

UF Benefits/Retirement Conference Draws 120+

Our first-ever Health, Benefits and Retirement Conference, co-sponsored by FACCC and the UF at DVC last March, was a terrific success with dozens of vendors and speakers and an excellent turnout from all three campuses. We have already started planning for another conference next year, and we hope to make it an annual event.



UF President Jeff Michels Speaks at "March in March"

Thousands of students from across the State traveled to Sacramento on March 14 and marched through the rain to the steps of the Capitol building to listen to speakers and chant "students are the future" and "let the people vote." Among those who addressed the crowd was FACCC Executive Director Jonathan Lightman, who asked the students, referring to those who may be turned away from community colleges next year: "which of you is one of the 400,000?" UF President Jeff Michels also spoke, representing CCCI, at the invitation of student leaders, and stressed the need to raise taxes on corporations in California. "Corporate profits are at an 18-year high," Michels told the students. "We need Big Business to pay its fair share in supporting the schools that train our workforce."



Glenn Appell, Deborah Dahl-Shanks Run for FACCC Board

UF leadership has long played an active role statewide both in advocating for faculty (and students) and in serving on statewide boards. This year, UF Vice President from DVC Glenn Appell is running to represent our region on the Board of the Faculty Association for California Community Colleges (FACCC), and UF Part-Time Faculty Advocate Deborah Dahl-Shanks is running for the position of Part-Time Faculty Officer on the FACCC Board. FACCC members should be sure to vote on-line; the link is on the FACCC web page: www.faccc.org. If you are not yet a member of FACCC, you may join now and still vote. FACCC is the only statewide professional organization that advocates exclusively for community college faculty.

UF Leadership Meets with CalSTRS Deputy CEO

UF President Jeff Michels, Vice President (DVC) Glenn Appell, Benefits Chair Stuart Lichter, and part-time representatives Deborah Dahl-Shanks and Doug Dildine, were among attendees at the California Community College Independents (CCCI) conference last weekend in Sacramento who met with Ed Dermin, CalSTRS Deputy Chief Executive Officer, to discuss pension reform proposals and the safety of faculty pensions in CalSTRS. Dermin's report was surprisingly optimistic, stressing the stability of the CalSTRS system and the relative safety of faculty pensions, even facing likely pension reforms in the coming year. We have collected information on CalSTRS and recent debates over public pensions on our UF website: www.uf4cd.org, which we will continue to update. CalSTRS also has a site where they post new information and responses to reports: www.calstrsbenefits.us.

Other highlights from the three-day CCCI meeting included discussions with Dan Troy, Statewide Vice Chancellor of College Finance, and David Hawkins, a student/faculty organizer and education lobbyist. CCCI is currently negotiating with Hawkins, who served for seven years as FACCC's legislative director, to help represent CCCI in Sacramento and to provide local trainings to CCCI affiliates, including the UF, in grass-roots organizing and political campaigning.

President's Message: Debunking Myths about Pensions

Myth #1: You're going to retire with a fortune. It's not true. Sorry. On average, a faculty pension is worth about 60% of your base pay when you retire, and that's after decades of service. Every one of us should be investing in a 403B or 457 plan, setting aside extra money for retirement. We're going to keep sponsoring workshops and conferences every year to encourage faculty to invest in retirement. Have questions about it? Call the UF Office: 925-680-1771.

Myth #2: Defined Benefits Programs (like ours; STRS) are a public rip-off that's hurting our economy. Everyone should move to a "defined contribution" program (like a 401k). Nonsense! Providing benefits through a defined benefits plan is HALF as expensive as through a 401k or 403b. A big plan like STRS can invest more aggressively and earn a much higher rate of return (plus they pay a lot less to manage investments). And they can plan for an average life-span (now 87 years) where an individual needs to save more money in case he/she lives longer than average. Also, most of the money in the plan comes from employee and employer contributions.

Myth #3: The public pension system (including STRS) is broke and broken. Not true. STRS may need to raise contributions rates to become fully funded, but they they have assets to fund the next 30 years! We need to shift the conversation. The problem isn't that public employees have solid pensions; the problem is that employees in the private sector deserve secure retirements too.

United Faculty Executive Board Members

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Rachel Dwiggins-Beeler (PT Rep)	
Stuart Lichter	Casy Cann-Figal (PT Rep)
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Table Talk

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

April 12, 2011

News at a Glance

- 2011-2012 Negotiations Begin as Budget Assumptions Worsen
- UF Completes Budget/Spending/Cuts Comparison
- UF Joins District in Celebrating Newly Tenured Faculty
- Know Your Contract: Personal Necessity Leave
- Education Finance Chair Susan Bonilla Attends UF Event
- New District Trustee Robert Calone has Labor Background
- UF Co-Sponsors Breakfast for Higher Ed Chair Marty Block
- UF Benefits/Retirement Conference Draws 120+
- Glenn Appell and Deborah Dahl-Shanks Run for FACCC Board
- President's Message: Debunking Myths about Pensions

