



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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Dr. Brice W. Harris Named 15th Chancellor of the California Community Colleges *Former Los Rios Community College District chief to lead nation's largest system of higher education*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The California Community Colleges Board of Governors today announced the unanimous selection of former Los Rios Community College District Chancellor Brice W. Harris as the 15th chancellor to lead the 112-college system, the largest system of higher education in the country.

"Brice Harris is the right person at the right time to lead the California Community Colleges. I've known and worked with him for many years, and he is widely respected within the college system. He has the vision and leadership skills needed to navigate these tough fiscal times and keep us focused on improving student success," said California Community Colleges Board of Governors President Scott Himmelstein.

Harris was the longest-serving chancellor at Los Rios, with nearly 16 years at the helm, and led two local bond measures that funded facilities improvements and allowed the district to serve thousands of additional students. The Los Rios district includes American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City colleges, and enrolls more than 85,000 students each semester. Harris oversaw the establishment of the district's fourth college, Folsom Lake, and provided the vision that made it home to a regional performing arts center, which was recently renamed in his honor.

Harris previously served as president of Fresno City College, and was a faculty member and vice chancellor in the Kansas City, Mo., community college system.

"It is humbling to be asked to lead such a tremendous system of colleges serving the educational needs of California. The California Community Colleges have helped educate generations of citizens, and these colleges are even more important to the future of our great state," Harris said. "Serving as the system chancellor at this time is very exciting. The efforts that retiring Chancellor Jack Scott and the board of governors have begun related to improving student success provide us all a clear road-map to a better future for our colleges and for California."

Harris has served on a host of local, state and national boards and commissions. He was the first educator to serve as president of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and also served as president of the Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization (SACTO). Harris serves on the American Council on Education (ACE) board, and was a member of the California Community College Chancellor's Office Student Success Task Force.

“I enthusiastically endorse the appointment of Dr. Brice Harris as the chancellor of the California Community Colleges. He is an outstanding educational leader, as evidenced by his superb leadership of the Los Rios Community College District,” said former Chancellor Jack Scott, who retired earlier this month. “He will ably represent community colleges in state government, and I predict great progress for California community colleges under his leadership.”

Harris did his post-doctoral study at the Harvard University Institute of Educational Management, received his doctorate in education at Nova Southeastern University, his master's in communication from the University of Arkansas, and his bachelor's in communication from Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

“I’ve known and worked with Brice for almost 20 years, going back to my days on the Sacramento City Council. He was an exemplary chancellor at the Los Rios Community College District, broadening higher education opportunities for tens of thousands of students through unprecedented renovation and expansion of the district’s four colleges,” said Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg. “As California Community Colleges enlarge their role in educating and training our state’s workforce, I look forward to working with Brice as he takes on another leadership challenge.”

As chancellor, Dr. Harris will receive an annual salary of \$198,500, plus a standard benefits package afforded to state employees. He begins his duties on Nov. 6, 2012

Harris lives in Fair Oaks, Calif., with his wife, Barbara, who is an elementary educator and he has three adult children also in the state.

The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.4 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor’s Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

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Additional Information:

High-Resolution Photo of Dr. Brice W. Harris:

http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/images/Chancellor_Brice_Harris_HiRes.jpg

Low-Resolution Photo of Dr. Brice W. Harris:

http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/images/Chancellor_Brice_Harris_LoRes_Web.png

A bio for Dr. Brice W. Harris is available at:

<http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/ChancellorsOffice/MeettheChancellor.aspx>

Dan Walters: California's school funding confusing

By Dan Walters
dwalters@sacbee.com

Published: Monday, Oct. 1, 2012 - 12:00 am | Page 3A

If you want your head to spin, try to figure out how much money we spend each year to educate California's 6 million K-12 school students.

Official agencies and outside groups publish numbers, but they rarely agree. They either take their snapshots at different times or include different types of spending and/or different sources of financing.

Gov. Jerry Brown's budget pegs the number at \$63.4 billion during the 2012-13 fiscal year, but assumes that voters approve his sales and income tax increase measure, Proposition 30, on the Nov. 6 ballot.

If it fails, that budget number would presumably drop by \$5.5 billion, unless he and the Legislature change their minds after the election.

With that caveat, Brown's number appears to be fairly accurate because it includes income and outgo that other reporting agencies often ignore, such as federal funds (about \$7 billion), state payments for teachers' pensions (\$1.2 billion) and the repayment of school-construction bonds (\$3.3 billion). It's also roughly in line with the Census Bureau's annual report on school spending.

Why are accurate school- financing data important?

It's because Brown focuses on school finance in his campaign for Proposition 30, and because wealthy civil rights attorney Molly Munger is pushing a rival tax measure, Proposition 38, whose proceeds would almost all go to schools.

Brown's number, which assumes Proposition 30 passes, is about \$10,500 per student, somewhere in the lower third among the states.

Were it to fail – its chances are about 50-50 – a contingency plan already in the law would cut schools by \$5.5 billion, but only about half would be real-time operating funds (\$400 per pupil), accomplished by counting bond service as state aid. The remainder would be further delay in repayment of money already owed to schools.

Conversely – and this is very tricky – were Proposition 30 to pass, it would interact with the allocation formula under Proposition 98, the state school-finance law. Schools would see very little, if any, increase in operational financing, at least during the plan's early

years, according to the Legislature's budget analyst and the California School Boards Association.

Munger has repeatedly hit that point because her Proposition 38 would, if enacted, raise income taxes and devote nearly all its revenue to classroom spending – by as much as \$2,000 per pupil per year when fully implemented.

