

## SRC Wins UF Food Drive Competition: Party 2/16

Of the nearly 1000 pounds of food collected for the Food Bank during last November's UF food drive, San Ramon Center collected nearly half (by weight). Either those folks were donating some really heavy food, or that's one generous and community-spirited group of faculty and staff! As promised, the UF Executive Board will be hosting a party for all SRC employees on Thursday, Feb. 16, at 12:30pm in W-204 to show our appreciation. All are welcome to join us for fancy non-alcoholic drinks, gourmet snacks, and good fellowship! The UF E-Board will also be meeting at SRC this Thursday after the party at 2:15pm (our first-ever E-Board meeting in San Ramon).

## Donna Wapner Becomes Interim UF VP from DVC



With UF Vice President from DVC Glenn Appell away this semester on sabbatical, Donna Wapner has stepped up as our Interim VP. A Professor of Health Science and Addiction Studies, Wapner has served for years as an E-Board member and Faculty Advocate. She will replace Appell on our negotiating team this spring. Wapner has also served on DVC's Academic Senate.

## ACCJC Continues to Dole Out Sanctions

In January, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) announced another heavy-handed round of sanctions throughout California. On "warning": Columbia College; Fresno City College; College of Marin; Evergreen Valley College; San Diego Miramar College; Reedley College; and Solano Community College. On "probation": Modesto Junior College; Shasta College; Moorpark College; Oxnard College; Ventura College; Northern Marianas College; and San Jose City College. On "show cause": College of the Redwoods; and Cuesta College. The "show cause" rulings are particularly troubling in light of all the efforts faculty have made statewide to convince the ACCJC not to jump so quickly to impose sanctions when the quality of education is not an issue. As one faculty leader wrote recently, "clearly, our accrediting commission is hyper-focused on punishment, with students suffering as a result." This will continue to be a centerpiece of UF advocacy at the State level.

## UF Welcomes John Al-Amin as District CFO

The UF joins the District in welcoming John Al-Amin, Ph.D. as our new Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services and Chief Financial Officer. Al-Amin, an Oakland native, was selected by a committee with strong faculty representation, and comes to CCCC via Oxnard College, Grossmont College and Laney College. He replaces Kindred Murillo, who left the post last year to become President of Lake Tahoe CC. John brings a lot of expertise, and the UF team looks forward to working with him.



## President's Message

I have spent more time than usual in Sacramento over the past few weeks, meeting with faculty leaders at the Council of Faculty Organizations (CoFO), meeting with legislators and representatives from the Community College Board of Governors and Chancellor's Office, helping to frame a response to the Student Success Task Force (SSTF) report, and the legislation and implementation plans that will follow.

On Feb. 1, I testified at a joint hearing of the Senate and Assembly Higher Education Committees convened to consider the SSTF recommendations. The setting was a bit unnerving, and I wound up deviating slightly from my prepared speech. (If you search my name on Youtube, you can watch my actual testimony.) But I thought our UF members might appreciate knowing what I said. Here is the statement I had prepared:

The Legislature must not ignore the fact that these recommendations were endorsed by the Community College Board of Governors despite overwhelming opposition from students and faculty, and I'm not just talking about the official groups, all of which submitted detailed critiques outlining concerns that have largely been ignored throughout this process. I'm talking too about thousands of faculty members throughout CA who participated in blogs and came to meetings to express concerns about unintended but predictable consequences of these proposals.

We know that education reform without investment is a bad recipe. We know that new restrictions and requirements without first putting in place the infrastructure necessary to meet those requirements is a bad recipe. We know that education reform without buy-in from your educators is a recipe for failure.

As faculty, we are deeply concerned about the success of our students. But you can pad your student-success statistics by denying access to community college for those students who seem least likely to succeed. That's not going to be good for California. It's not going to be good for our students. And it's going to make your scorecards meaningless. [Senator Lonnie Hancock said at the hearing: without new investment, your scorecards are just going to tell us which colleges are in rich neighborhoods and which are in poor ones.]

I urge you not to require new education plans and orientations until we figure out how to afford more counselors, not to begin restricting financial aid until we have the infrastructure in place to help students meet the new restrictions so as not to be disqualified from financial aid.