2011-2012 Negotiations Begin as Budget News Worsens

As the District prepares for an all-cuts State budget with the real possibility that our unrestricted general fund will lose as much as 15% next year (after a 10% reduction over the past two years), UF negotiators have been looking for options that might help cover increasing costs while also stressing the huge contributions and sacrifices faculty are already making. Sharp increases in faculty productivity since the start of this budget crisis (as professors voluntarily take on extra work by overloading classes above established maximums) have dramatically decreased the cost of instruction. Our productivity gains, in fact, have moved us to the top third of the Bay 10 (#2 overall) in total faculty productivity (and tops in the Bay 10 in Full-Timers to FTES). Layoffs of part-time faculty and full-time retirements without replacement-hires have also significantly reduced our workforce.

Negotiations this year will focus on rising benefits and insurance costs. Without COLA or new revenues, and facing such significant downsizing, new expenses are creating a structural deficit that may be difficult to address, even after the District spends down reserves. So far, our teams have met

By the Numbers

22%
Increase in
Faculty Productivity
(2006-2009)

\$15MIL
Estimated Annual
Savings from
Added Productivity

\$1MIL
Potential Savings
from Last Year's
Benefits Concession

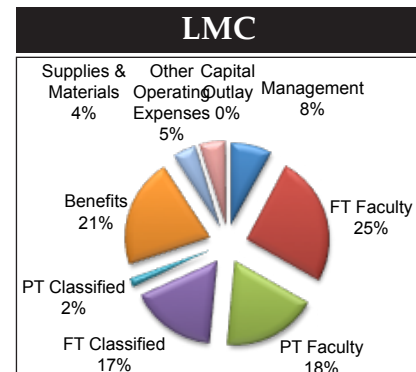
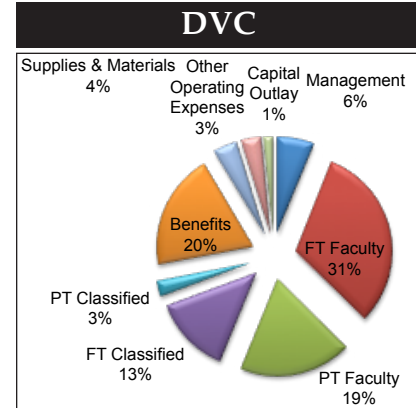
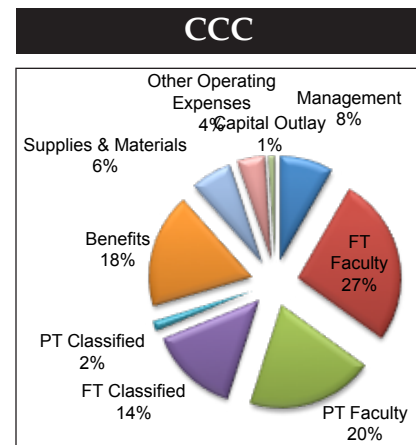
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Faculty Positions
Lost in 2010/11

once; and we started not only by reviewing budget assumptions but also by working on flex reporting and the calendar. We know that there might be advantages to reaching a quick agreement on compensation and benefits this year, but there are still so many variables and unknown factors that we may decide to tackle non-monetary issues first while we wait for the funding picture to become clearer.

There have been some optimistic rumblings from the State Chancellor's Office and Democrats in the Legislature; Governor Brown may still manage a special election this summer or failing that, put taxes on the ballot in November. Community college advocates may be able to successfully press for a more proportional split with K-12, so that colleges don't see cuts double, even if there is an all-cuts budget. But of course, most of the latest news has been bad, and the UF has mostly supported the District's making conservative assumptions so far.

Budget Comparisons Show Spending/Cuts at Each College

10/11 Adopted Budget:
Categories as Percentage of Total Spending



The UF has completed a comparative study, analyzing the last three years of college spending in our district towards a better understanding of how each college has been handling the budget cuts. Although the recent shift to a new college-centered funding model made it harder to compare this year's adopted budget to previous years' spending patterns, the reductions to staffing at each college stand out clearly.

