

# Daily Breeze

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## Under-funding hits Cal State Dominguez Hills especially hard

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By Clare Weber

California State University, Dominguez Hills is threatened by the recent budget cuts to the Cal State system in ways that the larger, more affluent and whiter campuses are not.

The campus administration is trying to manage its way out of an impossible situation and faculty and students are outraged at yet another blow to the campus that serves the most students of color in California.

Structural racism and the willingness to ignore the educational needs of Latinos and blacks in Los Angeles are, tragically, alive and well. It reminds me of the closure of the Martin Luther King Jr.-Drew Medical Center, except at Dominguez Hills we haven't killed anyone; we just educate people in the community and offer them a chance of a better life.

In the wake of the Watts Riots and urban unrest, in 1965, Gov. Pat Brown chose the current site for CSUDH as a campus that would be most accessible to minority students.

CSU Chancellor Charles Reed needs to recognize the fact that this structural racism, sexism and classism have left Dominguez Hills poorly under-funded for years. The funding formula of the system, which favors full-time students over part-time students, doesn't recognize the complicated lives of the working-class students of color who attend Dominguez Hills. It's convenient for the chancellor to say he's not closing any campuses, but then we see he starves a few slowly.

The administration at CSUDH is attempting to manage its way out of this crisis by eliminating departments and programs. Such elimination would deny students their right to a comprehensive education, and it threatens the very existence of the campus that has served residents of South Los Angeles and the South Bay.

Campus president Mildred Garcia is envisioning that somehow we can emerge from this crisis leaner and more efficient. This is a false hope, and it doesn't fit with the needs of the community or the importance of offering a comprehensive liberal arts education to working-class and first-generation students, Latinos and African-Americans.

When we have been allowed to educate our students with adequate resources, they, as individuals, and we, as a campus, have succeeded. Why now is the campus administration looking at departments and programs and

framing this as if they are problems that need to be eliminated in order to change us into something else?

Most CSUDH students attend part time rather than full time and funds from the chancellor are allocated based on a "full time equivalent student." CSUDH ends up doing more for students with less money. According to the CSU's own data, a student at Dominguez Hills, on average, is funded at three-quarters of what a full-time student should be funded.

No matter how many classes students take, they are individual human beings who need academic advising and a myriad of support services to graduate. By under-funding our students, we are unfairly penalizing them and CSUDH for doing what we so respect in this society—working our way through college.

The impact of this formula is reflected in decreased class availability, increased class size, longer student time to graduation, increased faculty workload, layoff of part-time faculty, inadequate staffing resources and more. The combination of a proposed \$6 million budget cut and the existing inadequate campus funding allocation, a budget that is already stretched thin, would be detrimental to the students, faculty, and staff.

The campus administration has already shut down the student newspaper, closed the Women's Resource Center and eliminated the successful program in Electronic Media Programming and Production. If Chancellor Reed truly supports education for working-class students of color, he would be providing more funding for Dominguez Hills.

There is no "fat" to cut from CSUDH, as our provost himself has recognized, and the chancellor needs to own up to this fact and adjust funding equitably. Those of us who have benefited from a CSU education and those who attended CSUDH must recognize that it and the community it serves deserve adequate funding and support.

The very mission of CSUDH and its service to the community are at stake. We can't allow the campus administration to cut programs. CSUDH students deserve better.

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