

CSU's \$1.5 billion in unmet needs

The Trustees acknowledge the need but fail to ask for the money

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The CSU Trustees, following advice from the Chancellor's Office, missed yet another opportunity to advocate for the California State University at the start of the process to determine state funding for the CSU in the 2006/07 academic year.

By the CSU administration's own estimates, the system is operating with a funding shortfall of more than \$1.5 billion. It has hardly recovered from the budget cuts in the recent past.

Knowing this, last fall the Trustees requested a \$128.5 million increase to the CSU's general fund budget next year. This action all but guarantees scores of "unmet needs" will not be addressed, even if the legislature approves the CSU budget for 2006/07 exactly as the Trustees proposed it.

Consider just a few of the unmet needs the Trustees acknowledged among themselves at their meeting last October (but for which they decided not to request funding).

Special education teacher initiative

An estimated 10 percent of California's K-12 students need special education teachers. With an estimated cost of \$1.4 million, this initiative could help address the state's significant shortage of K-12 special education teachers by adding more than 100 new students in its special education credential programs in 2006/07.

Initiative to facilitate graduation

As the demand for university degrees continues to grow, the CSU has developed a three-part initiative to help ensure its students successfully earn their degrees in a timely manner. The initiative includes an Early Assessment Program for high school students, a Lower Division Transfer Project for community college students, and campus-based projects to improve

advising and support students' progress towards graduation. To fully realize these programs, the CSU needs \$8.9 million.

Nursing initiative

California will need over 47,000 new nurses in the next five years, yet only about 6,000 nurses are graduated each year from the state's colleges and universities. The CSU is only able to enroll a small fraction of the prospective nursing students seeking admission. With another \$3 million, the CSU could admit another 340 FTES into its undergraduate nursing programs each year.

Decreasing reliance on temporary faculty and increasing percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty

The plan to implement the 2001 legislative resolution (ACR 73) to increase the percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty, which was developed jointly by the CSU administration, Academic Senate, and CFA, has never been funded. The plan envisions 1,800 to 2,000 tenure-line

faculty searches per year over a span of eight years and would reduce both the student/faculty ratio and the percentage of temporary faculty. With more than half the faculty holding temporary appointments, the \$35.8 million to implement the first year of the plan is sorely needed.

Unmet Long-Term Needs

Budget cuts in prior years have forced the CSU to put off repairs and maintenance to buildings and other facilities. The bill for such work is now in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The libraries alone are estimated to need more than \$100 million to maintain core collections and materials. Instructional equipment and technology need to be updated and replaced.

From CFA's perspective, the unmet needs don't end with the list presented at the Trustees meeting. Among the needs not identified, but felt acutely by the faculty, staff, and students each day, there are many more. For instance:

The CSU needs realistic plans to close the compensation gaps in comparison to other institutions and to address salary compression and inversion within the CSU system itself.

There are inadequate student services ranging from academic advising to tutoring to counseling; the shortages hurt students and place increased pressure on faculty and staff workload.

Despite mushrooming class sizes creating challenges for teachers, students still have trouble getting into the courses they need to graduate and are shut out of many impacted programs.

And, as faculty members know too well, there are plenty of other needs. What could the CSU have done differently last fall? In an academic institution of the size and scope of the CSU, where many important programs and priorities will be un- or under-funded should the Trustee's budget request be approved, the possibilities are endless. ♦

Summary of the CSU Trustees' funding request

Minimum funding and fee increases are spelled out in the governor's and the chancellor's Compact:

3% base budget increase (for general operating expenses)	\$75.8 million
2.5% increase for enrollment growth (for an additional 8,306 FTES)	\$52.6 million
TOTAL INCREASE IN GEN. FUNDS REQUESTED: \$128.5 million	
New revenue expected from student fees & increases (8% undergrad, 10% graduate)	\$107 million
TOTAL ADDITIONAL FUNDING:	\$235.5 million

Governor's proposed CSU budget

- Base budget and enrollment growth funding as requested by the Trustees.
- No student fee increase. The governor proposed to add \$54.4 million to "buy out" the fee hike for one year.
- Cuts \$7 million for academic preparation and student support services. Says it was a one-time allocation last year.
- Provides additional \$1.1 million for a math and science teacher initiative and continues funding of \$2.3 million to expand master's-level nursing programs.