

California State University, Northridge
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

College Plan – Updated December 2008

College:

The Tseng College

Planning Coordinator:

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1. Briefly explain how your plans relate to your college's mission/vision.

The Tseng College has significantly changed its programs and services over the last eight years to emphasize programs designed to serve midcareer professionals. In light of the changing economic context, we have made additional adjustments in focus. We plan to move with the University over the next few years to help address the challenges presented by the state's economic difficulties both for the University's financial stability and the challenges facing students when access to the University is more limited and changes in employment patterns push many back to the University to increase their credentials to compete in a demanding employment market. Areas of growth will be new degree and certificate programs tied directly to professional advancement and career change, fast-track baccalaureate degree-completion programs, and international graduate centers and partnerships. In the next five years, The Tseng College envisions:

- Improving and streamlining the core capabilities that make The Tseng College excellent, distinctive, cost-effective and exceptionally versatile.
- Working collaboratively with University faculty and respected practitioners to create new programs and services that will respond to the educational needs of midcareer professionals and their employers in a recession and then recovering economy. These programs will have high on-time graduation rates and will demonstrate their excellence through demonstrated student learning and career change or advancement in fields that remain viable in a challenged economy.
- Achieving an increase in revenue of more than 10% per year while controlling costs without compromising quality through the creation of many new programs and partnerships. This increased revenue will support the growth of Tseng College programs and services and will continue to provide significant financial resources to collaborating University colleges and departments and to the University's faculty.
- Positioning The Tseng College and the University as nationally and internationally recognized leaders in post-baccalaureate degree, certificate and professional development programs that prepare participants for the new world of work – i.e., a rapidly changing, global, cross-disciplinary, knowledge-based environment that demands sophisticated conceptual skills, exceptional agility and flexibility, and continuous innovation.
- Using its core capabilities in concert with the strengths of the University's colleges and departments to leverage and expand the agility and innovative potential of the University as a whole. Through these efforts, which should afford the University added strength to address the wide array of challenges facing higher education today (including the steady decline of state funding and the increasing demand for education across the career span), The Tseng College expects to be a major component of the University's competitive edge.

The plan that follows is an expansion of this vision.

2. ACADEMIC QUALITY

a) Assessment

Explain how the college intends to assess the outcomes of the planning initiatives: setting benchmarks, assessing against them, using results, etc.

The Tseng College continues to be a leader regionally and nationally among college and university-based continuing higher education organizations in the application of assessment strategies to midcareer programs – degree, certificate and continuing professional education. Beginning six years ago, The Tseng College began to invest in the training of senior staff in the College in assessment theory and application and that training continues. What is more important, however, is that The Tseng College incorporates into all of its degree and credit certificate programs outcomes-based instructional design with a strong assessment component. Programs offered through The Tseng College are developed with a focus on the program as a whole as the primary educational unit. Courses are seen as components of the whole. Learning goals are set at the program level by the teams of faculty or faculty and practitioners who form the program development group for each program.

In nearly all cases, Tseng College programs are offered in a cohort format in which the courses are presented in a predetermined sequence. This approach allows The Tseng College to design courses with learning goals linked to the program's goals. Courses build on one another, enabling students to achieve sustained and cumulative learning outcomes by the end of the program.

Programs offered through The Tseng College are regularly reviewed and revised in light of the assessment of student achievement, new scholarship and changes in professional practice. The Tseng College also considers other factors – such as student performance on state and/or national licensure exams and rates of timely and successful graduation – in program and course reviews and updates. During these reviews and revisions, the focus is first on the program level to consider overall learning outcomes goals and content and then on learning goals and content at the course level.

All credit programs offered through The Tseng College are CSUN programs and are, therefore, subject at all phases, from inception to discontinuation, to the approval and review processes governing all CSUN programs – i.e., starting with CSUN faculty committees, then CSU-level review, and on to the standards and reviews of regional and national accreditors. All credit course and programs offered through The Tseng College are under the academic oversight of the relevant department(s) with the department chair(s) selecting and/or approving all instructors and syllabi each time a course is offered.

