

From the California Faculty Association
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CFA HEADLINES

April 9, 2013 · Weekly news digest from CFA

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- Attend nationwide day of action to support comprehensive immigration reform
- “For Whom Is College Being Reinvented?” Article takes on the buzz about online higher ed
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· Lobby Days meetings focus on state budget, online higher ed bills

Seventy-five faculty members – representing 21 of the 23 CSU campuses – converged on Sacramento last week for CFA’s annual Lobby Days event at the State Capitol.

Union members logged 82 meetings with legislators to support the Governor’s proposed increase in funding for the CSU and to discuss the problems associated with some of his budget policy proposals, including changes to CSU employee health care.

Faculty members also discussed their on-the-ground experiences with the pros and cons of online education.

The event was well-received by faculty who attended.

“I always find participating in Lobby Day to be a valuable experience,” said Shelly Arsneault, a professor of political science at CSU Fullerton.

She continued, “Representing CSU Fullerton, in Orange County, means that most of the legislators we visit are not particularly sympathetic to public higher education and certainly not to the cause of labor. Still, I’m happy to be able to remind them that we are here, we contribute to the good of our region and the state, and that our voices matter.”

· Attend nationwide day of action to support comprehensive immigration reform



New immigration reform legislation is expected to be introduced in Congress as soon as next week, and this Wednesday (April 10) tens of thousands of union members, immigrants, supporters, faith leaders and community advocates will be joining a nationwide Day of Action to support fair and just immigration reform.

While thousands rally at the Capitol Building in Washington DC, thousands more will be taking action in their own communities from coast to coast. Show your support for 11 million aspiring citizens by coming out to an event near you:

In **Berkeley**, you can join community, labor, DREAMers, business owners, interfaith and elected officials for a rally and candlelight vigil in support of commonsense immigration reform at 6:00pm on the University Avenue Pedestrian Bridge (Over Interstate 80 between University and Ashby exits).

In **Los Angeles**, the action will begin at 11am at the LA office of Sen. Diane Feinstein (11111 Santa Monica Blvd). [Learn more.](#)

In **Oakland**, there will be a rally in support of commonsense immigration reform dubbed “The Key to Citizenship” at 11:30am at Frank Ogawa Plaza.

In **Sacramento**, labor groups will host a news conference for comprehensive immigration reform at 5th & I Street, in front of the Robert T. Matsui Federal Building at noon. That event will be followed by a student forum about the importance of comprehensive immigration reform at CSU Sacramento at 5:30pm, Hinde Auditorium in the Student Union.

In **San Francisco**, a march will begin at 3pm at the San Francisco office of Sen. Feinstein (1 Post St). The march will conclude at 5pm with a rally at Civic Center. [Learn more and RSVP.](#)

- “For Whom Is College Being Reinvented?” Article takes on the buzz about online higher ed

An article titled “For Whom Is College Being Reinvented?” which ran late last year in the Chronicle of Higher Education, is particularly relevant these days given the mania surrounding online higher ed.



[It is worth a read.](#)

One particular passage which addresses access and under-represented students states:

“The punditry around reinvention (including some in these pages) has trumpeted the arrival of MOOC’s, badges, ‘UnCollege,’ and so on as the beginning of a historic transformation. ‘College Is Dead. Long Live College!’ declared a headline in Time’s ‘Reinventing College’ issue, in October, which

pondered whether massive open online courses would ‘finally pop the tuition bubble.’ With the advent of MOOC’s, ‘we’re witnessing the end of higher education as we know it,’ pronounced Joseph E. Aoun, president of Northeastern University, in The Boston Globe last month.

“Read beneath the headlines a bit. The pundits and disrupters, many of whom enjoyed liberal-arts educations at elite colleges, herald a revolution in higher education that is not for people like them or their children, but for others: less-wealthy, less-prepared students who are increasingly cut off from the dream of a traditional college education.”

[Read the full article.](#)

· National faculty groups weigh in on the Affordable Care Act & part-time faculty

Last week, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) released a statement on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and its impact on part-time faculty positions.

It states:



“Implementation of the law has raised a number of questions, among them how the law will be applied to faculty members in part-time positions. One provision of the new law, scheduled to take effect in January 2014, requires employers with more than fifty full-time employees to provide health benefits to employees who work thirty hours a week or more. To comply with this portion of the law colleges and universities must calculate the weekly working hours of part-time faculty members who are typically hired and compensated per course or per credit hour, rather than hourly or on a percentage basis.

“The AAUP supports guidelines under development by the IRS that explicitly address part-time faculty members, a category of individuals who are often ignored and treated as if they were invisible despite comprising more than half of U.S. faculty positions.”

[Read the full statement.](#)

The Campaign for Future of Higher Education also released a statement on ACA and higher education faculty. [That statement can be found here.](#)

· Tell Senator Steinberg SB 520 creates more problems than it solves

Join the more than 500 CSU faculty members who have already emailed State Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) with concerns regarding [Senate Bill 520](#).

Steinberg believes SB 520 would help students who cannot get the classes they need to move toward graduation—so-called ‘bottleneck courses’— **by handing off up to 50 of these sections to private online education vendors.**

CFA believes this bill will lower academic standards (particularly in key skills such as writing, math, and basic analysis), amplify the digital divide along socio-economic lines, and diminish the ability for underrepresented minorities to excel in higher education. In other words, SB 520 would worsen precisely the situation it claims to resolve.

Take action today by sending a message to the Pro Tem to let him know [that his bill creates more problems for our universities than it solves.](#)

· Links of the week

Cleveland State University faculty leaders to consider ‘no confidence’ vote in administration

Cleveland State University faculty leaders, saying administrators and trustees ignored their opposition to converting nearly all undergraduate classes from four credits to three credits, are poised to take a vote of no confidence in the administration. – [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#)

MOOCs of Hazard

Will online education dampen the college experience? Yes. Will it be worth it? Well... – [The New Republic](#)

Essay-Grading Software Offers Professors a Break

Imagine taking a college exam, and, instead of handing in a blue book and getting a grade from a professor a few weeks later, clicking the ‘send’ button when you are done and receiving a grade back instantly, your essay scored by a software program. – [New York Times](#)

Editorial: State must fix liabilities that loom at CalSTRS

The unfunded liability at the California State Teachers' Retirement System is \$73 billion currently and growing at the astonishing rate of \$17 million per day. If corrective action is not taken CalSTRS could deplete all its assets by 2044. – [Modesto Bee](#)

Obama To Return 5 Percent Of His Salary In Solidarity With Furloughed Federal Workers

Sharing a bit of budget pain, President Barack Obama will return 5 percent of his salary to the Treasury in a show of solidarity with federal workers smarting from government-wide spending cuts. – [Huffington Post](#)

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