



Community College Council of the California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

Perspective



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

COMMISSION ACTIONS ON INSTITUTIONS

At its January 11-13, 2017 meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, took the following institutional actions on the accredited status of institutions:

REAFFIRMED ACCREDITATION ON THE BASIS OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

- Antelope Valley College
- Chaffey College
- City College of San Francisco
- Glendale Community College
- MiraCosta College

AFFIRMED ACCREDITATION FOR 18 MONTHS ON THE BASIS OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

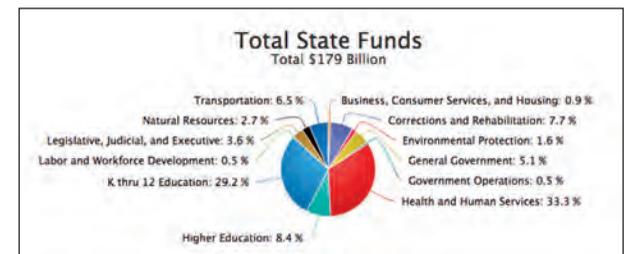
- Santa Monica College
- Moorpark College



Safe haven/sanctuary movement grows

More than a dozen community college districts and many other schools and local governments have passed resolutions and started to institute policies to protect their immigrant populations from the Trump administration's executive orders.

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State budget a mixed bag for CCs

The governor's proposed budget is "prudent," in his eyes. For the CFT there are problems, including the Prop 98 split, Cal Grants, and insufficient funding for part-time faculty office hours.

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Uproar over student "gotcha" taping

A student Republican club decision to surreptitiously record a popular instructor's classroom and post a clip on YouTube resulted in a right wing media uproar and flood of hate mail and phone threats to the instructor and the college.

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Faculty prevails over ACCJC CCSF wins back full accreditation

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President's Column

Jim Mahler, president, CFT Community College Council

United in the Age of Trump

In the face of the fundamental attacks that we are facing from the new administration, Congress, and the Courts that will likely prevent us from collecting dues, hinder our organizing, and attempt to take away many other hard-fought gains, we need to return to the basics. Now more than ever we need to stick together as a union—and most importantly—we need to remember what that word means.

The dictionary definition of “union” tells us that it is “an organized association of workers formed to protect and further their rights and interests; a labor union.” Digging deeper we learn that a union has to do with “brotherhood” (and “sisterhood”), a marriage of sorts, a “unification” that seeks to merge people through their “shared interests.”

Deal era in the 1930s. And for those of us in the public sector, basic union rights were not born until the 1960s nationally, and the mid-seventies here in California. One needs to pause and reflect on the fact that many of the basic rights and benefits we enjoy as a result of our ability to collectively bargain, play a role in politics, and have some autonomy in our workplaces

While there will certainly be many attempts to undercut us, if we stand together, maintain our membership status, contribute to COPE, and become more active rather than surrendering to despair, we will not just survive—we will continue to thrive and can continue to fight for our collective interests



Basic rights

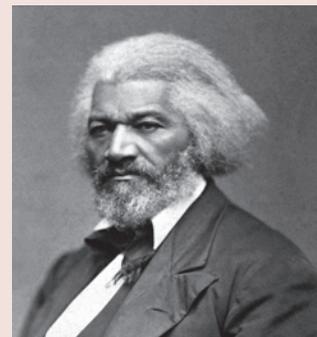
If we look to our history, we learn that unions as we know them are a relatively new institution. They began as fledgling organizations in the 19th century but did not gain legal recognition and the power to collectively bargain until the New

have only been in place during a very brief period of the history of the United States.

Before the collective bargaining era in the public sector, “bargaining” was jokingly referred to as “meet and defer” or “collective begging.” Thus, many of the things we may

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they suppress.”

—Frederick Douglass



take for granted such as salary schedules with steps in them that annually improve our pay, health benefits, pensions, and rights in the workplace are not just historically new but fragile and subject to political attacks from people, like those in Washington, who never thought employees should have living wages or dignity in the workplace ever.

And now they are trying to take all those hard fought precarious gains away.

Even if the new administration is able to impose a “right to work” status via Supreme Court ruling for the public sector that limits our ability to collect dues in order to weaken us at the bargaining table and electorally, it will only work if we allow such a ruling to divide us. While there will certainly be many attempts to undercut us, if we stand together, maintain our membership status, contribute to COPE, and become more

active rather than surrendering to despair, we will not just survive—we will continue to thrive and can continue to fight for our collective interests.

For students and communities too

Importantly, this doesn’t just mean negotiating for pay and benefits. It also has to mean that we stand for the rights of our students and the communities we serve. Our voices need to be raised for quality public education for all, but also for all of society’s democratic and civil rights and the basic principles of fairness and free inquiry in our classrooms and places of work.

I would be lying to you if I told you it will be easy, but, if we commit to staying unified, I believe we can stand together, weather the storm, and come out stronger in the end. That, after all, is the meaning and value of solidarity, and gives life to our union. ☐

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 31 - April 2	CFT Convention	Sacramento
April 27 - 30	AFT PSRP Conference	Detroit
May 5	CFT Community College Council	Los Angeles
June 26 - 29	CFT Summer School	UCLA
July 20 - 22	AFT TEACH Conference	Washington D.C.

Perspective

The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

The CFT represents over 120,000 educational employees working at every level of education in California. The CFT is committed to raising the standards of the profession and to securing the conditions essential to provide the best service to California’s students.

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Safe haven/Sanctuary movement grows

Community colleges step up for immigrant students

Within days after the election of Donald Trump as U.S. President, faculty unions at community colleges throughout California began passing resolutions and taking other actions to support immigrant students on their campuses, and some college boards began to do the same. “There was tremendous stress on students,” says Dean Murakami, President of the Los Rios College Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2279. “Many were filled with anxiety and fear, especially about the future of their education.”

“The biggest fear was that ICE [the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency of the Department of Homeland Security] would come in,” says Olga Shewfelt, who’s taught political science at West Los Angeles College for 20 years. “Teachers told me, and I saw myself, that students who’d been great were distracted, arriv-

AFT Local 1493, encouraging faculty to be supportive and take action, supporting DACA, and urging the district to bar cooperation between campus and local police and immigration agents, and to protect the confidentiality of student records.