Looking ahead, The Tseng College plans to look for cost effective ways to add to the number of staff with competency in instructional design and assessment. As funding permits, we will also offer faculty working with The Tseng College opportunities to attend conferences, seminars and/or courses in their fields.

In making these changes in our positions and investing in the building of these skills and abilities in Tseng College staff, we are acting to build the core capabilities of The Tseng College in keeping with our vision. Focusing on these particular core capabilities also allows The Tseng College to work collaboratively with University faculty and respected practitioners to create new programs that respond to the educational needs of midcareer professionals and their employers.

Further, The Tseng College develops a time line and action plan for each program to ensure that assessment is scheduled well in advance and occurs regularly in multi-year cycles.

The Tseng College also plans to expand its outcomes-based instructional design and assessment approach to all of the noncredit certificate, professional development, and new contracted programs. In the next few years, The Tseng College will ensure that every offering for midcareer professionals – credit or noncredit – offered by CSUN through The Tseng College is distinguished in part by the care in design, the strength of content, and the educational effectiveness of the program.

2. ACADEMIC QUALITY *(continued)*

b) The Learning-Centered University

Another defining characteristic of programs offered through The Tseng College continues to be the attention given to instructional strategies and engaged student learning. Working with midcareer professionals, The Tseng College and its CSUN faculty collaborators must pay close attention to learning theory, learning modes, learning styles, working modes in different fields of professional practice, instructional design, and adult learning theory.

The Tseng College works collaboratively with faculty to find innovative applications of best practices in these areas to the particular learning goals and instructional vision of each program, course and instructor. The Tseng College works with a variety of program and course delivery modes and formats. The focus is always on the best choices to meet the educational needs of the learners. Instructional design and instructional strategies also are chosen and refined with the intended learners in mind. The Tseng College begins each program with the question “what is it we intend to teach to whom,” and we build from there.

When developing programs through The Tseng College, CSUN faculty work with practitioners as advisers and/or co-planners to refine their understanding of the knowledge, conceptual skills and professional abilities individuals need for success in senior levels in the field in question. We also look at national and international models for programs in the field. When the “what” is refined and we have a clearer picture of the “whom,” all other aspects of the curriculum content and design, choice of format, delivery mode, instructional strategies, and the like flow from those core notions about the learner and the learning goals.

Looking ahead, The Tseng College plans to expand its capabilities to achieve increasingly high levels of instructional excellence as measured by student achievement through various strategies. This will include working with international partners to develop the instructional skills of their faculty.

This resource, once developed, would allow The Tseng College to offer faculty and practitioners an opportunity to build both the knowledge and skills needed to be particularly strong program/course designers and teachers. This capability would also be a resource for all of the University’s departments that might want to guide part-time and/or newer faculty to such resources to speed their evolution as effective teachers at the university-level.

The Tseng College’s distance learning unit already offers a strong orientation and professional development program for faculty who are to teach in online programs. In addition, there are experienced and specialized staff that support and guide faculty as they plan their components of fully online programs with The Tseng College. As The Tseng College extends its horizons, we are now facing the challenge of providing effective orientation and development for online program faculty who are in other parts of the country or the globe.

2. **ACADEMIC QUALITY** *(continued)*

c) **Research and Creative Activity**

As The Tseng College provides the foundation for CSUN innovation and excellence in degree, certificate, and nondegree programs for midcareer professionals, we also provide opportunities for research and creative work in the scholarship of teaching and in the scholarship of engagement/application. While The Tseng College has called attention to these opportunities in past, in the future we plan to be more active in encouraging faculty collaborating with us to consider the research and creative opportunities afforded by their work both with midcareer professionals and on innovatively designed curricula and instructional strategies. The Tseng College's working relationships with some regional employers would allow faculty unique access for research. We are also expanding opportunities for CSUN faculty to work abroad with international partners on research and curriculum develop projects.

Within the next three years, The Tseng College plans to create a Web-based guide to conferences and publication opportunities relevant to the scholarship of both teaching and engagement/application. This would provide models for research of this kind as well as a venue for publication and presentation. Programs offered through The Tseng College are often designed to have a strong link between work in the classroom and applied research in the field. Further, programs offered through The Tseng College are primarily graduate programs that often require research papers and applied scholarship projects at various stages during the programs.

