



# **OUR WAY FORWARD:**

**A Union Guideline  
for Fall 2020 and Beyond**

**Updated  
June 2020**

**“[T]he demands set forth here will guide our struggle for maintaining quality public higher education and a more equitable CSU. We fight for what we believe in. We fight for higher education. We fight for our faculty. We fight for our students. We fight for a better CSU.”**

--- Officers of the California Faculty Association, May 1, 2020

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# Executive Summary

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On May 1, International Workers' Day, the California Faculty Association (CFA) released its [long-term plan to defend quality higher education](#). The California State University system underwent major changes in Spring 2020 due to the coronavirus crisis, and we knew changes were on the horizon for the Fall term. On May 1, our union acknowledged three areas we would continue to fight for: maintaining faculty rights; defending access, equity, safety, and appropriate instruction for our students; and defending our union. Those goals are still part of our fight for a better CSU. Today, we expand our demands with specific areas of focus.

In late May, the Office of the Chancellor released their own guidelines for Fall 2020 planning, including procedures for exceptions to the near-universal implementation of virtual instruction. CFA is pleased to see a great deal of alignment between our May 1 demands and the Chancellor's plans announced May 25. While faculty are working diligently to pivot their pedagogical practices to the needs of this moment, the safety of faculty, staff, and students remains paramount.

University campuses are gathering places where we come together from disparate backgrounds to exchange and contest ideas, and to create and deconstruct knowledge and its applications. When operating at its best, a campus is designed as a community, a community that serves as an extended family for students, faculty, and staff. Campuses should be spaces that bring people together, not keep them apart. Therefore, both on-campus in-person instruction under rules of "social distancing" and virtual remote learning and working conditions pose unique sets of challenges for the CSU, as the Chancellor has recognized. We are pleased to read that the Office of the Chancellor agrees that meeting these challenges will require maximum communication, consultation, and flexibility with faculty, staff, and students, and with union leaders across the university system.

Faculty know best how to deliver the curriculum under new and changing circumstances; faculty must be given a voice, be given a choice, and be empowered and supported during this global health pandemic. Faculty have the right to determine how best to conduct their research and university and community work.

Faculty must be central in determining the proper mode of instruction: face-to-face, online, hybrid, synchronous or asynchronous. Faculty members know what they need to be safe at work and how they can deliver the curriculum. We cannot have our working conditions imposed on us by people who do not teach in the classroom. Management must consult with faculty, with the CFA on changes in working conditions, and with the Academic Senates on curricular issues.

COVID-19 has exposed many systemic inequalities. The last two months have shown disproportionate effects by race, indigeneity, class, and age, with new information on risk continuing to come to light. Those most adversely impacted are precisely the communities that

the CSU serves; our students and their families come from all over the state, but especially from COVID-19 hot spots such as Los Angeles County and the Bay Area.



CFA demands that faculty be provided with safe, healthy, and clean facilities, that they have a reasonable workload and necessary technology support, and that they be free from retribution or retaliation for exercising their rights to these working conditions. It is critical that there be joint labor meetings with statewide and campus administrations. CFA is in solidarity with CSUEU and our sibling unions in our pursuit to best serve our students across the CSU. CFA will always enforce the full contract, and particular articles related to the workload, appointment, and safety will be strictly monitored and enforced.

## Health, Safety, & Cleanliness

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Whether teaching and learning virtually or face-to-face, our faculty and our students must be supported by the CSU in order to thrive and reach their goals, dreams, and career aspirations. Faculty and students have the right to a working/learning environment where their safety is a top priority, and they are treated with dignity and respect. These principles must shape the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CSU plans for some faculty and some students to return to campus this fall and listed possible examples in the [Chancellor's statement on Fall 2020 University Operational Plans](#) released on May 12. Those include, but are not limited to:

- Nursing
- Energy and bioscience fields
- Performance and creative arts
- Engineering, architecture and agriculture
- Maritime industry

For our faculty and our students across the 23 campuses who will be returning to campus for face-to-face instruction, **health, safety, and cleanliness** must be prioritized:

**Sanitization is essential.** All areas of campus used for in-person instruction must be cleaned and sanitized on a regular schedule, and in between each use. This includes, but is not limited to classrooms, labs, studios, practice and performance spaces, instructional technology, libraries, athletic facilities, and other spaces. Offices and other multi-user spaces must be marked when last cleaned. Adequate funding is needed for specialized training and cleaning among custodial staff, who in turn need to be provided necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Sanitization budgets should be paid for centrally and not from department/college/library budgets.