“Students were very vocal,” explains Monica Malamud, Local 1493 president. “They

“We can’t do our job if students are fearful. Education is a social interaction among human beings, not inanimate objects, in which we’re making contributions to a larger society. We are not isolated. When we join in we are protecting others, especially students, who are vulnerable.”

ing late to class. They couldn’t focus, worried about whether they’d be able to stay.”

Students’ concern was rooted in promises by candidate Donald Trump before the election that he’d do away with the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), under which students brought by parents to the U.S. without immigration documents, and who’d gone to school here, were able to apply for deferment for a possible deportation, and for a work permit. President Trump, and advisors like Steve Bannon, attacked the legality of President Obama’s executive order establishing the program, and threatened to deport two million people immediately after the election.

Once he took office, President Trump added to fears when he issued an executive order taking action against refugees and migrants from seven Muslim-majority countries, and ordered ICE to begin detaining and deporting immigrants accused of crimes, even minor offenses.

Supporting DACA

One local that passed a resolution in December in response was San Mateo Community College Federation of Teachers,

went to the Board of Trustees with a list of demands that they declare the colleges sanctuary campuses, provide resources for immigrant students and guarantee openness and safety. When the Board met, our union and the students made common comments supporting each other.”

The board’s resolution, passed on January 25, supported the DACA program, called the three college campuses “safe havens,” vowed to “limit access to SMCCD campuses and property to federal officials for the purposes of immigration enforcement, unless legally compelled to do so,” and promised to protect the confidentiality of student records, among other measures.

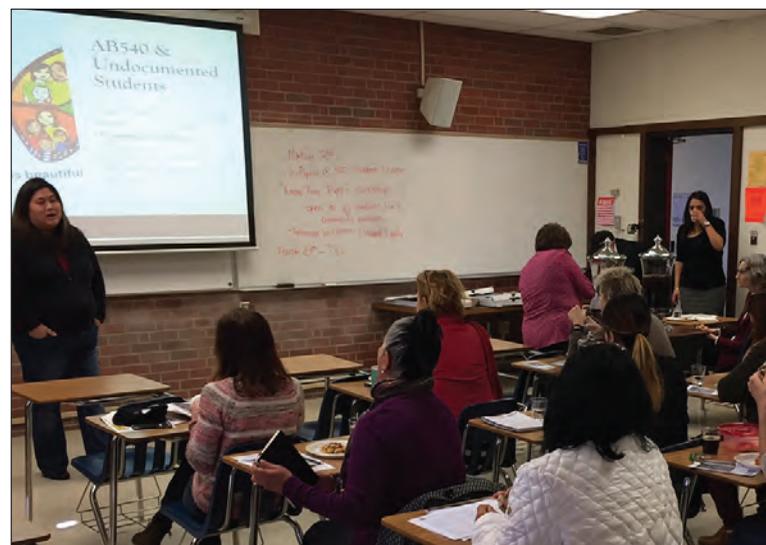
“Unions have to contribute to the fight for social justice,” Malamud declares. “Students coming to our educational institutions should feel safe. The care we provide as faculty is a contribution to their education.” That concern motivated faculty members to participate in local women’s marches protesting the presidential inauguration, including two who went to Washington DC. “Our union is part of a larger wave of resistance,” she explains.

Safe learning environment

The Los Rios federation also passed a resolution. “We want a safe learning environment, to be inclusive without discrimination or harassment,” Murakami says. “We realized that many of our students are undocumented and don’t have DACA deferments. We want to support all of them. Our resolution also covered other targets—African Americans, Muslims, Latinos and LGBTQ people too. We urged the Board of Trustees to tell the campus police not to detain or question people about their immigration status, and to look at sanctuary status.”

While the district is surrounded by conservative rural counties, Sacramento and Davis are sanctuary cities. The Board’s resolution, passed in January, didn’t use the word “sanctuary,” in part for fear that it would jeopardize Pell grants. “Nevertheless, they did a pretty good job and it passed unanimously,” Murakami says. “We’ve started organizing workshops on our campuses about DACA and legal rights, and sent our resolution out to all faculty members. It fits into our larger program also. We’ve protested the nomination of Andrew Puzder as Secretary of Labor in front of his Carls Jr. restaurants, and we were part of the women’s march too. We need to fight back as much as possible, about all of it.”

Murakami drew attention also to the statement made by



Sandra Guzman and Belinda Lum present “An Educator Overview of Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and AB540” for faculty at Sacramento City College, the first of a three-part series entitled “Supporting our Undocumented Students, Staff, and Faculty”.

Community College Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley, who protested the Trump executive orders, asking faculty to “inform my office if you become aware of any students, faculty or staff that have been detained or otherwise prevented from entering the United States,” and to inform students “how they can exercise their freedom to speak out.”

In Los Angeles, the College Faculty Guild, AFT Local 1521, passed a resolution the week after the election. “Our faculty was ready to support students,” Shewfelt recalls. The resolution concluded, “LACCD colleges should be sanctuary colleges, safe places for the continuation of the education of all our students, and in particular for our DACA and DAPA students and all other targeted populations.”

On December 7, after a rally, students and faculty went to the college Board of Trustees asking for a sanctuary declaration. While the Board was supportive in general, its resolution didn’t make the specific commitments they wanted, however. Trustees mentioned their fear of losing

the \$306 million the district gets from the Federal government, and that DACA hasn’t yet been invalidated.

Part of counseling programs

The union and the Academic Senate called a meeting on DACA in January. “Some colleges are way ahead,” Shewfelt says. “East Los Angeles is one of the best, and set up an office where students can go to ask questions and tap into resources. But nearly all our campuses are offering information for DACA students in some way, including referrals to non-profits serving the community. Faculty now is asking the administration to set up web links and offer services as part of counseling programs.”