However, were Proposition 30 to lose and Proposition 38 win – a very unlikely event, polls indicate – school spending cuts for 2012-13 would take effect, unless they are modified, while Proposition 38's new money wouldn't kick in until the following fiscal year.

Confusing?

Community colleges' crisis slows students' progress to a crawl

By Stephen Ceasar, Los Angeles Times

October 4, 2012

The first course Charity Hansen is taking as a freshman at Pasadena City College is a basic class on managing time, speaking up in discussions, setting ambitious goals and then going after them.

If only she could.

It's the only class she managed to get this semester. No math. No English. No science.

"I can't use what I'm being taught yet because I can't get these classes," said Hansen, a 19-year-old from Los Angeles who hopes one day to become a psychologist. "It's frustrating."

Hansen's college education has stalled just as it is beginning. Like thousands of students in California's community college system, she has been reduced to taking one class because there's no room in other classes.

Instead of a full-time load of 12 units, some students are taking three units or even less.

Frustrated students linger on waiting lists or crash packed classes hoping professors will add them later. They see their chances of graduating or transferring diminishing.

It's a product of years of severe budget cuts and heavy demand in the two-year college system. The same situation has affected the Cal State and UC systems, but the impact has been most deeply felt in the 2.4-million-student community college system — the nation's largest.

At Pasadena City College, nearly 4,000 students who are seeking a degree or to transfer are taking a single class this fall. About 63% are taking less than 12 units and are considered part time. The school has slashed 10% of its classes to save money.

The lives of some community college students have become a slow-motion academic crawl, sometimes forcing them to change their career paths and shrink their ambitions.

Mark Rocha, president of Pasadena City College, said California's once-vaunted community college system has never been in such a precarious state.

"It breaks our hearts," he said. "The students who are here, we're desperately telling them 'Don't drop out, don't give up hope. We'll get you through.'"

Since 2007, money from the state's general fund, which provides the bulk of the system's revenue, has decreased by more than a third, dropping from a peak of nearly \$3.9 billion to about \$2.6 billion last year.

Without enough money, course offerings have dropped by almost a quarter since 2008. In a survey, 78 of the system's 112 colleges reported more than 472,300 students were on waiting lists for classes this fall semester — an average of about 7,150 per campus.

California ranks 36th in the nation in the number of students who finish with a degree or who transfer to a four-year university, according to a February report by the Little Hoover Commission. Many students drop out before completing even half of what is required to earn a typical associate's degree, the report found.

Even for those who persevere, it can take years to graduate — well beyond the two years it once took.

Cinthia Garcia thought she was on the right track. She went straight from high school to El Camino College in Torrance with plans to transfer to a four-year university.

That was six years ago.

"I've been in school forever," said the 24-year-old graphic design major from Compton.

At El Camino, she struggled to get classes, typically landing a spot in only two or three. The art department at El Camino began losing professors and Garcia decided she needed a change.

Pasadena City College, with a respected arts program, was appealing, so she moved to Los Angeles to be closer to school.

Still, she was unable to enroll in more advanced art classes, in part because they also were full.

She emailed every instructor in the art department, searching for a class. One responded. She told Garcia she would help her get the last seat in a Web design class. By then, the class was full, but a few days later, someone dropped the course and Garcia was in.

"All that for just one class," she said, shaking her head.

The crowding has rippled through the school, causing long waits to see academic counselors — an important issue for many community college students who need advice on navigating the sometimes complex requirements to transfer to Cal State, UC or a private university.

At El Camino, Garcia said, the lines to see counselors were hours long. She'd make appointments weeks in advance, never seeing the same advisor twice, she said.

"I tried to do it on my own but I was only able to get so far," she said. "Students are isolated because the counselors have such an overwhelming load."

Garcia said all the delays have made her life harder. She had a full-time job at [Ikea](#), but cut back her hours, hoping the extra time would allow her to power through Pasadena City College.

Over the years, she has shifted her goals from a four-year degree, to a community college associate's degree, and now to a certificate, which requires fewer credits.

That decision could cost her in the long run.

A study by the U.S. Bureau of Labor showed that in 2009, the median weekly earnings of workers with bachelor's degrees was about \$1,137 — about a third more than workers with an associate's degree.

Jeffrey MacGillivray attended three community colleges in search of classes and direction.

He started at [Los Angeles Harbor](#) College, then tried West Los Angeles College, where he failed to get into any classes, and now he is at El Camino.

This fall, he managed to find a seat in only one academic class — philosophy. He later added a boxing class to fill some mornings.

"I was thinking I can just go to community college, do my two years and transfer," said the 20-year-old Redondo Beach resident. "I had no idea I'd probably end up at El Camino for four years."

MacGillivray has focused much of his attention on trying to play football and run track in community college in hopes of getting a scholarship to a four-year school.

But he has never been able to get enough classes — at least 12 units each semester — to qualify for a team. At El Camino this semester, 98% of class sections are filled to capacity.

"It's really frustrating, having this goal of running track at a university and graduating with a degree," he said. "Junior college is being a bigger obstacle than it should be."

Next semester, MacGillivray may be changing schools again. He was offered a chance to join the Long Beach City College track team — with the possibility that the school could help him get the classes he needs.

For all the trouble, MacGillivray said there is a bright side to his academic wanderings. After two years, he's figured out what he wants to major in — media arts.

And to his surprise, he has discovered that he actually enjoys philosophy.

