

The university encourages and protects free inquiry and expression, ensuring a forum for the generation, discussion and critical examination of ideas. By emphasizing the primacy of quality teaching and the close interaction between faculty and students, the university seeks to stimulate scholarly inquiry and discourse, inspire creative activity, heighten professional and technical competencies, encourage and support research and its dissemination, and recruit and develop outstanding teacher-scholars/artists.

The university fosters an environment in which students learn to live in a culturally diverse and changing society. Within that environment, it strives to develop a community founded upon mutual respect and shared efforts, in which individuals can communicate openly and work together to enrich the lives of all and to further the growth and excellence of the university. The university seeks and encourages historically underrepresented students to embark upon and complete a university education.

The university serves the San Joaquin Valley while interacting with the state, nation and world. California State University, Fresno is a center of intellectual, artistic and professional activity. Through applied research, technical assistance, training and other related public service activities, the university anticipates continuing and expanding partnership and linkages with business, education, industry and government.

The University's History

California State University, Fresno is the sixth oldest in the California State University 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 accelerated, both academically and physically. In 1949, the university offered its first master's degree; today, it offers this degree in 39 fields of study.

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, and in 1982 the system was renamed The California State University.

In 2007, the university began offering its first non-partnership doctoral degree with the Ed.D. in educational leadership.

The University's Seal

The official seal of the university was designed by artist and California State University, Fresno Professor Emeritus Darwin Musselman, who also created the seal used by the California State University system. The Fresno State seal includes the "lamp of learning" and the "book of knowledge." The Latin inscription "Lvcem accipe vt reddas" translates "Receive the light that you may give it forth." The date 1911 refers to the founding year of the school.

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 is now comprised of the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, the College of Arts and Humanities, the Craig School of Business, the Kremen School of Education and Human Development, the Lyles College of Engineering, the College of Health and Human Services, The College of Science and Mathematics, the College of Social Sciences, Continuing and Global Education, and the Division of Graduate Studies.

Fresno Normal School, in 1911, had an enrollment of 150 students, most of whom were women. By 1940 enrollment had increased to 2,000 students, and in 1968 enrollment surpassed 10,000. Currently, more than 22,000 students are registered at California State University, Fresno.

The presidents are listed below in order of tenure:

Charles L. McLane (1911-27)
Frank W. Thomas (1927-48)
Arnold E. Joyal (1948-64)
Frederic W. Ness (1964-69)
Karl L. Falk (Acting) (1969-70)
Norman A. Baxter (1970-80)
Harold H. Haak (1980-91)
John D. Welty (1991-)