With nine campuses, the district has over 134,000 students, of whom 56.5% are Latino, 12.5% Asian, 13.5% African American and 15.6% white. Federal immigration enforcement actions could conceivably affect thousands of students. AFT 1521 President Joanne Waddell said she hoped community

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Los Angeles CCD students rally in front of Board of Trustees meeting in support of a Sanctuary resolution.

Full Accreditation Restored to CCSF

CCSF faculty, CFT score major

City College of San Francisco (CCSF) is fully accredited. At its biannual meeting on January 13 the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) announced with little fanfare—but triggering a jubilant reception in San Francisco—that accreditation of City College of San Francisco has been restored.

Thus ended the long and harrowing saga of how a rogue accreditation agency, acting behind closed—sometimes bolted—doors, stubbornly, unfairly, and illegally attempted for more than four years to close one of the state’s premier community colleges, and how CCSF faculty prevailed in the fight for their institution’s survival.

“Unless you went through the

hell of it, it would be hard to comprehend the combined sense of joy, vindication and relief we feel,” said Alisa Messer, an English instructor and president of AFT Local 2121 when the ACCJC dropped its bombshell in 2012 that the college had been placed on the highest level of accreditation sanction short of termination.

The imposition of “Show

Cause” on CCSF and the closure order eight months later by the ACCJC set off a chain reaction in California’s community colleges, but one that ended with a radically different outcome than the one envisioned by ACCJC’s leaders.

“Pair of nines”

At the outset of the crisis the smart money was betting against restored accreditation. In summer 2013, the California Federation of Teachers’ lawsuit against ACCJC and its complaint to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) were dismissively referred to by one community college president as “CFT overplaying its pair of nines.” At the time ACCJC and its intimidating president Barbara Beno brooked no opposition, and most administrators, faculty and staff in the community colleges worried that any public questioning of—let alone resistance to—ACCJC would be met with damaging retaliatory sanctions.

For the uninitiated, no clue to the stormy drama behind the reaccreditation of City College can be detected in the document on the ACCJC web page, which simply includes CCSF among five colleges below the heading, “Reaffirmed accreditation on

The imposition of “Show Cause” on CCSF and the closure order eight months later by the ACCJC set off a chain reaction in California’s community colleges, but one that ended with a radically different outcome than the one envisioned by the Commission’s leaders.

the basis of a comprehensive evaluation.”

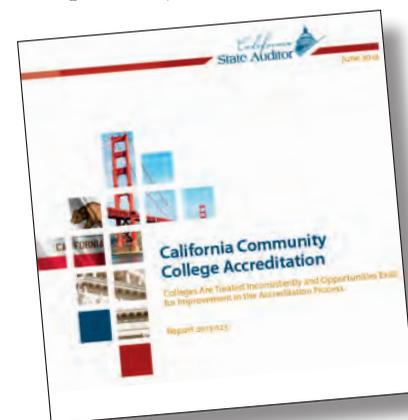
You’d have to know that City College had been mired in “Restoration Status,” a policy invented by the ACCJC expressly and solely for CCSF, requiring the college to meet a standard no other college has ever been required to meet: “full compliance” with all accreditation standards, as opposed to “substantial compliance” for everyone else. And you’d have to know the backstory of how the ACCJC and its president—described by one state senator as “the most arrogant, condescending and dismissive individual” he had ever met—had created a climate of fear throughout the state’s 113 colleges.

The “restoration status” policy, hatched behind closed doors in 2015 as the ACCJC

faced mounting pressure to back off from its unhinged mission to shutter the college, gave the school two years more than the original eight months to address accreditation concerns before closure. “Restoration status,” however, included no possibility of review or



CFT and AFT 2121 hold press conference in August 2013 on SF City Hall steps announcing they have filed suit against the ACCJC to block its effort to close City College of San Francisco. From left, student Shanell Williams, SF Supervisor David Campos, CFT Secretary Treasurer Jeff Freitas (head partially obscured), CFT president Joshua Pechthalt, AFT 2121 president Alisa Messer, and SF Supervisor Scott Weiner.



State Auditor in June 2014 finds ACCJC inconsistent, has room to improve.

Filing a third party comment the ACCJC way

On April 30, 2013, the Executive Director of the CFT, Dan Martin, carried a box into the nondescript offices of the ACCJC in Novato. He was accompanied by AFT 2121 president Alisa Messer and myself. After introducing us, Martin removed a foot-high stack of papers from the box and placed it on a desk in front

of the receptionist. He had a simple request: “Could you please date stamp this complaint that we’re filing?”

The receptionist didn’t know what to do. He found a supervisor, a tall woman, who came into the reception office and without introduction or preliminaries said, “This is private property. You must leave now.” Taken aback, Martin politely but firmly insisted on a date stamp on the papers, explaining he was following ACCJC’s own procedure in filing a “third party comment,” and just needed a date stamp, common practice for this sort of thing.

She ignored him and repeated the demand for us to leave, adding, “If you don’t I will have to call the police.” At this point I snapped pictures of the tableau, making sure to get a clear shot of the stack of

papers on the desk.

“I was almost a police officer”

The standoff continued through another few rounds of fruitless variations on the theme, at one point augmented by the receptionist informing us “I was almost a police officer, and I know what to do,” picking up the phone and holding it aloft in a flamboyant Statue of Liberty-like moment. The woman told him to put the phone down; with evident regret, he did.

Martin said, “I’d like to speak with your supervisor.” The woman said that that wasn’t possible and repeated her mantra that we had to leave now. Martin asked, if we left, would someone come out and talk with us? The woman gestured vaguely in a way that Martin interpreted as possibly affirmative, so he picked up the empty box and we walked out the front door.

Instantly there was a click as the door was locked from the inside. A second later the blinds went down on the other side of the

solid glass wall, and a moment after that a final click told us that another door that we hadn’t noticed before had been locked as well.

The charge?

Martin knocked hopefully a couple times with no response. He called through the closed door, “Is somebody coming out to talk with us?” Silence. After a couple minutes standing around, conjecturing what we would be charged with if we waited for the police to show up (Messer: “Aggravated filing of a third party complaint?”), we left.