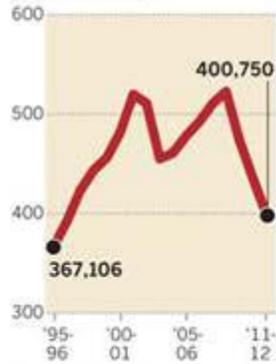
On a recent afternoon, he listened intently as his professor lectured on ethical relativism — the belief that morality is linked to the social norms of one's culture.

"She's so deep," MacGillivray said of his professor. "I only got one class, so it's pretty cool it was that one."

Fewer seats

California community colleges have recently cut back their class offerings.

Total course sections offered
(Scale in thousands)



Source: California Community Colleges
Los Angeles Times



Jeffrey MacGillivray, 20, has attended three community colleges in search of classes and direction. He started at Los Angeles Harbor College, then tried West Los Angeles College, where he failed to get into any classes, and now he is at El Camino College in Torrance.



Jeffrey MacGillivray, 20, third from left, added a boxing class at El Camino College in Torrance when he was able to secure only one academic course. He didn't get into any classes at his previous college.



Roommates Jeffrey MacGillivray, center, and Randall Jenkins, right, both 20, enjoy their philosophy class at El Camino College in Torrance. Philosophy was the only academic course that MacGillivray was able to secure a spot in this semester.



Jeffrey MacGillivray, 20, center, works out in his boxing class at El Camino Community College in Torrance. MacGillivray added the boxing class to fill some mornings when he was unable to secure a full academic course load.



Jeffrey MacGillivray, 20, second from bottom left, heads out after his philosophy class at El Camino Community College in Torrance. "I was thinking I can just go to community college, do my two years and transfer," MacGillivray said. "I had no idea I'd probably end up at El Camino for four years."

Habits of Mind: Lessons for the Long Term

October 8, 2012

The Chronicle of Higher Education

By Dan Berrett

Many education experts who seek to define the value of a college degree seize on metrics that can be quantified in the short term.

Some look at levels of student engagement, while others calculate gains on standardized tests of critical-thinking skills. Still others have started [analyzing the salaries](#) that recent graduates earn.

A different sort of approach, quietly gaining steam, takes a longer—and less measurable—view.

In this approach, the real value of a college education is how it affects the way students think and act, ideally for years after they graduate. Shape your students' underlying attitudes and intellectual characteristics, the theory goes, and a lifetime of deep and lasting learning will follow.

These characteristics go by different names, like intellectual virtues or habits of mind. And they originate in several disciplines, including education, philosophy, and psychology. They all boil down to an emphasis on underlying traits: curiosity, open-mindedness, and intellectual courage, thoroughness, and humility.

Habits like those have been attracting increased attention at all levels of education. In his best-selling book *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*, Paul Tough argues that children benefit from developing noncognitive traits of character. In higher education, intellectual virtues touch on both dispositions and cognitive qualities. References to habits of mind and ways of thinking have been cropping up regularly in descriptions of revised core curricula, course learning outcomes, and syllabi.

A conference taking place next year at Loyola Marymount University, in Los Angeles, is part of an effort to develop and apply a carefully defined model of intellectual virtues to education. The [three-year project](#) is supported by a \$1-million grant from the Templeton Foundation.

Proponents of teaching habits of mind say the approach bridges a [divide](#) in education between emphasizing content and focusing on the development of transferable skills, particularly critical thinking. An approach that values habits of mind is increasingly

valuable, they say, as open-mindedness and intellectual courage become rarer in a civic culture that has grown more polarized and doctrinaire.

Habits like those are difficult to capture in an assessment. But they are what students ultimately carry with them after they graduate, says Ron Ritchhart, a senior researcher for Project Zero, an educational research group at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

"A lot of the skills and knowledge that aren't used will go away," Mr. Ritchhart says. "The things that will be left are the habits of mind, the ways of thinking, the way you operate within a discipline or a field."

Lessons in Virtue

Faculty members teach intellectual virtues both explicitly and obliquely.

Heather D. Battaly, a professor of philosophy at California State University at Fullerton, dedicates several lessons in her "Introduction to Logic" course to intellectual virtues.

She assigns her students the task of maintaining a log in which they keep track of their intellectual acts in and out of class. What they record can be simple things: how they resolved a dispute with a friend or how they digest the news. The students have to describe their motivations and determine whether or not they exhibited intellectual virtues.

Ms. Battaly also draws on literature and pop culture. During a recent class, she showed part of an episode of the television medical drama *House* in which Dr. House and his fellow physicians puzzle over their patient, a college student with dangerously low blood pressure. The characters generate hypotheses, consider and dismiss evidence, and hash out alternative theories as new information emerges.

"That's a really good way of showing students what counts as an intellectual action," she says.

Rob Hackemack, a junior majoring in computer science, was initially surprised when Ms. Battaly aired the clip in class. But as he thought about it further, the fictitious doctor's relentlessness in search of the truth paired with his murky personal ethics illustrated the difference between intellectual virtues and moral ones. Dr. House often insults his patients and colleagues, but he will scuttle his pet theory about a medical condition if the evidence doesn't support it.

"He's the perfect example of someone who is an enigma as far as virtue goes," Mr. Hackemack says. "He seems like he's a jerk, but he's saving people's lives."

Jason Baehr, an associate professor of philosophy at Loyola Marymount who is leading the project financed by Templeton, tries to create a culture in his class in which virtues like curiosity, wonder, and intellectual honesty are explicitly discussed.

"When I teach," he says, "I stop a lot to think and wonder with students, to ask questions and get to why."

A couple of years ago, two students in his course were debating the problem of evil and whether the existence of suffering renders God's existence improbable or even impossible. Each student thought the other was fundamentally irrational, Mr. Baehr recalls.

