

California State University, San Bernardino

Campus Planning/Development

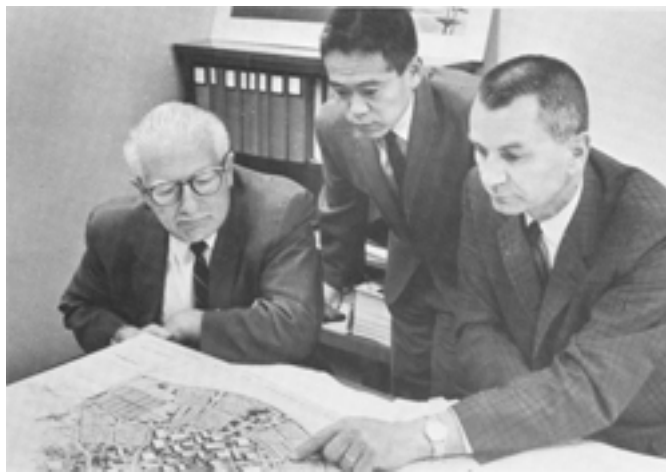
In 1955, after extensive research, a study committee of the State Legislature concluded that there was a need for a California State College to serve the San Bernardino-Riverside area. By 1959, Senator Stanford C. Shaw said that he saw an excellent chance for the passage of a bill for a state college in the San Bernardino-Riverside area in 1960. Once the college received that endorsement, the Senator predicted it would be ready for its first students by 1966. "We are going to have a state college in the near future, and it apparently will start as a two-level Institution, due to limited funds. My bill specifically provides that a state college shall be located in San Bernardino county. "

In 1961, the State Legislature appropriated the necessary funds to purchase a site for the college. At the same time the California State College Board of Trustees was created. Thus, the college at San Bernardino was one of the first two state colleges to be developed under the newly formed governing body of the California State Colleges.



The institution's educational program was formulated by members of the original planning staff in the offices they occupied at 532 North Mt. View. Hastily built but completely modern facilities, including secretarial anterooms, eleven offices, a library, and a conference room were to serve as the base of operations for three and a half years. There the President of the college, John M. Pfau; the Dean of Faculty, George McMichael; the chairman of the Division of Social Sciences, Robert R. Roberts; and the

Chairman of the Division of Natural Sciences, Gerald Scherba, formulated the academic master plan for the college. This academic plan defined in detail the College's basic purpose, function, philosophy, and the goals it would seek in terms of the academic areas to be offered and emphasized. From these ideas, additional members of the original planning staff, Business Manager Leonard Farwell, Executive Dean Kenneth Phillips, building coordinator James Urata, along with Robert Fisk, Dean of Students, helped with the implementation of the master plan in the area to be served by the physical master plan. President Pfau expected the college to open in September, 1965, with an estimated enrollment of 200 and a projected enrollment of 5,000 by 1975. It hadn't then been determined whether the college would accept freshmen in the initial group or start with junior and senior classes only--those students who had graduated from junior colleges.



Dr. Joseph Thomas, right, executive dean and James Urata, center, building coordinator, discuss master plan with N.B. Keller, of the state legislative analyst's office. (Photo courtesy of Redlands Daily Facts).

But before any classes could begin, a site for the college had to be selected. The Board of Trustees began the task of screening potential college sites in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. However, later legislation stipulated that the college must be located in San Bernardino County.

A total of twenty-six sites were presented to the Board of Trustees by a citizens committee appointed by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. Many were quickly eliminated because the distance from the center of the student population would be too great or because of topographical complications. The Arrowhead Springs Hotel site was eliminated because the land measured only fifty acres as compared to the Board of Trustees' criterion of a minimum of 350 acres. Another was discarded because of difficulties with rights of ways of power lines while interfering with the Metropolitan aqueduct, and because it lay in a general area where industry was beginning to develop. Also, the flight patterns of Norton Air Force Base had to be considered. Finally, the prospective sites were narrowed down to (1) Morrow Airfield, southeast of Rialto and west of Colton, fairly close to Riverside; (2) A large area immediately north of Rialto, encompassing three separate site proposals; (3) An area north of San

Bernardino and northeast of the Barstow Freeway, separated from the freeway by a ridge; (4) The Cooley Ranch near the Colton Freeway Interchange; and (5) Pellisier Ranch at the end of North Orange Street in Riverside. And there was a rumor that the actual site wouldn't be one of these five, but a completely different one, adjacent to the former Camp Ono north of San Bernardino.

When the committee of State College trustees headed by Charles Luckman deliberated in San Jose, after proponents for each site met in an open meeting, none of the five sites appeared to have a clear edge. The Pellisier offer was accompanied by free land, and Riverside offered to provide sewer service, with Colton paying the cost of installing the necessary connecting lines. On the other hand, Mayor Donald Mauldin, then mayor of San Bernardino, said that the County of San Bernardino would build an access road if the site north of San Bernardino were chosen. Attorney Louis Heilbron of San Francisco presided as chairman, and the present Executive Dean, Joseph Thomas, acted as liaison officer between the Board of Trustees and the College. Former Mayor Mauldin and Attorney Robert Holcomb were among the prominent citizens of San Bernardino who appeared on behalf of the City of San Bernardino to negotiate for the "North San Bernardino Site." After energetic competition between the neighboring cities, the 430 acres north of San Bernardino was unanimously selected by the Board of Trustees because of the scenic backdrop of the mountain range, the gentle sloping terrain of the land itself with its rich soil, and the enthusiastic welcome from the officials and citizens of San Bernardino.



Without this, school couldn't have started!

Immediately following the selection of the site, the Board of Trustees authorized Albert C. Martin and Associates to design a physical master plan of a campus which would eventually accommodate 27,000 students (the equivalent of 20,000 full time students).

But the difficult matter of the site was not yet finished. In 1963 the site selected for the college was called into question, and a rehearing was sought as one man filed a citizen's suit in Los Angeles Superior Court. This suit alleged that the site itself had important drawbacks. It also asserted that certain trustees and certain public officials

who approved the site had personal interests which conflicted with their duties as public servants. These charges were fully denied and nothing was ever adduced to substantiate these charges. In August, 1964 the suit was ultimately dismissed with prejudice, that is it cannot be filed again, and the University welcomed the first student class in 1965.

Compiled by John M. Pfau Library staff.