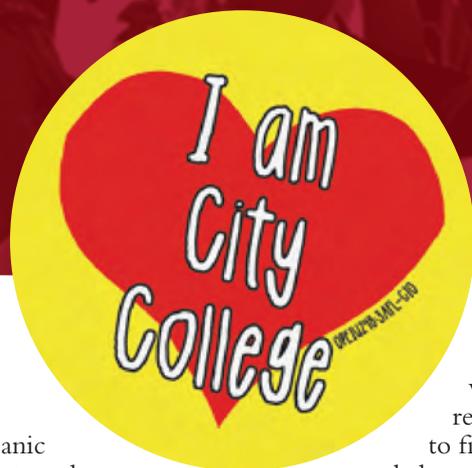
This was the welcome received by the California Federation of Teachers in its effort to follow the ACCJC’s own procedures, protesting the placement of City College of San Francisco on the highest level of sanction short of closure by its accrediting agency. The same day we emailed the complaint to the US Department of Education, and the campaign for fair accreditation practices in California had begun in earnest. [CCJ](#)

Fred Glass



Dan Martin (left) delivers CFT’s third party comment to ACCJC office in Spring 2013 and is told to leave or the agency staff will call the police.

victory



appeal by the college, provoking a separate complaint filed by the faculty union, AFT 2121, and its parent organization, CFT, to the USDOE, alongside an amended lawsuit against the commission. Both charged the policy was unlawful and violated due process rights of the school.

Everyone connected with CCSF was understandably anxious for the entire two years of the “restoration status” program. Given the precipitous imposition of the rarely invoked “Show Cause” sanction in 2012, and the termination of accreditation less than a year later—blocked by a court order—few at the college had any confidence in fair treatment by the ACCJC.

“Restoration status was not primarily meant to keep City College open. It was a means for the ACCJC to get out of the negative spotlight and buy it time,” observed Tim Killikelly, president of AFT 2121. But the response by ACCJC nonetheless revealed the growing success of a campaign to keep the college open and force ACCJC’s opaque decision making into the light of day.

Face value news

At first, most news coverage and institutional reactions took the ACCJC’s sanction at face value. “Everyone thought, well, this is a neutral expert body. Where there’s smoke there must be fire,” said Messer. Reporters without expertise in accreditation mangled the story, erroneously repeating ACCJC’s accusations that the college was bankrupt, instructors were paid too much, administration was falling apart, and the college had no technological infrastructure. Worse, some news reports told the public that the college was

about to close, precipitating a panic among students and steep enrollment losses. Faculty and staff morale plummeted. It seemed that ACCJC would have its way.

But meanwhile AFT 2121 and the CFT had been assembling a campaign to save CCSF and move the state to a fairer accreditation system. In essence, the unions turned the tables on the ACCJC, placing the opaque agency itself under sharp scrutiny, with the goal of reframing the situation, and forcing the ACCJC to defend itself in court, in the legislature, in front of state and federal agencies, and in the media. By 2016 it had become a virtual pariah, no longer “widely accepted” (a standard for continued recognition of an accreditor’s authority) as the accreditor of record for the nation’s largest community college system. What had happened?

The first blow: third party comment

After researching for nearly a year the ACCJC’s actions over time—not an easy task, given the veil of secrecy in which the agency draped itself—CFT filed a formal complaint with ACCJC and its overseer, the USDOE, in spring 2013 (see sidebar). The thrust of the complaint, or “third party comment,” was that the ACCJC had violated numerous laws and its own policies, and engaged in conflicts of interest, among which were sanctioning a college that had vocally opposed a community college reform bill supported by the ACCJC, and placing the husband of the agency’s president on the CCSF site visit team. It had also stacked the team with administrators,

violating the requirement to field a team balanced between academics and administrators, while falsely designating a number of administrators as “academics.” Most seriously, it had re-characterized suggestions it had made in 2006 during the last accreditation review as “deficiencies,” thus retrospectively (and unfairly, not to mention illegally) placing CCSF in the position of having failed to address deficiencies it was never told that it had.

While the ACCJC brushed off the several hundred page CFT document with a perfunctory seven page rejoinder, the Department of Education took it seriously, and shocked the accreditor by issuing a letter in August finding the ACCJC out of compliance with numerous accreditor standards enumerated by the complaint. That same month CFT and the San Francisco City Attorney filed suit against the agency—suits that the CCSF administration declined to join. In June 2014 the California Joint Legislative Audit Committee determined that ACCJC decisions were inconsistent from college to college and lacked transparency and due process.

Speakers’ bureau

Local 2121 set up a speaker’s bureau and sent teams of faculty, students, and trustees out to community colleges across the state to counter ACCJC’s version of events and acquaint colleagues with what had actually happened to CCSF. Large audiences attended, often including top administrators and entire boards of trustees, along with faculty. The forums left listeners



Top: Assemblymember Rob Bonta (left) holds press conference announcing ACCJC reform legislation in February 2014. Middle: SF Superior Court judge Curtis Karnow ponders evidence in October 2014 trial that finds ACCJC broke four laws in its effort to pull CCSF’s accreditation. Bottom: Los Angeles Community College Faculty Guild president Joanne Waddell rallies the crowd outside the ACCJC meeting in Sacramento in June 2015.

shocked at ACCJC’s distance from fair accreditation practices.

Assemblymembers Rob Bonta and Phil Ting, among others, carried legislation to reform the ACCJC and the accrediting process in California, seeking greater accountability and transparency from the agency.

On the basis of an October 2014 trial, San Francisco Superior Court judge Curtis Karnow ruled in early 2015 that the ACCJC had broken four laws in sanctioning CCSF.

