

President's Message

As offensive as we all find schedule cuts at a time when student demand is increasing, State Chancellor Jack Scott won an important victory when the legislature labeled the cuts to our general apportionment "workload reduction." The term is misleading, of course. Faculty workload is increasing substantially these days. A more accurate term would be "student access and choice reduction." And it's short-sighted and just plain stupid for our state to be cutting its investment in education during a recession. Education is our only hope for a better future, and community colleges are on the front lines retraining unemployed workers, moving high school students towards middle-class jobs; training tomorrow's workforce. We need to get back to pre-Prop-13 budgeting based on needs rather than post-13 budgeting based on current funds. But shrinking our colleges is still better than the alternative we were facing; it's better than gutting our colleges. Had the legislature insisted that we serve more students with less money, we'd be facing even worse decisions today.

We can't afford to stop investing in ourselves, even if the State is underfunding us. We need to stay focused on serving students well; that's why we've defined "productivity" at CCCCDC not just in terms of efficiency but also in terms of quality. It would be easy to stop all forward progress on shared governance, on improving teaching and learning conditions, on projects like evaluation revisions; we could blame it on the recession. Sure, we'd like to give chairs more release-time to do their work, but hey, times are lean. Yes, we want a more transparent process for scheduling part-timers, with hiring letters and load reports, but look, we're stretched thin. Thankfully, we're not hearing this. We may need to get a bit smaller (even as we do all we can to convince the voters and the legislature to rethink that unfortunate decree), but we can't stop trying to get better.

That said, we need to start looking towards next spring's negotiations and discussing what we'd like to improve. As we wrap up the collective bargaining we began last year, we're just a few months away from the next round. We expect the District to open the Benefits article, not seeking concessions necessarily but looking for dialog on how we might cope with rising costs. The UF is considering reopening "Leaves" to continue discussing sabbaticals and family leave as well as sick-leave donation policies, especially for part-timers. And both sides are talking about the need to address distance education and intellectual property rights in our contract. President Obama has proposed a substantial federal investment in community colleges that will likely come in the form of competitive grants for innovation and expanded on-line offerings. We need to help put our District in the best position to compete for those dollars.

We're also working at the State level on issues related to accreditation, accountability and SLOs. I myself have joined FACCC's Policy Committee to work on these issues. With so much today to fight against and so much to defend, we need to resist the temptation to circle the wagons and stop moving forward. The UF still needs to hear from you. What issues would you like to see the UF address? Send us an email; come to a meeting; run for E-Board. Take our fall survey when it comes (sometime soon).

United Faculty Executive Board Members	
<u>Contra Costa College</u>	
Shirley Brownfox (P-T Rep)	
Vern Cromartie	<u>Los Medanos College</u>
Stuart Lichter	Casy Cann-Figel (P-T Rep)
Jeffrey Michels (Pres.)	Milton Clarke
Dionne Perez	Michael Zilber (Vice Pres.)
Rudy Zeller (Vice Pres.)	
<u>Diablo Valley College</u>	
Emmanuel Akanyirige (Treasurer)	Jason Mayfield
Glenn Appell (Vice Pres.)	Steve Padover
Deborah Dahl-Shanks (Part-Time Rep)	Mary Ulrich
Katrina Keating	Bruce Koller
Donna Wapner (Faculty Advocate)	
UNITED FACULTY OFFICE	
Terri Adame, Office Administrator	
(925) 685-1230 x2502 or 680-1171 fax (925) 680-7283	
email: uf@uf4cd.org website: www.uf4cd.org	
(Email Jeffrey Michels at ujeffmichels@gmail.com)	

UF Nomination Form

Date: _____

We, the undersigned of the United Faculty, do nominate:

for the position of: _____

1. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

2. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

3. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

4. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

5. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

6. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

7. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

8. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

9. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

10. Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

10 signatures are required. Please return this petition to the UF office at DVC before noon on October 20, 2009.



