

2020 Fall Welcome Address
President Mary A. Papazian
August 6, 2020

Introduction and SJSU Adapt

Hello, and thank you for joining me. I want to welcome all of you to the Fall 2020 semester.

When I first addressed the Coronavirus pandemic several months ago, I wrote that the situation was unlike anything I, or any of us, had ever experienced.

Well, here we are, heading into the fall, and in many ways we remain in the same boat. If anything, the challenges we face have only multiplied these past several months:

- We have seen the protests and calls for action with regards to systemic racism that were sparked by the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and others leading to broader discussions around racial inequities.
- There was the decision by the Supreme Court regarding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, and the stresses that were felt by so many of us within the San José State community even after what can be described as a positive, if only temporary, outcome.
- We dealt with a proposed federal policy that would have stripped visas from international students whose courses move exclusively online amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- We are dealing with severe economic hardships due to the global pandemic, hardships that are particularly acute for many of our students and their families.
- And, of course, we have the pandemic itself, and the public health crisis that impacts all of us.

We as a community here at San José State have been facing tremendous challenges these past several months. One that looms large for us at the time of this recording, August 6th, is our financial and budget situation.

As you know, the state's 2020-21 budget includes \$299 million in cuts to the CSU system, and that means that campuses like ours will see a significant reduction in their budget allocation.

Chancellor White has outlined a course of action to address and mitigate these budget shortfalls, including a difficult decision to authorize each campus to proceed with some layoffs and a spending down of discretionary reserves.

Four of our departments lead

interdisciplinary and collaborative nature. I know she will do an exceptional job building the College and ensuring that we are at the forefront of understanding and addressing the health disparities that exist within our communities' most marginalized populations. Welcome, Audrey.

Traci Ferdolage is our new senior associate vice president for facilities development and operations. Traci most recently served as associate vice chancellor of physical planning, development and operations at UC-Santa Cruz, and

Graduate Studies

Believe it or not, in just a few months our new **College of Graduate Studies** will **celebrate two years** since its inception, and you can imagine how busy Dean Marc d'Alarcao and his team have been.

As the **first graduate college** in the California State University system, the new college has been developing ways to elevate the educational experience for our more than 8,000 graduate students. Just let me repeat that: we have **more than 8 thousand graduate students** here at San José State, which is just under 25% of our total student enrollment!

One of the many things Marc and his team have been doing is working to expand the array of graduate offerings available at SJSU.

This fall, we are welcoming our first class of **audiology doctoral students** and also are developing an **occupational therapy** doctorate. At the same time, we are exploring several possible Ph.D. programs to be offered in collaboration with University of California campuses.

Finally, we have **five new master's degree programs** under development and in the process of being developed.

Perhaps the most visible area of work from our IT team and one we will continue to see throughout the fall and beyond is the deployment of technology solutions that enable the hybrid method of instruction that we will see this semester—and perhaps beyond.

This work is incredibly important in our new environment, so I am very happy that we have such a talented team of technology professionals on hand as we continue building methods and solutions that allow for a flexible learning environment and successful engagement activities.

So, thank you to our Information Technology team for the great work they are doing in all of these important areas.

Athletics

We speak a lot about how we engage with the City and the broader community, and there are **two significant ways** in which we routinely do that.

I think of these as our campus's **two major bookends, both of which** excite our alumni base, get people talking about San José State, and show off the variety of talent we possess here at this university. And both of these areas are FUN!

I am referring, of course, to both our **Athletics programs**, and our **artistic and creative** endeavors.

We do not know just yet when our student-athletes will be able to resume on

I also want to congratulate assistant football coach **Alonzo Carter**, who was named by 247 Sports the 2019 “Football Recruiter of the Year” for the Mountain West. More importantly, “Zo,” as he affectionately is called, has been recognized for his leadership in calling for action to address systemic racism in the sports world. Beginning in May, Zo’s West Coast Zoom Clinics attracted between 200 and 700 coaches from all levels per Zoom call to listen, learn, share and

environment, our trust in government, and our collective ability to make change—make it a very relevant book selection for our incoming class and others who take the opportunity to read it.

Facilities

Some of you may recall the new **campus master planning process** that we are implementing, that will address the main and south campuses as well as the University's off-campus properties and connections with the City of San José.

We soon will be launching a **dedicated website** devoted to the planning process, and there will be many opportunities for the campus community to engage starting this fall. Chaired by our Provost Vincent Del Casino, Jr. and our Vice President for Administration and Finance Charlie Faas, an Advisory Committee consisting of students, faculty, staff and administrators will guide the process, which is being undertaken by a collaborative team of planners and architects.

Our Facilities Development and Operations team, particularly the Planning, Design and Construction group, also will help lead the effort. The process will update thoroughly information about all aspects of the campus and will create a vision for the future physical development of the campus. The final stages will include a formal environmental review and approval by the CSU Board of Trustees. So, it will be great to see our new campus master plan develop and begin to take shape.

Economic and social impact study

Lastly, I would like to point out an important study that will take place this year.

We will be partnering with an outside firm to conduct a study to capture the university's economic and social impact on the region, which we feel is significant. We know SJSU is transformative for our students and that our Spartan community contributes locally and globally, and now we will have an independent group

Though we do not know exactly what the future holds or what it will look like, we must continue to place the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff, as well as our commitment to the success and achievements of all of our students, at the forefront. We must embrace change when it serves us well to do so, with resilience and forward-thinking approaches.

Thank you for joining me for this Fall Welcome. Please continue to follow me on Twitter, and subscribe to my blog for frequent posts and announcements. Have a wonderful semester. I look forward to the time when we can gather together in person. In the meantime, be safe, and stay healthy.

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