One student found a scholarly article defending God to be unpersuasive, but when a classmate mounted a more plausible argument, her jaw dropped. Mr. Baehr still relishes the dynamic that unfolded. The student had been absolutely certain of her perspective. But, he says, her mind had been trained to be receptive to evidence in such a way that, when a sound counterargument was presented, she could take it in, even though she ultimately held to her position.

"I want everyone to see what just happened there," Mr. Baehr remembers telling his students. "You had a strong opinion and you encountered a strong opinion on the other side. That's what I'm talking about with intellectual characters and virtues."

For philosophers, analyzing how people think is a natural subject of study. Faculty in other disciplines tend to teach intellectual virtues more indirectly.

Barry Schwartz, a professor of social theory and social action at Swarthmore College, teaches those habits by embodying them. To demonstrate what a love of truth looks like, he takes bold positions to provoke his students to stand up for what they believe to be true, or to get them to reconsider their assumptions.

In a class about decision making, for example, Mr. Schwartz explains the unexpected benefits of stereotyping, as a tool to put events, objects, and people into manageable categories—the only way to make sense of a complex and changing world. While stereotyping tends to be seen in wholly negative terms, his argument encourages his students to look at it with fresh eyes, which moves them away from intellectual rigidity.

When teaching the work of other scholars, Mr. Schwartz highlights people like Karl Popper and Martin E.P. Seligman, who he says have shown a willingness to risk being wrong in pursuit of the truth.

"I make a point of saying that this is science at its best," says Mr. Schwartz, who has written about the value of these virtues, including for [The Chronicle](#). "This is intellectual courage."

The willingness to take intellectual risks can be rare among students because they may be disengaged or, Mr. Schwartz says, they are fearful of taking a controversial stand and earning a bad grade.

Faculty members also tend to plant themselves on safe intellectual turf and not let go, says Clifton F. Conrad, a professor of higher education at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and co-author of the book *Cultivating Inquiry-Driven Learners*.

While increasingly precarious job and tenure prospects are a big part of the problem, Mr. Conrad says that many faculty place more value on appearing learned than on learning. They also emphasize the teaching of content, which can lead to what he calls "knowledge stuffing." An example is a history professor who drills his students on dates and great men from a particular era but does not ask his students to sort through the competing interpretations of that era or the larger forces that caused changes to occur.

"When we just emphasize knowledge consumption, what we're often doing is undermining the very skills that develop an inquiry-driven learner," Mr. Clifton says. "We spend far too much time on the what."

An emphasis on content is in keeping with a long-standing view of the purpose of education: to transmit knowledge, often a canonical set of ideas, facts, and works. Such knowledge, advocates of this view say, represents the intellectual heritage that has been amassed by generations of academics and must be passed on for culture to endure.

Many people propose an alternative approach: teaching skills like critical thinking and quantitative analysis that are thought to be transferable among disciplines. According to this view, parcels of content can be extracted from survey courses, expanded, and shaped around a central question to spark student interest. A sociology student may never come across, say, Max Weber's theory of legitimacy, but she will become well versed in a skill like analyzing data. Skeptics of such an approach worry, though, that it leaves too many students ignorant of key facts and ideas. And terms like critical thinking have been invoked so widely, the skeptics say, that they have become meaningless.

Teaching for Rigor

But students will actually get more out of teaching that emphasizes content and skills if they have been trained to be curious and intellectually thorough, say Mr. Baehr and others. They are also likely to be more enthusiastic learners.

Following on the example above, students who are taught in a way that emphasizes the development of intellectual virtues might learn Weber's theory, its strengths and weaknesses, the scholarly responses to it, and be expected to respond with their own take.

"One of the really nice things about teaching for intellectual virtues is that, because they aim for deep, explanatory understanding and not just memorization of isolated facts, you're automatically teaching for rigor," Mr. Baehr says.

Some professors who stress the importance of teaching content or skills see their approaches as being just as academically demanding. Catharine H. Beyer, a research scientist for assessment of student learning at the University of Washington, has come to see that teaching critical thinking and teaching content are inseparable because each depends on the other.

Learning a discipline is never just about knowledge-stuffing, she says. It's also about teaching the conventions and practices of writing, thinking, and other skills that are specific to a discipline.

Ms. Beyer, whose research on 304 Washington undergraduates' learning over four years appeared in the book *Inside the Undergraduate Experience*, says the real meaning of traits like intellectual courage and rigor may vary according to disciplinary contexts. Even though both a psychology major and an English major may prize good writing and intellectually honest research, she says, what counts as a persuasive mode of argument and valid evidence is bound to vary greatly between the two.

She is skeptical that faculty can reasonably be expected to teach a set of habits of mind or intellectual virtues that transcend disciplines. But she agrees that how faculty members teach—including how well they model such traits as curiosity, open-mindedness, and intellectual passion—greatly influences students.

Ms. Beyer's research for a forthcoming book, *Inside the Undergraduate Teaching Experience*, suggests that faculty members and students realize the importance of these traits. She says that when a faculty member teaches students certain theories, then hands out readings that argue strenuously against them and asks students to sort through the debate, the approach models "an enduring curiosity" that students may retain beyond the course.

When faculty members allow their sense of wonder to show, it can have a similar effect. "They remember the professor's passion about rocks way longer than the facts about rocks," she says.

Inevitably, say several scholars, faculty members teach good or bad intellectual virtues—even if they are not aware of it.

"If we don't model intellectual virtue, then we're in danger of modeling something else," Dona Warren, a professor of philosophy and assistant dean for curriculum and student affairs at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, wrote in an e-mail.