**Physical distance and PPE guidelines must be followed.** Procedures for the enforcement of local, county, or statewide guidelines or group gatherings, social distancing, and the use of PPE must be transparent and shaped by consultation with campus constituents, including input from faculty, students, and staff. The university must provide hand sanitizing stations throughout campus and general cleaning supplies available for classrooms and offices.

**No militarization of police or racial profiling of our faculty and students.** Now is the time to be transformative in our collective thinking about what it means to be safe on campus. Trainings should be in place to assure that there is no militarization of police or racial profiling of our faculty and students. By militarized policing, CFA means the use of military-style dress and equipment (e.g., tactical rifles, Humvees or other armored vehicles, etc.), military tactics, and adoption of military culture that has a menacing effect. By racial profiling, CFA means policing that targets Black, Native/Indigenous, and other people of color. It must be mandated that university police departments be provided COVID-19 bias trainings to ensure that there is no racial profiling of our faculty, students, or staff. Campus policing and security measures must follow the same principles as those for the maintenance of physical distance guidelines. Faculty who wish to be escorted for safety reasons may request it. Those who do not wish to be escorted while on campus should be respected. Consultation with campus constituents should guide policy and implementation. Campus Safety Committees should be consulted about health and safety issues.

**Health care coverage for all employees.** CFA demands continuing health care coverage for all faculty who are currently covered, including employer-paid COBRA if faculty lose eligibility during the pandemic. We are especially concerned for lower time-base lecturers, coaches, and librarians who are susceptible to losing work, as well as student workers on campus.

**Importance of mental health counselors during this crisis.** The time to hire additional mental health counselors is now. CFA demands that the CSU meet the International Accreditation of Counseling Services (IACS) standard of 1,500 students to one counselor. Prior to this national pandemic, the [American Psychological Association](#) described a “[growing crisis with the state of mental health on college campuses](#)”, as the number of students seeking help for serious mental health problems skyrocketed over the last decade. Our campuses were already dangerously understaffed and the need for mental health services due to the stress and anxiety of the current crisis has only increased. It is urgent that the CSU respond to this demand.

# Technology

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This crisis has exposed a continuing [digital divide](#) among both faculty and students, and this inequality falls disproportionately on people of color and lower-paid faculty.

Pre-COVID-19, many students across the CSU system relied on campus internet and technology in computer labs for homework, exams, studying, projects, etc. Those are now shuttered.

**Access and equity are core values.** We must lift up our most vulnerable students and faculty. Teaching in virtual modes requires specific technological needs: all faculty should have access to what they need to do their jobs, including but not limited to mobile computing, software updates, electronic document transmission, and sufficient internet access. Likewise, computing and Wi-Fi access should be provided to students to use remotely in their own homes to maintain their personal safety while having access to online courses. Campuses need to provide confidential telehealth platform access for all distance mental health services.


**Ergonomic workspace is a must.** All faculty should have access to healthy, employer-provided ergonomic workspaces, including but not limited to ergonomically appropriate chairs, keyboards, and other input devices. Faculty should limit their “screen time” within [established parameters recommended by healthcare professionals](#). When possible, faculty should be encouraged to take home ergonomic office equipment, as has been initiated at CSU San Marcos through their [Office of Safety, Health, and Sustainability](#). CFA believes all 23 campuses should follow this best practice.

**Accessible resources should be expanded.** Additional resources and efforts should be devoted to promoting Open Educational Resources and purchasing textbooks/subscriptions through the library.

## Workload & Job Security

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The mid-term shift from in-person to virtual instruction in March 2020 was chaotic, unplanned, and yet, in the end, successful due to faculty persistence and hard work. With the announcement of a virtual Fall 2020, faculty have more time and opportunity to train and prepare.



The switch to virtual is a clear increase in workload, though this might vary among individual faculty. Given what we know about cultural taxation, greater workload often falls upon Black, Native/Indigenous, and other faculty of color, women, and LGBTQIA+ faculty. This burden is exacerbated in the virtual environment, and in the context of the disproportionate impact and angst that accompanies the pandemic. CFA recently retained important provisions for relief of cultural taxation and exceptional service to underrepresented students [in our contract extension](#). The vast majority of faculty, however, are off contract until mid-August 2020 at the earliest.