Shortly before the judge’s decision, the California Community College Board of Governors (BOG), over ACCJC’s strenuous objections, rescinded a regulation granting ACCJC sole accrediting rights for community colleges in the California community colleges. And a State Chancellor’s Task Force Report, accepted by the BOG in late 2015, found that the ACCJC no longer met California’s accreditation needs

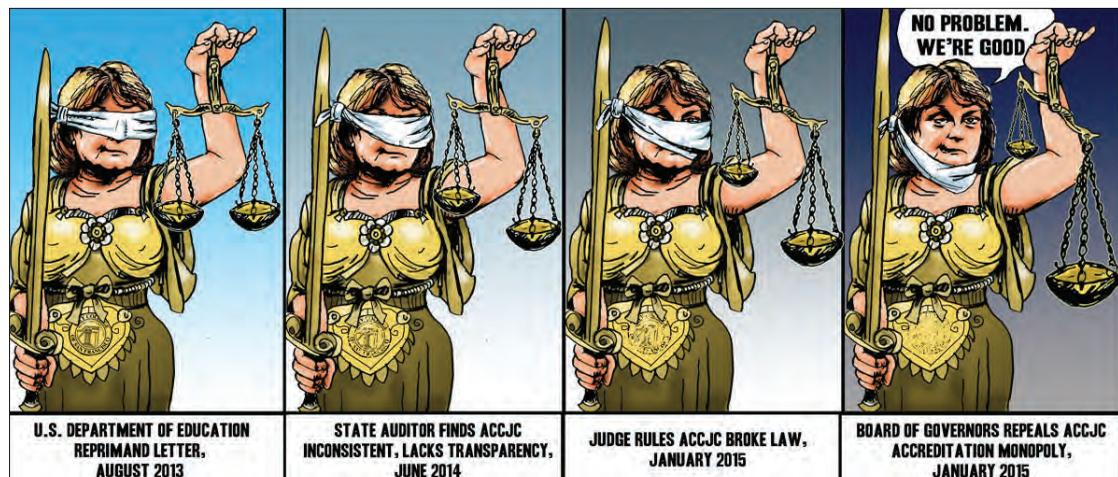
and recommended the state find a new accreditor.

Congressional actions, including town halls led by Jackie Speier, a press conference by Nancy Pelosi at the CCSF Chinatown campus, and letters from these and other members of Congress to the USDOE, demanded that ACCJC back off. Street demonstrations outside ACCJC meetings and government buildings, organized by AFT 2121 and the Save CCSF coalition, kept the matter in front of the media, the public and elected officials.

Mounting evidence

Mounting evidence of ACCJC’s dishonesty and intransigence gradually won a turnaround in media coverage, and by mid-2016 built a consensus among college chancellors and presidents that it was finally time to take the reins of the

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CARTOON CREDIT: JOS SANCES

FRED GLASS PHOTOS



Legislative Update

Bryan Ha, CFT Legislative Advocate

“Prudent” proposed budget from Jerry Brown

On January 10, Governor Jerry Brown released his proposed 2017-18 budget. The Governor’s approach continues to be “prudent”—urging restraint given California’s current fiscal outlook. The budget suggests sustainability through “student success” with a focus on timely completion rate. Additionally, it attempts to close the achievement gaps for students requiring additional needs.

Despite its restraint, the budget provides nearly \$400 million in new Proposition 98 General Fund spending for California Community Colleges (CCC). The General Fund is expected to grow by approximately \$3.7 billion or 3% and Proposition 98 is expected to grow by approximately \$2.1 billion or 3%.

The CFT has several concerns with the Governor’s budget proposal, including the Proposition 98 split with K-12, a lack of investment in operating funds to sustain quality programs, Cal Grants, and a lack of funding for part-time faculty office hours.

Traditionally the California community colleges have received 10.93% of the Proposition 98 Guarantee. In 2014-15 the share was 10.92%, in 2015-16 the share was 10.94, and in 2017-18 the share is 10.87%, which is approximately \$45 million less than what traditionally would be expected. CFT/CCC advocates will work with the administration and members of the Legislature to ensure our fair share.

Need more funding for part-time office hours

The budget proposes \$23.6 million for a base increase to cover increasing operating costs, especially due to rising employer pension costs. Base funds are essential to sustaining faculty and

classified staff, transitioning part-time faculty to full-time instructors, investing in healthcare and pensions, and other operating costs such as part-time faculty office hours. The CFT will seek to secure additional base funding for part-time faculty office hours.

Significant investment in “Guided Pathways”

The budget also includes a significant investment for the creation and implementation of the new “Guided Pathways,” which is an important factor for systematic overhaul of student experience at the CCC, meant to streamline the transfer process and boost graduation rates. The new competitive grant for an estimated fifteen to twenty colleges, administered by the State Chancellor’s Office, will include academic roadmaps and guidance proposing to ensure timely transfer or degree, create targeted advising, and support remedial education.

Below is a summary of the augmentation for the CCC budget.

Apportionments

- \$94.1 million for 1.48% COLA.
- \$79.3 million for 1.34% for growth.
- \$23.6 million for a base increase in Proposition 98 GF to cover increasing operating

costs such as employee benefits, facilities, professional development, and other general expenses. Will function similarly to a 0.37% COLA.

Educational Services

- \$150 million increase in one-time Proposition 98 GF for grants to develop an integrated, institution-wide approach to student success.
- \$20 million increase in one-time Proposition 98 GF to provide innovation grants. As opposed to an outside committee administering the program, the Chancellor will have broad authority selecting the focus of the grants and the awardees.
- \$5.4 million for a 1.48% COLA for the Apprenticeship, EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs and the Child Care Tax Bailout programs.
- \$3.1 million for enrollment growth in the Full-Time Student Success Grant program.

Technology

- \$10 million increase in Proposition 98 GF for the Online Education Initiative to purchase a learning management system that will be provided free to colleges.
- \$6 million increase in one-time Proposition 98 GF to facilitate the development of an integrated library system allowing students access to a cloud-based and up-to-date library catalog.