When a professor responds curtly to a student's question, says Ms. Warren, he models intellectual arrogance. If he says, "You know, I'm not sure," he embodies intellectual humility.

"There's very little of any importance that's value-neutral about teaching," Ms. Warren says, "so yes, I hope that professors are teaching intellectual virtues, even if they never use the term."

El Camino College's Measure E faces unlikely group of protesters

The Daily Breeze

By Rob Kuznia Staff Writer

Posted: 10/21/2012



A collection of Democratic protesters gathers on Hawthorne Blvd. and Carson Street in Torrance Wednesday afternoon to protest Measure E. Tom Newman and Toni Churg hold anti-war and anti-Measure E signs. (Photo by Steve McCrank / Staff Photographer)

Among the anti-war and pro-"99 percent" signs displayed by an enduring group of Occupy Torrance protesters every week on Hawthorne Boulevard, one message seems distinctly out of place: "No on Measure E."

The primary opponent to the broadly endorsed initiative on the Nov. 6 ballot that would bring facility upgrades to El Camino College near Torrance is not an anti-tax group with libertarian leanings, as you might expect.

Instead, it's a ragtag collection of a dozen or so baby boomer liberals.

The group convenes every Wednesday afternoon outside Bank of America at Hawthorne Boulevard and Carson Street to display signs advocating peace, denouncing corporate welfare and urging voters to reject Measure E.

Topping the handful of names on the "argument against" section of the Measure E ballot is Antonie Churg, a retired biophysicist from USC with long, gray hair and the default leader of Occupy Torrance. On Wednesday afternoon, she sported a "Bring our war dollars home" T-shirt while waving a "No on E" sign as cars blew by on Hawthorne Boulevard, occasionally blaring their horns.

"It's popular for people who are liberal to feel there is not a debt problem," she said. "But I think liberals as well need to face up to the fact that we do have a debt problem."

Most of the other Occupy Torrance regulars concur, though their names don't appear on the ballot.

"I totally support public education, but they've got this thing so topsy-turvy," said Torrance resident Tom Newman, while holding a sign reading "No war in Iran."

"This measure is just for buildings. It's not for teachers, it's not for educational programs."

Although not exactly a hot-button initiative, Measure E has a long reach, as it will be decided by voters all across the South Bay.

If approved, it would borrow \$350 million to upgrade the half of campus left untouched by a similar bond measure for \$394 million approved in 2002. Should at least 55 percent of the voters give thumbs up to Measure E, the college will create a new gymnasium, swimming pool and classroom facilities; replace counseling and administrative buildings; and renovate a theater and library, among other projects.

El Camino College President Thomas Fallo noted that polling puts the level of support among likely voters between 60 and 70 percent.

"Candidly, it's clear that in order to complete the campus, we need a significant contribution from the community," he said. "Funds from generations before us did this in a different way. This is our chance to pay the future generations."

Measure E boasts a wide base of support across the South Bay, including multiple city councils, chambers of commerce, K-12 school districts, as well as the South Bay Fire Chiefs Association and faculty union - although that last group offered its endorsement with some reluctance.

Supporters also include El Camino's Associated Students Organization - a remarkable fact in light of how current students would not benefit from passage of Measure E. In fact, students over the past several years have been inconvenienced by the jackhammering and detouring engendered by that first bond measure.

But student body President Brooke Matson puts a positive spin on all the din.

"Going to school and being in the midst of construction - it gives you a sense of hope for the future," she said.

More to the point, the second-year student has experienced some of the fruits of construction in newly completed classrooms, with their document projectors, air-conditioning, nice desks and easy-to-access laptop plug-ins.

"They are fantastic - it makes me feel like I'm at a big university, like UCLA," she said.

Sean Donnell, president of the El Camino College Federation of Teachers, said the union's executive committee recently agreed to endorse the measure on a narrow 3-2 vote.

He pointed out that even though El Camino recently passed a \$394 million bond, that amount pales in comparison to the indebtedness of other community colleges in Los Angeles County. He said Long Beach City College and the nine campuses of the Los Angeles Community College district are all paying off construction bond initiatives that exceed the amount of El Camino's first.

"I travel around through various community colleges for various functions, and all the ones I see in South Los Angeles and northern Orange County are building like crazy," he said.

Passage of Measure E would add \$7 per \$100,000 assessed value on top of the \$17 already paid by area taxpayers for the 2002 bond measure. It would last about 28 years. Fallo said the current \$17 amount is the lowest of all community colleges in Los Angeles County. (Residents in Santa Monica pay nearly \$80.)

If approved, Measure E would bump the cost to the average property owner from the current \$51 a year to \$72. That would put El Camino in the average range for indebtedness.

Out on Hawthorne Boulevard, the Occupy group often gets heckled by the driver of a van bristling with anti-Obama decor, such as a bumper sticker that says "Stop Obamageddon!"

"They come by and they call us commies," Churg said with a chuckle as the van trawled by on Wednesday, with the song "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" blaring in the loudspeakers.

But she said she readily agrees with members of the local Tea Party on the issue of debt. As evidence of the problem in California, she points to a recent report from the state treasurer showing that the amount of debt from local construction bonds as a percentage of the entire state's general fund has nearly doubled in five years, to 8 percent.

"We have this terrible debt crisis hitting all of government and it's coming from construction," she said.

Fallo believes this take on the matter is alarmist.

"Very few people walk to the auto dealership and say `Here's my \$40,000 - I want to buy a new Buick,'" he said, adding that borrowing is often a boon to the economy.

"Admittedly, in the U.S. and every country, there's a tremendous amount of debt. You have to manage it, and I think we've managed it well."



