

For Immediate Release Contact:
May 25, 2007

Lisa Cohen, 310.395.2544

California Faculty Association Statement Re. Skilled Workers and California's Economy

May 25, 2005

"Two reports this week reveal California's public state universities are falling behind.

The future of California's economy depends on the number of skilled workers that graduate from college. The Public Policy Institute study released this week makes clear that the supply of workers is nowhere near the level of need.

Yet the leadership of the California State University - the State's public higher education institution that serves the most minority students -- is making decision after decision to make it more difficult for students to graduate.

The Administration has for years refused to press the governor and legislature for much needed funding for programs and services that help students get classes and advice on the quickest path to graduation. While funding for the CSU has stagnated, a San Francisco Chronicle report this week revealed that on the current course, spending on prisons will outstrip spending on public state universities.

Furthermore, as state funding for the system languished, this administration raised student fees 94% since 2002, making it tougher for students to afford their education. About 57% of CSU students are minorities and 25% work at least 30 hours a week to pay for their education. Significantly, CSU campuses serving the largest numbers of students of color experienced dramatic declines in enrollment as student fees soared.

Policies such as these indicate that the CSU Administration is out of touch with the needs of the university's more than 400,000 students.

If the leadership of our state universities doesn't change course quickly, California's economy will suffer sooner rather than later as increasing numbers of students drop out of school."