

## **ModBee.com**

12-1-08

### **Students stressing out over enrollment cuts in state university system**

**By Walter Yost  
The Sacramento Bee**

A succession of bad news over the past two weeks has turned the college plans of California high school seniors upside down.

The Community College League of California announced that proposed state budget cuts at community colleges could drive away 262,000 students.

Four days later, California State University administrators said they plan to eliminate 10,000 admission spots for the coming school year.

Two days after that, University of California regents warned they may limit freshman enrollments next fall.

The timing couldn't be much worse for high school students in the thick of the college application season. Sunday was the deadline for many students applying to CSU and UC.

Students who were considering scaling back their college plans because of shaky family finances say the barrage of proposed cuts has punched holes in their safety nets.

"The most surprising thing is that a lot of kids and their parents don't know what's in store for them," said Teresa Schmutte, chairman of the counseling department at Pleasant Grove High School in Elk Grove, about 20 minutes south of Sacramento.

Some private colleges are seeing a surge in applications as opportunities appear to dry up at public schools.

"What I think is going on nationally is that students are applying to more schools because of the uncertainty in the economy," said Robert Alexander, associate provost for enrollment at the University of the Pacific in Stockton.

Daniel Williams, a senior at Pleasant Grove, thought he had met all the requirements to be accepted at California State University, Chico, a school he's wanted to attend since his freshman year.

His mother, Gina, a counselor at his school, helped him maintain a high enough eligibility index -- a combination of grade point average and ACT or SAT test scores -- to be admitted.

But on Nov. 17, CSU officials said the state budget crisis had prompted them to cut enrollment by 10,000 students for the 2009-2010 school year. They pushed up application deadlines for the 23-campus system and raised entrance requirements for freshmen at the most popular campuses.

Campuses that were overenrolled this year stopped accepting applications after Sunday. All CSU campuses will close admissions for first-time freshmen by March 1 or sooner, depending on space.

In order to control enrollment, campuses can raise the eligibility index. That's what's tripping up Williams.

Gina Williams said there were rumblings at the start of November that CSU might be tightening admissions.

Her son's counselor got a call from a Chico State administrator about Nov. 1, warning that if the CSU system declared it had more students than it could accommodate, Daniel's qualifications would be considered borderline.

"I was shocked and felt sick," Gina Williams said. "Part of my frustration is that (counseling) is what I do; I know about all this stuff."

Daniel Williams is gearing up to retake the ACT next month to see if he can improve his score.

"I'm still hoping I can get in," he said.

### **Fallback plans go awry**

Dan Hill, a senior at Oak Ridge High in El Dorado Hills, about 30 miles east of Sacramento, has his sights set on Northwestern University. He plans to study journalism.

He's pretty confident he'll be accepted at Northwestern or another of his out-of-state choices. But part of his fallback plan was to attend a UC campus and that's now causing unanticipated stress.

During their meeting last week in San Francisco, UC regents warned that they are enrolling 10,000 more students than the state budget supports.

They stopped short of limiting enrollment or raising student fees.

UC system President Mark Yudof suggested the UC campuses might even out enrollment by denying admission to students' first choices and referring them to underenrolled campuses such as UC Merced.

Even if he's accepted to one of the out-of-state universities, Hill said, finances could force him to stay in California. His father, Patrick Hill, said the college fund set up when Daniel was born "has been taken to the woodshed in the recent economic calamity."

Oak Ridge senior Lindsay Nelson has applied to five colleges; her first choice is Sonoma State.

"It's stressed me out beyond belief," she said of CSU's plans to eliminate admission spots.

"My counselor said I've done all that I can to be admitted," Nelson said. She has a 4.0 GPA.

If her plans don't work out, she'll enroll at a community college.

For some students, even that may not be a sure thing. Brice Harris, chancellor of Los Rios Community College District, said he'll have to turn away 11,000 students if proposed fee increases and state cuts take place.

The Legislative Analyst's Office has recommended tuition at community colleges be raised from \$20 per unit to \$26 in January and \$30 next school year. Combined with increased class sizes and possible cuts in class offerings, the Community College League predicted the changes could mean a loss of 262,000 students from the state's community colleges.

The cuts come at a bad time for community colleges, as they take in students turned away from CSU and UC campuses and a flood of displaced workers seeking to upgrade job skills, said interim chancellor of California Community Colleges Diane Woodruff.

"My mom said, 'If you can't find the money for college, you'll have to look at community college,' " said Melissa McLaughlin, a senior at Oak Ridge High in El Dorado Hills. She is working 25 to 30 hours a week at Starbucks to help pay for college.

McLaughlin said her whole family has been "downsized" by the economic downturn.

### **Private colleges eager to fill in**

Those are the families some private universities are reaching out to, particularly when a nationwide record of 3.3 million high school students are expected to graduate this spring.

UOP soon will unveil a large sign at Sacramento International Airport, promoting the college's "four-year graduation guarantee."

Alexander, its associate provost, said students sometimes take seven years to get their degrees at public colleges and the cuts could make it worse. UOP's sales pitch is that even with \$31,000 a year tuition, the four-year graduation guarantee balances out the cost.

The tiny, private William Jessup University in Rocklin, about 25 miles northeast of Sacramento, is airing its first TV commercial this year as part of a marketing campaign.

Joe Womack, vice president for university advancement, said the 550-student college's application deadline isn't until May, but so far the number of enrollment inquiries has doubled.

"I do think when access to state schools contracts, it opens eyes to private schools," Womack said.

12-1-08

## **Dan Walters: Schwarzenegger plan splits education coalition**

By Dan Walters

It got almost no media attention at the time, but when Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger unveiled an array of new taxes and spending cuts to deal with a severe budget crisis, he also proposed a revolution in how schools are financed.

Schwarzenegger's proposal to remove almost all constraints on how local school officials spend billions of dollars in so-called "categorical aids" didn't go unnoticed in education circles, however, and it touched off an internal debate that could divide the politically powerful "education coalition" of unions, school boards and administrators.

The coalition – with the California Teachers Association its chief source of political muscle – was formed in the 1980s to press Sacramento for more state school aid in the wake of Proposition 13, the iconic property tax limit measure. In 1988, the coalition won voter approval of Proposition 98, which lodged in the state constitution a complex school finance guarantee that has been the centerpiece of every budget conflict since.

A tenet of the education coalition's success is that its members stand together to protect state education funds while vying among themselves over how the pot is divvied up.

Starting before passage of Propositions 13 and 98 but accelerating after their enactment, many of those school dollars have been set aside for special purposes, sometimes at the behest of advocates for affected groups, such as gifted children or those not proficient in English, sometimes to skirt the equalization of aid among districts, sometimes to establish a governor's education credentials, and sometimes via ballot measure, such as Schwarzenegger's own \$547 million after-school program.

They total nearly \$16 billion this year, almost a third of what the state spends on schools. And each one of the 69 programs comes with a set of rules and procedures, many of them horrendously out of date. Nevertheless, each has a political constituency of some kind – often with a lobbying presence – and that has blocked efforts to give local educators more flexibility to meet the state's overall education "accountability" standards, measured by academic testing.

Schwarzenegger doesn't propose to do away with categoricals, but his budget crisis proposal includes "dramatic flexibility" that would remove almost all restrictions on redirecting their money to other purposes as an offset to a \$2.2 billion reduction in K-12 aid.

Local school boards and administrators, who have long struggled with categorical aid restrictions, would probably take that deal in a nanosecond, and that threatens solidarity in the education coalition, which has adopted a just-say-no position on school aid cuts. Some statewide groups now face something of a revolt in their ranks, and that dissonance discomfits Democrats who pretty much parrot the education coalition position.

It may not come to anything, but in any event, a major overhaul of categorical aids is long overdue.

# **The Daily Breeze**

## **ECC: UCI finds spots for 27 area students**

From staff reports

12/1/08

A group of El Camino College students were recently selected to learn from some of the top science faculty of the University of California, Irvine. The 23 students are all majoring in a scientific field and earned at least a 3.0 GPA.

The students are Lucia Rivera, Veronica Ixtupe, Melissa Ellis, Nancy Abongwa, Jose Guardado, Edmond Abdou, Hadasa Reyes, Tamara Restrepo, Myron Jimenez, Charito Yamil Flores, Brandon Davis, Senai Tsegazeab, Manuel Monteverde, Johanna Zamora, Freddy Carrillo, Luis Carranza, Jose Valdez, Jose Tapia, Lucila Dalila J'aime, Xenia Anita Rodriguez, Teresa Nieves, Courtney Hamilton and Tizita Zewdie.

12-3-08

## **Tenure on the Chopping Block**

Amid state budget concerns, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System may eliminate tenure for all new faculty members and instead offer short-term renewable contracts. System leaders say the plan will give them a flexibility they need, but many professors fear a potential loss of academic freedom and job security.

The board will also hear another agenda item which would eliminate health insurance benefits for retirees hired on or after July 1, 2009. The proposal would also mandate that those same employees have at least five years of continuous service to receive retirement pay from the system. It notes that the system could save more than \$3 million over the next 10 years if this measure is approved.

Michael B. McCall, system president, and other officials would not offer comment about the proposal until after the Friday meeting. Nonetheless, Terri Giltner, system spokeswoman, said the soonest any action could be taken on the policy revisions would be at the board's March meeting. At this week's meeting, she said, the board could only direct McCall to provide a recommendation on how to carry out this idea, if it is well received.

The rationale of the board's Finance, Technology and Human Resources Committee in proposing this revision was outlined in the public agenda to be considered at the full board meeting. It notes that the "adoption of one employment status (term contract) for faculty and staff provides greater consistency in hiring practices and application of human resources policies." The system currently allows faculty to choose between a term contract and tenure-track employment. The committee cites the lower cost of hiring non-tenure-track faculty members and the flexibility of term contracts to offset the large numbers of tenure-track faculty members.

Data from the system indicate that, in the past few years, tenure-track contracts have been declining while term contracts have grown steadily. From 1999-2000 through 2006-7, between 20 and 40 tenure-track faculty were hired annually, but this number began to decline in 2006-7. That year, 30 new hires were tenure-track, down from 44 in 2005-6. When the system began allowing faculty members to sign short-term contracts in 2004-5, only 6 new faculty members chose this option. In 2006-7, however, 90 new faculty members were signed to term contracts. This shift, the committee notes in the agenda, allows for more institutional flexibility and places more "emphasis on the classroom."

While the practice of granting tenure is more prevalent at four-year institutions and beyond, recent data show that most full-time faculty members at two-year institutions have tenure. According to data provided by the American Association of University Professors, 58.4 percent



of all full-time faculty members at the nation's 1,052 associate degree-granting colleges were either tenured or on a tenure-track in the fall of 2005. The same year, at doctoral and research universities, 73.6 percent of all full-time faculty members were either tenured or on a tenure track.

Still, there are some state systems and individual two-year institutions around the country that do not offer community college professors tenure. The Virginia Community College System, for example, offers faculty annual or multi-year contracts. Individual institutions in Indiana, Michigan and Missouri also only offer similar term contracts.

Though the Kentucky system points to these institutions as evidence that those who do not grant tenure can survive and flourish, some professor reject these comparisons.

“They’re comparing apples and oranges when they look at Virginia and Kentucky,” said Franklin T. Carothers, a member of the Kentucky Community College Faculty and Staff Alliance — a local association sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers — and professor at Somerset Community College. “Kentucky is a small, poor and rural state. Jobs are hard to come by, even when not in tough financial times. In Virginia, there are more opportunities. No one comes to Kentucky to teach for the money.”

Many faculty members are worried about the possible elimination of tenure, Carothers said, because they believe a more “corporate model” of hiring could take its place. He noted that the quality of new instructors could suffer greatly if this revision were approved, adding that he believes this measure is motivated more by cost-cutting than accountability. Since most community college professors start out with a low salaries, he said the benefit of tenure is that it allows them to lobby for salary increases throughout their career. Under a term contract, he said, faculty members fear their salaries will not increase between signings. The promise of less personal flexibility and fewer chances of advancement, he said, will dissuade many from teaching in the system.

Dexter Alexander, former treasurer of advocacy organization, the Kentucky Community and Technical Education Association, and retired dean of institutional effectiveness and research at Somerset Community College, expressed a similar sentiment.

“I cannot imagine a teacher taking the risk of working in a rural neighborhood community college without having tenure,” Alexander said. “Working in a community college is a kiss of death for an academic who has a desire to work at a research university or even a four-year doctoral granting institution. You don’t move up once you get down in the community college level. What’s the motivation for someone moving into a non-tenure track position, unless there just aren’t any other jobs available? The quality of faculty will go down.”

In recent years, Carothers said, more tenured faculty members have taken on additional course loads to make up for the lack of qualified instructors. He noted he was teaching seven courses this semester and eight next semester, including some pro bono work with individual students doing independent study work. Moreover, he said, in recent years these same tenured faculty members have not been offered a cost of living increase greater than the rate of inflation.

“If these can happen to tenured employees, what’s going to happen to non-tenured employees?” Carothers said of the additional work load and pay stagnation. “We believe folks who become professionals and dedicate their lives to educating others with a wealth of knowledge should be offered decent job security and receive decent health benefits.”

Carothers noted that tenure reviews at community colleges focus almost entirely on teaching, not research, but said the academic freedom issues are as important as at research institutions.

If such protection is unavailable for those in the Kentucky two-year college system, some professors believe their future colleagues will have little or no job security.

“Kentucky’s state employees and the employees of [community and technical college system] do not have the right of collective bargaining,” Alexander said. “That leaves tenure and continuing status as a college employee’s only viable protection against arbitrary and capricious personnel action by college and system administrators. . . . The plan to abolish tenure removes the security from the equation, and there is no realistic expectation that pay will increase to private sector levels to compensate for the loss of job security, and protection against political retaliation.”