Political priorities should not outweigh our educational priorities, and these recommendations must be balanced against other needs. If you brought educators together and asked what they need to do better for our students, this is not the list they would produce. They would say we need more full-time faculty and to professionalize our part-time faculty. I urge you to proceed slowly and in consultation with faculty. Keep in mind: we are starving more than we are broken.

### United Faculty Executive Board Members

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# Table Talk

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

February 15, 2012

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## Budget Outlook Grim as Colleges Plan for More Cuts

With more deficit funding likely and no growth or COLA funding in the Governor's proposed 2012/13 budget, community colleges are looking at another bad year. There may be some long-range relief in sight, with the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) seeking to qualify its "Millionaires Tax" for the November ballot (\$6-9 billion, mostly for education, by raising taxes on millionaires) and the Governor's tax plan promising a 4% bump in college funding in 2013/14. But in the short run, even with healthy District reserves, we are facing another year of likely schedule reductions, especially at DVC where the College built a schedule for this spring as if the 2011/12 "trigger cuts" would not be realized (in order to capture FTES that might have been funded). Now that the triggers have been pulled, as it were, due to State revenue shortfalls, DVC will have to cut that much deeper to come under our current funding cap. We'll have a complete UF analysis of the Budget picture, including proposed cuts at our colleges, in the next issue of *Table Talk*. We'll also review the coming tax measures and other developing legislation of interest.

## UF Seeks "Institutional Commitment" to More Full-Timers

Statewide debates over ways to improve "student success" and to close so-called equity, opportunity or achievement gaps have highlighted several weaknesses of our community college system, but none is so glaring as our shortage of full-time faculty. In a recent letter responding to the Student Success Task Force (SSTF) recommendations, California Federation of Teachers Community College Council President Carl Freidlander summed up the situation clearly:

"The primary cause of the 'student success problem' that the Task Force sought to address is the budget-induced staffing crisis in the California Community Colleges. Our system's main strategy for man-



aging underfunding has been to dramatically downsize the full-time faculty and rely increasingly on underpaid and often unbenefited part-time contingent faculty. There is ample evidence that this staffing structure, despite the best efforts of our talented and committed part-time faculty, negatively impacts student success."

A recent study published in the *Journal of Higher Education* confirms that the key element in improving student outcomes is increased full-time faculty. While there is little hard evidence to suggest that more accountability or standardized assessment tools bolster student success, data consistently shows that "institutions with higher percentages of full-time faculty members have higher completion rates."

The study's author, David Jacoby, himself a former part-timer, stresses that part-time instructors were not any less effective in the classroom than their full-time counterparts. But contingent faculty "aren't on campus when they aren't teaching, and don't have the consistent involvement in departments that makes them able to fully help students," he said. According to Jacoby, even at institutions with demonstrably excellent part-time staffs, the fact remains that colleges that have "a lot of part-timers," are overall "less effective."

In a letter to the CA Community College Board of Governors, (former) Academic Senate President Jane Patton suggests that especially in this economic climate, each district must individually commit to hiring full-time faculty. Because of the "strong correlation between institutional commitment to full-time faculty and student success," districts that are serious about improving outcomes must find ways, even amid budget cuts, to add full-time faculty positions.

This is why the UF is asking the District for a long-term plan to hire more full-timers, even while budgets are tight. As Patton sums up, "simply put, colleges which fail to commit adequately to full-time faculty fail to commit to their students."

### 100+ Discuss Student Success at FACCC Policy Forum

More than 100 faculty from around the State joined the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC) Board of Governors at DVC last Jan. 27 for a forum on recent recommendations by the Student Success Task Force (SSTF). UF President Jeff Michels joined task-force member and California Community College Independents (CCCI) President Rich Hansen along with Statewide Vice Chancellor for Government Relations Marlene Garcia in discussing the SSTF report and next steps for implementation. DVC President Peter Garcia and Vice President of Instruction Susan Lamb also attended, as did District Trustee John Nejedly and several community leaders.