Within the next three to three years, The Tseng College plans to expand the number of ways in which student work can be shared more publicly. Ideas include opening some research presentations to invited guests, Web publishing the best student work in selected programs, and encouraging students to present at their own professional conferences and/or write for publication in their own professional journals.

Because The Tseng College is often out ahead of others in its approach to education for midcareer professionals, Tseng College staff members are frequently called upon to make conference presentations or to write for publication. As we build core capabilities further in instructional design, instructional strategies and assessment, we expect to see more research, presentations and publications coming from The Tseng College staff, and we would envision investing in this kind of professional development as funding permits beyond the financial tight times of the next few years.

The staff and students of The Tseng College are generally outside the RTP purview (either not being on the tenure track or being already tenured). Promotion in The Tseng College certainly depends on the effective and innovative application of knowledge, skills and abilities for the work of the college – especially for those who are ongoing learners or scholars and are able to apply their new knowledge to increasing Tseng College core capabilities.

The Tseng College is by necessity an agile organization that responds thoughtfully and strategically to new opportunities, shifts staff from relatively static programs to those that are growing rapidly, and develops new core capacities that are essential to its success. The College's dynamic and constantly changing nature does, however, put a strain on staff that are less comfortable with change and ambiguity. As we look ahead to a continuing pattern of rapid growth and change, the College will work hard to refine its approaches to supporting staff through change by refining management structures and strategies across units and ensuring that we fill vacancies and new positions with professionals who are at their best in a creative and dynamic working context.

2. ACADEMIC QUALITY *(continued)*

d) On-Going Programs

The Tseng College does not plan to add to senior staff within the next two years unless unexpected large scale projects arise with strong revenue streams. Tseng College will creatively use existing capacity to take on new initiatives for the University.

Adding to the University's financial flexibility and stability is among The Tseng College's goals. At present, The Tseng College returns nearly 50% of its yearly gross revenue to the University community in the form of payments to faculty for program development and instruction, to partnering colleges and departments, and to the library and University support units. We plan to increase revenue from new programs by 50% in five years, thus achieving an annual gross revenue of approximately \$18 million. In so doing, payments to faculty and partner colleges will increase accordingly.

The Tseng College plans to use its substantial and growing core capabilities in concert with the strengths of the University's colleges and departments to leverage and expand the agility and innovative potential of the University as a whole. For the past few years, The Tseng College has invested \$500,000-\$600,000 per year to develop and launch new degree and credit certificate programs. Going forward, this upfront investment will be a shared investment with partner colleges. The Tseng College is also exploring options for creating donor-funded program development fund that adds to the University's capacity to create new self-support programs quickly in a tight economy. With changes in Summer Session followed by and economic slow-down that became a significant recession, The Tseng College is experiencing a period in which it must tightly manage current operating expenses and investment in new programs. New revenue streams planned for launch in the next 19 to 24 months should strengthen the Tseng College's financial position within two to three years.

Over the next three years, The Tseng College plans to launch two to four new degree and/or certificate programs per year. Programs selected have strong potential for marketplace success and for establishing new and high-visibility areas of excellence and distinction for the University and its academic departments and colleges. The Tseng College also plans to build clusters of complementary programs around larger programs to further augment the University's visibility, reputation and revenue. Because the availability of CSUN faculty is an important factor in program growth, The Tseng College has begun to fund full-time faculty hires within relevant departments to support particularly robust programs and/or meet the demands of special accreditation.

The visibility, excellence and distinction The Tseng College is able to help create through investment in well-crafted and innovative programs will stimulate increased enrollment in the state-funded undergraduate programs in related fields. Further, CSUN's reputation for excellence and distinction in fields that well-crafted and strategic self-support programs have helped to create can also attract research grants and contracts for the collaborating departments and colleges.