SF City College money woes have long history

SFGate

Nanette Asimov

October 20, 2012

On a brisk November day in 1990, the new chancellor of City College of San Francisco offered a rare gift to employees who had felt ignored or trampled by the previous chief just ousted.

"We stand by like jackasses in a hailstorm, and we take it, and we take it, and we take it. And, by God, we are not going to take it anymore!" Chancellor Evan Dobbelle proclaimed in his inaugural address to enthusiastic applause.

With that he announced the promotion of 11 employees, mostly faculty, to administrative posts and told reporters: "You just saw the faculty appointed to run the district."

Soon he would fire more than a third of the 71 administrators, paring them to 46 at the school of 65,000 students. The number of administrators fell to 39 in 2012, though enrollment neared 90,000.

Dobbelle's topsy-turvy move was the beginning of a transformation at City College, a seed that today's administrators say helped cultivate, 22 years later, the field of managerial and financial troubles that now threatens California's largest public school with the loss of accreditation and possible closure.

By the time the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges issued its sharply worded report in July giving City College until March 15 to fix its problems - including too few administrators - a psychology professor had risen through the ranks to become chancellor himself, committed to shielding the college from layoffs and course cuts even as the economy and his budget crumbled around him.

Complicated tale

The story of what brought a vast college to its knees could fill a business course syllabus or, better, a novel. It's a tale of innovation and self-protection, against a backdrop of generosity.

"The college had a very big heart and tried to do a lot for a lot of people," interim Chancellor Pamila Fisher told the state Board of Governors for the college system recently. But she acknowledged that that was her "elevator speech about how our wonderful college got into this mess." More to the point, she said, Dobbelle "rewrote the way the college was going to be governed," and a subsequent chancellor, Philip Day, spent money to keep it going.

The system Dobelle started let certain faculty members - department chairs with their own labor union - for the first time make key decisions that had financial implications, such as who would teach what classes and when, and to influence hiring and tenure decisions.

The deans who formerly made those decisions retired and were not always replaced. As their numbers dwindled, they "could no longer make decisions without the approval of people lower in the structure," said John Rizzo, the current board president.

Dobelle, now president of Westfield State University in Massachusetts, remains committed to the system. "There can never be a faculty that is too empowered," he said. But he declined to comment on the transformation's long-term impact on the college.

The trustees accepted the move to faculty-centered governance, said Bob Varni, a trustee until 2001.

"We on the board really didn't understand the whole concept, so we didn't do anything to slow it down," Varni said. "It seemed like a nice family operation. What do they say? Kumbaya."

By 1998, when Day took the chancellor's job, the U.S. economy was robust and California was in the midst of the dot-com boom.

"We had a lot of money, and Phil Day used it," said Natalie Berg, a trustee since 1996. "The department chairs got a big boost in their pay. The unions got raises, too. We had the money to give."

Problems with the system might have emerged sooner if money had been tight. But that wasn't the case.

Not only did City College begin paying its faculty more generously than other colleges, including 23 paid holidays, but the college also began accumulating employees. The accreditation team would later marvel that City College employed almost twice the number of tenured faculty for every thousand students as did comparison college districts, with many more part-timers as well.

Costly labor agreements in place since the 1970s also persisted: lifetime health benefits kick in for any 50-year-old hired before 2009 who has worked just five years. And employees still don't contribute to their retiree health program, a condition that set up the college for what is today an unfunded liability of at least \$180 million.

"Our problems started when we started overpaying, which was not sustainable," Berg said. "We should have been forewarned. It was the staff's responsibility to tell the board. People did say, 'This is the budget,' but not in a way that made the board understand that this was a problem."

Ambitious plans

Day, meanwhile, had big plans. Voters approved a \$195 million school facilities bond in 2001, and another for \$246 million in 2005, and Day laid the groundwork for new campuses in Chinatown and the Mission District, as well as a new athletic center and other buildings for the main campus at 50 Phelan Ave.

Those dreams coincided with a harsher reality. In 2006, it was City College's turn for an accreditation review, which occurs every six years. An accreditation team identified eight major problems, including poor financial planning that kept reserves too low, gobbled too much of the budget on salaries and benefits, and jeopardized the college's future with the ballooning retiree health obligation.

Although accreditation teams issue recommendations, not requirements, making the fixes are necessary for colleges to stay in business. California does not fund unaccredited institutions.

Had college officials taken the recommendations seriously, it's unlikely that City College would now be in its desperate race for survival. But in April 2007, the first Chronicle article appeared revealing Day's involvement in an illegal scheme to divert college funds into the facilities bond campaigns.

Instead of focusing on the problems cited by the accreditation team, Day found himself the subject of an investigation into money laundering by then-District Attorney Kamala Harris.

That wasn't Day's only problem. Rizzo, who joined the board in 2007, said he and trustees Julio Ramos and Milton Marks pushed for performance audits that uncovered \$40 million of construction expenses unapproved by the board or approved after the money was spent.

"We found unfiled paperwork that filled 64 boxes - unpaid invoices, contracts the board never saw that we didn't know existed," Rizzo said. "It was amazing."

Yet Day still enjoyed support from a majority on the board. He couldn't be fired, so Rizzo and his allies hounded him out with unusual demands and nitpicking questions.

"We were making his life miserable," Rizzo recalled.

Day left in 2008. Three years later he pleaded guilty to three felony counts of diverting \$100,000 of college funds into the bond campaigns. A judge reduced the felonies to misdemeanors.

Day's successor was Don Griffin, a veteran psychology professor who had risen through the ranks as department chair, dean of instruction and vice chancellor.