Table Talk

The Newsletter of the United Faculty of Contra Costa Community College District

October 1, 2009

News at a Glance

- Funding Cuts Cost Part-Time Jobs and Threaten Programs
- UF Launches New Web Site: www.uf4cd.org
- New Evaluation Guidebooks Ready for Review
- Negotiations Update: Tentative Agreement Expected Soon
- UF Breakfast Meetings: CCC 10/12; LMC 10/13; DVC 10/14
- Nominations Now Open for E-Board Spots from Each College
- District Investigations: UF Still Pressing for a Change in Protocol
- Benefits Tips: New Options Coming for Some Part-Timers
- District 60th Anniversary Book to Include History of the UF
- President's Message: Moving Forward Despite Cuts

Funding Cuts Cost Part-Time Jobs and Threaten Programs

With multiple versions, backfills, revisions, deferrals and the rest of the smoke-and-mirror politics of recession, it has been hard to pin down the budget picture, but the bottom line has become clearer in recent weeks. Community colleges lost all COLA and growth funds this year, while student fees increased from \$20 to \$26 a unit. The system also lost \$120 million in base apportionment plus another \$333 million in categorical funding. And almost a billion dollars has been deferred in some way, causing all kinds of cash-flow problems for colleges as well as additional losses in interest income.

For our District, this translates to an estimated \$4.7 million cut to ongoing funding and another \$6.8 million cut to categoricals (money earmarked for specific programs, such as Basic Skills, EOPS, DSPS, Matriculation, Apprenticeship, and Part-Time Parity). The State budget had anticipated backfilling some of the categorical cuts with \$130 million in federal stimulus money, but we learned recently that only \$35 million dollars would actually come to the colleges, and this not as categorical backfill but as general apportionment.

The District's approach to these cuts has been mostly to divide them up proportionally between each of the three colleges, the District Office and District-wide Services, and to give each group the authority to handle the cuts differently. New FTES goals have necessitated schedule reductions on every campus, and part-time faculty are bearing the brunt of the cuts. The District has committed to spending approximately \$4.3 million from the reserves to help mitigate some of the cuts in the short run, but the colleges will mostly decide how to spend that money. So categorical programs may fare differently at each college, depending on priorities.

The UF has been active since July in pressing for the most collaborative and transparent process possible both in determining priorities and in

implementing cuts. We've also advocated for more reserve money to be spent. The District has about \$29 million dollars set aside, more than a 15% reserve. The current plan to spend about \$4.3 million of this leaves the Board with a 10% reserve (\$17 million) plus another \$3 million dollars in "undesignated reserves" to cover any mid-year cuts. (There is almost \$5 million in "college carryover" reserve money too, some of which the colleges will spend this year.)

The UF agrees that we need to plan for future reductions, and we know that when we spend one-time reserve money to backfill ongoing cuts, we'll need to dip into the well again next year if we want to continue funding those same priorities. But we have asked the District to spend what's needed this year to protect programs vital to students, like EOPS and DSPS, and prevent paycuts for part-time lecturers (which would result from the State's 62% cut to part-time parity funding). Even if this takes the rest of the \$3 million undesignated reserve, which it won't, we're confident that our remaining 10% reserve will be adequate to cover mid-year cuts and future needs.

Overall, we've been pleased with our District's commitment to budget transparency, and we've found the Governing Board and Chancellor responsive to our arguments about protecting both student services and faculty working conditions. But since the apportionment cuts have come in the form of "workload reduction," which means that the State has lowered our FTES cap and told us to serve fewer students, there has been little the District could do to prevent appalling schedule reductions. Spending reserve money has helped a little in the short run. In the long run, the future of student access to community colleges will depend on the voters and the legislature.

New UF Website Now On-Line: WWW.UF4CD.ORG

After many months of work, our new web site is finally open for business at www.uf4cd.org. We have a new email address too: uf@uf4cd.org. The old site will stay up with a link to the new one, but we hope the change to "4cd" will make us easier to find (with fewer mistakes because someone left out a "c" in typing our address).

Our new web site has two main features. First, the whole site can be searched by typing in key words. This will find your terms wherever they are on the site: in the Contract, in *Table Talk*, and in other posts or discussions. Second, the site treats almost every area as a sort of interconnected blog. After just about every post, you can ask a question or leave a comment. UF E-Board members or others can reply. And this can then become a discussion that will also be searchable. So over time, we hope to develop a database of questions and answers on topics like benefits, leaves, banked load, evaluations, etc.

We still need to work out some of the details, and for a while, the new site will certainly be a work-in-progress. But we expect that it will already give UF members faster access to information.

This website was designed by Professor Lee Montgomery using a freeware program called Wordpress, and was built by CCC student Shahruz Shaukat (recently transferred to UC Davis but still providing technical support to the UF). Please let us know if you find bugs or outdated information, or if you have suggestions or comments.