Facilities and Equipment

- \$43.7 million one-time

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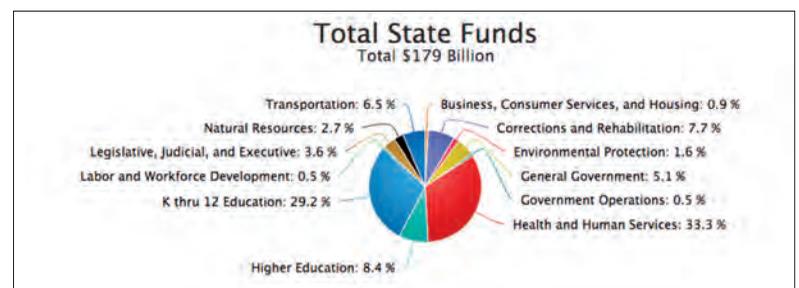
- increase in Proposition 98 for the Physical Plant and Instructional Equipment program.
- \$52.3 million one-time increase in Proposition 98 for the energy efficiency projects through the Proposition 39 (Clean Energy Job Creation Fund) program.

Chancellor’s Office State Operations

- \$378,000 GF increase for the creation of two Vice Chancellor positions to assist with student success, address equity disparities, and develop the Guided Pathways Program. The Department of Finance will collaborate with the Chancellor’s Office to develop an organization framework to achieve the goals and priorities created by the new Chancellor and Board of Governors.

Finally, the 2017-18 Budget proposes to phase-out the Middle Class Scholarship, a \$74 million program created under former Assembly Speaker John Perez. The budget lacks Cal Grant investment to better serve community college students. The budget continues to distribute less than 10% of Cal Grant resources to our students, regardless of the fact that our students represent two-thirds of the entire higher education population. The CFT will work with the administration and members of the Legislature to ensure that the savings from the Middle Class Scholarship program remains in one form or another of financial aid.

If you have any questions, please contact Bryan Ha, CFT Legislative Representative at bha@cft.org.



Community colleges step up continued from page 3

colleges would follow the lead of the University of California, whose leaders released statements in November vowing not to cooperate with federal searches for undocumented students.

The district has set up a task force that will include Shewfelt as a Guild representative. “We need to prevent collaboration between local law enforcement and ICE,” she explains. While a Special Order 40, dating from 1979, bars the Los Angeles Police from checking immigration status, no such order

exists for the county Sheriffs Department, who provide the security for the LA Community College District. The department has even recently budgeted funds for an immigration office.

Fighting any action

After San Diego Community College’s Board of Trustees passed a resolution pledging not to allow federal immigration agents on campus without a court order, to aid in deportations or to share student records, the district chancellor Constance

Carroll said the district would fight any action that could lead to their deportation. “There are institutions that will provide voluntary assistance (to federal immigration officers), and we will not be one of them,” she declared.

Responding to voices that assert that the union should not get involved in issues beyond salaries, conditions and professional concerns, Shewfelt says, “We can’t do our job if students are fearful. Education is a social interaction among human

beings, not inanimate objects, in which we’re making contributions to a larger society. We are not isolated. When we join in we are protecting others, especially students, who are vulnerable.”

Shewfelt believes, as do many teachers, that attacks on immigrants are part of a broader political agenda. “What’s emerging is a larger pattern of rolling back our achievements in creating a fairer society,” she charges. “Public education itself is under attack, and the whole idea that

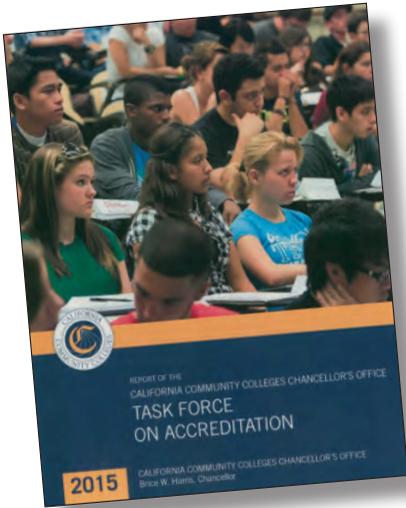
we are working for some kind of public or common good, opening the minds of students who can become more tolerant people in a more tolerant society, as well as preparing them for the jobs of tomorrow. The connection is clear, and we are on the front lines.”

As of *The Perspective’s* press deadline a dozen similar resolutions had passed the boards of AFT-represented community college districts.

David Bacon

ACCREDITATION

Victory continued from page 5



The Chancellor's Accreditation Task Force report concluded that the state of California needed to move away from ACCJC to another accreditor.

anti-ACCJC bandwagon. They formed two task forces: one to explore affiliation with a new accreditor, and another to monitor ACCJC practices and ensure better practices during the transition. These two groups, without faculty participation, have been meeting and presumably making some progress.

However, Jim Mahler, president of the CFT's Community College Council, cautions that "While we remain hopeful of the eventual outcome, faculty are concerned about the slow pace of these workgroups' deliberations. The movement toward a new accreditor needs to pick up the pace. City College may be back on the ACCJC's good list, but the damage they have suffered remains; their enrollment has a long climb back, and

we do not intend to let this happen to anyone else."

Accordingly, CFT and AFT Local 2121 have not dropped their lawsuit against the ACCJC. Although the trial has been delayed by creative stalling tactics by the agency's battery of attorneys, the unions intend to press their case—far more comprehensive than the San Francisco City Attorney's—to conclusion.

The state and local unions, with the support of the national AFT, also sent speakers to testify again in February before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) in Washington D.C., where they argued that the ACCJC needs to have its authority revoked. NACIQI has accepted the recommendation of USDOE staff to extend ACCJC's authority for eighteen months, another in a series of temporary extensions, rather than giving the agency a full five years.

Why now?

While the AFT 2121/CFT campaign to save City College and move California to a fairer accreditation system was fundamental, other factors undoubtedly contributed to the ACCJC's decision to restore CCSF's accreditation.

Most of the commissioners who voted to sanction CCSF are now gone. Last October Commission president Barbara Beno announced her intent to resign as of June 2017. Then in



Supporters of City College of San Francisco rally in front of the ACCJC offices in Novato.

December the news was leaked that she had been placed on administrative leave. No explanation was given by interim ACCJC president Richard Winn for this welcome but mysterious action.

Still unanswered is why the ACCJC overreached in the first place. Certainly the arrogance of the commission's leaders played a role. Despite a raft of studies and reports over the years from a variety of authorities, suggesting to the Commission that it shift course from a punitive "compliance" model to accreditation based on collegial collaboration, nobody had succeeded in so much as nudging the agency in that direction.

