From the California Faculty Association

CFA HEADLINES
September 12, 2018 · Weekly news digest from CFA

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CFA supports family of slain Humboldt State student, calls on CSU admin to better protect students, demands all speakers be treated with respect

As the mother of slain Humboldt State student David Josiah Lawson made her third appeal to CSU Trustees at today’s meeting, faculty and students stood arm-in-arm behind her, echoing her call for the Board to use its leverage to help solve the crime and improve campus safety.

Lawson was a 19-year-old Criminology & Justice Studies student. He was killed at a party near campus in the rural, mostly white community of Arcata on April 15, 2017. As of today, his murder remains unsolved.

HSU students, Lawson’s family, and advocates have protested persistently at city meetings, on campus, and in town since his death. His mother, Charmaine Lawson, has asked the Board twice before for help in finding the killer and make CSU campuses safe for students.

“We demand safety,” Charmaine Lawson said. “The university must work to end the discrimination throughout the CSU system.”

Today, faculty and students from throughout the CSU amplified her message, and called out Trustees for their treatment of Charmaine Lawson during their July meeting. At that meeting,
while Ms. Lawson spoke, a CSU police officer could be seen on video standing behind her in an intimidating manner, his hand near his weapon.

“She was treated more as a criminal than a righteous grieving mother,” said Sharon Elise, CFA’s Associate Vice President of Affirmative Action and a CSU San Marcos Professor. “She came to you because her son was murdered. She entrusted him to you for an education and expected him to survive the experience and did not expect to be menaced by the police. She deserves more than that and he deserves justice.”

CFA faces up to racism and takes it on when it occurs and the Trustees need to do it too, she said. The work belongs to all of us.

“David Josiah Lawson lived a short life that deserves our honor and recognition. It is not too late to get to know him and to stand for him. To seek justice,” Elise said. “We are waiting for Black lives to matter.”

Renée Byrd, a professor in the Criminology & Justice Studies program at Humboldt State and CFA Chapter President, urged Chancellor Tim White and Trustees to think of safety through the lens of racial justice.

“Parents shouldn’t need to worry every day when their kids leave the house, let alone when they go to get an education,” Byrd said. “David Josiah Lawson deserved to come to Humboldt and encounter new ideas and be safe doing that. His life matters... It’s time to show us that his life matters.”

James Thomas, a Cal State LA faculty member and Pastor of Living Word Community Church in Sherman Oaks, told Trustees that if they are recruiting students of color, they need to truly make space for students of color, and protect them from harm. To help them feel healthy and supported.

“If you invite us to your institution, you must allow us to be Black,” Thomas said. “That means the culture of the institution has to change to make space for us. You need to be ready for the students you recruit and you’re not. It means working openly with students, parents, community leaders, pastors, and faculty.”

The police presence in the CSU system and lack of support from administration for families and students of color, particularly Black students, must stop, said Antoinette Sadler, a Cal State LA student and member of Students for Quality Education.

“We can’t enter the administration office without police coming in full riot gear to block the entrance,” Sadler said. “We are students. You all get paid by us... You all need to be held accountable.”

The auditorium was silent as Charmaine Lawson spoke of her son, her voice shaking with emotion. With faculty and students standing in solidarity behind her, she told them of David Josiah Lawson’s life. Of his vibrance. Of his character. Of his love for the CSU.
“My son was smart. My son was compassionate. He was an ambitious leader. He was driven to succeed. My beloved son was destined for greatness. DJ set his sights on higher education when he entered Humboldt State in 2015. He was so excited to be heading off to college, a young African-American man,” Charmaine Lawson said. “As parents, we sacrifice to send our children off to college because we want them to succeed as future leaders. This institution failed our family.”

Click here to read full comments by CFA leaders.

Faculty to Trustees: We worked with students to secure additional funding for the CSU — don’t squander it

CFA leaders questioned the CSU administration’s budgetary priorities during the Tuesday’s Board of Trustees meeting, which focused on education policy and finance.

CFA issued an open letter to Chancellor Tim White and Trustees on Tuesday, calling them out for their actions regarding executive compensation, student enrollment, tenure density, and state funding.

CFA officers pointed out that it was faculty and students who helped secure the additional $364 million in state funding for the CSU. In memoranda from the Chancellor’s Office to campus presidents, campuses were directed to use enrollment money toward making already-enrolled students take more units, whether or not they can handle it.

“That money was given with the expectation that it be used to increase student enrollment. That a portion of that money be spent on improving tenure density so that there are teachers in the classroom,” said Rafael Gómez, CFA’s Associate Vice President North. “And yet, you are setting out down a path that will take that hard-earned money and twist it to fit your agenda, which doesn’t improve access to the CSU, nor improve the number of full-time, tenure-track faculty.”