**Virtual training.** CFA demands that faculty be compensated for their time and resources for COVID-19-related preparation, training, and technology needs and upgrades. Campuses should delay the start of classes by an additional week or offer other forms of compensation for faculty to do the work to prepare for the Fall 2020 term.

**Higher course caps are disastrous.** Virtual work does not mean the lifting of course caps: higher course caps hurt students and increase faculty workload. In the Fall, we expect that students will need more attention, not less. This will be particularly true in terms of advising and mentoring.

**Maximum choice.** Faculty need the maximal amount of choice to determine what is right for their pedagogy, their workload, and their particular set of personal circumstances. Faculty should not be micromanaged during an emergency. Within the virtual realm of education, faculty need to have the freedom to choose the mode of instruction (synchronous, asynchronous) and what online tools to use or not use.

**Accommodations for caregivers.** Faculty, like all workers who are parents, may be taking care of K-12 children who are out of school in part or in whole. Faculty do not have access to subsidized childcare. Accommodations must be made for parents, as well as for those who have other caretaking obligations (e.g., for elderly relatives, for infirmed family members, etc.). An [expansion of COVID-19-specific leave that CFA fought for](#) should apply not only for those who need to take it for themselves, but also due to their caregiver status. CFA reaffirms our position on the [parental rights petition from January 2020](#). We believe that the CSU should immediately implement: (1) one full term of paid parental leave; (2) lactation rooms in all campus buildings that comply with state and federal laws; (3) affordable on-campus childcare for faculty; (4) a Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) process that mirrors the flexibility of the parental leave process; and (5) a CSU-supported family/parenting council at each CSU campus.

**Librarian rights.** The workload for librarians has increased, just like that of all faculty. Librarians and staff should not be required to complete additional work outside of their normal responsibilities, nor should job assignments change without consultation. Librarians must have access to the technology and office equipment they need to perform their work remotely.

**Protecting coaches and student athletes.** Athletics bring students and faculty together, offering a form of emotional healing during times of loss and struggle (like the moment we are in now). This health crisis should not be used as an excuse for CSU leadership to eliminate any individual sport, and coaches should be retained for similar assignments as outlined in the



contract rather than suffer a loss of work. [A May 2020 survey from the NCAA](#) found that the rates of mental health concerns were 150 percent to 250 percent higher than those historically reported by NCAA student athletes. Coaches are a critical part of student athletes' support network and academic success. No athletic programs should be eliminated, coaches must be consulted on all major decisions affecting their programs and positions, and student athletes must retain their scholarships. Athletic Directors must make decisions to re-appoint coaches based only on their previous re-appointment letter.



**Virtual adaptation for counselors.** Telecommuting must continue to be available to all counselors and extend to integrated health centers. Counselor Faculty who do not have appropriate space to conduct teletherapy at home should be permitted access to their office space, with health and safety precautions in place, in order to conduct teletherapy from their campus offices. Providing clinical care, crisis intervention, and supervision remotely takes more time and energy than in-person contact. This represents an increase in counselor workload. Addressing this workload increase may be done in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, reducing the percentage of direct service and/or capping the maximum number of hours spent with online platforms per day. Specific work plans must be developed in consultation with counselor faculty and the union. The time needed to create and maintain new services (e.g. taped workshops, analogous to asynchronous teaching, mental health-related blogs, virtual drop-in groups, etc.) shall be considered part of direct service for counselor faculty.

## Evaluation and Retaliation

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**Zero retaliation.** Faculty appreciate the offer for training over the summer, but not all faculty will be able to take advantage of this opportunity. No employee should be subject to retaliation, retribution, or shaming for not participating in training opportunities.

**Restructure student surveys.** Student surveys of teaching effectiveness for Fall term should only be incorporated into personnel files if the faculty member wishes. CFA requests an extension of agreements worked out this semester on each of the 23 campuses related to both student ratings of instruction as well as peer evaluations and other forms of review. CFA believes that we need to acknowledge that instruction will be occurring in less than ideal circumstances, and that faculty are still working in a modality for which they may or may not have formal training and at a time in which the state and the nation is still moving through this global crisis. Students and faculty will still be faced with health concerns, unemployment, housing and food insecurity, and a digital divide.