— David Moltz

12-3-08

## **Breadth of Adjunct Use and Abuse**

The use of adjuncts iThe report — “Reversing Course: The Troubled State of Academic Staffing and a Path Forward” — is designed to publicize the extent of adjunct use with a mind toward encouraging more colleges to either improve the pay they offer adjuncts or shift more of their positions to the tenure track. Along those lines, the AFT is releasing a new tool that allows colleges to calculate the costs of changing staffing policies. The goal is to show that modest changes may be possible — even in tight budget years like this one — and that over time, such changes could have a meaningful impact on the makeup of faculties and the compensation of adjuncts.

It has been too easy for administrators to ignore the issue of adjunct use as something other than widespread, and this study “debunks” that view by focusing not only on numbers of individuals, but courses taught, said Barbara Bowen, president of the Professional Staff Congress, the AFT union at the City University of New York, at a briefing on the report. Part timers are being used nationwide “in all disciplines” and in many cases at “completely non-professional salaries,” Bowen said.

“Most people don’t know the situation,” said Lawrence N. Gold, director of higher education at the AFT. He acknowledged that there will be no immediate shift from relying on adjuncts to creating tenure-track positions. But he said that, if more of the public comes to understand what has happened to public higher education, progress can be made. The AFT and other faculty groups have argued that while many adjunct instructors are great classroom teachers, their working conditions — such as lack of office hours, being cut off from curricular decisions, being forced to move from campus to campus — result in a reduced quality of education, and erode the job security vital for academic freedom.

The report was prepared for the AFT by John B. Lee, whose consulting and research business JBL Associates has done previous studies for the union. Lee primarily used data from the Education Department’s National Study of Postsecondary Faculty. In many cases, however, Lee grouped data in new ways.

One key change — which Lee says is important to get a sense of the extent of teaching by non-tenure-track faculty — was his decision to include graduate students as adjuncts if they are responsible for managing a course. So graduate students who serve as teaching assistants under the supervision of a professor are not counted, and their courses are not counted as being taught by adjuncts. But courses led entirely by graduate students are.

The focus of the report is on public institutions, including community colleges, where adjunct use is particularly high (although the use of graduate students is not). But the report shows that

public four-year colleges and research universities are also making widespread use of adjuncts. Across public research institutions, for example, the report finds that full-time, tenured or tenure-track faculty members make up only 41 percent of instructional staff, while full-time non-tenure-track make up 20 percent, part-time faculty members off the tenure track make up 20 percent, and graduate employees are another 19 percent.

The AFT study comes at a time of increased attention among academic groups on the use of non-tenure-track faculty members. At the annual meeting of college human resources leaders in October, one senior member of the field stunned colleagues by denouncing the way adjuncts are treated and calling for major reforms. A few colleges — such as Elon University — have undertaken campaigns to increase the percentage of their courses taught by tenure-track professors. But in many other cases, long campaigns by adjuncts to improve their pay and benefits have been rejected. Next week, the Modern Language Association will release a report also documenting the accelerating trend of reliance on part-timers for teaching college courses.

In the case of the AFT report, here are some of the key data.

As is well known among academics, but many believe that these instructors are utilized primarily in certain areas (such as the humanities) or certain types of institutions (such as community colleges). But a report being released today by the American Federation of Teachers suggests that the breadth and depth of adjunct use is greater than many realize — such that they are teaching a majority of public college and university courses, and are a major force in a wide range of disciplines.

**Percentage of Undergraduate Courses at Public Colleges and Universities Taught by Contingent Instructors**

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Community Colleges</b>	<b>Four-Year Colleges</b>	<b>Research Universities</b>
Business	50.4%	31.3%	39.4%
Education	77.0%	42.5%	48.9%
Engineering/computer science	49.6%	38.0%	29.6%
Fine arts	56.8%	47.9%	41.6%
Health science	55.4%	32.6%	56.1%
Human services	71.6%	46.3%	54.0%
Humanities	60.2%	41.0%	44.6%
Life sciences	45.0%	26.7%	28.2%
Natural/physical sciences	57.6%	36.6%	34.9%
Social sciences	51.6%	34.7%	38.5%
Vocational education	54.5%	49.6%	53.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57.5%</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>

The report says that there are many reasons to be concerned about these numbers. A primary focus is on the limited ability of adjunct professors to fully participate in campus life and be available to students. But another reason cited is that adjuncts are not paid appropriately.

Comparisons between tenure-track and non-tenure-track instructors are difficult, the report acknowledges, because many tenured or tenure-track faculty members have specific responsibilities outside of teaching, while most adjuncts are hired to teach only. This gap in responsibilities is especially notable at research universities, the report says. However, it says that the pay gap — if measuring salary divided by courses taught — is unacceptably large, even when factoring in mission differences.

Across sectors, the study finds that full-time faculty members are paid on average four times what a part-time faculty member is paid per course. Even with job differences, “it is not reasonable to suggest that contingent faculty members, particularly part-time/adjunct faculty members, deserve to be paid at the disproportionately low wages they currently earn for the valuable service they provide.”

Salary comparisons follow. The “other salary” category includes pay for teaching in the summer, administrative responsibilities, coaching, etc.

#### **Average Salary Per Course, by Job Status, Public Higher Education in 2003-4**

<b>Faculty Status</b>	<b>Basic Annual Salary</b>	<b>Other Salary</b>	<b>Salary Per Course</b>
<b>Community college</b>			
—Full time, tenured or tenure track	\$58,645	\$5,814	\$7,722
—Full time, non-tenure track	\$40,117	\$2,625	\$6,098
—Part time	\$8,855	\$727	\$2,486
<b>Public four-year college</b>			
—Full time, tenured or tenure track	\$64,435	\$4,585	\$10,731
—Full time, non-tenure track	\$41,033	\$3,010	\$7,299
—Part time	\$9,550	\$860	\$2,645
<b>Public research university</b>			
—Full time, tenured or tenure track	\$78,409	\$6,765	\$20,253
—Full time, non-tenure track	\$46,974	\$3,475	\$9,776
—Part time	\$14,228	\$1,159	\$4,245

The goal of the AFT report is to prompt colleges to reconsider their use of and treatment of adjuncts. Specifically, along the principles of an AFT campaign called Faculty and College Excellence (or FACE), the main goals are to have 75 percent of undergraduate courses taught by full-time, tenure-track faculty members and to have part timers or adjuncts receive pro rata pay and benefits.

The tool allows colleges to put in data on their current staffing patterns and to then find the costs associated with increasing the share of courses taught by those on the tenure track or improving adjunct pay or some combination. Gold noted that the tool may help, even in tough economic times, by demonstrating that progress along these lines is possible. The costs of fully embracing FACE goals in a year might be daunting, but perhaps not some forward movement, he suggested.

“It’s time for us to frame the discussion appropriately,” he said. “We’re taking a long term, incremental approach.”

— Scott Jaschik

12-4-08

## **You Can't Measure What We Teach'**

"You can't measure what we teach."

"The results [of what our students gain in the classroom] won't be known for 10 years."

"You're just going to use the information to evaluate *us*."

Those are just a few of the responses that Orin L. Grossman, academic vice president at Fairfield University, said he has heard from faculty members — especially in the humanities — who resist the notion that they and the colleges that employ them must find ways to measure how, and how much, their students learn in the classroom. "Their view tends to be that we should simply trust the faculty, and that the role of the administration is to keep scrutiny of them at arm's length," Grossman said.

His comments came Wednesday during a session on assessing student outcomes in the humanities at the annual meeting of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the regional accrediting agency for that part of the country. The meeting took place in Boston.

The session featured a panel of three humanists with views that were widely divergent in some ways: Grossman, a Gershwin scholar and senior academic administrator who believes higher education needs to get with the program on accountability for student learning outcomes; Ellen McCullough-Lovell, president of Marlboro College, which uses several measures of student learning but has an educational philosophy that makes its brand of assessment virtually impossible to transfer to other colleges; and David Scobey, a historian at Bates College who acknowledged being a humanities professor who has "said every one of those whining comments" that Grossman recalled, "and believes them."

Despite those diverging starting points, the discussion revealed quite a bit more common ground than any of the panelists probably would have predicted. Let's be clear: Where they ended up was hardly a breakthrough on the scale of solving the Middle East puzzle.

But there was general agreement among them that:

- Any effort to try to measure learning in the humanities through what McCullough-Lovell deemed "[Margaret] Spellings-type assessment" — defined as tests or other types of measures that could be easily compared across colleges and neatly sum up many of the learning outcomes one would seek in humanities students — was doomed to fail, and should.
- It might be possible, and could be valuable, for humanists to reach broad agreement on the skills, abilities, and knowledge they might seek to instill in their students, and that

agreement on those goals might be a starting point for identifying effective ways to measure how well students have mastered those outcomes.

- It is incumbent on humanities professors and academics generally to decide for themselves how to assess whether their students are learning, less to satisfy external calls for accountability than because it is the right thing for academics, as professionals who care about their students, to do.

“It’s in our hands — nobody is forcing us into overly prescriptive models or any one particular way at this point, and it’s our responsibility to respond to the public’s interest [in learning what value they’re getting for their tuition and tax dollars] by doing it ourselves,” said Grossman. “But the longer it’s delayed,” he warned, “the more over time the public will start saying, ‘What is really going on?’ and start pushing for the kinds of measures that nobody really wants.”

Wednesday’s session was part of the New England accreditor’s assessment forum, an event that has been attached for the better part of a decade to the annual meeting of the association’s Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. That fact alone, noted Barbara Brittingham, the commission’s president and director, challenges the frequent assertion by critics that colleges aren’t paying attention to how effectively they are educating their students.

But it is also true that the idea that colleges must measure the extent and depth of student learning is far from a fully embraced concept in higher education, and at this meeting. That is far more true, the University of New Hampshire’s Bruce Mallory said in introducing the panel, in the humanities, which are characterized by qualitative and analytic approaches, than in the sciences, which are “characterized by objective measurement, have more bounded notions of truth and fact, and for which the way we represent those bounded notions of truth and fact have been more quantitative.”

Fairfield’s Grossman, after provoking laughs with his litany of the humanists’ standard explanations for why measuring student learning is impossible in their domain (the ones that began this article), expressed frustration at the tendency of faculty members, “in extremis,” to pull out the mother of all reasons why they shouldn’t be assessed: academic freedom. He said he had taken to urging faculty members who define academic freedom to mean complete autonomy to re-read the American Association of University Professors’ 1940 statement on the concept, to realize that academic freedom was not a free pass from professional responsibility.

“It is not some kind of iron curtain faculty can draw around themselves to protect themselves from scrutiny or accountability,” Mallory, New Hampshire’s provost and executive vice president, said in reiterating Grossman’s argument.

McCullough-Lovell, the Marlboro president, distanced herself from her faculty members most skeptical about assessment, who — she said — believe that most assessment is “antithetical to the humanities,” which is designed to develop the almost unmeasurable skill of “discerning judgment.” She also cited the multiple ways that the tiny (330 student) Vermont institution measures its students’ learning, both through commonly used measurements like the National Survey of Student Engagement, participation in experiments like the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, and through requirements like the Clear Writing Program, which



demands that all students submit a portfolio within their first two semesters to prove that they can, well, write clearly.

But McCullough-Lovell also said that she was not convinced that the type of assessment in which Marlboro engages would apply almost anywhere else, given that so much of it takes place in one-on-one settings between professors and students. If assessment is, as some believe, about trying to find ways to compare colleges and hold institutions accountable, Marlboro's version of assessment probably wouldn't qualify. "I think we could describe it, but what I'm worried about is how transferable it is to other places," she said. Her implicit question: Would that disqualify it from some definitions of valid assessment?

Though he described himself at the start as "a bit of a skeptic and a Luddite" on the question of assessment, David Scobey, who directs Bates's Harvard Center for Community Partnerships, did not fall neatly into the pigeonhole of humanistic faculty member who rebuffs any effort to hold colleges accountable.

He agreed with the assertion, frequently put forward by the Spellings Commission and by many other observers of higher education that "the public needs all kind of good information about colleges, and we have obfuscated it."

But on the matter of measuring student learning, especially in the humanities, he expressed reservations. Partly that grew from his nuanced and complex definition of what the humanities seek to impart to students, from the ability to engage in "meaning-making," to a degree of "cosmopolitanism," to a reflexive ability to assess themselves and the quality of their own learning. Those and many other "outcomes" of the humanities are difficult if not impossible to measure in "any form of high-stakes knowledge," Scobey said, "even rich high-stakes knowledge like the Collegiate Learning Assessment," which has become the test du jour in many circles.

Ultimately, "the question 'How well are we doing educating our students in the humanities?' is much closer to 'How good is our marriage?' than it is to 'How good is this hotel's service?'" he said. In other words, it tends more toward the subjective than the objective, is better assessed over the long term than in snapshots, and is difficult to compare, among other things.

The question probably can be answered, but with "thick description" rather than concise data, Scobey said.

Despite those reservations, the panelists seemed to agree that the days were past when humanists, or colleges generally, could say, "It's a little too complex and nuanced for you to understand — just trust us, and write us your checks," as Mallory put it.

As the issues of cost and affordability continue to mount, Grossman said, "the public will be asking more critically than in the past, 'What are we getting for our money?'" If the answers aren't forthcoming, politicians or other will offer their own prescriptions for how to gauge that.

But right now, he said, it is still in the hands of professionals in higher education to define for themselves what their students ought to be learning and how that might be measured. "Professors

don't want a model that will trivialize the humanities. Well, what do humanities professors think is important? What do we want them to know, what do we want them to learn? They have power to shape this analysis as they like, as they wish." For now.

— Doug Lederman

# **The Daily Breeze**

## **Editorials**

### **Salaries under scrutiny**

Staff Writer

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College board must do balancing act on ECC president's compensation.