The Tseng College is also planning for significant international growth and is taking the lead for the University in the exploration of several promising international partnership in Brazil, France, Russia, Oman and Egypt over the next two years. Should these initiatives come to fruition as planned, the gross revenue of The Tseng College could increase rapidly, enabling the college to develop an even greater range of core capabilities.

3. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Tseng College addresses a unique set of student support challenges associated with serving midcareer students in a competitive marketplace. Most students in programs offered through The Tseng College are midcareer adults who work full-time and often have significant family obligations.

With this in mind, The Tseng College is committed to providing exceptionally responsive student support services. Typically, the college identifies one individual as the primary student contact for each program. This person provides support and creative problem-solving to students who face challenges, whether academic or personal.

The Tseng College also invests in developing systems and services that make the University more responsive to student needs. For example, within the last few years, The Tseng College has created a set of fully online and “self-service” registration functions for programs such as Winter Term, Open University, and most nondegree programs. Students in cohort-formatted degree and certificate programs are automatically registered each term.

The Tseng College has also developed a streamlined registration process for noncredit programs, a demand pay function for all programs, and a Tseng College-specific online application system. These systems use Solar and replicate the more complex registration and application system (CSU Mentor) automatically and behind-the-scenes to make the student’s interactive experience as easy as possible. These strategies have put The Tseng College well ahead of other CSU continuing education units in making PeopleSoft a viable and responsive resource for extended learning.

Looking ahead, The Tseng College plans to continue its two-pronged strategy for service excellence based on the skills and abilities of program managers who work directly with students and the effective and innovative use of technologies and data systems. An upcoming challenge will be providing and sustaining equally high levels of service in support of programs whose sites, delivery modes and intended audiences differ from those of current offerings. As it grows, The Tseng College will regularly refine policies and practices to maintain versatility and responsiveness while meeting its obligations to the requirements of the University, the CSU, and other organizations, including financial aid agencies, accrediting bodies and clients/employers who sponsor students.

The College intends to continue this effort and enlarge business management support services so that staff members attached to specific programs will have more time to focus on providing direct and meaningful student support services. Two cross unit work groups were created this year one focused on streamlining and integrating support services across units and one focused on increasing the amount of business intelligence available to The Tseng College for assessing the performance of programs and units.

4. SHARED VALUES

We, in The Tseng College, value education for its transformative power which has special significance given the challenges the larger human community faces within the region, the nation, and around the globe. We are dedicated to making a positive difference with the educational programs we provide. We seek to make that difference with each interaction we have and with each program and service we offer.

These values guide our commitment to expanding the University's capacity to respond to the educational needs of midcareer professionals regionally, nationally and internationally. The regional economy and its socio-political and environmental well-being are globally interconnected and interdependent. The University and all the disciplines it comprises are globally interconnected and interdependent as well. The exchange of ideas, the generation of new knowledge, and collective efforts to resolve the most intractable problems and open the most promising doors in research is our shared value. The Tseng College must achieve its goals and vision in the context of a competitive marketplace that requires a balance between University strengths and the ability to design programs with strong market potential.

These convictions and marketplace skills prompt focus and strategic program development, program improvement, expanded access and refinement of high-value student support services.

New Programs(Expected to begin in the next 18 to 36 months):

- Master's degree in humanities
- Master's degree in library and information management (in collaboration with the University of North Texas)
- Master's degree in public policy (urban international focus) - online
- Master's degree in social work
- Master's degree in engineering -- assistive technologies
- Master's degree in human services -- assistive services
- Master's degree in music industry studies
- Master's degree in travel and tourism management
- Master's degree in linguistics with and TESL emphasis
- Master's degree in information technology
- Graduate credit-certificate in human factors and masters degree in human factors – online
- Collaborative MBA/JD in collaboration with Southwest Law School
- Graduate credit-certificate in urban planning
- Graduate credit-certificate in not-for-profit management
- Graduate credit-certificate in performance management
- American International University Egypt, Al Alamein
- Collaborative International Graduate Center at Al Buraimi College, Oman
- Collaborative public policy and public sector programs with the University of Lyon
- Professional development series for midcareer urban planning professional in Brazil

More projects will be added as we move forward. New options, ideas and possible partnerships emerge every week.