The CFA Way Forward: A Long-Term Plan to Defend Quality Higher Education

Dear Friends,

The pain and hardship from COVID-19 will be long-lasting. Some of us have lost family members, friends, neighbors, and loved ones. The economic toll is harming the communities we live in. Rumors are swirling about the future of the CSU. But we will not allow them to become reality. The voices of faculty – the ones on the front line of the CSU – will be heard, and we will fight for a more just and equitable CSU for all.

Today is May Day, International Workers’ Day. May Day is celebrated across the globe to recognize and remember the sacrifices of working people. Our communities are facing adversity like never before, as powerful influences seek to use the COVID-19 crisis to minimize or subvert the interests of working people. As a union, we will push back to protect the health, dignity, and livelihood of faculty and the core mission of the CSU. This is why today, of all days, CFA is announcing its long-term plan to defend quality higher education.

We will fight to maintain faculty rights:

- CFA will not let the moment become an opportunity to privatize or profit from public higher education.
- Healthy and safe campuses are paramount; sanitization is essential. We will need to follow physical distance guidelines so long as COVID-19 threatens our communities. Faculty, staff, and students need to be safe when returning to campus.
- CFA will safeguard the professional integrity of the CSU, defend academic freedom, and protect our intellectual property.
- CFA will demand continuing health care coverage for all faculty who are currently covered, including employer-paid COBRA if they lose eligibility due to the pandemic.
- CFA will demand the maintenance of teaching entitlements and will fight for the jobs of our faculty.
- CFA will demand that faculty be compensated for their time and resources for COVID-19-related preparation, training and technology needs and upgrades.
- CFA will not tolerate the militarization of police or the racial profiling of our faculty and students.

We will fight to defend access and equity, safety and appropriate instruction for our students:

- CFA will demand that this economic crisis not be placed on the backs of our students. Students should not bear the burden of digging us out of this emergency.
- Access and equity is a priority, and we must lift up our most vulnerable students. That means every student must feel safe on campus and in their dormitories.
- CFA will not allow our Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and undocumented students, our students of color, our students with disabilities, our international students, our foster students, our students who live meal to meal, and our students who
may not know where they’re sleeping night to night, to be left behind during the crisis and recovery. Their lives must be respected and supported. They are our future leaders.

- The time to hire additional mental health counselors is now. CFA will demand that the CSU meet the International Accreditation of Counseling Services (IACS) standard of 1,500 students to one counselor.
- CFA will demand that stimulus money already allotted be used to address the needs of all students.
- CFA will demand that when the CSU allocates stimulus money, campuses must be transparent, and prioritize instruction and student service centers.

And we will defend our Union:

- CFA will demand that the CSU put a moratorium on hiring administrators and managers during this crisis, and instead allocate those resources to ending the hiring freeze on faculty and staff positions.
- CFA will demand that the CSU prioritize the core mission of instruction and facility safety over all other management initiatives.

Management will be held accountable. Campuses should not hire outside consultants with bloated contracts while both faculty and students are forced to resort to campus food pantries. The CSU needs to get its priorities in order and those priorities should support those who are learning and those who are providing the learning and support.

Over the coming days, weeks, and months, CFA will roll out in-depth details on how we will fight to achieve these goals. For now, the demands set forth here will guide our struggle for maintaining quality public higher education and a more equitable CSU. We fight for what we believe in. We fight for higher education. We fight for our faculty. We fight for our students. We fight for a better CSU.

Sincerely,
Officers of the California Faculty Association

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