Executive pay and perks tend to get more scrutiny as the economy slows. Witness the criticism the financial and auto industry executives received about multimillion-dollar pay and bonuses as they sought federal bailouts to keep their companies afloat.

In both the public and private sectors, as revenues dry up and the talk turns to cuts and layoffs, the debate over administrator salaries centers around perceptions as well as financial realities. Should the boss reap rewards while the rank-and-file prepare for layoffs and benefit cuts? Can institutions maintain effective leadership without the perception of sacrifice shared by all?

Higher education is also in the spotlight. The California State University system in recent weeks approved raises of up to 19 percent for some top administrators, provoking raised eyebrows at a time when the budget outlook for the coming year is gloomy and the CSU is planning to turn away 10,000 students.

Closer to home, the El Camino College Board of Trustees has been discussing the status of its top administrator, college President Thomas Fallo. The board met in closed session last week on the subject of Fallo's performance. The meeting was in response to word from MiraCosta College in Oceanside that Fallo is one of three finalists in that college's search for a new president.

According to the San Diego Union-Tribune, a public forum took place Friday at the college to introduce the three candidates to the community. MiraCosta's governing board will make the final selection.

The story might have a familiar ring to it. In 2004, the El Camino board granted Fallo a raise of 14 percent to an annual base pay of \$199,000 after Fallo was courted by the Ventura County Community College District.

El Camino board member Bill Beverly said that at the time the governing board felt it was not in the college's interest to let him go and made the offer of higher pay and benefits. In 2004, Beverly said, the college had several vice presidency vacancies and imminent retirements. He explained that there was simply not adequate administrative staff in place to take over if Fallo left.

The situation is different this year, however. Beverly said that while Fallo has been a good administrator during some tough economic times, nobody is indispensable. And the staffing situation is different than it was in 2004.

According to a 2006 report prepared for the California community college system, the average base salary for superintendents or presidents of the state's 52 single-college districts was \$164,760.

If Fallo were to be offered the MiraCosta job, the El Camino board might be faced with the question of whether to make Fallo a counter-offer. Fallo has earned high marks for helping the college weather drops in state revenue without laying off permanent employees. The college has also been successful in helping oversee and improve operations at the former Compton College campus, which lost its accreditation. In addition, El Camino has been continuing its renovation plans after the passage of Measure E, a \$394 million bond approved in 2002.

Overall, El Camino has been doing better than many other community colleges as a result of decisions made by Fallo and the governing board. We hope the board will be able to keep Fallo at the helm, but it seems clear that in these uncertain financial times for higher education, the board will be more limited in its ability to make any sort of counter-offer.

We suspect the importance of demonstrating shared sacrifice - which looms large as the economy and tax revenues tank - will weigh more heavily on the governing board than it might have in past years.

## **The Daily Breeze**

### **ECC roars all way back for state volleyball title**

By Heather Gripp, Correspondent

Posted: 12/07/2008

The El Camino College women's volleyball team made winning it look easy .

The Warriors are back-to-back state champions for the first time after sweeping No. 1 seed Santa Rosa in Sunday's final of the state championship tournament at Pasadena City College.

El Camino, which advanced through the losers' bracket after dropping its opening match Friday, clinched the title with a 30-17 victory in a one-game playoff. The extra contest was required after the Warriors took little more than an hour to hand Santa Rosa its first loss of the double-elimination tournament, 25-15, 25-21, 25-15, snapping the Bear Cubs' 24-match win streak.

"Today our adrenaline was up enough," said sophomore libero Karina Woehrstein, who was selected tournament MVP after contributing 29 digs for the day. "We had no nervousness. We came out confident, played how we always play, played loose."

Freshman Kara Cummings had five kills in the deciding game, helping the Warriors (32-2) pull away with nine consecutive points. Fellow all-tournament selection Amrita Tuladhar provided the clinching kill.

"It feels absolutely amazing," said all-tournament setter Sam Taylor, who had a total of 48 assists against Santa Rosa. "My team worked so hard and with so much heart. We had faith in each other and did this as a team."

Whether it was the accurate serving, impressive back-row play or the middles who stepped up after struggling earlier in the tournament, the Warriors were clicking in all facets when it counted.

"The key for us was settling down and remembering how we got here," Coach La Valley Pattison said, reflecting on four elimination matches ECC won just to get to the final.

One of those matches was Sunday morning. The Warriors defeated Fresno City, the after taking the difficult path to the final North North No. 4 seed, 25-15, 25-13, 25-21. Cummings paced El Camino with 15 kills, and Taylor had 34 assists and 13 digs against the Central Valley Conference champion Rams (27-7).

"Friday really gave us a back-to-reality check," Woehrstein said.

No. 3 seed Santa Rosa (35-3) was aiming to become the first Northern California team to win the championship in the event's 32 years. But the only real threat the Bear Cubs mustered was in Game 2 when they cut their deficit to 21-19.

**The Daily News**

## **Prep-JC Roundup: El Camino women's volleyball team racks up SCC honors**

From staff reports

Updated: 12/03/2008

El Camino College dominated the South Coast Conference women's volleyball awards much like it did in its conference matches.

Setter Sam Taylor was named the conference Most Valuable Player, and Le Valley Pattison earned the South Coast Conference Coach of the Year award, the SCC announced Tuesday.

El Camino boasted three other first-team selections: middle blocker Ashley Hardy, opposite hitter Amrita Tuladhar and libero Karina Woehrstein. All three earned all-conference honors for the second straight season.

Three El Camino freshmen made the second team: libero Kylie Tamblyn, outside hitter Jo'Vine Tulikihifo and middle blocker Deja Dickerson.

El Camino opens play in the eight-team state tournament Friday at 3 p.m. against Sacramento City College at Pasadena City College.

# Dan Walters: State's official deficit figure is way too low

By Dan Walters

Published: Monday, Dec. 08, 2008 | Page 3A

The official party line – from both parties – is that the state has an \$11.2 billion hole in its current budget and faces an additional \$17 billion deficit in 2009-10.

Those numbers, however, are almost certainly too low, which is one of the many complications in the frantic search for a political solution.

Try as they might, even Democrats could come up with an array of new taxes and spending cuts adding up to only \$16.2 billion over the two fiscal years, plus some bookkeeping maneuvers to pick up couple of billion more. That still left them \$10 billion short of solving the problem as they defined it and even that package couldn't win approval, thanks to Republican opposition.

One of the Capitol's nightmare scenarios is that legislators and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger by some miracle cobble together a scheme to cover the current deficit number, only to find out later that it falls many billions of dollars short. They would have exhausted themselves politically, closing all options, without really solving the problem.

Privately, many of those involved in the budget believe that the deficit could easily top \$15 billion this year and \$20 billion next year, not only because the economy is continuing to contract and state revenues are continuing to decline, but because local property taxes are likely to fall short and the state is obligated to make up those shortfalls to schools.

Whatever the deficit's dimensions turn out to be, were the state's politicians to be brutally frank, they'd also admit that the gap ignores some big costs lurking out there on the periphery.

They'd put a number, for instance, on the cost of complying with looming decrees by federal judges on overcrowding in the prison system and health care for inmates. A federal court receiver is demanding another \$8 billion to fix the prison health system and while those costs, if approved by the courts, might be financed out of bonds, servicing those bonds would put a new strain on the deficit-ridden state budget, and staffing those new facilities would cost billions of additional dollars in operational funds.

And then there are retiree health costs. New accounting standards require governments to report costs of providing health care to retirees. A year ago, a blue-ribbon commission appointed by Schwarzenegger said state and local governments have a \$118 billion unfunded health liability, with the state accounting for \$48 billion of the staggering total.



Schwarzenegger promised that the state would begin setting aside money in trust funds, similar to those maintained for public pensions, to whittle down the debt but he hasn't done it, even though a new report from the Center for State and Local Government Excellence says other states are taking action. Therefore, the official deficit estimate is at least \$2 billion a year too low.

The time for hide-the-pea politics is past. The time for absolute candor about the dimensions of this fiscal calamity should be now.

## **State public worker pension fund takes big hit**

Carolyn Said, Chronicle Staff Writer

Monday, December 8, 2008

The market downturn has walloped the nation's largest pension fund.

The California Public Employees' Retirement System portfolio has lost 31.1 percent of its value since peaking last fall, a staggering \$81.4 billion drop. CalPERS officials say a "rainy day fund" is helping to defray the losses - for now. But if the market slump continues, they will hit up state and local employers for more money. That's a painful prospect as California struggles through a fiscal emergency and municipalities cope with the foreclosure crisis and economic downturn.

The good news for the 1.6 million CalPERS retirees, workers and family members is that their pension benefits are guaranteed.

"Obviously, if there is a downturn, there are going to be ramifications," said Rob Feckner, president of the CalPERS board. "Our job is to make sure we protect the system and the funds that are there for the pensioners."

The CalPERS portfolio hit a high point of \$260.6 billion on Oct. 31, 2007. As of market close on Dec. 4, it had fallen to \$179.2 billion - almost back to its value in mid-2000.

The portfolio drop comes amid a time of extraordinary financial turmoil, with wrenching contractions on Wall Street that have wiped out trillions of dollars of shareholder value. The Dow Jones Industrial Average has dropped 39.8 percent during the same period that the CalPERS portfolio fell 31.1 percent, for instance.

Unlike many pension funds, CalPERS can require employers to dig deeper when needed. Since those employers are public entities, their funds come from taxpayer dollars. This fall, CalPERS warned that it might ask for more money from the state starting in July 2010 and from local-government employers starting in July 2011.

If the current losses are sustained, CalPERS said the increases could be from 2 to 5 percent of payrolls. That's a hefty rise on top of the 12.7 percent of payrolls employers already contribute to the pension fund. (Employees contribute from 5 to 7 percent of their salaries.) If losses are more moderate, then the potential increases would be smaller. Although it seems highly unlikely, if the fund finishes the year in positive territory, employers could even see their pension obligations reduced.

"We wanted to give an early warning so they had plenty of time to prepare if the worst were to happen," said Pat Macht, a spokeswoman for the agency in Sacramento.

## **Long-range focus**

She and other experts emphasized that CalPERS focuses on long-range planning.

"It's important to remember that public pension funds exist over decades and their liabilities will come due over decades, which provides the time for markets to recover and funding levels to recover," said Keith Brainard, research director of the National Association of State Retirement Administrators. "Yes, this has been a precipitous market decline, but because (CalPERS and other retirement plans) have plans and mechanisms to smooth out peaks and valleys, the actual effect is likely to be far less sharp."

The nation's second-largest public pension fund is the California State Teachers' Retirement System with 794,812 members. It, too, has sustained heavy losses in the market downturn. Its portfolio fell 20.3 percent, or \$32.9 billion from June 30 to Oct. 31, going from \$162.2 billion to \$129.3 billion.

CalSTRS' defined-benefit pensions are guaranteed just like those of CalPERS. Unlike CalPERS, however, the teachers' fund does not have the authority to ask for increased contributions from employers. Any contribution changes would have to be enacted by the Legislature and approved by the governor. CalSTRS is funded by school districts contributing 8.25 percent of payroll, the state general fund paying in a tad over 2 percent of payroll, and members contributing 8 percent of salaries.

"As a patient, long-term investor, we're built to make it through these ups and downs," said Sherry Reser, a CalSTRS spokeswoman in Sacramento. "We're a forever investor. There is going to be a recovery; we've done this before."

Both funds use various "smoothing" mechanisms to help minimize the impact of market volatility.

During four years of double-digit growth from 2004 to 2007, CalPERS reserved 14 percent of its total portfolio to hedge against drops, Macht said.

"If we had not done this, it would have been considerably worse," she said. "The impacts of today are being softened considerably."

However, that cushion is largely depleted. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007, the portfolio was down 5 percent. The "rainy day" funds were used to make up that shortfall and provide the returns CalPERS would have experienced if the portfolio had risen 7.75 percent.

The portfolio fell an additional 25 percent from June 30 to Dec. 4. There are still almost seven months in CalPERS' fiscal year, but if the results are still negative on June 30, then it will ask agencies to ante up.

## **Hoping for best**

California Treasurer Bill Lockyer, who sits on the CalPERS board, said he is hopeful that market conditions will improve by then so it won't have to ask for more money.

But if agencies do have to dig deeper to fund pension obligations, "this would be an added burden," he said. "It means both state and local government employers would be spending more on retirement than on some immediate program needs. Paying the commitments to pension obligation is a high priority, and it would take precedence over many other spendings."

Where would the money come from? Government has just two choices, Lockyer said. "You either cut some other program expenditures or you tax something."

Critics say that underscores their basic gripe with public pensions: Taxpayers end up footing the bill.

"This is another example of why, over time, all public entities in California need to think seriously about changing from the defined benefit to the defined contribution plan," said Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association in Sacramento. "With defined contribution plans, which can still be quite generous, the taxpayers' obligation ends when those contributions are made. You don't get in a situation like we have right now, where the economy is heading in a downward spiral and you ramp up taxpayer obligations to meet those pension obligations."

Attempts to change public pensions meet strong opposition from government workers and their unions. In 2005, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed reforming California public pensions with a 401(k)-style plan, but later withdrew the idea.

**'It's going to get worse':** Obama expects the economy to dive further before improving. **A3**

## **About CalPERS**

**Mission:** Manages pension and health benefits for public workers from about 2,300 California public entities. Pensions, which are guaranteed by law, are defined benefits determined by a retiree's salary, length of service and age.

**Members:** 1.6 million public employees, retirees and their families (1,126,133 active and inactive members; 476,252 retirees). Members are drawn about one-third each from state government, schools and local government agencies.

**Income:** Participating agencies contribute an average of 12.7 percent of payroll. Workers contribute 5 to 7 percent of their salaries.

