

**Cal Poly
San Luis Obispo
College of Science and Mathematics**

To: Students in the College of Science and Mathematics

From: Phil Bailey, Dean of the College

Dear College of Science and Mathematics Students:

This is my 40th year at Cal Poly and the 26th that I have had the honor of being dean of the College of Science and Mathematics. I deeply care about the Cal Poly community and especially you, our students. Cal Poly is in a serious financial situation that, if not addressed, will diminish the approach to and quality of a Cal Poly education and jeopardize the growing national reputation of our University including the enduring value of a Cal Poly diploma. The only way I see to combat the situation is to ask you and all Cal Poly students to support an increase in your College Based Fees. I ask this because I care deeply about your future and believe the fee increase is absolutely essential.

Currently, College Based Fees for most students are \$252 per quarter; students in the College of Liberal Arts are somewhat less. The proposal is for all Cal Poly students, including those in Liberal Arts, to pay \$362 per quarter beginning in the 2009-10 academic year. This increase represents the annual inflationary index (Higher Education Price Index, HEPI) that is already attached to the fee plus a \$100 increase per quarter. The fee would again increase by \$100 per quarter (plus the HEPI index) in both the 2010-11 and the 2011-12 academic years. During this three year period the proposal calls for a total increase of \$300 per quarter (more for Liberal Arts students) or \$900 annually. Part-time students pay half.

Cal Poly's situation is serious and we are functioning only because of one-time money saved from frugal spending and funds from unexpected over-enrollment. Two colleges got through last year with such one-time money and are struggling this year; neither is meeting its enrollment target. Two colleges are requiring supplements from the provost's diminishing one-time reserves to deal with large over-expenditures. The Library and ITS are very poorly funded.

The College of Science and Mathematics is making it through this year because of resources previously saved that won't be available next year. Our College's budget from the State is about \$22M. The salaries of our faculty and staff are \$24M. We are spending another \$2.7M on operating expense, student assistants, instrumentation and equipment, and student-faculty research. The 2008-09 budget totals \$26.7M; again, only \$22M comes from the State and that does not even cover salaries. Much of the \$4.7M in addition to State funds comes from Cal Poly Plan and College Based Fee. These special fees have kept Cal Poly afloat. The one-time money in this year's College of Science and

Mathematics budget is about \$1.8M. This is similar to what we spend on operating expense (supplies, chemicals, routine equipment, student assistants etc). We spend about \$2M on part-time faculty members. Cutting here would devastate our offering of the curriculum. We spend about a million dollars of College Based Fee money annually on student-faculty research and instruments and equipment uncommonly found in undergraduate laboratories. I would hate to lose this but it has happened before. From 1990 to 2002 (the current College Based Fee was approved by our students in 2002), the College did not purchase a single piece of major equipment or instrumentation and did not support student-faculty research. College Based Fee changed everything and brought distinction to each of our departments. It is hard to imagine the state the University would be in without College Based Fees.

The State is in no position to help. It has a developing \$42B budget deficit and ranks 47th in the nation in K-12 per pupil expenditure (overall the K-12 problem is much more serious issue because it could result in lasting educational and social inequities). In the past two decades, California's support of higher education has slipped from 89% of the total cost in 1988 to 81% in 1998 to 73% in 2008. State budget cuts to Cal Poly during this current decade have resulted in shortfalls of nearly \$25M. Any apparent increases in funding are not real but the result of increased enrollment (marginally funded), inflation, or new mandatory costs. If fees had been adjusted each year in this decade in response to diminished resources, they would have grown cumulatively by \$322 per student per quarter to remain even in funding (the decreased spending power of the dollar is not considered in this scenario). The College Based Fee proposal is for a \$300 increase spread over three years.

You currently pay \$5,043 in fees annually to attend Cal Poly. This is remarkable considering you are attending one of the most selective public institutions in the country (UCLA, Berkeley, and Cal Poly are by far the most selective in California) and one of the most respected polytechnic universities in the United States. U.S. News and World report has rated Cal Poly as the best public, largely undergraduate, university in the west for 16 consecutive years. Compare your fees of \$5043 to the average for public universities in the United States, \$6586. University of California fees are much higher: UCLA, \$8310; Berkeley, \$8932; and Davis, \$9484). Public polytechnic universities that have an undergraduate emphasis average \$6900. Some are much higher: Michigan Tech, \$11,206; New Jersey Institute of Technology, \$12,382. Certainly we hate to ask for a fee increase but take some comfort in the fact that your increased fees will still be below the national average and significantly below those of other polytechnic universities and the UC system.

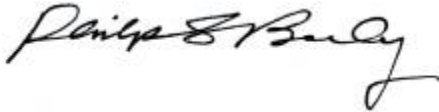
Cal Poly is working hard to provide predictive scheduling so you can get the classes you need when you need them but the increased College Based Fees is necessary to retain the faculty to accomplish this. We hope to make it possible to guarantee four year graduation to new freshmen who will follow the curriculum responsibly. For current students, we hope to break the logjams and get you to a more timely graduation. You will see the first of these efforts manifested this

spring when you will register for fall quarter in May. Over four years of attendance, the increased fee will cost a student \$3600; five years, \$4500. If access to classes could save students even a single quarter of attendance, they will be ahead financially as the estimated per quarter cost of attendance at Cal Poly is \$5681 (fees, books, room and board, personal and transportation costs as per Cal Poly 2007-09 catalog).

This fee cannot be instituted without consultation with students. You can make your opinion known by two general methods. (1) Participate in the development of resolutions from clubs and College Based Fee committees. (2) You can go online (information to come) on March 11-12 to participate in a survey of student opinion on this proposal. This is how you provide advice to the President who will make the final decision based on consultation with students.

Thank you for reading this message and for informing yourself on the issues. Please check our Q&A website for more information. I sincerely hope you will support the fee increase proposal. It is vital to Cal Poly's immediate and long range future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Bailey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Phil Bailey, Dean
College of Science and Mathematics