Additionally, the $25 million in funding earmarked for tenure-track hiring is being slid into the “Graduation Initiative,” and is not being distributed to campuses in a way that will help actually hire tenure-line faculty.

“You want to know what really helps students graduate on time? Having access to professors who are with them throughout their academic career. Having access to professors who have stable teaching jobs, not three teaching jobs. Having access to teachers who mentor them,” said CFA Treasurer Susan Green.

In terms of the budget, the CSU should be asking for the kind of state funding it needs for the
coming academic term, not just what is needed to get by, said Jonathan Karpf, CFA’s Associate Vice President of Lecturers North.

Cecil Canton, CFA’s Associate Vice President of Affirmative Action, chastised Trustees for taking up executive compensation just weeks after Gov. Brown signed a budget that for the first time in years reinvested state funding in the CSU.

“We can’t afford to jeopardize future funding by bantering around the idea of lavish raises for executives when the ink is barely dry on a budget that we had to fight to get,” Canton said. “We hope the CSU’s budget request for next year will reflect the REAL funding needed to support our students and our university system. Funding for real needs, for real teaching, for real students.”

Click here to read CFA’s Open Letter to Chancellor White and Trustees.

Help us urge Gov. Brown to sign critical legislation!

CSU counselors will be at several campuses in the coming week, encouraging faculty and staff to send emails to Gov. Brown urging him to sign legislation that would improve student mental health services in the CSU.

The Legislature passed SB 968, authored by Sen. Richard Pan, which would increase the number of counselors on CSU campuses. It is currently awaiting the governor’s signature. The professional recommended ratio is one counselor per 1,500 students. Currently, the ratio on CSU campuses is far higher, in some cases as much as one counselor per 3,000 students.

On Thursday, counselors will be at Sonoma State encouraging colleagues, students, and staff to send a message to Gov. Brown using our Take Action email tool. The “Tissues for Issues” display then moves to Sacramento State next week.

About 61 percent of college students experience overwhelming anxiety, which can be exacerbated by stressors such micro-aggressions and racism, cyberbullying, isolation, and loneliness. In the CSU, where a majority of students are students of color, low-income, and are the first in their families to go to college, these may be experienced in even greater numbers.

“Our students need our help, and every one of us has the opportunity to help right now by telling Gov. Brown to please sign this legislation,” said Mimi Bommersbach, a Chico State Counselor and Chair of CFA’s Counselors’ Committee.
Another piece of CFA-sponsored legislation also is on the governor’s desk. SB 1421, authored by Sen. Nancy Skinner, would make available to the public records in cases involving sexual assault or dishonesty in criminal investigations, where accusations were sustained after due process.

The bill also would make available records related to police shootings and other serious or deadly uses of force incidents after 180 days or after an investigation has concluded.

With increasing police presence on CSU and in the community, and increasing numbers of students of color enrolled in the CSU, it’s critical that there is accountability and transparency for police officers who abuse the public trust. Gov. Brown needs to sign this bill in order to protect faculty, students, and community members in and around our campuses.

Faculty Rights Tip of the Week: Outside Employment

Article 35 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) covers outside employment.

This provision of the CBA stipulates that outside employment “shall not conflict with the normal work assignments or satisfactory performance of all duties of the faculty unit employee.” Upon written request from the appropriate administrator, full-time faculty shall provide a written statement of the approximate distribution of time devoted to continuous outside employment during the academic term. There is a specific form for reporting this found in Appendix H of our CBA.

Such requests from administrators are not issued on “blanket” basis to all full-time faculty every semester, but rather when the administrator has determined that such information is necessary to assure there is no conflict with the normal duties of specific faculty members.

Full-time faculty members are required to report outside employment if it is expected to exceed:

- One hundred sixty (160) hours per semester for faculty holding academic year or ten (10) month appointments at a semester campus.
- One hundred ten (110) hours per quarter for faculty holding academic year or ten (10) month appointments at a quarter campus.
- One hundred twenty (120) hours per three (3) month period for faculty holding twelve (12) month appointments.

It is important to remember that CSU management cannot prohibit employees from taking on “outside employment” or require reporting in ways that are inconsistent with Article 35.
If you have questions about faculty rights, contact your faculty rights representative.

If you have questions about a faculty rights tip or would like to suggest a tip, please write us with the subject line “Faculty Rights Tip.”

In Other News…

POLITICAL GAIN: It may be the beginning of September, but CFA activists already are taking political action in preparation for the Nov. 6 General Election.