The state's economic crisis hit just as he took office. Almost immediately, City College learned it would lose about \$7 million a year in state funds earmarked for student services

- Griffin's former department - which included counseling and other nonacademic support.

Making one-time cuts

Mark Robinson, the new vice chancellor in charge of student services, presented a budget that proposed layoffs and across-the-board cuts to the many departments in his area. Griffin, however, balanced the budget with one-time cuts from elsewhere, in a move appreciated by faculty.

Robinson wasn't the only administrator advocating for longer-term budget reductions.

But the short-term cuts continued.

"We cut everyone's salary for the third year in a row," said Peter Goldstein, vice chancellor of finance and administration. "We greatly restricted hiring, and we tried to save money through attrition."

By 2011, that strategy blew up. City College faced a \$13.75 million loss in state funding - part of \$25 million lost since 2008. Trustees dipped into reserves, reducing the emergency fund to dangerously low levels that brought the college to the brink of bankruptcy.

Griffin, who retired in April to have surgery to remove a brain tumor, did not respond to requests for comment.

Fisher, the interim chancellor, took over in May.

Two months later, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges gave City College just nine months to repair all 14 significant problems that had been years in the making or lose its accreditation.

And because there was no guarantee that could be done, the accrediting team also ordered City College to prepare for closure.

"From the beginning, we've had people saying the accreditation report was part of a far-right conspiracy designed to take us down because we're so liberal," Fisher told the college system's Board of Governors.

She said the intentions of those who led the college to this point reflect "San Francisco values of which we're all very proud - but which sometimes get in the way of making good decisions.

"Yes, our board will have to make very hard, fiscal choices. Just making the fiscal decisions won't save us. We'll need the cooperation of all constituency groups."

EDITORIALS

Not now on bonds

It's the wrong time to ask residents for another tax, no matter how deserving the cause

THERE'S no doubt that community colleges provide a vital education service, whether it is as a step for high school graduates headed to four-year universities or for adults taking vocational courses. That's why it's important to keep technology and classrooms updated whenever possible.

But no matter how nice it would be to fix the outdated facilities at Cerritos College and El Camino College, asking residents to support another tax on Nov. 6 to pay for the bonds is too much.

Measure E

El Camino College is asking voters to approve a \$350 million bond measure aimed at building a new library, gymnasium, swimming pool, classrooms and administrative offices.

If Measure E is approved, homeowners in Torrance, El Segundo, Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Hawthorne, Lennox, Lawndale and Inglewood would be charged about \$7 annually per \$100,000 in assessed valuation for these construction projects. The initiative is competing with K-12 bond measures in Redondo Beach and Inglewood, along with a parcel tax spanning five South Bay school districts — not to mention the statewide tax initiatives.

The need for this tax is questionable. The district is not done spending money from a \$394 million bond approved 10 years ago that has already fixed up half the South Bay campus, said Bill Beverly, president of the El Camino College Board of Trustees.

Measure G

Voters in Cerritos, Norwalk, Lakewood, Bellflower, Downey, Artesia, La Mirada and Bell Gardens are also being asked to approve a \$350 million bond. This bond would go to upgrade classrooms, renovate the math,

ELECTION 2012



science and computer labs and provide new job training equipment for students of Cerritos College.

If Measure G passes, homeowners would be charged about \$25 annually per \$100,000 in assessed valuation. The initiative is competing for attention in Bellflower, where city and school district officials are each asking voters to pony up more money for services and upgrades.

Half of the facilities at Cerritos College are more than 50 years old and are in dire need of renovations that would be covered under Measure G. Work is almost done to update the other half of the campus thanks to Measure CC, a \$210 million bond measure approved just eight years ago.

It's difficult urging voter to put the projects at campuses on the back-burner, especially considering how disproportionately community colleges are being hit by state budget cuts when compared with K-12 schools and state universities. Even though this is a good time to take advantage of low-interest rates and construction costs, it is not the right time to ask for additional funds for the sake of new buildings.

If the economy rebounds in two years these two districts can come back and ask voters to help their community colleges to thrive well into the future.

But not now. We urge voters to say no to these two measures.

see and marvel. One of them may develop our next manned re-entry shuttle.

— Randy M. Mills, Harbor Ci

President can't cut gas prices

Contrary to popular opinion, presidents do not control gas prices. That is set by the world market. The oil pumped out of U.S. soil does not belong to the citizens, but to the oil companies to do with as they please. Their only concern is to make as much profit as possible. Compounding the situation has been congressional deregulation of oil and other commodities and lack of oversight of oil company practices and private markets. This makes it much easier for large hedge funds, banks (Chase and Goldman Sachs come to mind), and private equity firms to take advantage through speculation and manipulation. Though none of us like the effect on our pocket books, high prices are here to stay. So maybe the only answer is to drive less and walk more — or to focus our efforts to change the situation through Congress.

— Barbara Rogers, Lakewo

Short end of stick

What will it take for the people of California to wake up and realize that regardless of how we vote on the propositions, we get the short end of the stick. Are people all over the world as brain dead as Americans?

— Robert Profaca, Long Bea

Obama can't be trusted

Re "Obama vs. Romney: The tables are turned" (Oct. 23):

President Barack Obama glibly and forcefully enunciated many statements of policy as pursuing traditional domestic energy sources, strong non-apologetic foreign policy, major economic reforms, support of the military, etc. Unfortunately, his plans have been minimally implemented the past three years. Even in recent crises, he has not attended intelligence briefings but campaigned and played golf. It's a shame that voters cannot see that while the president may speak well, he is neither a competent performer nor can he be trusted to be re-elected.

