

From the California Faculty Association
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CFA HEADLINES

January 23, 2013 · Weekly news digest from CFA

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· CSU Trustees meeting

The CSU Board of Trustees meeting this week was the first with new Chancellor Timothy White. It was notable not only for the presence of Gov. Jerry Brown – who was on hand for the second time in as many meetings – but also for a cordial tone of discussion that showed sincere interest in the work of the faculty.

Some highlights of the meeting included:

- CFA President Lillian Taiz welcomed new CSU Chancellor Timothy White and urged the board to adopt a spirit of cooperation with the faculty moving forward.

“All of us are eager to start fresh and build enduring relationships that can withstand the challenges that will, no doubt, test us in the future. It should be remembered that while we will at times find ourselves on different sides of particular issues, we share common interests – the future of the California State University and the ability of our students to have access to quality, affordable, higher education.

“We believe that when our values line up we ought to be able to work cooperatively to solve problems. We have done this in the past, even under difficult circumstances; if we put our minds to it we should be able, under more favorable circumstances, to do it again.

- The Trustee's Committee on Finance heard reports and further details on the governor's CSU Budget Proposal for 2013/14.

Gov. Brown – who attended the Tuesday portion of the meeting in his position as an ex-officio trustee – said of the state budget: "It's a tight ship we're running and it's going to get tighter. Let's live within our means and stay the course."

The governor's attendance at the CSU board meeting highlights his increased scrutiny of higher education policy and spending. Last week he attended the University of California Board of Regents meeting.

CFA Treasurer John Halcón (Education, CSU San Marcos) addressed the Trustees on the importance of hiring and retaining enough psychological counselors to deal with the growing issue of mental health care.

“The time has come for serious assessment of what it will take to prevent violence such as we have seen in Newtown, Connecticut, Aurora, Colorado, Tucson, Arizona, Columbine, and yesterday in Houston...

“If proper mental health services had been available, it may have made a difference in these preventing tragedies....

“We ask that the Board of Trustees provide adequate funding for mental health services and campus police. Careful handling of the students in the middle of crises must be required of the services. We need to ensure that the counselors are adequately available to protect faculty, administrators, staff, and students on campus.”

· National leaders discuss organizing, funding ideas at 4th Campaign for the Future of Higher Ed meeting

The 4th national meeting of the Campaign for the Future of Higher Education last weekend took on some of the toughest challenges confronting the faculty across the country, including the hard-sell push toward online education and the harsh cuts to public funding of state colleges and universities.

Leaders of faculty, students, and higher education staff from 14 states and national organizations heard Jonathan Potter of the Chicago Teachers Union describe the revitalization of his union to take on attacks against teachers and public education.

His talk on “Lessons Learned from the Recent Chicago Teachers’ Strike,” which detailed how teachers built strongly unified faculty-community support for the schools, earned a standing ovation. Faculty participants lauded the connection between teachers and college faculty and noted the similarities in what all educators at all levels are up against.

Learn about the Chicago Teachers Union at <http://www.ctunet.com/>

The meeting also followed up on a previous decision to develop new ideas on how to fund public higher education and public support for students.

Three funding ideas were presented as papers that CFHE will release to stimulate discussion and to foster public hearings and other action at the state and national levels.

CFHE participating groups decided to take the three papers back to their respective states and campuses as examples of thinking that will actually rebuild, rather than tear down, public support for higher education. They will write opinion articles in their respective regional media on funding and take the papers as examples to policy makers.

One of these papers, by Bob Samuels, president of the AFT local that represents UC Lecturers, mapped the math that shows it is possible to “Make All Public Higher Education Free” to students by refocusing the money the states and federal government already spend.

Economist and AAUP national president Rudy Fichtenbaum’s paper shows how a very small “Financial Speculation Tax” would not only fund all public higher education in our nation but also help to stabilize the U.S. economy.

Stanton Glantz and Eric Hays, officers in the Council of UC Faculty Associations, provided the calculations on how much money per taxpayer it would take to “reset” higher education funding in California to a more reasonable, recent level. Alert: Not all that much. They are now working on similar calculations for other states.

Meeting attendees also heard about and debated a “Pay it Forward” funding model that would allow students to attend school without advance tuition and to pay a small percentage of their income in the future to fund the next generation of students.

Watch [CFA Headlines](#) for the public release of the CFHE funding ideas papers and for a link to a soon-to-be-launched web site to discuss and share ideas on “Funding Higher Education: The Search for New Possibilities.”

Finally, CFHE heard a panel discussion by four faculty members who teach online. They presented ideas on what does and does not work and on how to ensure students get the best possible education using online tools.

They cited some positives. Their students write a lot, since discussion is online. Every student can contribute a thought. It is helpful for non-traditional students with difficult schedules in locations far from a campus.

On the other hand, students indicate they sorely miss the face-to-face college experience. And the faculty cited high attrition rates; they said it works better for experienced students with strong foundations in learning and may be problematic for under-prepared students and for remedial classes.

The group decided to call for papers about online education similar to the papers developed on funding. Specific ideas and papers will be discussed at the 5th meeting of CFHE to take place in Ohio in May.

Read more in [CFHE Principle #4: Quality higher education in the 21st century should incorporate technology in ways that expand opportunity and maintain quality.](#)

CFA officers, members and staff who attended the CFHE gathering thanked the meeting hosts, the Community College Association/California Teachers Association organized by Ron Reel, CCA president. He has been with CFHE since its founding news conference in Washington DC.

The next gathering will be jointly hosted by the Ohio Conference of the American Association of University Professors, the Ohio Federation of Teachers/AFT, and the Ohio Education Association/NEA.

· **Trustees meeting webcast live for the first time**

This week's Board of Trustees meeting was also notable because for the first time it was webcast live over the Internet for all CSU constituents to see and hear.

This important move toward transparency was made possible by a CFA-sponsored bill signed into law last fall by the governor.

Assembly Bill 1723, which was authored by Felipe Fuentes (D-San Fernando Valley), utilizes advances in technology to provide the public with access to accurate, real-time televised or webcast transmissions of Trustees' meetings. It also requires an online archive of the transmissions.

"We can watch and listen to our federal, state, and local governments debate significant policy and programmatic issues. Now students, parents, and other interested individuals and organizations will have the same ability to engage in the important decisions affecting public higher education," said CFA President Taiz.

· **CFA member named San Francisco's poet laureate**

San Francisco State CFA member Alejandro Murguía was named the poet laureate of San Francisco last week.

Murguía, who teaches Latino/Latina studies and is active in the campus CFA chapter, was named to the position by San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee.

"I am thrilled to announce Alejandro Murguía as the new San Francisco Poet Laureate, a position that exemplifies San Francisco's rich literary history and tradition," said Lee. "Murguía, who founded the Mission Cultural Center, has been a champion of many local authors, artists, poets as well as a great contributor to the literary community in the City, and this honor is richly deserved."

The poet laureate's duties include delivering an inaugural address at the library, participating in community-based poetry events with communities and the library, and giving a reading at "Litquake" in October.

· Links of the week

Online courses need human element to educate

Education is under threat, but the Internet and the growth of Massive Open Online Courses are not to blame. – [CNN.com](#)

California State U. Will Experiment With Offering Credit for MOOCs

State universities in California, looking for creative ways to reduce education costs at a time of budget stress, are turning to MOOCs to offer low-cost options for students. – [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

Gov. Brown tells CSU to 'live within our means'

Gov. Jerry Brown urged California State University officials Tuesday to operate more efficiently on a tighter budget and forgo any plans for future tuition hikes – [Inland Valley Daily Bulletin](#)

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