New Evaluation Guidebooks Ready for Review

Negotiations over Appendix X, the faculty evaluation procedures, are mostly completed, and we're moving now to what we hope will be the last round of faculty review and input before a ratification vote. The old Appendix X has been divided into 16 new guidebooks, separated by group: part-time, probationary and full-time as well as counselor, librarian, disabled learning specialists, classroom and on-line classroom faculty. Each book has a different numbering system and contains only those parts of Appendix X relevant to that group's evaluation process.

The guidebooks, including all forms and procedures, are available on the new UF website (www.uf4cd.org), and have been delivered to the Academic Senates. We have asked the Senates for a vote of confidence in our process so we can move forward to a ratification vote after a final round of negotiations to make changes based on faculty input. We will collect comments and suggestions throughout the month of October and hope to complete our work in collective bargaining in November. Please take a moment to review the guidebooks and send us your comments! We will also be hosting several union meetings to discuss the new forms and evaluation procedures as well as other developments in negotiations. See below.

Union Meetings in October

Drop in for breakfast with the United Faculty!
We'll serve the coffee; you bring your questions and comments!

CCC: Monday, October 12, 8am-10am, Room LA 100
LMC: Tuesday, October 13, 8am-10am, Room L-109
DVC: Wednesday, October 14, 8am-10am, Media Room (L-151)

Want to meet some other time?
Invite us to a Department Meeting.
Or just schedule an appointment. We're available!
Email us at uf@uf4cd.org.

Negotiations Update

Negotiations are scheduled to resume on October 1, and as we go to press, it is hard to say if we will be able to reach a Tentative Agreement without more meetings. We're working on compensation, Article 20, and Department Chair funding and duties. The Department Chair straw design was made public in a "joint statement" last semester. It sets a minimum level of reassigned time (10%) for every department chair while adding about 25% to the total allocation for chairs. It also clarifies and amends the list of department chair duties. Most of the changes in Article 20 involve initial placement on the salary schedule and how faculty advance in salary classification. The UF has been working to make sure that professional postgraduate courses or scholarly projects like publishing a book don't yield "lower division units" in our system. More negotiations details should be available soon. We had thought of delaying *Table Talk* until after our 10/1 meeting, but we decided we will focus the next issue on negotiations.

Nominations Now Open for E-Board Positions

Several of our current UF Executive Board members are up for reelection this fall, and we have a couple of new members too who have been appointed to fill vacant positions (who also must stand for election if there are other candidates). This means we have spots open from all three colleges for full-timers and part-timers if anyone wants to run for E-Board.

All you have to do to run is submit a completed nomination form, which we've printed on the back of *Table Talk*, by noon on October 20. If we get more candidates than we have vacancies, we will hold elections in November. If nobody submits a form, then the current members will be automatically reelected.

The E-Board meets every other Thursday, from 2:15-5pm, usually at DVC. Part-timers receive \$150 per month for serving. For more information, please email Jeff at ufjeffmichels@gmail.com.

UF Still Pressing for Improved Investigation Protocol

We've been making slow progress in our quest to have District investigators routinely inform faculty of their right to union representation at any interview connected to an allegation of misconduct. For now, you need to know your rights. If a District lawyer or investigator calls you to schedule a meeting, tell her that you want to have a union rep at the meeting, and then call the UF at 925-680-1771. You have a right to privacy and confidentiality, but you also have a right to be represented. See our article on Weingarten Rights on the UF Website.

Benefits Tips: New Options for Uninsured Part-Timers

As schedule reductions are costing our part-timers sections, many are struggling to meet the threshold required to participate in District insurance programs. A part-timer must have averaged 30% load in the previous two semesters to be eligible for benefits in this semester, and the UF has sent a letter to department schedulers asking them to be mindful of this cutoff. Meanwhile, we've been working with the District's benefits consultant, Tom Rich, and with the Faculty Association, FACCC, to seek new options for uninsured part-timers. FACCC is just weeks away from releasing a number of new plans. And the UF has been working on a discount plan for major medical tests. We'll keep you posted. In the meantime, part-timers seeking insurance options should check FACCC's new website (www.faccc.org) under "Membership," and also check in with either the UF's Stuart Lichter (slichter42@yahoo.com) or the District's Reed Rawlinson (rrowlinson@4cd.edu).

District's 60th Anniversary Book Includes History of UF

CCCCD is throwing a 60th Anniversary party at the Craneway Pavilion in Richmond on October 5, from 1-3pm. Admission (\$30) includes a new book of stories and memories from the District's past, including a history of the UF that combines previously published material with new accounts from UF presidents Brendan Brown, Marge Lasky, Sue Shattuck and Jeff Michels. Did you know the UF was the first independent community college union in the State?