Source: CalPERS

## **Possible changes in employer contributions**

Depending on investment results when the fiscal year ends on June 30, 2009, CalPERS may request additional contributions from employers, which are taxpayer-funded government entities.

So far this fiscal year (from July 1 to Dec. 4), the investment return is -25%. Contribution decreases are smaller with larger returns because CalPERS would hold back some gains as a cushion for future downturns.

2008-09 investment return	Change in employer contributions as percentage of payroll
-20%	2% to 5%
-15%	1% to 2%
-10%	0.2% to 0.5%
0	0.1% to 0.2%
7.75%	-0.1%
10%	-0.1% to -0.2%
20%	-0.2% to -0.5%

Source: CalPERS

## **3 finalists offer ideas on leading MiraCosta**

### **Candidates for president queried**

**By Lola Sherman**

UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

All three finalists for president of MiraCosta College assured a public forum yesterday that the institution will keep its accreditation.

Francisco Rodriguez, Thomas Fallo and Kathleen Hodge said they are confident the community college's board of trustees can work with campus groups to address a warning issued in January by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

The commission sent representatives to the college's Oceanside campus after two years of turmoil and the departure of former President Victoria Muñoz Richart in June 2007.

Since then, the college has had two interim presidents while searching for a permanent leader. Yesterday, three finalists chosen by a search committee answered questions before an audience of about 100 people in the college theater.

All three candidates head other California community colleges.

"I'm not daunted by current challenges," said Rodriguez, president of Cosumnes River College near Sacramento. "I'm not naive. We can work together. Let us begin."

The accrediting commission had faulted trustees for not working well with the faculty, the staff or one another. The seven-member governing board often split on 4-3 votes, and meetings were acrimonious.

Accreditors also told the college to speed up its submission of expectations for student learning.

Fallo, president of El Camino College in Torrance, said he has experience with accreditation issues because El Camino operates classes for the defunct Compton College.

At MiraCosta, he said, "the board has to get its act together."

Loss of accreditation would affect the ability of students to transfer to four-year institutions and to receive federal and state funds.

"I have every confidence that the commission will affirm accreditation in July," said Hodge, who is president of Fullerton College.

Each of the candidates was questioned by a panel of faculty, staff and student leaders and then answered questions from the audience. They did not hear one another's responses because they were interviewed separately.

Each candidate answered a specific concern raised by either the panel or the audience.

Questions for Hodge centered on her decision to veto a course the faculty had approved, cancel a graduation ceremony and impose a dress code.

She said she dropped the course only because it was not economically viable. She was forced to cancel the commencement, she said, because a sudden lightning storm made the metal bleachers dangerous.

And, she said, the “dress code” involved ribbons some students wanted to wear to denote club affiliations. Hodge said a committee, not she alone, decided only academic honors should be worn.

For Rodriguez, the concern was that as president of one school in a multi-college district, he reports to a chancellor. He said he does have experience working with board members, however.

For Fallo, the concern was that Richart is his friend.

He said she did talk to him during her controversial tenure at MiraCosta, and that he had never understood the problems on campus.

Trouble started in 2006 when Richart announced a probe into campus money-handling and the illegal sale of campus-owned palm trees. The head of the school's Horticulture Department eventually pleaded guilty to grand theft. The probe also led to the unwilling departure of two other administrators and a faculty no-confidence vote in Richart.

She left soon after trustees received a letter from 31 former trustees, administrators and teachers seeking her dismissal for a million-dollar investigation that found \$305 in illegal tree sales.

Audience member Leon Page, a lawyer, asked all three candidates the same question:

If they were to leave MiraCosta as president, would they promise to seek only the 18 months of pay and benefits usually written into administrative contracts.

Page unsuccessfully sued the district and Richart over her \$1.6 million departure settlement, which included \$650,000 in cash and 18 months of salary plus benefits.

Rodriguez answered that an “exit strategy,” as well as an “entrance strategy,” must be agreed on beforehand.

“I cannot imagine anything other than that (the 18-month provision),” Fallo said.

Hodge answered, “Yes.”

The board of trustees attended the forum, but did not comment. It is expected to interview the candidates individually in closed session Wednesday.

A 22-member search committee of both on-campus and off-campus representatives narrowed the selected to the three finalists from about 50 applicants.



**DailyBreeze.com**

## **El Camino College swim coach sets national record**

Posted: 12/07/2008

EL CAMINO COLLEGE

Swim coach sets U.S. records

El Camino College instructor and swim coach Traci Granger was recently named the nation's fastest masters swimmer, setting two national records in the 50-54 age group while competing in the United States Masters Swimming Short Course Yard Championships.

She set records in the 50-yard butterfly and 50-yard freestyle, and also won the 100- and 200-yard butterfly and the 100-yard individual medley. Granger has been an assistant coach at El Camino College since 1992. Before coming to El Camino College, she was the head swim coach at California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo.

12/7/2008

Last Update: 12/7/2008 1:06:00 AM

## **Some personal facts about David Benoit**

Jazz pianist David Benoit happened upon his career path in 1965, when he first saw "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Here are some other facts about Benoit:

- Born in California and studied music theory and composition at El Camino College.
- Took film-scoring classes at UCLA.
- Is considered by many to be a pioneer in contemporary (smooth) jazz.
- Has performed at the White House for former presidents George Bush, Sr.; Ronald Reagan; and Bill Clinton.
- He has been nominated for five Grammys.
- "Jazz for Peanuts" has been popular on both jazz and mainstream charts.
- Has also written themes for "All My Children," and "Sisters," and scored the movies "Final Descent" and "Cadillac Jack."
- He's at work on "Something's Got To Give," a Broadway musical about Marilyn Monroe.
- He has released 25 solo albums.
- He and his wife, Kei, are parents to daughter June Koko, 8, adopted from Japan
- For information on Benoit's youth orchestra (he's also musical director of the orchestra), visit [www.asiaamericasympphony.org](http://www.asiaamericasympphony.org).

For information about Benoit, visit his Web site at [www.benoit.com](http://www.benoit.com).

# **The Daily Breeze**

## **El Camino weighs pitch for Fallo**

By Nguyen Huy Vu, Staff Writer

Posted: 12/09/2008

The El Camino College Board of Trustees is trying to decide whether to make a bid to keep President Thomas Fallo as he vies today for the top spot at a college in northern San Diego County.

Bonnie Hall, a spokeswoman for MiraCosta College in Oceanside, confirmed that Fallo is one of three finalists to meet today with the college's trustees for a final interview.

Locally, some have criticized the possible move as a way for Fallo to leverage a salary hike during tight economic times. But board members insist that's not the case.

El Camino officials said Fallo could get up a raise of up to \$72,000 if he is selected to succeed interim President Susan Cota at MiraCosta.

Fallo, who serves as president as well as superintendent at El Camino, could not be reached for comment.

Board members said Fallo first notified them about his candidacy at a Nov. 17 meeting and told them MiraCosta was offering him more money.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office reports Fallo had a base salary of \$268,840 last year. The average salary of a single-college CEO is just over \$193,000, according to the Chancellor's Office.

"It was a surprise to everyone," said board Vice President Nathaniel Jackson. "I had no inclination that Dr. Fallo was planning on leaving, and I am sure the other board members felt the same way."

Jackson said he and other trustees started talks that day and met again Dec. 2 to gauge interest in keeping Fallo in case he is offered the job. They will meet again next week to continue discussions on the matter.

"We haven't made any decisions," Jackson said.

Board member Ray Gen would like to see the board try to keep Fallo in his post but said more time is needed to potentially strike a deal. Gen said he doesn't believe Fallo is using the MiraCosta bid to win a pay raise.

"I think the more cynical would believe that, but I don't believe that," he said. "I take him at his word. They approached him. He is one of the premier community college presidents in the state. He would be a welcome addition to any college that I know of."

Fallo has had a long history with El Camino. He spent a semester as a student at the college in 1966 before returning in 1991 to serve as the campus's chief business official. He was named superintendent and president in 1995.

Fallo is considered an intelligent administrator who is widely credited with keeping the campus afloat during a tempestuous economy.

He also was at the helm when El Camino took over the ailing former Compton College as a satellite campus and injected it with new leadership and curriculum.

Fallo was courted by the Ventura County Community College District in 2004. The board responded by giving him a 14 percent base salary jump, from \$174,653 to \$199,000, and a 5 percent annual pay hike on top of yearly cost-of-living increases.

The board's decision angered union leaders and some faculty members. They had argued against the pay raise at a time when El Camino was slashing class offerings and taking other belt-tightening measures to save money.

Board President Mary Combs said the board isn't going to consider the strife four years ago as members decide what to do if Fallo gets the offer.

"It's a brand new day. It's a totally new issue," she said. "One has nothing to do with the other."

Don Brown, chief negotiator for the campus instructors union, disagrees.

He said many on campus believe Fallo's actions mirror 2004.

Brown said the overriding sentiment among people he talked to is that the board should let Fallo leave if he is offered the job at MiraCosta.

"Many people agree that President Fallo has been a good college president when all factors are put into place, but it's not like someone is indispensable," he said. "I think that's what it boils down to at this point in people's minds."

## **San Jose school district blasted for budget that cuts athletic programs**

By Sandra Gonzales

12/11/2008

Angry sports enthusiasts went on the offensive Thursday night, accusing an East San Jose school chief of making a bad call when he proposed cutting all athletic programs to balance the budget.

Bob Nuñez, superintendent of the East Side Union High School District, unveiled a budget that cuts overall spending by \$11.4 million, with \$2.1 million from sports — a move that eliminates football, basketball, soccer and all other athletic programs.

"Shame on you and the people who are responsible for even bringing this up tonight," said Jeff Borges, a coach at Andrew Hill High, before a standing-room-only crowd that filled the board room and spilled into the lobby. "You say \$2 million in sports, I say get rid of an administrator at each school and the problem is solved."

Although the district has enough money to balance the budget this fiscal year, without cuts or any additional funding, officials say, the district will be in the red in 2010 and 2011.

Ultimately, the board adopted Nuñez's interim budget in order to meet a Monday state deadline that requires school districts to show how they will balance their budgets this year and the next two. But it's hardly a done deal, and anything can change until the board adopts a final budget in June.

"Nobody disagrees that sports is important "... but we have to balance the budget. This does not mean we're going to cut sports tonight," said board President Patricia Martinez-Roach.

Nuñez later encouraged those in attendance to meet with him Monday to brainstorm on finding the dollars to keep sports afloat. "We need to have a plan that will take us through the next few years," Nuñez said.

The San Jose Earthquakes and the Oakland Athletics, meanwhile, have announced that they will work with the district to help raise money to save the sports programs.

At the onset of Thursday night's special board meeting, however, it quickly became apparent that strong passions were provoked by Nuñez's initial spending plan as dozens of students entered the board room, chanting "8, 6, 4, 2, take em' away and we'll be blue."

They then rimmed the board room, holding signs that ranged from "Sports are my life don't take my life away," to "Sports keeps me out of trouble."

With rapid-fire vitriol, dozens of speakers attacked the interim budget, accusing the superintendent of lacking judgment to suggesting that administrators take pay cuts.

"I'm sick and tired of sports always being put on the chopping block," said Melanie Waters, a Mount Pleasant High coach. "It's disturbing."

"There mere fact of this proposal is ridiculous," said Margaret Centeno, a teen-parent liaison at Evergreen Valley High. "It's outrageous."

Still wearing her basketball uniform after a game at Evergreen, 15-year-old Megan Gage summed it up succinctly.

"Sports is an important part of my life. Sports are not just an incentive, they are a necessity. If you take away sports with our teachers, what do we have left?"

With the state struggling over the budget and the schools left with gaping financial holes, school districts across California are making tough decisions, but none apparently as drastic as the interim budget — a proposal that Nuñez has said will help save academic programs. The 11 high schools in the district have 40 teams competing in 23 sports. Other cuts include \$3.5 million for teachers and other personnel, \$1.9 million from administration and \$3.1 million from support staff and services.

## Recordnet.com

12/11/08

STOCKTON - Longtime San Joaquin Delta College Trustee Maria Elena Serna resigned from the board Monday moments before pleading no contest to a charge that she claimed reimbursement twice for several business trips dating back to 2005.

Serna's letter of resignation, which her attorney handed to board President Janet Rivera in the hallway at San Joaquin County Superior Court, cited Serna's health.

"On the advice of my physician, I can no longer fulfill my obligations with the college, and due to personal reasons, I will be having this resignation effective immediately," the 67-year-old Serna wrote. She declined further comment.

### Past problems

Police reports say former San Joaquin Delta College Trustee Maria Elena Serna had past problems with travel expenses and reimbursements:

- An administrative assistant at Delta said Serna asked to be reimbursed for meals that President Raul Rodriguez had already paid for on a college credit card.
- The same assistant said Serna once became "belligerent" when she learned she would not be receiving a full travel allowance for a conference in San Jose, even after she was told the conference would be providing meals.
- When Rodriguez and Serna took a business trip to Washington, D.C., in February 2007, Rodriguez paid for a cab ride and a meal at a Brazilian restaurant; Rodriguez learned later that Serna tried to claim reimbursement on both.

Serna, a Delta trustee since 1990, was accused of claiming nearly \$1,650 from both Delta College and the Community College League of California, which held conferences attended by Serna in San Francisco and Sacramento. The money has been paid back, prosecutors said.

"It's not the amount of the money. It's the audacity of the conduct," said Deputy District Attorney Stephen E. Taylor. "When people do that in public service, they have to leave."

Delta administrators noticed inconsistencies in Serna's reimbursement records and contacted prosecutors, who sent the case to Stockton police. A criminal complaint was filed Friday following a two-month investigation.

The case was set to go before a grand jury today before the last-second plea deal was arranged, attorneys said.

The single felony charge levied on Serna could have resulted in up to three years in state prison.