### UF to Host Benefits/Retirement Conference March 16

For the second year in a row, the UF is partnering with FACCC and with District HR to host a full-day Benefits and Retirement Conference at DVC on March 16. The Conference will include breakfast and lunch, a keynote speaker on the subject of public pensions and pension reform (we have invited STRS Deputy CEO Ed Derman), and breakout sessions on a wide range of topics from investment strategies and estate planning to health benefits and leave options. We are planning four different tracks with breakout sessions: one on health and welfare; a second on PT benefits and retirement planning; a third on FT retirement planning and STRS; and a fourth on estate planning, social security, PERS, and retirement planning for classified staff and managers.

The UF has also met recently with representatives from TIAA Cref and STRS Pension2, along with District management, to explore some new investment options we're hoping to make available for all District employees. These include a Pension2 403B, Roth 403B and 457 plan, as well as a 529 plan for saving towards college tuition (for children of employees). If we can work out the details in time (and if, as we hope and expect, we can offer these plans at no cost and little or no administrative burden to the District), we hope to have workshops on these new investment options at the March 16 conference.

Look for publicity coming soon with all the details about workshops and registration. The conference will be free to our members. Last year, we had more than a hundred faculty attend, and the reviews were excellent. This year is shaping up to be even better.

### UF Supports Student March in March

This year's student-organized "March in March" in Sacramento on Monday, March 5, starting from Raley Field at 10am and culminating in a rally on the capitol steps at 11am, may well turn out to be the biggest demonstration ever held in support of community colleges. Student leaders are seeking to send a loud message to Sacramento that it's time to re-invest and stop cutting college funding. For complete details about the march, look at the website: [www.iwillmarch.com](http://www.iwillmarch.com).

As we have in past years, the UF is partnering with student governments on each campus to send as many students to Sacramento for this event as possible. The UF has agreed to help fund buses to transport the students, and we're arranging afternoon visits to meet with our legislators as well. Faculty members who would like to join our UF team at the march and/or visiting legislators should call the UF office at 925-680-1771. Also, let Terri know if you need transportation.

This year, the March is being held in coordination with FACCC's annual Advocacy and Policy Conference, and several UF Executive Board members will attend the conference. The UF will also be co-sponsoring a breakfast March 5 for Assemblyman Paul Fong, who will be receiving FACCC's legislator of the year award. UF President Jeff Michels will be speaking on a pre-conference panel regarding the Student Success Task Force Report, Sunday March 4, at 10am, with CA Vice Chancellor Erik Skinner. Call the UF Office for details.

### Know Your Contract: On-Line Office Hour FAQs

Q: Is it true that anyone may now hold an "on-line office hour," even if one does not teach on line?

A: Yes. All faculty may now designate up to one hour as an on-line office hour. (Designating half an hour would be OK too.)

Q: How exactly does one hold an office hour on-line?

A: The key to the on-line office hour is that you designate a regular time every week when you will be available electronically to students. This might be as simple as telling students that you will be at your computer every Tuesday night from 7-8pm, and will answer emails within a couple of minutes during that hour. Or you could set up a chat room using blackboard, WebCT, or any system. You could also make yourself available via Skype. Give your students the best access to you during that hour that you can. If you need training or technical help, check with the staff development office at your college or call the UF. But remember: it needs to be a regularly scheduled hour. Responding to student emails at other times, as all faculty do, does not count as an on-line office hour.

Q: Can I hold my on-line office hour on the same day that I hold an on-campus office hour?

A: No, not if you want the hour to count officially. The contractual rule that says you may hold no more than 1.5 office hours on any given day still applies.

Q: Does this mean I no longer need to be on campus four days a week if I have a three-day teaching schedule?

A: Yes. The rule that says we can hold no more than 1.5 office hours on any given day used to mean that full-timers needed to be physically on-campus at least four days a week. With the on-line office hour, a faculty member might be on campus Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (holding 1 or 1.5 office hours on each day) and home grading papers Tuesdays and Fridays (holding an on-line office hour one of those days). Of course, our professional obligations may draw faculty to campus on many non-teaching days, but the on-line office hour does allow for increased flexibility.

### UF to Host House-Party Fundraiser for Nancy Skinner

Following our terrific event last semester for Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla, the UF is now planning a house-party to support Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner. Long a favorite of UF advocates, Skinner has been a leading voice supporting education in Sacramento. The fundraiser will be Thursday, March 22, from 6-8pm, in Orinda, and will include live music, a Mediterranean buffet, and signature UF mojitos. Look for more details coming soon.

