

From the California Faculty Association  
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## CFA HEADLINES

February 20, 2013 · Weekly news digest from CFA

- Senator introduces oil severance bill to fund higher ed
- NY Times examines “The Trouble with Online College”
- CFA members share their stories of John Travis
- Attend AAUP California meeting
- Links of the week

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### · **Senator introduces oil severance bill to fund higher ed**

Last week Senator Noreen Evans (D-Santa Rosa) announced the introduction of Senate Bill (SB) 241, a bill that would fund California’s higher education systems and State Parks through a severance tax imposed on oil producers in California

Evans said the tax would raise an estimated \$2 billion annually, 93 percent of which would be steered toward public colleges and universities and the rest used to help shore up the state's beleaguered parks system.

[Learn more about SB 241.](#)

“CFA appreciates Senator Evans’ recognition of the dramatic cuts that have greatly impacted our institutions of public higher education, students, and faculty. CFA has supported an oil severance tax in the past and applauds Senator Evans’ effort to reinvest in the California State University system (CSU),” said CFA President Lillian Taiz, a professor of history at Cal State Los Angeles.

She continued, “Together with Governor Brown’s latest budget proposal to increase funding for the CSU, this is another positive step towards enabling our universities to develop and expand California’s human and economic capabilities as intended.”

In 2009 CFA supported a similar effort led by then-Assemblymember Alberto Torrico, aimed at getting oil companies to pay their fair share. That bill was eventually defeated in committee following heavy lobbying from California’s oil industry.

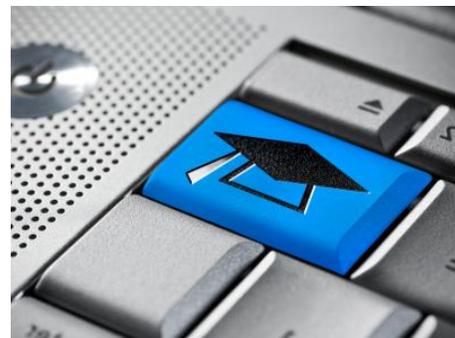
### · **NY Times examines “The Trouble with Online College”**



In an editorial published Monday, the New York Times examined the popular notion that online education can cure all that ails our colleges and universities.

[Read the full editorial.](#)

The piece – which was entitled “The Trouble with Online College” – took a look at many of the weaknesses CSU professors are already finding with wholly online teaching. Specifically, many students are ill-prepared for the online environment either because of a lack of basic skills from their k-12 education or inadequate computer technology to get the most out of an online course.



The editorial states:

*“The research has shown over and over again that community college students who enroll in online courses are significantly more likely to fail or withdraw than those in traditional classes, which means that they spend hard-earned tuition dollars and get nothing in return. Worse still, low-performing students who may be just barely hanging on in traditional classes tend to fall even further behind in online courses.”*

The editorial goes on to conclude:

*“The online revolution offers intriguing opportunities for broadening access to education. But, so far, the evidence shows that poorly designed courses can seriously shortchange the most vulnerable students.”*

## · **CFA member share their stories of John Travis**

Last week, CFA announced the passing of our former [President and long-time union stalwart John Travis.](#)

In order to share the many great memories so many of faculty have of John, CFA has created a webpage where friends and colleagues can leave their own personal stories, tributes and remembrances.

[Read CFA members stories about John here.](#)



## · **Attend AAUP California meeting**

CSU faculty members are invited to attend the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) California annual meeting next month in San Diego.

The event will take place Saturday, March 9 at the University of California San Diego’s Cross-Cultural Center (in the Price Center).

The theme of the event is “The Financial Crisis in California and Its Impact on Higher Education,” and workshops offered include:

- Building and Maintaining Participatory Governance
- Organizing Faculty to take the Offensive on the Crisis in Higher Education
- Preserving and Enhancing Academic Freedom
- The University of Oregon Story: Faculty Unionize and Fight for First Contract

For more details contact: [westcoast@aaup.org](mailto:westcoast@aaup.org)

## · Links of the week

### **A Governor's Attack on Academic Freedom**

Gov. Jerry Brown's 2013-14 budget for California intrudes on academic freedom in a way that could harm the 23 campuses of California State University and the 10 campuses of the University of California—but the impact of his attempt to control academic decision-making threatens every public college and university in the country. – [Chronicle of Higher Ed](#)

### **The MOOC Revolution: A Sketchy Deal for Higher Education**

Beginning in late 2011 and throughout the following year, major U.S. publications devoted a good portion of the space in their pages not consumed by election coverage to stories and opinion pieces lauding recently founded online education startups like Udacity, Coursera, and edX, and the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) they offer. – [Dissent Magazine](#)

### **CSU investigation finds mistakes in billing, conflicts of interest**

Allegations were submitted to a university administrator on Aug. 26, 2010 regarding Chico State's Research Foundation and the College of Business, launching a full investigation by the California State University system in 2011. The university responded to the investigation findings last month. – [The Orion](#)

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