

From the California Faculty Association
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Editor's Note: This will be the last edition of CFA Headlines for 2012. Publication will resume in January following the holiday break.

CFA HEADLINES

December 11, 2012 · Weekly news digest from CFA

- Poll finds Californians remain worried about college costs
- Working people tell Congress that we need jobs, not cuts
- Changes continue atop CSU as General Counsel retires
- Deadline to purchase CalPERS “airtime” is Dec. 31
- Sign up for NEA’s new eAdvocate monthly newsletter
- Links of the week

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· **Poll finds Californians remain worried about college costs**

A new poll has found that Californians are increasingly worried about the cost of attending public colleges and universities – even after voters approved new measures that are supposed to help limit tuition hikes, a new poll has found.

The Public Policy Institute of California poll – released last week – shows that nearly all Californians say the state’s public higher education system is very important (85%) or somewhat important (11%) to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state over the next 20 years.

[Read the poll.](#)

Yet they express growing concern about the system. The share of adults who say affordability is a big problem is at a new high of 65%, up 13 points since 2008. And 43% say overall accessibility is a big problem, an increase of 19 points since 2007.

Despite passage of Proposition 30—which averted trigger cuts to higher education—64% say the state budget situation is a big problem for higher education. These concerns come at a time when a record-high 51% of parents of children age 18 or younger say they hope their youngest child will attain a graduate degree.

· **Working people tell Congress that we need jobs, not cuts**

It's time to make the call.

From Seattle to Miami to Columbus to Denver, activists like you are taking part in the national call-in day and telling Congress we voted for job creation and protecting services like Medicare and Medicaid — not only for current beneficiaries, but for future ones as well.

[Click here to start calling.](#)

Our priorities are being threatened (again), and we need to take action TODAY to tell Congress that we need jobs, not cuts.

By a 2-1 margin, Americans want our elected leaders to focus on job creation rather than deficit reduction. We need Congress to extend the middle-class tax cuts for working Americans. And we need our government to defend Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security from unnecessary cuts in the name of deficit reduction.

Why should seniors receive fewer benefits than they earned because politicians in Congress refuse to raise taxes on the rich? Why should our most vulnerable suffer because some in Congress believe they aren't worth the cost?

Make sure your elected officials stand up for you.

· **Changes continue atop CSU as General Counsel retires**

The major changes within top CSU management continued last week as Christine Helwick, the system's general counsel, announced her retirement Friday.

Like outgoing CSU Chancellor Charles Reed, Helwick has brought forth controversy to the system.

Read the [Long Beach Post article](#) about Helwick's retirement and her sometimes contentious tenure.

· **Deadline to purchase CalPERS “airtime” is Dec. 31**

As a result of legislation adopted earlier this year, the purchase of Additional Retirement Service Credit (ARSC) from CalPERS – which applies to for time not actually worked and is often colloquially known as “airtime” – will be eliminated effective Jan. 1, 2013.

Previously, faculty members with at least five years of qualifying service credit in CalPERS and five years as CalPERS members were eligible to purchase up to five years of additional “airtime” service credit.

[Learn more about ARSC.](#)

Interested employees must submit an official application to purchase airtime to CalPERS by the close of business on Monday, Dec. 31, 2012. Please note that applications postmarked by but not received at CalPERS by Dec. 31, 2012 will not be accepted.

If you are thinking about purchasing any service credit for which you may be eligible, you will need to submit your request using the Steps for Requesting Additional Retirement Service Credit form which is only available for download through the [Service Credit Cost Estimator](#).

The form includes instructions for completing and submitting your application.

· **Sign up for NEA's new eAdvocate monthly newsletter**

The higher education division of the National Education Association (NEA) has launched a new communications tool: the *eAdvocate* newsletter.

This new monthly online newsletter highlights trends, legislation, resource material, and local, state, and national news in post-secondary education.

Some of the content will be similar to what is published in the [Advocate](#) – the widely-read hardcopy newsletter from NEA – but with a greater focus on breaking news and action (i.e., call your Congressman about impending budget cuts or check out the new *Thought & Action* call for papers, etc.).

[If you'd like to receive the eAdvocate, you can sign up here.](#)

· **Links of the week**

To Steer Students toward Jobs, Florida May Cut Tuition for Select Majors

Now, looking for more value on the remaining dollars, Governor Scott and Republican lawmakers are prodding Florida's 12 state universities to find ways to steer students toward majors that are in demand in the job market. – [New York Times](#)

The Troubling Dean-to-Professor Ratio

U.S. colleges are layering up at the top at a time when budgets are tight, students are amassing record debt, and tuition is skyrocketing. – [Bloomberg BusinessWeek](#)

'Metro' Unionizing Strategy Is Viewed as a Means to Empower Adjunct Faculty

Last week, Officials of the Service Employees International Union are touting their effort to unionize adjunct faculty members at all colleges in this city as a model for similar campaigns in other metropolitan areas, and envision using such an organizing strategy to greatly improve the pay and benefits afforded such instructors in those labor markets. – [Chronicle of Higher ed](#)

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