But Judge Richard J. Guiliani said the court viewed the case as a misdemeanor and sentenced Serna to three years' informal probation, requiring that she obey all laws.

Delta President Raul Rodriguez, who sat in the first row at Monday's arraignment, said the college has long struggled to help Serna understand how reimbursement works.

"It's a shame we've come to this," he said. "But a trustee should know better."

One example: According to an internal Delta College memo, Serna attended a meeting of the nonprofit college league June 20-21 in Sacramento. Delta College used a \$179 credit card payment to reserve her room at the Hyatt Regency hotel; Serna wrote up her own reimbursement for the same amount and filed it with the league.

So she was paid by the league for an expense the college had already covered, the memo said.

Overall, the league reimbursed Serna \$1,642 for expenses already covered by the college dating back to 2005, the report said. Serna signed reimbursement forms stating that no more money would come from any other source.

Serna's attorney, Albert Ellis, called this a "technical" violation of the law and said Serna's intent was not to defraud anyone.

"This is a horrible thing for someone to have to go through after so many years of distinguished service," he said. "This is the type of woman they're normally talking about naming schools after."

Serna, a retired Bear Creek High School social science teacher, had represented the Lodi area on the Delta board since 1990; she was the first Latino woman



elected in San Joaquin County, according to a Delta College news release earlier this year.

She is also the sister of Joe Serna, who served as mayor of Sacramento from 1992 until his death in 1999.

Maria Serna was part of the board majority that favored building a south-county campus in Mountain House, a decision derided by new board members. She recently had back surgery and was not present for some key decisions about how trustees should divvy up a dwindling pool of bond money.

Her resignation means just two of the seven previous Delta trustees will be returning to the dais. Two others did not seek re-election in November, and the last two were ousted by challengers. Only Rivera and Ted Simas will remain on the board.

State law says Delta must either order an election or appoint someone to fill the vacancy. The organization of the new board will be discussed at a special meeting Wednesday night.

Prosecutor Taylor accused Serna of "felony conduct" and said the case was treated very seriously because Serna held public office.

Ellis, her attorney, questioned whether the case would have been filed at all had she been an ordinary citizen.

In a memo to the campus community Monday, Rodriguez said Serna's resignation and other recent negative news - such as allegations of overspending by student government - are "not random or accidental events" but are part of an ongoing effort to "correct longstanding problems, to ensure that we are abiding by laws and regulations, and to bring about necessary and positive change."

Said board President Rivera, after court: "We're cleaning house."

**SFGate.com**

## **S.F. to require college prep work to graduate**

Jill Tucker, Chronicle Staff Writer

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

**(12-09) 21:41 PST San Francisco** -- Attention all San Francisco seventh-graders: Study hard now because high school is going to be a lot harder by the time you get there.

The city's school board voted Tuesday night to require students starting with the class of 2014 to pass 15 college preparatory courses in order to graduate.

The new policy puts every child on the college track, ensuring teenagers take the so-called A-G courses needed to get into the University of California or California State University.

District Superintendent Carlos Garcia proposed the policy, saying it's imperative students leave school with every door open and every option available to them.

Going to college "should be a student's choice, not a failure on our part to prepare our students," Garcia said when the policy was first proposed two weeks ago.

Only a handful of California districts have approved similar policies, and most are still working on implementation. San Jose Unified is the only urban district where the requirement is in place for current graduates.

San Francisco district officials will now develop an implementation plan, which the school board expects to consider later in the school year. Implementation will require the district to offer more science labs and hire more foreign language teachers and advanced math teachers, increase student remediation and more. They'll also have to figure out where the money will come from to fund it all.

The board Tuesday also approved a policy to open up advanced placement and honors courses to any student who wants to enroll. Currently, each high school has a different system for determining who is placed in those classes.

In a third related vote, the board gave the go-ahead to officials to create new ways for students to earn course credit, including online courses, independent study and life experience, among others.

All of that would also require more time and money, but district officials say it will be worth it.

"The way our system is now, if you're failing in Algebra I during the fall semester, you will have to wait until next year to take the course over and make up the coursework," said Margaret Chiu, assistant superintendent of high schools. "By creating greater flexibility in programming, we can help students catch up in a timely manner and prevent more students from dropping out."



# **The Chronicle of Higher Education**

From the issue dated December 12, 2008

## **New Calif. Community-College Chief Seeks Unity Over Autonomy**

By JOSH KELLER

As the California Legislature's resident expert on community colleges, Jack Scott has a good idea of what he can do as the system's next chancellor. And what he can't do.

Mr. Scott, a longtime chair of the State Senate's committee on education, will take the helm of the California community-college system in January. But in a twist of state politics, his influence over the campuses could actually decline.

The system, which educates nearly a quarter of the community-college students in the country, is so large and decentralized that many of its leaders prefer to call it a "confederacy." The chancellor's office itself has little power over individual campuses, and its staff is smaller than the human-resources department of its sister system, the University of California.

The emphasis on local control is a point of pride here, where campus administrators say designing their own standards and curricula allows them to serve the specific needs of their students in an exceedingly diverse state. But it has often frustrated efforts to make systemwide changes that depend on central coordination.

"The genius of the community colleges is also one of their weaknesses," says Mr. Scott.

Many people, including the next chancellor, contend that California's community colleges have lagged behind those in other states in finding ways to evaluate and improve student success. The system lacks a statewide assessment of how well students are prepared for college. Instead, its 110 campuses use dozens of incompatible tests. That often forces students who transfer between colleges to retake assessment tests and makes it difficult, system leaders say, for colleges to give high-school students a consistent message about how to prepare for higher education. By some estimates, only about a quarter of students who enter the system looking for degrees earn them or transfer to four-year institutions after six years.

The California system's decentralization puts it in marked contrast to other large community-college systems, such as those in Texas and Florida, where greater state coordination and investment have spurred the development of common student assessments, clearer pathways for transfer, and shared curricula for basic skills.

"We are functioning with a 1970s infrastructure in a 2010 world," says Marshall E. Drummond, who was chancellor of the system from 2004 to 2007 and now leads the Los Angeles Community College District. "California is getting better at understanding the needs of students, but we really don't have the money or the infrastructure to do that."

## **'A Mile in Everybody's Shoes'**

Mr. Scott, 75, has a background unique in the state. Many observers hope it will offer him an opportunity to unify some of the system's factions and make long-needed structural changes.

As chair of the education committee, he has either written or worked on most state bills related to community colleges for several years. For example, he drafted a 2006 law that changed the budget formula for the community colleges, helping to tamp down chronic arguments among the campuses over the equitableness of state support. Before he was elected to the Legislature, in 1996, he served for eight years as president of Pasadena City College, one of the institutions he will oversee as chancellor.

"He has walked a mile in everybody's shoes, and as a community-college president, he clearly understands what the challenges are from that point of view," says Kay M. McClenney, director of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, at the University of Texas at Austin. Now, as a lawmaker, "he hears the messages from legislators and other state officials and the business community about what they expect and what the state needs."

Still, Mr. Scott acknowledges that it will be difficult to push the system's campuses toward common goals without seeming to impose mandates from above. That challenge is made more difficult by the national economic downturn, which has hit California especially hard. State leaders predict a deficit of \$28-billion by mid-2010, and the community colleges expect significant budget cuts. At the same time, their enrollment is expected to surge. The California State University system recently announced that it was likely to admit 10,000 fewer students this year, potentially sending thousands of students toward already crowded community colleges.

"Is he a magician who can make all this go away and fix things with just a few political connections? I don't think so," says Patrick M. Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, an independent research group based in California. "He brings to this a credibility in the political world and the education world to help get things through. But he will need to enlist a lot of cooperation."

## **A Basic-Skills Challenge**

That kind of cooperation — among faculty members, local districts, lawmakers, researchers, and the chancellor's office — will be especially important in a coming discussion over basic-skills instruction. Mr. Scott and the system's current leaders are pushing to make major changes in how incoming students are assessed and placed.

Like many states, California faces the immense challenge of educating students who enter community college unprepared for college-level work. An estimated four out of five of the system's incoming freshmen need some sort of remedial work, but many slip by without being assessed or taking any basic-skills courses at all.

The community colleges have made some progress toward expanding such courses, most notably with a state program, started in 2006, that provides about \$33-million annually for that purpose.

Many local efforts to improve basic-skills instruction have popped up around the state, reflecting the attention being paid to the issue.

But Mr. Scott says he will push for systemwide changes as chancellor. He has criticized the state's current practice of making basic skills optional. About nine in 10 students in the state who need but do not get basic-skills instruction fail to earn degrees, he says.

"We're not doing them a favor," Mr. Scott says. "If I were a military leader and we found out that 90 percent of the people perished, I'd say, Well, maybe we ought to change our tactics here."

The community-college system, he says, should require all entering students to be assessed and, if necessary, placed in basic-skills courses. Some campuses are resistant to such a move, for fear of a standardized curriculum that would not reflect local concerns.

But many state leaders support the idea. A key committee of the system's governing board convened in September to study the feasibility of mandating placement in basic-skills courses and recommended a common assessment to the campuses.

Mr. Callan, the public-policy-center president, says such systemwide requirements are long past due in California. The current arrangement, he says, puts an undue burden on students themselves to figure out how to navigate course requirements.

"Those are absolutely essential priorities — they're not just nice-to-dos," he says. "If we're going to move to take care of educational gaps that exist in California, those two things I think absolutely have to be done. It is an embarrassment that we haven't done it already."

### **'Inextricably Localized'?**

But adopting a statewide policy in the California system is easier said than done. A task force assembled last year to consider mandating a common assessment rejected the idea, instead endorsing measures to make it easier for individual community colleges to share results from existing tests. The report said the curricula at the colleges may be "inextricably localized."

Resistance to a common assessment and mandatory placement often comes down to dollars, says Mark Wade Lieu, president of the system's Faculty Senate, who led the task force. The economic downturn has already prompted more students to enroll in community colleges. Fall enrollment is up by an estimated 100,000 over last year, a 6-percent increase, and campuses across the state are struggling to find room.

Mandating basic-skills courses for students who need them would necessitate a major shift of resources away from other worthy programs, Mr. Lieu says. "If certain courses are required because of mandatory placement, what courses will be eliminated?" he wrote in an e-mail message. "Clearly, there would be opposition from faculty and districts who are committed to the programs that may be pushed out by an increase in basic-skills courses."

Campuses that are developing their own programs to teach basic skills are wary of a statewide mandate, says Linda Umbdenstock, executive director of Hewlett Leaders in Student Success, a system-administered program in which campuses share data about improving student success.

Ms. Umbdenstock, who has worked with the community-college system for decades, believes that California will never adopt a unified model for student assessment and placement like those in other states. The eventual solution in California, she predicts, will involve finding a workable compromise between the top-down and local-control models.

The individual colleges are right, she says, to be concerned about mandates from the state capital.

"It's not just obstinacy," she says. "It's an understanding about how things work in different places as well. I have somewhat mixed feelings about it coming from both directions at the same time. If people say, Wait until we do it ourselves, it will be too late. If it's imposed from Sacramento, it's not going to fit local concerns.

"That conversation in the middle is so critical."

Ms. Umbdenstock, like others, thinks Mr. Scott may be the right person to get that conversation going. But with the increases in community-college enrollment and the state in dismal financial shape, she draws a comparison between Mr. Scott and another recently elected leader.

"Yeah, he won now," she says. "But does he still want the job?"

**DailyBreeze.com**

**Education Notebook**

**ECC: Board to consider bid to keep Fallo**

From staff reports

Posted: 12/14/2008

The El Camino College Board of Trustees Monday will continue to discuss whether to make a bid to keep President Thomas Fallo as he vies for the top spot at a college in northern San Diego County. The meeting will begin at 4 p.m. at 16007 Crenshaw Blvd. in Torrance. Information: 310-660-6067.



Dec. 15

### Who Needs a 5-Day Schedule?

When the national average price for a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline peaked at more than \$4 in July, a number of colleges and universities around the country were already experimenting with four-day — or shorter — workweeks to ease the load on their students' pocketbooks. Even with gas prices down, some colleges are finding the programs — first used by many campuses in the summer only — are worth keeping for the rest of the year. But so far, students aren't flocking to a more crammed option that allows them to take a semester's worth of courses on only one day a week.

Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tenn. offered its students the opportunity to maintain full-time status by attending four general education courses that met in lengthy Friday-only sections. "Full Time Friday," as the institution calls it, could have potentially kept an industrious student in class from 8 a.m. until nearly 10 p.m. at night — a schedule one administrator called "not for the faint of heart" at the beginning of the semester.

As it turns out, most students taking advantage of this offering could not stomach 11-plus hours in the classroom. Of the 214 students enrolled in "Full Time Friday," 102 enrolled in only one course. Only 11 students enrolled in the maximum of four courses. Though the college has not collected data to show the academic success of these students, it did report that 14 students dropped out of all their condensed courses, whether they were taking the minimum of one or the maximum of four. The lengthy courses were, apparently, more than some could handle.

"There was a misperception among some students that there was nothing special about these courses other than that they were being offered once a week," said Bruce Scism, vice president of academic affairs at Volunteer State. "Some thought the classes would be easier because they met less often."

To improve retention in the future, Scism added that the college could offer more counseling for students who decide to enroll in these courses. Still, data collected by the institution suggests those students who enrolled in more courses — especially those who decided to take a full day's worth of classes — had higher academic credentials than those who took fewer courses. They had higher ACT scores and high school and community college grade point averages.

Students who took more than one class were also more likely to live farther away from the institution than those who took only one — proof enough for some at the college that this offering successfully targeted students who did not want or could not afford to make multiple trips to campus. Regardless, those who came to campus less often had to spend a long Friday in the classroom.

“I had two cups of coffee before the first class and energy drinks throughout the day,” said Eric McGee, a Volunteer State student who took three Friday classes this semester. “It’s easier to commit to one day. It helps on gas and helps schedule for my job [at the campus bookstore].”