**Protection of research, community, and university service.** CFA will fight for the extension of the tenure clock on our campuses. Faculty may not be able to perform research and service

to the university and to the community in the usual fashion. CSU administrators and faculty reviewers should count any conference papers accepted (but not able to be presented due to travel restrictions). The administration must also be mindful of the lack of travel to professional conferences and associations due to this pandemic, and other reductions in the ability to perform research in any number of contexts. There must be flexibility for faculty meeting their retention, tenure, and promotion requirements given the ongoing stay-at-home orders and travel concerns. Until we have a vaccine that is widely employed, faculty may want to restrict their travel and participation in large conference events and research projects for their own health and safety. CFA recommends a joint discussion with statewide and campus Academic Senates on this issue.



## Our Way Forward

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We are living through unprecedented times. The global pandemic has strained the CSU system, underscoring many weaknesses that we have been aware of and making us aware of some new ones. As we prepare for a virtual Fall and what is still unknown for Winter and Spring terms, we must recognize that there are differing opinions at every level on how to move forward. Since there is not necessarily a right answer to many of our questions, we must maintain maximum flexibility for faculty decision making.

We are educational professionals. Faculty of the CSU are committed to assisting our students all the way through to graduation. They are the future of California; we cannot short-change their education. Faculty teaching conditions are student learning conditions, that's why we won't compromise on these issues.

We will ensure these demands by enforcing our Collective Bargaining Agreement and through our ongoing advocacy work. CFA will always enforce the entire contract, but, due to COVID-19 changes, [Article 12](#) (Appointment), [Article 16](#) (Non-Discrimination), [Article 20](#) (Workload), [Article 37](#) (Safety), and [Article 39](#) (Intellectual Property Rights) must be monitored and strictly enforced in the next year.

**Safe working conditions are vital.** If faculty don't feel safe on campus, they should not be forced to work in person. If a course is designated as face-to-face but faculty choose not to teach in-person, they should be offered an alternative work schedule. If librarians, counselors, or coaches are required to meet students on campus but have health and safety concerns, they should be offered an alternative work schedule. CFA will defend our rights to safe working conditions.

**Professional integrity.** CFA will safeguard the professional integrity of the CSU, defend academic freedom, and protect our intellectual property. CFA demands that the CSU put a

moratorium on hiring administrators and managers during this crisis, instead of applying austerity to faculty and staff via hiring freezes.

**Protection of faculty on temporary contracts, including lecturers, counselors, coaches, and librarians.** CFA will protect the work of lecturers, counselors, coaches, and librarians, and will scrutinize the order of appointment. The CSU must freeze entitlements, maintain health care benefits, provide equipment like ergonomically sound chairs, laptops, keyboards and other input devices, and internet access that may be more readily available to tenure-track faculty. The CSU must not increase course cap, which will both degrade the quality of education for our students and reduce the number of available sections for faculty employment.

**No free work.** Faculty must not be forced, cajoled, or shamed into doing free work. Summertime work is off contract and faculty must be compensated for all time worked to transition classes into a virtual modality. We will defend our contract and our rights as we continue the frontline work of quality public higher education. Faculty can consult their chapter leaders for any questions and issues; contacts for our [Northern California campuses](#) and [Southern California campuses](#) are posted on [our webpage](#).

**Anti-Racism and Social Justice Transformation.** As evidenced throughout this document, Anti-Racism and Social Justice are central to the work of CFA and need to be guiding principles for the CSU as well. All efforts must be made to extend, rather than diminish, this work. Given the rise of racial violence and vitriol that we witness during this pandemic, we must take every opportunity to call out and address all forms of bias, hate, racism, and social injustice. It is important that faculty continue to benefit from opportunities to learn to interrupt racism and injustice, particularly in the virtual environs that form our new working conditions.

We can never forget that all of our faculty – tenure/tenure track, lecturers, counselors, librarians, and coaches – play the central role in fulfilling the core mission of the CSU. We faculty, along with our invaluable colleagues, are the ones responsible for delivering a high standard of education that all of our students deserve. We cannot allow the current crisis to undercut that mission because it is essential to California's ability to recover from the ravages of this global pandemic.

We owe it to ourselves and to our students. In planning for the recovery, **we need faculty to be involved, too.** We want to encourage members to connect with [their local chapter](#) to join CFA's efforts in the rebuilding that we all must engage in. If you are not a member of CFA, we invite you to [join the union](#).

It's going to take all of us to get it right.