

From the California Faculty Association
webmaster@calfac.org or www.calfac.org

CFA HEADLINES

September 4, 2013 · Weekly news digest from CFA

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Welcome back

Greetings to faculty members and the campus community starting classes this week at Sacramento.

Are you a faculty member who is new to the CSU or never got around to joining CFA? Now is the time to add your support to your union. [Learn more about membership and how to join.](#)

See the FAQ about the latest agreement on faculty pay

If you have questions about the latest agreement on faculty pay, [see the FAQ](#) on the CFA web site for more information.

To recap, in August CFA and the CSU Chancellor's Office agreed to a modest pay raise for faculty during "reopener" contract talks over salary in the last year of the current faculty contract.



If you have further questions, please write to bargainingideas@calfac.org with the subject line "Reopener Bargaining."

Learn what's next at your campus bargaining info meeting

CFA Officers and Bargaining Team members are visiting campuses in the coming weeks to meet with you about what is next in negotiating the faculty's next contract. All CSU faculty members are invited to attend.

Here is a list of meetings scheduled so far. More will be announced at other campuses as they are arranged.



To confirm details about the meeting at your campus, please contact your campus CFA chapter —[click here to find chapter phone and email](#).

Wednesday, Sept 11

- SONOMA, Noon, Schulz 3001.
- DOMINGUEZ HILLS, 11:30-1 pm, LSU Ballroom A.

Tuesday, Sept 17

- FRESNO, 11 am-1 pm, call chapter for location.
- CHANNEL ISLANDS, 2-4 pm, call [chapter](#) for location.

Monday, Sept 23

- CHICO, 5-8 pm, Mom's Restaurant.

Tuesday, Sept 24

- HUMBOLDT, 1-2:30 pm, UC Banquet Room.

Thursday, Sept 26

- MONTEREY BAY, 5-7 pm, UC Living Room.

Tuesday, October 1

- SAN DIEGO, 11:30-1 pm, Faculty Staff Club.

Thursday, Oct 3

- POMONA, 11:30-1:30 pm, Kellogg West.

Monday, Oct 7

- EAST BAY, Noon-2 pm, Biella Room.

Tuesday, Oct 8

- FULLERTON, 11:30-1:30 pm, Academic Senate.
- SAN JOSE, Noon-2 pm, call [chapter](#) for location.

Thursday, Oct 10

- LOS ANGELES, 3-5pm, FA 143.
- SAN LUIS OBISPO, 11 am, call [chapter](#) for location.

Thursday, Oct 17

- SACRAMENTO, 5:30 pm, call [chapter](#) for location.

Other contract talks in the CSU

In addition to CFA, unions representing other CSU employees also have been in reopener

bargaining with the CSU Chancellor's Office. On August 27, Academic Professionals of California (Unit 4) announced that they and the CSU Chancellor's Office had reached an agreement that provides a 1.34% base pay increase retroactive to July 1, 2013.



Faculty Rights tip of the week: Flex Cash

This is a new feature for the CFA Headlines. CFA will regularly run a brief "faculty rights tip" or short information piece about the faculty contract.

FLEX CASH

Through the FlexCash Plan (Article 32.13 in the Faculty Contract), faculty who waive CSU benefits because they have other non-CSU coverage can receive an additional \$128 in compensation per month for waiving just medical benefits, \$12 for waiving dental, and \$140 for waiving both.



In order to participate, each employee must request participation and certify that s/he has alternate non-CSU insurance for the CSU insurance being waived.

Want to learn more? Become active with your local CFA chapter faculty rights team. Find your representative here. <http://www.calfac.org/faculty-rights-chapter-representatives>.

If you have questions about a faculty rights tip or would like to suggest a tip, please write us at cfa@calfac.org with the subject line "Faculty Rights Tip."

CFA takes a stand for Africana & ethnic studies

Last week CFA President Lillian Taiz and Council for Affirmative Action Chair/VP for Affirmative Action Cecil Canton sent [a letter on behalf of CFA](#) to every California State University campus president, expressing "deep concern for an emerging pattern on a number of campuses within the CSU—an initiative to drastically cut existing race and ethnic studies departments or to merge them into larger departments."

The letter notes pressure on the campuses to introduce "efficiencies," some of which will undermine exactly what public higher education needs to achieve.

They wrote, "Now is not the time to be shrinking or burying academic curriculum that takes on these critical issues. Instead we must commit ourselves to helping all of our students wrestle with the reality of race in America and aspire to create a better society for all of us."

The letter calls for a moratorium on program changes on all campuses and supports Chancellor Timothy White's request that changes proposed at CSU Long Beach be postponed for two years while an assessment of the impact can be conducted. The letter also shares with campus presidents a [California State Assembly resolution supporting Africana Studies](#).

SJSU data on MOOC “experiments” found dubious

A blistering critique of recent data on results of San José State’s MOOC experiments, which are done in collaboration with the online course provider Udacity, calls into question the veracity and transparency of the claimed outcomes.



Phil Hill, a big name in advocating e-learning, picked over the data and found it too limited to draw good conclusions. Even so, the data that was released suggests the alleged MOOC progress had more to do with changing the types of students taking the classes (“student population”) than with making the MOOCs work better for students.

Looking at the numbers released regarding the spring MOOC experiment, the summer MOOC experiment, and SJSU on-campus classes, Hill writes, “The student populations between these three groups are completely different, to the point where other comparisons, such as passing rates or completion rates, should not be made.”

He points out the differences were extreme. “That’s right – the summer pilot includes 53% of students already having a college degree, 48% with a bachelor’s or higher. In the spring, none of the students had a college degree,” he found.

Hill is especially critical of SJSU administrators, people he argues should know how to work with data correctly.

Hill’s comments are circulating among online teaching advocates including EdSurge and others. [Check out his critique at e-Literate.](#)

To compare this with a different point of view, check out Udacity head [Sebastian Thrun’s blog](#) on the summer results of his MOOCs at San José.

For the overview of what’s going on, check out “Boost for Udacity Project” where [Inside Higher Ed](#) explains that two months after San José State announced it would put its partnership with Udacity on “pause,” university officials touted the summer results as “significantly better.”

CFA President Lillian Taiz argued in the news story that the sluggish pass rate among students in the remedial math course suggests the SJSU Plus (MOOC) project is a poor match for students in the California State University System.

Links of the week

California rambling: Labor Day

To most Americans, Labor Day is a holiday marking the end of summer. Its original intent as a day to honor the social and economic achievements of American workers is secondary, or

perhaps not even a thought. ... Steve Smith, director of Communications for the California Labor Federation, (said) “unions actually fight for causes that benefit everyone, such as raising the minimum wage, improving benefits, worker safety and protecting retirement.” — [Mountain Democrat](#)

CSU faculty receive modest pay raise (CFA)

— [Redlands Daily Facts](#)

— [\(Vallejo\) Times Herald](#)

Survey of Faculty Attitudes on Technology

Among the many findings, only one in five faculty surveyed agree online courses can achieve learning outcomes equivalent to those of in-person courses—even among those who have taught online. Big majorities think online classes are lower quality, less able to reach “at risk” students, less helpful to students with questions. And more than two-thirds say the news media is overrating the value of MOOCs. — [Inside Higher Ed](#)

Which Colleges Should We Blame for the Student-Debt Crisis?

Borrowing has grown all across higher ed. But private colleges, and for-profits in particular, have played an outsized role. — [The Atlantic](#)

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