Most at the college — including students like McGee — were pleased with this first foray into alternative scheduling, Scism said, although there were a number of lessons learned. He noted that some students complained the breaks between classes were actually too long, saying that they would have rather finished up their class work and be done on campus. Additionally, he said the college’s cafeteria had been closing at the usual time, stranding some in later classes without an opportunity for dinner.

As the college waits for more detailed data to emerge from this scheduling experience, Scism said he hopes to see completion rates and grade points averages at least on par with the institution’s “traditional offerings.” Next semester the college will continue to offer only general education courses on the Friday-only schedule, electing not to expand the “Full Time Friday” offerings at least until next fall.

“I know fuel costs are not as high as they were when we first implemented this, and that was an element of it,” Scism said. “Still, I think it’s relevant. This [scheduling] is a viable tool to help increase access to education. The conclusion we’re coming to is that this is beneficial to students, and we’re sufficiently pleased to do it again.”

Missouri State University at West Plains, a two-year institution, beat a number of colleges to the punch when it adopted a four-day workweek in fall 2007 — prior to the days of three-dollar-a-gallon gas and the spreading effects of the current economic downturn. Now, with three semesters of data under their belts, college officials indicate that the alternative schedule may be here to stay for the foreseeable future.

The first semester the college switched to the four-day workweek, it saw an 11 percent enrollment increase over the previous fall. This semester, it saw an additional 4 percent increase, bringing the college’s total headcount to 1,834. Not only did the introduction of the new schedule bring more students, but those students also enrolled in more credit hours. The college had a 15 percent increase in the number of credit hours taken by students in fall 2007 from the previous year and an additional 8 percent increase this year. This year, the number of full-time equivalent students at West Plains is 1224, up 90 students since it introduced the four-day week.

Drew Bennett, West Plains chancellor, said he believes these across-the-board increases in students served and credit hours taken are predominantly the result of this alternative scheduling. Though many community colleges have seen enrollment increases following the downturn in the economy, he points to the initial boost provided to the college in fall 2007, before the word “recession” had crossed the lips of many.

“This was done before three-dollar-a-gallon gas and when the economy went south,” Bennett said. “We’re in the 14th [poorest Congressional district](#) of the 435, and our [state funds higher education](#) 47th out of 50. A dollar to our students here matters more than it does elsewhere in the

country. Anything we can do to reduce the cost of education and assist them is important to us. That was our motivation.”

A fall 2007 survey of 578 West Plains students showed that 80 percent of them preferred the new four-day scheduling, even though it has resulted in longer class sessions. Now, many students can take a full load of credits and only have to attend classes on campus two days a week, leaving more time for them to work or attend to other obligations.

“I’ve enjoyed the new schedule a lot better,” said Michael Harrington, a West Plains sophomore who works as a teller to save for his transfer to the University of Missouri and Columbia to pursue a business degree. “It makes for a long day, but it hasn’t affected my grades. It helps get [the class work] over faster.”

Other students echoed a similar sentiment but hinted that the long days in the classroom may be a double-edged sword.

“You’re tired by the end of the day, but it’s a small sacrifice,” said Kristin Herron, a West Plains sophomore who works as a political science tutor and a barista to save for her transfer to the state flagship to study occupational therapy. “My first semester, I went to class five days a week and remember dreading my Monday and Wednesday classes. Since we were only in there for 50 minutes, it was hard to get into the subject. Now, I think the schedule makes it easier for you to have more time.”

Some faculty members, however, argue that these lengthy classes — while keeping the week short for students — do not lend themselves equally to all disciplines. Judy Carr, West Plains Faculty Senate chair and psychology and sociology professor, said some professors felt as if they could do a better job instructing students three times a week and in shorter sessions. She suggested math was among those subjects that did not accommodate an hour-and-20-minute class.

Though the four-day week was never designed to give faculty Fridays off, Carr said it has freed up some time on that day for various meetings and appointments with students. The course load on full-time professors has not altered since the schedule change, she said, while noting that it is easy to forget just how long these classes are when scheduling. Her first semester teaching on the four-day week, Carr said she taught three classes in a row — something she was accustomed to during the regular week — but found herself stretched to her limit at the end of her daily round of classes.

“There can be some ideas out there that can be a bit harebrained,” Carr said of some alternative scheduling, but went on to note that the four-day week was by and large a success at West Plains. “We don’t want the McDonaldization or Wal-Martification of higher education. But, that’s not the case here. We’ve maintained our classroom integrity, no matter the deployment.”

— David Moltz

**LA Times.com**

SMALL BUSINESS

## **Rules tightened for SBA's Community Express loan**

**Caps mean fewer loans per month are available through the popular program.**

By Cyndia Zwahlen

December 15, 2008

The Small Business Administration has tightened the rules on a popular loan program, which will make it tougher for some start-ups and small ventures to get the loans they need.

New lending caps and other restrictions come at a particularly dicey time for small businesses because the recession and uncertain financial markets continue to pinch off access to vital capital.

The restrictions in the Community Express Pilot Loan program mean two major small-business lenders active in the Los Angeles area each must stop at 100 such loans a month nationwide. This year, before the restrictions, lenders were making as many as 500 a month.

The Small Business Administration said it imposed the caps because the pilot loan program it oversees threatened to bump up against a limit authorized by Congress.

At Innovative Bank of Oakland, demand for Community Express loans has as much as doubled to 20 applications a day from small firms looking for cash to help them survive the recession.

"We cannot accommodate most of them," said Young Ho Won, senior executive vice president at the bank.

Many of the applicants may not have considered the typically smaller Community Express loans in the past, he said.

The loan, which is a small but growing pilot program in the SBA's portfolio of loan-guarantee programs, has been popular with borrowers because it is often available in small amounts, as low as \$5,000, that many lenders don't want to handle. In addition, the loans don't always require collateral.

Community Express loans accounted for 9% of all loans in the SBA's major 7(a) loan-guarantee program and 1% of the 7(a) dollars lent in fiscal 2008. But in Southern California, such loans play a larger role.

In the Los Angeles area, Innovative Bank and Superior Financial Group of Walnut Creek, Calif.,

together accounted for about 23% of all SBA-guaranteed loans, both in numbers of loans and dollars lent in the federal fiscal year ended Sept. 30, SBA data show. Community Express has accounted for most of those banks' SBA loans.

That share has declined to 13% of loans and 3% of the total dollars lent from Oct. 1 through Dec. 8 as the new caps, the rocky financial markets and the recession have stymied lending.

In the South Bay, the popularity of the loan has grown in recent months among clients at El Camino College's small-business development center, said Sharon Peterson, the senior business counselor who handles the nonprofit's loan packaging. At the same time, Community Express lenders are tightening credit rules, in part to help them stay under their caps, she said.

"You have more people competing for less money being available," Peterson said, adding that most of her clients are minorities.

The new caps are part of other changes the SBA made to the program effective Oct. 1.

From now on, potential borrowers have to submit a business plan with their application. Fulfillment of the required financial and business counseling, which is free to borrowers and available as an online course, will be more closely monitored. The maximum interest rate through the program has been lowered.

Eligibility requirements have been broadened. Any qualified borrower can apply for a loan under \$25,000. Eligibility for loans above that amount is based on a borrower's location. The old rules focused on borrowers in specific demographic groups, such as women or minorities in underserved areas, the SBA said. It said constitutional concerns about the former eligibility rules promoted the change.

Partially in response to the new economic landscape, Superior Financial will focus on loans of \$5,000 to \$25,000, it said. Innovative Bank, which now requires site visits for some loans, is expected to focus on slightly larger Community Express loans.

Both lenders said they were increasingly using other SBA products to try to meet borrowers' needs.

The SBA said it made the changes to address concerns about the program's default rate, which it says is 7%, or twice the rate of all 7(a) loans. In addition, officials didn't like that only a few institutions were doing most of the lending and doubted whether all borrowers were getting the required financial counseling.

The agency also said it had anecdotal reports of predatory and exploitative lending practices but didn't name the lenders. In May, the agency said that it had asked its independent inspector-general's office to audit the loan program, a step that one SBA official said was unusual.

I would readily say our evaluation of it was long overdue, but it's something we are really focused on," said Eric Zarnikow, the SBA's associate administrator in the Office of Capital Access.

SBA officials play down objections to the altered Community Express program and say they want to wait to see how the changes affect the program. Results of the audit are expected next year.

The pilot program was authorized by Congress, which said the program loans couldn't exceed 10% of all loans made in the SBA's 7(a) loan program.

The number of 7(a) loans has dropped for months as banks have slowed lending and some small-business owners put off borrowing until better economic times. The SBA began to set varying caps for the first time this year when the growing program began to bump up against its limit.

The new caps apply to all of the 365 institutions that participate in the program, although Innovative and Superior account for 80% of Community Express lending nationwide, the agency said. Small lenders have caps of 10 loans a month. The SBA has said it may review individual caps.

The SBA has objected to contentions that the cap on the program will mean fewer minority or women-owned businesses will get loans.

Excluding Community Express, 28% of all SBA loan dollars went to minority-owned businesses in 2008, the SBA said last week. With Community Express, the share would be 32%, it said. Women-owned businesses received 18% of all SBA loans, it said. With Community Express included, that share would be 23%, it said.

Lenders are pushing hard to end the Community Express program's pilot status, which could eliminate the caps. Sen. Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine), ranking member of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, recently introduced legislation that would make the program permanent and broaden the eligibility criteria.

## PRWeb

12/16/08

### Top U.S. Two-Year College Joins Growing List of Institutions Accepting Pearson's New State-of-the-Art Measure of English Language Ability

Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic Now Recognized by El Camino College Torrance, Calif., and London ([PRWEB](#)) December 16, 2008 -- El Camino College, one of the top two-year colleges in the United States, announced today that it now recognizes [Pearson Test of English \(PTE\) Academic](#), the company's new computer-based academic English language test, to measure the language skills of candidates for admission who are non-native English speakers. Each year, El Camino College enrolls hundreds of international students from more than 65 different countries in Latin America, Europe, Africa and the Pacific Rim.

The college offers more than 80 associate and transfer degrees, which help students enter universities such as University of California-Los Angeles, University of Southern California and The California State University, where they receive full credit for courses completed at El Camino College. El Camino College is consistently one of the top 10 community colleges whose students are accepted for transfer to the University of California and California State campuses.

"Each year, El Camino College prepares hundreds of international students for matriculation at California's prestigious colleges and universities," said Leonid Rachman, Coordinator, International Student Program, El Camino College. "We have decided to recognize PTE Academic to ensure that the international students we admit are ready to study in an environment where academic English is required."

PTE Academic received the endorsement of the prestigious Graduate Management Admission Council® (GMAC®), owner of the Graduate Management Admission Test® (GMAT®), and is being developed and offered to students in collaboration with GMAC. The test will be launched internationally in October 2009.

As the worldwide global leader in publishing and assessment for education, Pearson combined the power of comprehensive field tests, in-depth research and proven, proprietary automated scoring technologies to develop PTE Academic. The test will fill a critical gap by providing a state-of-the-art test that accurately measures the English language speaking, listening, reading and writing abilities of non-native speakers.

Rachman compared [PTE Academic](#) to other tools for measuring English language abilities. "Our decision to begin using PTE Academic is simple. Other tests available today can be very restrictive to use. PTE Academic offers a great alternative for our incoming international students."

PTE Academic will deliver real-life measures of test takers' language proficiency to universities, higher education institutions, government departments and other organizations requiring academic-level English. The test is designed to better predict the ability of test takers to function in an academic environment where English is the language of instruction.

"Many of the international students who come to study in the United States launch their academic careers at two-year colleges," said Mark Anderson, President, Pearson Language Tests. "High-quality institutions, such as El Camino College, play a critical role in ensuring that these students are prepared to learn in an academic-English environment so they can advance to earn bachelor's, master's and other post-secondary degrees. We know that recognizing PTE Academic will assist the college in this effort."

For more information, contact usreco at pearson dot com or visit [www.pearsonpte.com](http://www.pearsonpte.com).

#### About Pearson Language Tests

Pearson Language Tests (PLT) is part of Pearson plc. PLT is developing PTE Academic in collaboration with the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC).

#### About Pearson

Pearson (NYSE:PSO), the global leader in education and education technology, reaches and engages today's digital natives with effective and personalized learning, as well as dedicated professional development for their teachers. This commitment is demonstrated in the company's investment in innovative print and digital education materials for preK through college, student information systems and learning management systems, teacher professional development, career certification programs, and testing and assessment products that set the standard for the industry. The company's respected brands include Scott Foresman, Prentice Hall, Addison Wesley, Benjamin Cummings, PEMSolutions, Stanford 10, SuccessNet, MyLabs, PowerSchool, SuccessMaker and many others. Pearson's comprehensive offerings help inform targeted instruction and intervention so that success is within reach of every student at every level of education. Pearson's commitment to education for all is supported by the global philanthropic initiatives of the Pearson Foundation. Pearson's other primary businesses include the Financial Times Group and the Penguin Group. For more information, visit [www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com).



# **The Chronicle of Higher Education**

12/19/08

**COLLEGE 2.0**

## **Top 10 Threats to Computer Systems Include Professors and Students**

By JEFFREY R. YOUNG

Karen McDowell spent several days this fall dressed in a purple fish costume, holding a plastic spear.

Ms. McDowell, a network-security analyst at the University of Virginia, wanted to raise awareness about "phishing," e-mail schemes in which con artists send messages to trick people into giving out passwords or other personal information. Ms. McDowell walked around high-traffic areas of the campus to get attention. "Sometimes I introduced myself as a fraudulent e-mail because many people don't know what a phish is," she said.