Last week, CFA members at campuses across the CSU recruited dozens of colleagues to participate in phone banking, hall walking, and other activities to support candidates who value public higher education and hold fast to principles of racial and social justice.

Many also helped faculty, staff and students register or re-register to vote prior to the Oct. 22 deadline.

- Click here to sign up and get involved with your chapter!
- To see a photo gallery from our week of action, click here.

OPEN ENROLLMENT SEASON: CalPERS Open Enrollment began Monday, Sept. 10 and is available through Oct. 5. During this time, members enrolled in CalPERS health plans can review health coverage options for 2019 from the system's health plans. Pension beneficiaries also can be updated during this time. CSU employees should contact campus HR to make any of these changes. Retirees can access CalPERS via a new mobile-friendly site by clicking here.

RISE UP: CFA leaders and members were out in force on Saturday, marching alongside thousands of other activists as part of the “Rise for Climate, Jobs and Justice.” The event preceded the Sept. 12-14 Global Climate Action Summit organized by the UN and Gov. Jerry Brown.

Click here to see a photo gallery of CFA in action!

Links of the Week

Bill would increase mental health counselors at CSU
KPCC
A California bill headed to the governor's desk would increase the number of mental health therapists at California State University campuses to reach national guidelines. Some campuses have student to
counselor ratios that are nearly double of what's recommended. One unknown: where is the funding coming from to pay for the additional counselors.

**Why white parents need to do more than talk to their kids about racism**

*TIME*

In a moment of deep racial and political divides, when explicit racism frequents our news and our communities, white parents have concerns about how to raise white kids who are kind, compassionate and, importantly, not racist. The advice they most often receive is simple: talk more to your kids about race and racism. This is certainly important. But I have seen first-hand that it is not enough.

**Relax: Federal law won’t raise your California income tax**

*San Francisco Chronicle*

Not surprisingly for a state of nonconformists, the Legislature adjourned Sept. 1 without conforming California state income taxes to any part of the Republican-crafted federal tax law passed in December. That means the federal law won’t affect how much Californians pay in state income tax for 2018, although it could make filing tax returns more complicated for some. Those who take the new, higher standard deduction on their federal return will still be able to claim itemized deductions on their state return.

**An ‘unprecedented’ direction for Title IX**

*Inside Higher Ed*

In an unparalleled decision and a win for those who feel due process has been shunned in campus investigations of sexual assault, a federal appeals court has ruled that universities must allow students in these cases — or their representatives — to directly question their accuser in a live hearing.

**A conversation with CSU Board of Trustees Chair Adam Day**

*San Diego Tribune*

San Diegan Adam Day recently became chair of the California State University Board of Trustees. Day is currently chief administrative officer for the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation. He is the son of former SDSU president Thomas Day. His previous volunteer service includes the Del Mar Fair Board, the San Diego County Planning Commission and Century Club of San Diego. Day met with the U-T Editorial Board last week. Here is transcript of the interview.

1 in 5 college students so stressed they consider suicide

*CBS News*

College can be so stressful that many students think about killing themselves, and some even try, a new study suggests.

14 things people think are fine to say at work — but are actually racist, sexist, or offensive

*MSN*

From telling a new female worker that she "looks like a student" to asking a black colleague about her natural hair, microaggressions often exist in the workplace, too. And they can make a workplace feel unsafe and toxic.

**Blunt Instrument**

*Inside Higher Ed*

Just a few years after rewriting the rules on program cuts and related faculty layoffs, the University of Wisconsin System is again seeking to limit faculty -- and even institutional -- say in academic matters.

**Why is college in America so expensive?**

*The Atlantic*

Before the automobile, before the Statue of Liberty, before the vast majority of contemporary colleges existed, the rising cost of higher education was shocking the American conscience: "Gentlemen have to pay for their sons in one year more than they spent themselves in the whole four years of their course," *The New York Times* lamented in 1875.

Decadence was to blame, the writer argued: fancy student apartments, expensive meals, and "the mania
for athletic sports.”

Today, the U.S. spends more on college than almost any other country, according to the 2018 Education at a Glance report, released this week by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In the age of Trump, there’s a fine line between racism and free speech. Even at high school football games

LA Times

Maybe in another time, the scene at an Orange County high school football game might have felt different: the home team fans dressed in red, white and blue chanting, “USA!” “USA!,” after a touchdown.

But this is an age of polarization from President Trump on down, of us versus them, of viral accounts of racist rhetoric and bullying in schools — and the home team’s campus is mostly white, the visiting team’s almost entirely Latino.

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