

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

The California State University, Fresno, is dedicated to academic excellence, integrity, and freedom. It is committed to developing competent students, citizens, and leaders and to serving the Fresno and Valley communities. The university offers programs of instruction through the master's degree in the liberal arts and sciences, in the professions, in applied fields, and in special and interdisciplinary areas. Innovative departmental programs provide unusual and interesting opportunities for enrichment of the university experience. Further educational opportunities are also offered to individuals, public agencies, school systems, private business, and agriculture through continuing education, in-service education, and research programs.

HISTORY

CSU, Fresno is the sixth oldest in The California State University and Colleges system. It began with the establishment of the first junior college in California in 1910 and a state normal school in 1911 which, under a single administration, offered two-year programs in general and vocational training and in teacher preparation. Between 1911 and 1921 a campus was built on University Avenue, then the northern border of Fresno. In 1921 the combined schools became Fresno State Teachers College, authorized to offer a four-year program and grant the bachelor of arts degree in teaching. In 1935, by act of the Legislature, the official designation became Fresno State College. A variety of degree programs in addition to those related to the teaching credential were authorized at that time. Following World War II, expansion was accelerated, both academically and physically. The first master's degree was offered in 1949; today it is offered in 37 fields of study.

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Between 1953 and 1958 the college was moved from the old campus site, by then surrounded by the City of Fresno, to a 1,410-acre site six miles to the northeast. In 1961, under the newly created California State College system, the administration and control of the state colleges was transferred from the State Board of Education to an independent board, the Trustees of the California State Colleges. By legislative action in 1972 the state college system became the California State University and Colleges. Between 1965 and 1968 an approximation of university organization was accomplished on the Fresno campus and the transition to official university status in the state system became effective on June 1, 1972. The university now comprises the Schools of Agriculture and Home Economics, Business and Administrative Sciences, Education, Engineering, Humanities, Natural Sciences, Professional Studies, Social Sciences, and Social Work and the Division of Health Professions.

Fresno State College in 1911 had an enrollment of 150 students, most of whom were women. By 1940 the enrollment had increased to 2,000 students, by 1964, to 7,500. In the fall of 1979 more than, approximately, 15,000 students registered.

The Presidents, in order of tenure are: Charles L. McLane (1911–1927), Frank W. Thomas (1927–1948), Arnold E. Joyal (1948–1964), Frederic W. Ness (1964–1969), Karl L. Falk (Acting) (1969–1970), Norman A. Baxter (1970–79), Robert O. Bess (Vice President-in-Charge) (1979), and Harold H. Haak, beginning February 1980.