The outfit hooked curious students, who asked her what she was up to, and most listened to her spiel. In the past, plainclothes administrators set up tables and handed out brochures about the importance of computer security. But Ms. McDowell felt that such efforts made little impact, since students mostly walked by without stopping. The fish costume was her idea — the university paid a local seamstress \$60 to make it — because she felt that a bit of flashiness and humor would help the message sink in.

User awareness is growing in importance when it comes to computer security. Not long ago, keeping college networks safe from cyberattackers mainly involved making sure computers around campus had the latest software patches. New computer worms or viruses would pop up, taking advantage of some digital hole in the Windows operating system or in popular Web software, and officials would work to plug the gaps.

Those were the good old days — back when many big attacks were started by hobbyists who got a cheap thrill watching geek squads scramble.

Today a growing number of network bad guys are professional criminals, and they're looking to steal real money. They don't just want to post an embarrassing note on your college's home page. They want to nab the identities of students and professors to go on shopping sprees with forged credit cards. With the global economy getting lousier, officials predict that even more hackers will get into the act in search of easy cash.

Increasingly, the weakest part of a network is the users, who carelessly give out their passwords or leave important information for the taking.

That's the conclusion I reached at a recent Dartmouth College conference on "Securing the eCampus: Building a Culture of Information Security in an Academic Institution," where I was asked to give my take on security threats. I compiled the following top-10 list of campus computer-security risks based on several recent computing surveys and interviews with more

than a dozen college-technology leaders. The list, ordered from least to most serious, is by no means scientific, but it gives a sense of where today's battle lines are — and why "phish" costumes should become more common on campuses.

### **Threat #10: Spammers**

The unwanted e-mail advertising messages named after canned meat represent a constant attack on the campus, and collectively they can have a significant impact on network performance. Even though many colleges can stop most spam messages before they reach users, filtering out ads for Viagra diverts energy away from other activities that IT officials could be doing.

More important, spam is an underlying factor in other network-security problems, since some attackers aim at college networks to help them send more spam, by hijacking student computers and turning them into spam servers. So if spammers could be stopped, that would help reduce other kinds of network threats.

### **Threat #9: Cellphones**

The number of iPhones and other Web-surfing smartphones on campuses is growing rapidly. Since some phones can connect to wireless networks that blanket campuses, it is easy for students, professors, and administrators to do all sorts of communication on their phones that they used to do on their laptops. Which is great, until hackers create viruses for cellphones or until a user loses a phone with sensitive data stored on it. And so far, smartphones are harder to secure than laptops or desktops because virus-detection software can quickly run down cellphones' batteries.

### **Threat #8: Phishers**

Phishing scams are getting more sophisticated. Some early e-mail messages that attempted to trick users into revealing passwords were littered with spelling errors or poor grammar, tipping people off that they were fakes. But today the bait is more lifelike.

In a scheme that has emerged in the past year, scammers pretend to be college network officials asking recipients for their network ID's and passwords. Colleges are struggling to educate students and professors that they should never, ever give out their passwords via e-mail.

### **Threat #7: Social Networks**

The popular Facebook social-networking system was invented by a college student, and students are among its most enthusiastic users. But cybercriminals have found that social networks are ideal pools for phishing attacks.

A study by Indiana University researchers showed that phishing schemes were much more likely to trick people on social networks than via e-mail — in some cases getting 70 percent of users to fall for the scam. In one popular scheme, students get a message that appears to come from a

friend, saying that if they click a link they will see a video clip that they appear in. The link takes users to a site that tries to install malicious software on their computers.

### **Threat #6: Outsource Partners**

Colleges are outsourcing more technology services than ever these days, putting the security of campus information in someone else's hands. Calling vendors a "threat" is probably too strong, but companies can be a point of vulnerability for campuses. Case in point: This April a contractor for SunGard Higher Education had a laptop stolen, and it contained data from 18 colleges that were clients of the company. For one of those institutions alone, Connecticut State University, the laptop had data for 3,502 students and alumni from four campuses.

### **Threat #5: Students**

Every year students seem to become more careless about computer security, according to some college officials. Students will happily give their passwords to friends to check their e-mail for them. Or they'll create simple passwords that are easy for attackers to guess.

### **Threat #4: Professors**

The only people more careless on their computers than students are professors. When a phishing scheme hit Stanford University this year, for instance, the vast majority of those who fell for the con were faculty members.

### **Threat #3: Staff Members**

Some colleges collect more sensitive information than they need, leaving more opportunities for the data to be exposed to the public or swiped by hackers. Several recent reports said mistakes by careless employees had caused more data breaches than outside attackers had.

### **Threat #2: Thieves**

Thefts of computers with sensitive data have increased each year for the past five years, according to the latest survey by the Campus Computing Project, which tracks college IT trends. This year more than 30 colleges have reported lost or stolen computers or hard drives with sensitive data on them. As laptops get smaller and flash drives get more capacious, this threat will very likely grow. Officials recommend that professors and administrators encrypt sensitive data so that criminals won't be able to see such information on laptops they've swiped.

### **Threat #1: Malware and Botnets**

The Georgia Tech Information Security Center estimates that 15 percent of online computers worldwide are part of botnets: millions of computers infected with malicious code that lets attackers turn them into "zombies" for their own evil electronic deeds (botnets are often used to send spam). That's up from 10 percent a year ago.

The problem is that malware, as this and other malicious software is called, gets upgraded faster than antivirus software. "The bad guys can repack and rerelease their malicious code faster than the good guys can build and distribute antivirus signatures to identify and block it," says Joseph E. St. Sauver, manager of security programs for Internet2, an academic-computing consortium.

It's clear that tech security is as much a people problem as it is a technological one. And education and awareness of good computer hygiene are more important than ever to keep networks clean and data safe. The University of Virginia has already received requests from security officials at other colleges who want to borrow the costume.

*College 2.0 explores how new technologies are changing colleges. Please send ideas to [jeff.young@chronicle.com](mailto:jeff.young@chronicle.com)*

**The Salt Lake Tribune**

## **College faculty, staff can count on layoffs**

**Budget woes » Higher-ed boss predicts at least 500 jobs lost.**

By Brian Maffly

12/17/2008

Utah's budget crisis is rife with uncertainties for higher education, but it promises to cost hundreds of jobs at the state's nine public campuses at a time when enrollments are spiking, officials say.

The College of Eastern Utah in Price and Salt Lake Community College this week sent contract-termination notices to nontenured professors and instructors, and Utah State University announced it will lay off 23 employees.

At a meeting last Friday, CEU's board of trustees decided to send letters to all 42 nontenured faculty, nearly half the total, informing them their contracts might not be renewed next year.

"Because of the uncertainties of the budget, we know there will be cuts. We don't know how much," said CEU interim president Mike King. "We do know that it will result in eliminating some positions. We have been preparing for a 20 percent reduction as a worst-case scenario."

Legislative leaders are proposing cuts of up to 15 percent for next fiscal year; this year's spending has already been reduced by 4 percent during a special session last month and lawmakers have asked for a special session in which they would cut even more. Top higher-education officials warn that this worst-case scenario could make a college education more expensive, less accessible and less rewarding.

Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr.'s proposed cuts are more modest, but the disparity between the two budget plans renders strategic planning all but impossible for administrators.

King's job was complicated by a CEU policy that requires faculty be informed by Dec. 15 if their contracts won't be renewed the following year.

With the deadline approaching last week, the trustees had no option but to put all nontenure faculty spots in limbo. Actual layoff decisions won't occur until the Legislature sets the budget.

"We didn't want to do this," King said. "We would rather make surgical cuts rather than this shotgun approach."

The notices could prompt faculty to find new jobs, costing the college valued members who will be hard to replace, said CEU faculty senate president Troy Hunt. He was dismayed that the early-notification policy, designed to protect faculty, was now working against professors' interests.

"The faculty who received those letters are key people we need to grant degrees. Some of these people won't get their jobs back," said Hunt, the recently tenured chair of the community college's communication department. "Faculty and staff will lose jobs at every institution in this state. Staff will take a greater hit."

Meanwhile, 27 of SLCC's 365 faculty members also received notices that their jobs are in jeopardy.

"The idea of terminating contracts was a second-to-last consideration. Raising tuition was the last," SLCC spokesman Joy Tlou said. "Everybody is taking a hit. We are trying to do our part, and we're making sure our services to students aren't compromised and access to higher education is not compromised."

Under a best-case scenario of a 5 percent cut, worth nearly \$37 million, Commissioner of Higher Education William Sederburg predicts the loss of 500 faculty and staff positions, out of a systemwide total of more than 14,000. In addition, 495 students would be dropped from financial aid, schools would rely more on adjunct faculty, and concurrent enrollment would be reduced.

Under a 10 percent cut, tuition would need to be raised by 31 percent to cover the loss, but more likely 1,000 jobs and even entire departments would be sacrificed.

"It'll be the most dramatic decrease in higher-education funding around the country. That's not very consistent with the message regarding Utah's robust economy," Sederburg said. The cuts also would undermine the state's ability to compete for top scientists and scholars.

"Higher education is very people-intensive and talent-intensive. The people you lose are people who can leave and go elsewhere," Sederburg said. "There's no backfilling. Once Utah loses its great scholars, you can't say, 'come back.'?"

Colleges likely to suffer most from budget cuts are CEU, which has a 500-student auxiliary campus in Blanding, and Snow College in Ephraim, both community colleges serving economically distressed parts of Utah. The low-tuition schools get more than 85 percent of their operating expenses covered by the state. (For example, CEU tuition covers just \$2.4 million of its \$19 million budget.) State support of Utah colleges averages 64 percent and runs as low as 15 percent for the University of Utah, which has access to millions in external grants.

"[U. President] Mike Young has more fungible dollars to move around. At CEU they don't have those extra pots of money," Sederburg said.

Snow's president and spokeswoman did not return phone messages. Officials at the U. and Southern Utah University say faculty layoffs are not being considered yet.

**WVGazette.com**

**December 18, 2008**

## **Third woman alleges sexual harassment at community college**

By **Andrew Clevenger**

Staff writer

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- A third woman has come forward with allegations of sexual harassment against the vice president of student services at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College.

In a lawsuit filed Monday in Kanawha Circuit Court, Wendy Walls accuses James P. Owens of fixating on her breasts after she became a secretary in his office in 2006.

Owens repeatedly discussed Walls' breasts, making such comments as "My God, how big are those things?" and "You could be a porn star," according to the lawsuit.

"[Walls] was offended by [his] inappropriate attention to her breasts but was too embarrassed to respond," the lawsuit states.

Owens' attorney, David Mincer, declined Wednesday to comment on pending litigation. Attorneys for the school, which is also named as a defendant, did not return a call for this report.

Walls, who has moved from Logan County to South Carolina, also maintains that Owens would stand behind her and rub her shoulders, which made her "incredibly uncomfortable."

More than once, Owens called Walls into his office, told her to shut the door and asked her to rub his shoulders, the lawsuit contends. Walls was careful not to shut the door all the way because she was afraid of what he might do, according to the lawsuit.

"Don't feel uncomfortable, no one will know," Owens told her at one point in his office, the lawsuit alleges.

After Walls continued to rebuff his advances, Owens began to retaliate against her by publicly berating her and attacking her professionalism and work ethic in her performance reviews without discussing those issues with her beforehand, according to the lawsuit.

Walls reported Owens' behavior to a human resources employee at the school, but no action was taken, the lawsuit maintains.

Walls ultimately resigned because of the alleged harassment and retaliation, the lawsuit states.

Walls joins two other women, Vicki L. Damron and Janelle Rockhold, who have filed sexual harassment lawsuits against Owens and the college.

Damron, an executive secretary, alleged that Owens began making inappropriate remarks on her first day working in his office in 1998. Rockhold, a student who was participating in the school's work-study program, maintained that she was transferred to work directly for Owens after he specifically requested her.

Charleston attorney Matthew Criswell represents all three women.

Like the previous lawsuits, Walls' lawsuit seeks unspecified punitive and compensatory damages.



**Daily Breeze**  
**South Bay School Notebook**  
December 10, 2008

**Should El Camino College's Fallo stay or go?**

I'd like to get some feedback from School Notebook readers about my story today on El Camino College President and Superintendent Thomas Fallo interviewing for a job at a college in northern San Diego County.

Some have criticized the possible move as a way for Fallo to leverage a pay raise although the college board insist that's not the case.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office reports Fallo had a base salary of \$268,840 last year. The average salary of a single-college CEO is just over \$193,000, according to the Chancellor's Office.

So what I want to know from all of you is: should the board try to keep him or should they let him go?

## **Inside Higher Ed**

### **A Dent in the Data**

**By Doug Lederman**  
**December 22, 2008**

For anyone looking for signs of the decline of American higher education, the annual statistics published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development have become a standard building block to make that case. The data — particularly those showing the comparative rate of educational attainment by 25- to 34-year-olds in the U.S and elsewhere — are regularly cited to show the nation’s failure to keep pace as other developed nations that long trailed the U.S. ramp up their higher ed systems.

As the OECD numbers have gained currency, some researchers and statisticians have warned against overdependence on them, citing questions about the international agency’s methodology. At the same time, American college leaders, recognizing that the data are being used widely, have been digging into the numbers to try to understand them better and, where possible, look for ways to learn from what they say about the United States and its peers/competitors.

It was in one such quest that researchers at the American Council on Education, higher ed’s chief coordinating group, discovered that the OECD’s latest data contain a significant error in the U.S. attainment numbers, and perhaps those of other countries as well. OECD officials have acknowledged the problem in the American statistics and expressed concern about others as well.

And while the errors don’t radically alter the picture of potential problems in the educational attainment among younger U.S. citizens, they do point to the dangers of overdependence on any single source of data to make sweeping, and potentially oversimplified, generalizations about public policy matters.