CCSF faculty leaders believed that the "show cause" order was payback for the college—faculty, administration, students, and trustees—testifying against an ACCJC-backed reform bill in the legislature in 2011. Although the City Attorney failed to persuade the judge on this point, that failure was more due to how the point was argued, faculty believe, than the merits of the charge.

The agency's own explanations for its harsh actions didn't hold water. As was shown by the CFT in its meticulously documented initial complaint, by the state auditor, and by the City Attorney in his case against the ACCJC, CCSF was slammed disproportionately by ACCJC when measured against other colleges with similar

accreditation compliance issues. And thanks to the lawsuits, ACCJC was forced to file documents with the court. One of them, unearthed by an enterprising *Los Angeles Times* reporter, revealed that the agency's own site visit team to CCSF had unanimously recommended to ACCJC that it impose a lesser "Probation" sanction, a recommendation the ACCJC ignored before jacking it up to "Show Cause."

Enormous toll

Another factor: faculty and administration had spent a ton of time complying with the ACCJC's fine-grained bureaucratic demands. At the same time as CCSF faculty moved the battle from ACCJC's home field and ever-shifting rules to the broader political, legal, and moral questions of what constitutes fair accreditation, it nonetheless joined with CCSF administration in a life and death effort to comply with the ACCJC's ultimatums.

The human cost of all of this was serious. Tens of thousands of mostly low-income students of color, who relied on CCSF as their doorway to higher education, didn't know if their course credits would count and student loans would be available. A couple thousand faculty and

staff jobs hung in the balance. San Francisco employers relied on the job training programs at CCSF. An institution that contributed \$300 million a year to the city's economy was in existential crisis.

And everyone—especially faculty, shouldering the simultaneous burdens of accreditation compliance, anti-ACCJC campaigning, and pay cuts, all while attempting to perform their already demanding job of delivering quality education to CCSF's student body—was enormously stressed out.

What remains now is the necessity to recoup enrollment, restore classes, improve relations with administration, and finally, maybe, just maybe move the state to a new accreditor.

"This is a moment to savor," said CFT president Joshua Pechthalt, on hearing the news about CCSF's reaccreditation. "Reaccreditation is an enormous victory. But we haven't forgotten that the agency that set in motion a terrible series of events for the community college students and faculty of San Francisco is still in business. Its leadership may have undergone a transition, but it remains to be seen if the agency itself has gained the wisdom to be safely entrusted with accreditation going forward." **CCC**

By Fred Glass



CFT, AFT 2121, the Save City College coalition and other friends of fair accreditation descended on the NACIQI meeting to testify against reauthorizing the ACCJC's authority to accredit in December 2015.



Tim Killikelly, president of AFT 2121, and Rashid Yahye (right), president of the Compton Federation of Employees, tell Board of Governors of Compton College needs its accreditation back.

Local Action continued from page 8

San Francisco

Free City College

During the first week of February negotiations between San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim and Mayor Ed Lee's office ended with an agreement to make City College free for all San Franciscans eligible for in-state tuition, starting in the Fall 2017 semester.

The deal followed wrangling over distribution of the proceeds of a progressive parcel tax on properties assessed at more

than \$5 million, passed by San Francisco voters last November as Prop W. Among promises made to voters was that a portion would be set aside to defray costs of attending CCSF. Before the agreement was reached the Mayor had threatened to divert the funding to other city services. As a result of the agreement between Kim and Lee, \$5.4 million will go to cover student expenses, including tuition fees and other costs.

Acknowledging the support of CCSF administration for the

"free City College" initiative, AFT Local 2121 president Tim Killikelly nonetheless said the administration needs to take the next step. The administration slashed a hundred classes from the schedule last fall in an austerity response to enrollment falling during the ACCJC-inspired accreditation crisis; it is planning for more cuts ahead. "We have restored our accreditation for seven years, and we offer our classes for free to our students," said Killikelly. "Now it's time to press the pause button on cuts to classes."

The agreement stipulates that San Franciscans (city residents) who were already receiving financial aid will be eligible for additional assistance in the form of reimbursement for books and transportation vouchers. Students taking between 6 and 11 units can receive an additional \$200 each year. Students taking 12 or more units can receive an additional \$500 each year. The agreement allows for up to a 20% increase in enrollment in next year's budget. This is expected to become part of the yearly rollover when

budgeting for the program in future years.

Said AFT 2121 political director Alisa Messer, "Although this compromise is less than what our students deserve, especially for some of our undocumented, low-income students, and for out-of-San Francisco workers, it is also undoubtedly more than any other tuition-free community college program in the nation. We should celebrate what we've accomplished and stay tuned for ways to continue to build on these critical first steps." **CCC**

Local Action



CFE LOCAL 1911 PHOTO

Faculty supporters of Cox, left to right: Phatana Ith, Kayleigh Sevi, Glynis Hoffman, Leigh Ann Weatherford.

Orange County

Trump's election meant the bullying started

In the wake of last November's election, the Republican club at Orange Coast College held a meeting and decided to send a member into the class of Olga Perez Stable Cox to record the discussion. During the class Cox, a psychology professor, answering a student's question, said that in her opinion Trump was a "white supremacist," and that Vice-President Mike Pence was "anti-gay."

Then she sought to reassure students concerned and afraid about the election. "We are in for a difficult time. But again I do believe that we can get past that. Our nation is divided." She said she was nevertheless an optimist. Cox offered coping skills and sought common ground with her students, saying, "All of us have people in our families and our circle of friends that are part of that movement."

Little did she know that one of her students was surreptitiously recording her. The video was then posted on the internet, and soon she was receiving insults and violent threats, called a "libtard," "Marxist," "nutcase," "vile leftist filth" and a "satanic cult member." "Go out in the middle of the football field, pull out a handgun, put it to your temple and shoot yourself," Jim Ernst wrote online. "Or better yet, douse yourself in gasoline and set yourself on fire." It was so frightening that she had to leave home and stay away from work.

