make ten years from now, and that's okay.

Finally, I think it is crucial for students to get some practical experience in a specific area of interest, either at the high school level or at the university level. For example, if you are curious about business, ask a business manager for an opportunity to come to his or her office and observe the staff for a few days. There are very few working adults who would say "no" to an eager young person who simply wants to discover what is going on in a particular area. Perhaps, the most important thing for you to realize is that you are a unique human being with unique talents. The faculty and staff at CSU, Fresno are committed to helping you achieve your maximum potential and therefore, your contribution to your own life and the lives of others.