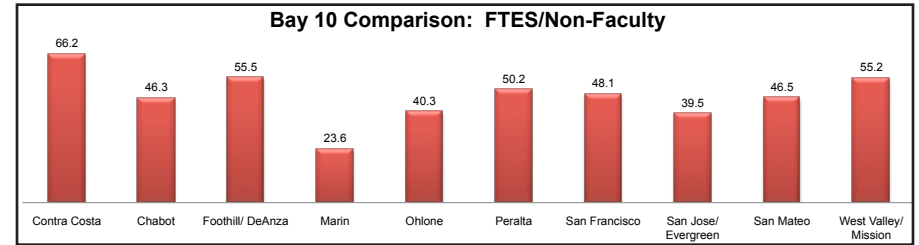
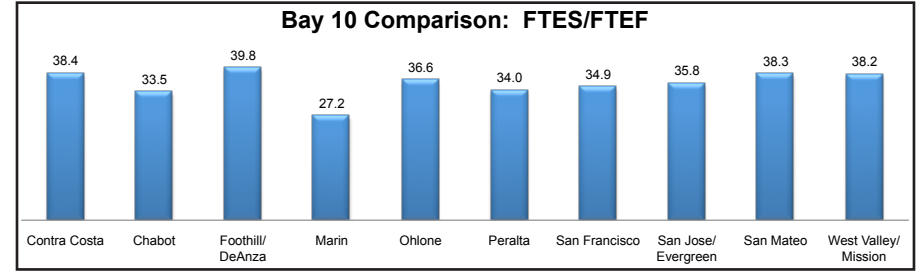
CCC, for example, budgeted in 2010/2011 for a 7.6% reduction in spending on full-time faculty and a 12% reduction in spending on management (compared to 2008/09 final actuals). CCC is facing the largest structural deficit as the new funding model phases in, and so has been mainly replacing full-time retirees with part-timers. At LMC and DVC, in contrast, the budgeted reductions are mainly in part-time faculty: down 18.2% at LMC and 13.4% at DVC. All three colleges have also dramatically reduced spending (46%) on part-time classified staff (the first casualties of downsizing in the classified ranks).

When 2010/11 budgets are compared side by side (as in the charts to the left), one sees small variations, related perhaps to economies of scale. DVC spends a bit less on

management (as a percentage of total spending). LMC budgeted a bit more for classified staff in 2010/2011, but this has not been a consistent pattern over the past three years. In 2009/10, both CCC and LMC spent about 15% on FT classified staff. Mostly, the comparisons revealed consistent spending priorities from college to college. The big slice for benefits is worth noting. Benefits has been growing steadily as an increasing percentage of total spending, a problem being faced nationwide in both the public and private sectors. The UF will continue monitoring and analyzing this kind of data, both independently and in our UF/District Compensation Committee, as we continue looking for ways to increase efficiency and keep cuts away from the classroom to whatever extent is possible.

Districtwide Productivity Reaches All-Time High

Productivity ratio increases, as faculty know all too well, are not necessarily something to cheer about. Larger classes and reduced support staff and services are not a recipe for student success. But in this lean economic environment, it is worth noting that at CCCCD we now serve more students per employee than any district in the Bay 10.



UF Joins District in Celebrating Newly Tenured Faculty

Following a District reception for newly tenured faculty, UF President Jeff Michels addressed the CCCCD Governing Board to thank them for continuing to support quality teaching and those elements of our system (like tenure, sabbaticals, step and column increases, and professional development) that reward and encourage commitment and scholarship. Michels noted that not only does tenure help to keep good people in the teaching profession, it also provides an essential layer of protection for those whose work involves not only interacting with the public but often challenging perceptions and pushing students to think critically and expand their perspectives. In the course of a career,



Michels said, most faculty face a complaint at some point. Too often for part-time, non-tenured faculty, it becomes a career-crisis. Tenure ensures academic freedom and due process.

Know Your Contract: Personal Necessity Leave

In last year's agreement, we clarified that "Personal Necessity Leave" (PNL) is "not intended for vacation." But we left in place Article 12.3 that reads: "A faculty member cannot be required by management to supply a specific reason when using personal necessity leave." Because PNL is for "compelling personal business," our contract allows faculty to keep their personal business private. We recommend that you avail yourself of this right if you do need to miss work for personal reasons. You may leave blank the space on the form for "reason."

Education Finance Chair Susan Bonilla Attends UF Event

Assemblymember and Education Finance Committee Chair Susan Bonilla (far right in the top photo) recently attended a wine-and-cheese reception for faculty hosted at LMC by the UF and the LMC Foundation.



Bonilla was on campus to present a public budget workshop at the invitation of LMC Political Science Professor Milton Clarke. Many faculty spoke at the meeting, emphasizing to Bonilla the damage being done to our programs and students by cuts to college funding. New District Trustee Robert Calone, Chancellor Helen Benjamin, and LMC Interim President Richard Livingston also attended our reception.

Bonilla, a former Concord High School English teacher, has made education her main focus since her election in November of 2010.



The UF leadership has met with her several times this year, and we're considering hosting a fund-raiser for her in May.

New District Trustee Robert Calone Has Labor Background

Following a public process, the CCCCD Governing Board appointed Robert Calone, a retired Journeyman Plumber of UA of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 159, to fill Jess Reyes' seat and represent Ward 5. Calone, a DVC graduate who has taught plumbing for more than 30 years, is particularly committed to vocational education.



UF Co-Sponsors Breakfast for Higher Ed Chair Marty Block



As part of the UF's effort to strengthen relationships with key legislators (and help educate the Legislature about our issues), we joined with Foothill-DeAnza's Faculty Association, FACCC, and others, to host a breakfast for Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair Marty Block. A longtime friend of community colleges, Block talked with UF leaders before addressing the FACCC Advocacy and Policy Conference.