Shawn Steel, former chairman of the California Republican Party and husband of a county supervisor, appeared on TV with the campus club's president, and accused Cox of punishing right-wing students with poor grades. Ironically, the student who taped Cox got an A, since she grades based on class participation, and he'd been very verbal in class about his views.

Popular instructor

Cox teaches human sexuality, and is one of the most popular instructors on the Orange Coast campus. She engages in dialogue with her students during class, and while most questions have had to do with sex, after the election students wanted to talk about politics. Some who are gay, Muslim or undocumented said they were scared. "I basically said, 'Deal with your feelings and do something positive,' and I was helping them cope with their fears," she later told the *Washington Post*. Surreptitious recording is specifically and clearly prohibited in the class syllabus, given the free discussion that Cox encourages. That policy is in line with broader campus policy and with California state law.

Rob Schneiderman, president of Coast Federation of Educators, AFT Local 1911, began organizing support for Cox right away. So did students. A Facebook post led to a rally of over 200 during finals week, with some of her former students coming hundreds of miles to support her. Schneiderman called the AFT. "The higher ed division stepped up, got the *Washington Post* involved, and then started tweeting, getting people to stand up where they'd been afraid."

The union passed a resolution condemning the recording, and the abuse that followed. Schneiderman took it to the district, and a letter he signed jointly with the college president and the president of the Academic Senate affirmed, "We fully support each of our professors' right to respectfully respond to student questions and to express views that may challenge student opinions, world view or ideology." The incident, the letter said, "resulted in a barrage of threatening and uncivil attacks through social media..."

Clear guidelines

In the wake of the incident, the union created a document that outlined a series of steps teachers can take to stop the use

of surreptitious recording for intimidation. First, it says, create very clear guidelines for students. "It is highly likely that your students are unaware of your audio and video recording policies," it explains.

Syllabus language has been created by Professor Marc Perkins and the union, meant for professors who do not allow audio or video recording. Similar syllabus language is also available for professors who allow recording in class but do not want students to widely distribute the classroom materials.

"Have students acknowledge your requirements," Schneiderman urges, "because it confirms that the students are agreeing to participate in your class based on your grading criteria. Know your rights. If you do not allow recording, you have the right to require a student suspected of recording to leave class and not return before meeting with the Dean. Send letters to your college president and Chancellor John Weispenning encouraging management to support both students and faculty by enforcing existing district policies."

Schneiderman recognizes that, as was the case with Olga Cox, students break the rules in spite of all of this. For that reason he met in Sacramento with Assembly Member Karen Quirk-Silva, to urge that the Education Code include language that would impose specific consequences on students who record classes in violation of campus rules.

Permission slip for bullies

"There's no doubt that this was a consequence of Trump's election," Schneiderman says. "The whole plot was hatched the Tuesday afterwards in student Republican club meeting. The election was their permission slip to be bullies, to bully people they disagree with."

Following the fall semester, the college administration suspended the student for two semesters, and required that he apologize to the instructor. But after the local daily newspaper—the *Orange County Register*, the most right wing daily in the state—published an editorial and an op ed by the Republican students, and the right wing media generated hundreds of emails and phone calls, the administration caved and rescinded the disciplinary actions.

The union issued a statement that said, "CFE is deeply disappointed that the Coast Community College District administration has capitulated to individuals and groups who threatened and bullied students, faculty and administration. On

behalf of a planned, covert partisan agenda, one student's actions have harmed the educational experience for all students and made classrooms less safe." CCC

David Bacon

Santa Maria

Progressive election results in a conservative area

In one of the most conservative areas of California, five years of work has won the local union for community college part-timers a majority on their district board. "Our area is slowly changing," says Mark James Miller, president of the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College, AFT Local 6185, "and our members understood how important this was to them."

In a bargaining unit of 500 part-time faculty, union membership is over 400. With that base, in 2012 the union ran two candidates for seats on the college board of trustees. One trustee with a long record of hostility to faculty was defeated, and in his place a progressive alternative was elected.

The district encompasses urban Santa Maria and the surrounding towns and rural areas, on California's central coast. "Board members run in separate constituencies, and she won in Santa Maria itself, the district's most densely populated part," Miller explains.

Stakes grew higher last year, however. After one long-time faculty member was terminated, the union went to arbitration, which is only advisory in its contract. A district administration lawyer then took the unusual position that the contract itself was nullified by the Education Code. "That really motivated us," Miller recalls. "It was more than just insulting. It was dangerous."

Faculty support crucial

In last fall's election, the union decided to run two more candidates. In Lompoc, a small city south of Santa Maria, a candidate from the local branch of the NAACP, Jeff Hall, approached the Democratic Club, which in turn approached the union. Faculty decided to support him. Another candidate, Dan Hilker, came forward from Santa Maria's suburban fringe. Hilker won by a margin of only 300 votes of 18,000 cast. In Lompoc Hall's margin was 700 votes out of 12,000.

The two board members whose seats weren't up for election have a history of even greater hostility to the union. Both wrote op-eds in the local newspaper defending the incumbents, and administrators even campaigned for them. "The candidates we defeated had been on the Board for 12 years, so we're proud of what we accomplished," Miller says. "Our members did phone banking and put up signs. We had a broad message - that what's best for teachers is best for students too."

Since arbitration is advisory, the union hopes that the new board will uphold an arbitrator's opinion restoring the job of the terminated teacher. The lawyer who called the union contract "null" is gone.

"Before we were fearful," he says. "Our contract's up for bargaining, and for the first time now we have the chance to make progress on our main issues, especially parity for part-timers. In the past, whenever we tried to bring this up, management would just say the district wouldn't even discuss it."

Miller has a message for other small locals: "A few determined people can make a difference." CCC

David Bacon

Continued on page 7



CHRIS CRIVER PHOTO

Over 200 faculty and students attended the West Valley-Mission CCD Board of Trustees meeting in October. Packing the boardroom beyond capacity and lining the sidewalks outside, protesters made known their displeasure over how the District's sizable financial reserves were not being used to offset increasing health care costs or support part-time faculty.