— Harris S. Goldman, Tarzar

Food-labeling costs misleading

Re "Unwilling to pay for food label" (Letters, Oct. 18):

You bet food prices are going to go up. The giant "controlling" food corporations are now spending \$1 million a day to fight Proposition 37. At the end, they will have spent nearly \$40 million to persuade Californians to stay in the dark about the food we're eating. Sadly, it seems to be working. Like the letter writer, editors of 29 newspapers in California believe food prices will go up and trial lawyers will get rich. What a bunch of malarkey. In 50 other countries worldwide that have implemented GMO labeling, the costs did not go up simply by adding a few words to the label. It costs shoppers nothing. As far as lawsuits, there are no incentives for them. Prop. 37 is extremely straightforward and easy for businesses to follow. Companies will label their products for genetically engineered ingredients, just like they label fat and calories.

— Cindy Koch, Long Bea

City College dismantles faculty leadership

SFGate

Nanette Asimov

October 29, 2012

Over objections from dozens of department chairs at City College of San Francisco, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously early Friday to dismantle a decades-long system of faculty leadership at the nearly bankrupt school of 86,000 students.

The trustees did it to save \$2 million, streamline governance, and because, they were told, the college would edge closer to losing accreditation if they didn't.

"Without dramatic change, there won't be a college," interim Chancellor Pamila Fisher scolded the trustees at 1:30 a.m. when she feared they might waver. "Time is of the essence. The accrediting commission made it clear as recently as yesterday that they are concerned we are not moving quickly enough."

City College has until March 15 to prove it should to stay in business. The accrediting commission has said one major problem is the college's byzantine and costly governance structure - unparalleled among California community colleges.

More than 60 faculty members earn extra pay as department chairs. They are released from teaching to do administrative work, such as scheduling, that other colleges assign to deans. City College employs 11 deans. The chairs have their own labor union, work 10 months rather than 12, as deans do, and must have their classes covered by other faculty.

Pending refinements still to be negotiated between the college and the union, the move will send most chairs back to class.

Many of them waited for seven hours on hard, plastic chairs as the trustees conducted other business. They packed into the small auditorium on the main campus at 50 Phelan Ave., remaining steadfastly into the morning hours.

Dozens argued passionately against the plan to replace them with 12 deans and three associate vice chancellors. They said students would suffer if departments lost their knowledgeable faculty leader, only to be replaced by what they portrayed as a paper-pushing bureaucrat overseeing several departments yet lacking expertise in any of them.

"We're ready for radical change - just not reckless change," Kristina Whalen, chair of the speech department, told the trustees to cheers from the faculty.

Major downsizing

Many criticized the board for rushing the proposal without vetting it with faculty.

Greg Keech, chair of the English as a Second Language Department, accused the trustees of union-busting.

"The purpose is to erode faculty control and academic democracy at this college," he said.

But in the end, torn between faculty pleas and the possibility of losing the college, the trustees approved the decision with little discussion. Only Trustee Chris Jackson asked for a review once the new system was in place.

The move was part of the first major downsizing by a board that has been diffident about cutting its budget even as state funding for City College plunged by \$25 million since 2008.

Now the trustees have to close a \$15 million budget gap expected for the 2013-14 school year, Vice Chancellor Peter Goldstein said, then dropped another bomb: If voters reject Prop. 30, a tax measure on the Nov. 6 ballot, the school's budget will plunge by another \$11.4 million.

The Accrediting Commission for Junior and Community Colleges gave the college until mid-March to repair 14 major deficiencies - including its muddled leadership structure. That overhaul was one of several significant decisions made during the marathon meeting.

The trustees also voted unanimously to close the Bernal Heights State Preschool to save \$84,000 a year, and to end summer hours at their three other college-run child care centers.

City College spends \$700,000 a year on the centers that serve as laboratories for child-development majors and as places where parents can learn alternatives to corporal punishment.

Jackson initially argued that the college "should have compassion and look at alternatives to closure," saying his own mother depended on such care so she could work.

Student Trustee William Walker said his mother did, too. But he and Trustee Steve Ngo reminded Jackson that the college is in dire straits, with the prospect of layoffs and the elimination of classes looming.

"We're in a crisis right now," Walker said.

Ngo added, "No one wants to cut (child care), but we can't operate like that anymore."

The trustees also hired a "special trustee," giving veto power on accreditation-related decisions to Bob Agrella, retired head of the Sonoma County Junior College District. In a private session earlier, the trustees approved an eight-month contract at \$1,000 per work day, roughly \$160,000, and a taxpayer-funded car for Agrella.

Lack of enrollment fees

Also on the jam-packed agenda was what to do about a practice that has cost City College \$8.5 million over many years: letting students take classes without paying enrollment fees.

College officials revealed last month that the school loses \$400,000 a year by not collecting the fees - a figure that could rise to \$1 million a year if nothing is done, Goldstein said.

Fisher, the interim chancellor, said that if the college does not try to collect what is owed, the state can withhold 10 percent of its apportionment as a penalty.

The trustees then unanimously agreed to start collecting fees at registration, and to send a warning to all who owe fees that a collection agency will pursue the debt if they don't pay up.

El Camino College Alumni

----- Portraits of Success -----

El Camino College Alumni - Daily Breeze 10-11-12



PHOTO COURTESY OF NASA

“The time I spent at El Camino College helped give me the competitive edge I needed to further my career in space exploration.”

Michael “Mike” Fincke
Colonel USAF
NASA Astronaut



Space Shuttle Endeavour

Colonel Mike Fincke served as mission specialist aboard Endeavour’s final spaceflight.

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