The numbers in question, which examine the proportion of citizens of various countries that have received a “tertiary” (or postsecondary, in U.S. parlance) credential, have been widely cited in the increasingly common critiques of the United States’ ability to produce enough educated citizens to compete in the global economy. Margaret Spellings’ Commission on the Future of Higher Education leaned heavily on the OECD data, as have more recent reports like “Measuring Up 2008” and the College Board’s “Coming to Our Senses.”

The data most commonly cited to show the decline of the U.S. higher education system examine the rates at which citizens of different age groups in different countries attain a postsecondary degree of some kind. The United States has long been among the world’s leaders in ensuring access to higher education for its people, and the country still fares well in rankings for older citizens. But the OECD’s 2008 data (which cover outcomes from 2006) for the proportion of 25- to 34-year-olds who have a postsecondary (or tertiary) degree show the U.S. falling to 10th among the 30 OECD countries, with 39 percent of citizens that age having some kind of degree.

Jacqueline E. King, assistant vice president at the American Council on Education's Center for Policy Analysis, is among the higher education researchers who have been digging into the OECD numbers to try to understand them better; among other things, she noted, ACE is preparing to undertake a study looking at how Canada has managed to give such a large proportion of its citizens "sub-baccalaureate" degrees, a category in which it ranks tops in the OECD statistics.

It was in analyzing the OECD numbers that King and her staff noticed that they showed the U.S. as having dropped to 19th, from 10th in 2005, in the proportion of citizens with a sub-baccalaureate (or, in the United States' case, associate) degrees. The steep decline, from 9 percent to 5 percent of citizens, was accompanied in the OECD data by an equally sharp (and equally unlikely) *rise* in the proportion of Americans with a baccalaureate degree, to 35 from 30 percent, and to 2nd place from 6th place. (A spreadsheet comparing the 2006 and 2005 numbers in various categories can be found here.)

After ACE officials brought the issue to the attention of OECD, the international group admitted that its researchers had "mistakenly categorized those academic associate degrees" as baccalaureate degrees, King said. In an interview Friday, Michael Davidson, a senior analyst in OECD's education directorate, acknowledged that a "mistake was made" in the mapping of U.S. programs to international classifications, and said that OECD was at work correcting the data.

As ACE officials dug further into the numbers, they noticed several other apparent discrepancies, as well. The OECD data for 2008 show New Zealand, for example, increasing the proportion of its 25- to 34-year-old citizens with sub-baccalaureate degrees to 14 from 5 percent, and the proportion of people in that age group with baccalaureate degrees to 30 from 26 percent. Over all, New Zealand shot up to 4th in postsecondary attainment in that age group in 2006, from 18th in 2005.

Several other countries showed multiple point changes between 2005 and 2006, which Davidson said in the interview Friday would be surprising under normal circumstances, given how difficult it is to achieve significant movement quickly in most countries. He said the OECD would review the data for other countries to ensure that the "glitch" that occurred in the United States numbers was not replicated for other nations.

King, of ACE, said her organization was not questioning the OECD numbers to try to pretend that there are not serious issues in postsecondary attainment in the United States, or to soft-pedal the extent of the problem. But these data "have gained a lot of currency," she said, and "you need to unpack [them] if you're really going to understand U.S. performance compared to other countries. We need to make sure the data are right so we in the analytical community can figure out what the differences really are, and work on how to improve what we're doing."

## **Inside Higher Ed Frenemies on Facebook**

**By Jack Stripling**

**December 22, 2008**

Send off the application.

Buy the T-shirt.

Join the Facebook group.

Such is the process — not necessarily in that order — for many college-bound high school seniors. So it's perhaps no surprise that admissions officials and students alike felt betrayed when they learned dozens of Facebook groups devoted to the "Class of 2013" at various colleges appeared to have been created by non-students who were more interested in marketing than getting chummy with future classmates.

The viral marketing ploy was first exposed by Brad Ward, coordinator for electronic communication in Butler University's admissions office, who wrote about some Facebook peculiarities on his blog, [squaredpeg.com](http://squaredpeg.com).

After a tip from another admissions official, Ward found that many of the "Class of 2013" groups were created by the same people, none of whom seemed to have a connection to the colleges for which they were creating groups. They did have connections to each other, however. Several of the creators were affiliated with College Prowler, a Pittsburgh-based company that publishes college guidebooks.

Calling the group creators "an inside ring with a common purpose," Ward speculated on their intentions: "Think of the data collection," he wrote. "The opportunities down the road to push affiliate links. The opportunity to appear to be an 'Admin' of Your School Class of 2013. The chance to message alumni down the road. The list of possibilities goes on and on and on."

By mid-morning Friday, something of a disorganized revolution began, with admissions officials and students from all of the country outing the creators online and warning Facebook users about the deception. Before long, a Google Docs [spreadsheet](#) was posted on the blog, naming the names of all the creators.

Soon enough, there was action on Twitter, where interested parties were "tweeting" like crazy about apparent efforts by the creators to cover their tracks. In what was likely a move to avoid copyright infringement, official logos from colleges, including Pennsylvania State University, were removed from the 2013 pages, one person wrote on Twitter. Others noted that administrators were leaving the groups altogether.

And finally, in an act of online truth and reconciliation, a confession came. A person identifying himself as Luke Skurman, chief executive office of College Prowler, wrote on Ward's blog that his company had "crossed the line" in its viral marketing efforts.

"Yes, College Prowler has been directly or indirectly involved with the creation of multiple Class of 2013 groups," Skurman wrote.

"... From a big picture perspective, having a marketing strategy using social networking sites (like Facebook) is something that is necessary to be effective in our business. We do pride ourselves on being forward thinking and aggressive. In this instance, in its current form, we have crossed the line and to reiterate, we will be removing our administrator privileges from all of these 2013 groups immediately."

The post gave a rationale for creating the groups, saying the purpose was to steer students toward Skurman's Web site where they could find "a free guide about their new college." Skurman did claim some ignorance, however, about the extent of the marketing project, saying he was unaware until Friday that College Prowler had teamed up with another company that used fake aliases to create groups.

In an e-mail to *Inside Higher Ed*, Skurman confirmed Monday that he had written the post on squaredpeg.com, and identified the other company that partnered with College Prowler as Match U.

"We no longer have any administrative access whatsoever and we have no involvement with any of those Class of 2013 groups any longer," Skurman said in a voicemail.

Friday's flap wasn't the first time College Prowler has taken heat for a marketing strategy. Higher education officials raised objections in 2006, when the guidebook publisher pressed colleges to advertise in the book, or risk being criticized inside of it.

### **Colleges May Change Approach to Facebook**

The controversy over the 2013 groups highlights a relatively new and emerging tension for college admissions officials. Several who talked to *Inside Higher Ed* said their standard practice has been to let student groups emerge organically, fearing that creating an "official" group — as many of the College Prowler groups were dubbed — makes students feel that they're being monitored by university officials. On the other hand, college leaders are concerned about Facebook pages that appear to be "official," but are actually designed for the marketing purposes of a third party.

Jeannine Lalonde, assistant dean of admissions at the University of Virginia, said the College Prowler story prompted her to start an official group Friday morning, reversing her previous hands-off approach.

"Last night when I read the post, I completely changed my mind," she said Friday. "I think we need to protect our brand and we need to protect our students."

Despite concerns, some admissions officials couldn't help but marvel at College Prowler's strategy.

"There is brilliance in it, and quite frankly if they had taken it one step more they never would have been caught," said Michelle Lynch Clevenger, director of recruitment at Winthrop University.

Clevenger, who was the first to alert Ward to something odd about the Facebook groups, said the marketers never would have been identified if they had waited to join as members instead of creating the groups as administrators. On the other hand, becoming administrators empowered the marketers to send out mass messages or delete postings, such as, ahem, "this site is a scam," or something like that.

Anne Petersen, a former administrator in Penn State's undergraduate admissions office, said she worried about how covert Facebook groups might influence prospective students. By posing as prospective students, a company could promote or besmirch a college, she said.

"When it comes to yield, that could be really important," said Peterson, who directed electronic communications at Penn State. "That could sway some decisions about where students go."

Petersen, who has taken a position at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said the potential for companies or individuals to manipulate social networking sites presents a lot of scary possibilities.

"It's really kind of black helicopter [stuff]," she said. "You start to think about all of the conspiracy theories that can come out of this."

## **Union Tribune**

# **New president hired for MiraCosta College**

**UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF**

11:49 a.m. December 23, 2008

**NORTH COUNTY** — After an 18 month search, the MiraCosta College board of directors has hired a new president for the Oceanside-based community college.

Francisco Rodriguez will begin working on March 1, leaving his position as president of Cosumnes River College in the Sacramento area. He has served in that capacity since 2003.

Rodriguez holds a bachelor's degree in Chicano studies and a master's degree in community development from the University of California Davis and a doctorate in education leadership from Oregon State University. He began working in community colleges in 1997 as an associate dean at Woodland College in the Yuba Community College District.

He has also worked at UC Davis for 12 years, in various capacities related to student affairs.

Rodriguez will be paid an annual salary of \$256,208, plus a monthly allowance of \$1300 for expenses including transportation.

Rodriguez takes over at a critical time for MiraCosta College.

While the school is experiencing an enrollment boom, the faculty and administration are still regrouping from turmoil during the previous president's tenure.

Victoria Muñoz Richart resigned in 2007 with a settlement package worth \$1.6 million, after controversy regarding her management style and an investigation into the illegal sale of campus palm trees and other money-handling at the school.

Over a period of two years, one department head pleaded guilty to grand theft over the tree sales; two popular administrators left and later received financial settlements; the faculty issued a no-confidence vote in Richart and the board of trustees; and group of staff members and former board members and presidents sent trustees a letter calling for Richart's dismissal.

The board of trustees fractured over the controversies, causing the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges to warn MiraCosta that it could lose its accreditation unless rifts were resolved and officials completed work required to remain in good standing.

## **Riverside Press-Enterprise**

### **More colleges serve locally grown food on campus**

**By Sean Nealon**

**December 20, 2008**

University of Redlands dining facilities get Gouda cheese from Winchester, honey from Mentone and fruits and vegetables ranging from kale to kiwis from Redlands. UC Riverside dining halls serve oranges, asparagus, dates and eggs from the school's agricultural fields adjacent to campus.

The two Inland universities are part of a growing trend of colleges serving locally grown foods. Some schools have done so for decades, but the concept has exploded in popularity recently as students and college officials have grown more interested in the origins of their food.

At UCR, which started as a citrus research station in 1907, oranges, lemons and grapefruit are used to make juice, sauces and marinades. In February, the university plans to start bottling its own orange juice.

"We thought we were going to have student riots when the Pepsi machine was removed," said Gustavo Plascencia, UCR's residential dining general manager. "But, no, every student had a glass of juice on their tray."

At the University of Redlands, local farmers grow about 30 percent of produce served on campus. Local farmers benefit from the arrangement because they can sell their product to the university for up to twice what they would get on the wholesale market.

"It means a lot to our bottom line that they're supporting us," said Abby Harned, who started the organic Three Sisters Farm in Redlands this summer with her husband, Jason.

#### **A Growing Movement**

Nationwide, 200 to 300 colleges serve locally grown food, more than double the number since 2001, said Kristen Markley, manager of the Farm to College program run by The Community Food Security Coalition, a Portland, Ore., nonprofit.

A Food Security Coalition survey returned by 106 of those colleges found their use of locally grown food had an almost \$24 million impact on farms.



Howard Sacks, a sociology professor at Kenyon College in Ohio who studies how colleges use locally grown foods, traces that increase to students' interest in food.

"It's sort of a perfect storm for promoting local foods," Sacks said.

Sacks, also interim provost at Kenyon, started Food For Thought, a sustainable local market for foods produced in and around Kenyon's campus to keep small family farms alive.

In 2004, Kenyon College started buying from local farmers in 2004, Sack said. Now, 40 percent of food consumed on campus has local origins, he said.

The college recently remodeled a dining facility to serve local farmers. Changes included adding a loading dock that can accommodate the smaller trucks driven by local farmers and expanding space to wash and chop produce. Before, much of the produce was pre-chopped and pre-packaged.

Companies that operate college dining halls have taken note of student interest in locally grown foods.

Bon Appetit Management Company, which runs the dining facilities at the University of Redlands and more than 400 companies and colleges nationwide, is one of those companies.

### **Local Produce**

Bon Appetit started serving locally grown citrus at the University of Redlands about 10 years ago, said Brett Martin, senior general manager.

The percentage of locally grown food served has increased significantly in recent years, especially since Bon Appetit started its "Eat Local Challenge" in 2005. The challenge requires all company facilities to create a lunch made completely from ingredients grown within 150 miles of the cafe.

Now, the university gets medium-aged Gouda for its barbecue chicken pizza from Winchester Cheese company. Olives come from Graber Olives in Ontario. Wine is made at Joseph Filippi Winery & Vineyards in Rancho Cucamonga.

Three Sisters Farm has provided lettuce, butternut squash, kale, chard, cilantro and melons, Harned said. The university is important to the farm because it can buy large quantities of one item that the farm might otherwise not be able to sell, she said.

At UCR, dining halls occasionally get dates from the university's agricultural research land in the Coachella Valley, said Lanette Dickerson, executive chef for UCR Dining Services. The agricultural land adjacent to the Riverside campus yields asparagus, green beans, about 200 dozen eggs per week and citrus, she said.

Twice a week, James "Cam" Calkins transports about 1,000 pounds of citrus in a refrigerated truck from the agricultural fields to the dining halls. Students wash and juice it.

Lemon juice is used in a carne asada marinade. Oranges are incorporated into the Riverside Citrus Salad Dressing. Limes are used in non-alcoholic mojitos.

The orange juice will be bottled and sold on campus starting Feb. 1, Dickerson said. A 16-ounce bottle will sell for \$2.25.