CSU STUDENTS UNITED

PUBLIC STATEMENT TO CHANCELLOR REED AND THE CSU BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

November 20, 2011

On November 16, 2011, Chancellor Reed and the CSU Board of Trustees voted behind closed doors to increase student fees another 9%. Rather than taking precautions to make sure that the concerns of students were taken into account, the Board of Trustees think police presence and force is a necessary condition of diplomacy as the meeting was called to an end by Chairman Herbert Carter. It was then that CSU police forced the protestors outside and when some tried to regain entry, the police reacted with force and pepper spray against protesters. Four students were arrested in the aftermath, while dozens of officers in riot gear stood in opposition to protestors.

Moreover, the Board of Trustees continued the meeting at an adjacent meeting room behind closed doors. They proceeded to vote on a 9% increase. Following the decision, Lt. Governor and CSU Trustee Gavin Newsom issued a statement requesting a revote: “Due to the alarming manner in which the decision was made to approve the 2012-2014 support budget and the 2012-2013 tuition increases and given that there were 9 members of the California State University (CSU) Board not in attendance during this vote, I respectfully request that you place these two items back on the agenda for the meeting scheduled on December 5, 2011.”

In solidarity with the students, faculty and community members who attended and who were denied access to the second meeting at the Board of Trustees, we honor their efforts and commitments to protest the 9% tuition increase. Not allowing the public to continue witness and participate in their meetings is a testament to the current BOT’s undemocratic structure of the policy-making process within our universities. We condemn their decision to proceed with the vote in a private meeting. We condemn the lack of leadership allowing CSU police to act violently against students, faculty, and staff. We urge you to drop all charges and disciplinary proceedings against the students arrested at the Chancellor’s office, and also to respect students’ rights to protest the pressing issues of our political, social, and educational life.

The Chancellor has made bad decisions for public higher education that are going to impact California’s future for years to come if we do not stand up now. On Monday, December 5th we demand that the Board of Trustees honor Lt. Governor’s request for a re-vote of the 9% tuition increase. This is a call to action to all students who have been affected by the CSU Board of Trustees decisions. It is a call to action for all faculty and staff that feel the administration’s disregard for the sanctity of a public university system that aims to provide high-quality, accessible, student-focused higher education. This is a call to all members of our communities who believe that education is for learning, not for-profit. This call to action asks that everyone band together and unite peacefully on December 5th at the Chancellor’s Office in Long Beach.

In Unity,

STUDENTS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION
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