

From the California Faculty Association
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CFA HEADLINES

March 19, 2013 · Weekly news digest from CFA

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- Trustees' agenda item on budget includes discussion of faculty raises
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· CFA weighs in on the groundswell of online higher ed bills

Numerous bills related to online education in California's public colleges and universities have been introduced in the legislature this year. ([See examples and the full text of this article.](#))

While these bills are still in the initial stages of development and consideration, CFA is very concerned about the impact on students, faculty and quality education and the unintended consequences of one-size-fits-all legislation.

While CFA believes that online education can be a successful mode of instruction for some students and while we wholeheartedly support the goal of expanding access to higher education in California, we have deep concerns about some proposed legislative solutions that mandate online instruction or call for blanket standardization of curricula across a variety of institutions.

CFA also fundamentally rejects the belief that after years of deep cuts in state support for the CSU the solution to restoring the greatness of the system lies in throwing open the doors to private vendors and privatizing operations.

[See more from CFA on this topic.](#)

· Trustees' agenda item on budget includes discussion of faculty raises

At the CSU Board of Trustees meeting this week, the governing board of the 23-campus system discussed its plans for how best to allocate the projected \$125.1 million in extra state funding for 2013/14 included in the governor's budget plan.

While emphasizing that the plans are just preliminary – and that the CSU's budget number could very well change between now and the start of the new fiscal year in July – the Trustees

detailed a plan to use the funds to expand enrollment and online courses as well as boost employee salaries.

In a conference call with the news media Monday, Assistant Vice Chancellor Robert Turnage said the employee salary portion of the new funding would include \$38 million to begin addressing the fact that faculty and staff have gone many years without a raise.

The \$38 million proposed for this purpose amounts to 1.2 percent of CSU compensation. System and campus executives as well as campus presidents would not be included in this compensation pool.

Turnage also noted that issues related to distribution will be addressed through the collective bargaining process.

· Hueso victory returns supermajority to Dems in state Senate

Assemblyman Ben Hueso (D-San Diego) won a seat to move up to the state Senate last week, restoring the supermajority the Democrats gained in the upper house in November.



The victory by Hueso – whom CFA endorsed – continues the domino effect of vacancies in California politics. His election filled one of three Senate vacancies. Hueso replaces former Democratic Sen. Juan Vargas of San Diego.

Vargas and state Sen. Gloria Negrete McLeod (D-Chino) moved to Congress in January. The third vacancy occurred when state Sen. Michael Rubio (D-Shafter) resigned last month to work for Chevron.

In an election this week to fill McLeod's 32nd Senate District seat, no candidate received a majority. A runoff will be held May 14 between the top two finishers.

If Torres wins, the Democrats' numbers in the Assembly would fall below the supermajority threshold in the lower house, at least until Hueso's seat and possibly Torres' are filled.

CFA has already endorsed [Lorena Gonzalez](#) (Secretary-Treasurer and CEO for the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council) for Hueso's old Assembly seat.

· Obama nominates his civil rights chief to be the next secretary of labor



President Barack Obama announced Monday that he will nominate Thomas E. Perez, who heads the Civil Rights Division at the Justice Department, to be the next Secretary of Labor.

Perez would replace Hilda L. Solis—a graduate of Cal Poly Pomona and a former community college board member—as head of the Labor Department at a time when the president has promised to create more jobs and overhaul immigration policy.

Labor leaders responded favorably to the nomination.

"President Obama has made an excellent choice in nominating Thomas Perez to lead the U.S. Department of Labor," said Mary Kay Henry, the president of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), of which CFA is an affiliate.

She continued, "During his time as Labor Secretary in Maryland, Mr. Perez had a strong record of enforcing labor laws, especially wage and hour and other violations that stood in the way of workers earning a fair wage. Enforcing these labor laws help to close the income gap between the wealthy and everyone else."

California Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez was also reportedly on the short list for the position.

· **Links of the week**

California State University plans enrollment hike with extra funds

California State University plans to spend the projected \$125.1 million in extra state funding for the 2013/14 academic year to expand enrollment and online courses, boost employee salaries and pay for increased energy and health benefit costs, officials said Monday. – [Associated Press](#)

San Francisco Symphony musicians striking over wages, orchestra quality

The San Francisco Symphony has canceled four home concerts and an East Coast tour, which would have taken it to Carnegie Hall this week. Its musicians, who earn an average of \$165,000, are on strike, seeking assurances that theirs will remain among the country's top-three orchestras in terms of pay -- capable of recruiting top talent and putting on the best performances for years to come. – [San Jose Mercury News](#)

Editorial: Give online courses the old college try

Online courses could open worthwhile classes at California's public colleges to thousands more students, or they could undermine the reputation of our widely admired public higher-education system. – [Los Angeles Times](#)

F. King Alexander is named sole finalist for top job at Louisiana State U.

F. King Alexander, president of California State University at Long Beach, is the sole finalist for the job of chancellor and president at Louisiana State University, the university's search committee announced on Monday. – [Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

City College of San Francisco fights for its life

For the last year, faculty at City College of San Francisco have been under siege, not just from a newly-hostile administration, but from an accreditation commission that has threatened the district's very existence. – [Labor's Edge](#)

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