

ASCSU March Plenary Report

March 13-14, 2025

1. Update on CSU Policy Changes

Al Liddicoat, Interim Vice Chancellor, Human Resources, and Peter Lim, Civil Rights Programming and Services provided an update regarding staffing within the Human Resources and Civil Rights Office. The update included ongoing efforts to ensure compliance and provide support across all campuses. As part of this initiative, five campuses per semester will undergo a Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (DHR)/Title IX review to assess adherence to systemwide policies and best practices.

A question was raised about the recent changes to the CSU non-discrimination policy and whether further policy updates are necessary. It was noted that the issuance of a Dear Colleague Letter and subsequent federal guidance required immediate compliance with the 2020 Title IX regulations. This development effectively rolled back the implementation of the 2024 policy updates. Additionally, the 2024 revisions introduced complications in reconciling CSU policy with evolving California state law. A second Dear Colleague Letter was later issued to provide further clarification on these matters.

It was emphasized during the discussion that a Dear Colleague Letter is a significant guidance document, but it does not carry the force of law. Rather, it is intended to clarify the federal government's interpretation of existing statutes and legal precedents.

2. Chancellor's Office Updates

Dilcie Perez, Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs & Chief Student Affairs Officer, and Nathan Evans, Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs & Chief Academic Officer, provided systemwide updates on behalf of the Chancellor's Office.

Commitment Amid Challenges

Chancellor Mildred García reaffirmed the CSU's steadfast commitment to its mission, students, and employees despite mounting political and fiscal pressures. Notably, the CSU—alongside the California Attorney General's Office—secured an injunction to block the elimination of Teacher Quality Partnership Grants, preserving essential funding that supports teacher preparation programs.

Budget Advocacy

The proposed 7.95% reduction to the CSU's state budget remains a pressing concern. Advocacy efforts are ongoing to mitigate these potential cuts, which could significantly impact the system's capacity to serve students. While legislative discussions suggest some sympathy for the CSU's position, the final budget will be determined through negotiations between the Governor and the State Legislature.

Academic and Enrollment Initiatives

A finalized policy on applied and professional doctoral programs has been adopted, expanding academic offerings across the system. Additionally, revisions to Professional and Continuing Education (PaCE) programs are underway. Strategic enrollment planning remains a high priority, with particular emphasis on re-engaging students who stopped out without completing a degree and expanding dual enrollment opportunities for high school students.

AI Innovation and Integration

The CSU has launched both an AI Workforce Board and the AI Commons Hub to promote equitable access to artificial intelligence tools, research, and training across all campuses. A grant program will soon be introduced to support faculty in incorporating AI into their teaching. Future initiatives will explore broader applications of AI in university operations.

DEI and Academic Freedom

Concerns were raised regarding recent federal investigations affecting several CSU campuses, including Sacramento State, as well as increased scrutiny of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs and academic freedom. The Chancellor's Office reiterated its commitment to CSU values and mission, while carefully navigating the current legal and political landscape.

Student Success and Equity

Systemwide efforts continue to focus on improving student retention and closing equity gaps. The Chancellor's Office emphasized ongoing initiatives to ensure that all students receive the support necessary to persist through graduation.

3. CFA Liaison Report

Dr. Charles Toombs, CFA President, reports the California Faculty Association (CFA) continues to advocate strongly in response to the proposed 7.95% state budget cut and broader financial and policy pressures affecting the CSU system. The Austerity Working Group, based at Sonoma State, is leading campus-wide discussions on financial sustainability, while union-wide town halls are being held to gather faculty input on critical issues facing higher education. CFA remains actively engaged with system management on the *Time, Place, and Manner* policy to ensure that faculty rights are protected, particularly regarding academic freedom and campus advocacy.

National Day of Action and Upcoming Events

April 17 has been designated as a National Day of Action. Although the legislature will be in recess, CFA will host an advocacy event at the State Capitol, while faculty are encouraged to engage directly with legislators in their home districts. Additionally, the annual CFA Equity Conference will take place in San Diego from Friday through Sunday.

Legislative and Policy Advocacy

CFA is sponsoring and co-sponsoring legislation aimed at increasing transparency and faculty representation within the CSU. Key bills include:

- A mandate for external audits of all CSU campuses every three years
- The addition of a second faculty trustee to the CSU Board of Trustees

- A requirement for justification of all CSU expenditures exceeding \$10,000

Faculty Compensation and Research Expectations

Concerns were raised about the increasing expectations for faculty research—often tied to tenure and promotion—without corresponding compensation or assigned units under the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Faculty from multiple campuses reported a lack of institutional support for research time. Several senators called for this issue to be addressed in future contract negotiations to ensure research responsibilities are appropriately recognized and compensated.

Federal Investigations and DEI Backlash

Faculty voiced serious concerns about the Department of Education’s ongoing investigation into 60 universities, including Sacramento State. There were strong criticisms of what was characterized as a return to McCarthy-era tactics targeting faculty members, particularly in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs. CFA leadership encouraged faculty to elevate concerns through campus Faculty Rights teams for potential union action. Questions were also raised about the stance of campus and CSU system leadership, especially as institutions may face difficult choices between upholding CSU values and maintaining federal funding.

Focus on Equity and Human Impact

CFA leaders urged faculty to continue engaging legislators, emphasizing the human impact of budget cuts and advocating for funding to be directed toward teaching and student support—rather than administrative expansion. The upcoming CFA equity report, *Shortchanging Students*, will provide a detailed analysis of CSU funding practices and highlight disparities in resource allocation, calling for stronger financial accountability and prioritization of the university’s educational mission.

4. Update on Year of Engagement

Dr. Perez provided an update on the ongoing review of the Graduation Initiative (GI) 2025, acknowledging key concerns raised by faculty and stakeholders. These include the exclusion of faculty and graduate students from earlier phases of the initiative, limited data disaggregation, and an overemphasis on four- and six-year graduation rates. In response, the CSU is working to strengthen faculty engagement and develop a more holistic and inclusive framework for student success moving forward.

Two systemwide strategies—**Equitable Teaching and Learning Environments** and **Experiential Learning**—will undergo further consultation with faculty before being finalized, signaling a more collaborative and responsive planning approach.

Campus-Specific Metrics and Broad Consultation

A comprehensive consultation process is currently underway. Faculty input, gathered through targeted surveys developed in collaboration with the Academic Senate of the CSU (ASCSU), is being used to guide the development of campus-specific metrics. This addresses concerns that prior system goals felt overly prescriptive and detached from the realities of individual campus contexts.

Six Core Commitments of the New Framework

The revised student success framework centers on six interconnected commitments:

1. **Academic Readiness** – Improving college preparation
2. **Affordability** – Reducing financial barriers through advocacy and partnerships

3. **Personalized Journeys to Success** – Offering flexible, student-centered pathways
4. **Equitable Teaching and Learning Environments** – Advancing inclusive instruction (pending faculty consultation)
5. **Experiential Learning** – Scaling internships and applied learning (pending faculty consultation)
6. **Post-Degree Opportunity** – Enhancing alumni engagement and career development

Proposed Systemwide Strategies

To operationalize these commitments, the CSU is considering several key strategies:

- Integrating academic and career advising for comprehensive student support
- Standardizing degree audit tools to improve course availability and inter-campus planning
- Leveraging predictive analytics to inform student interventions and support services
- Simplifying financial aid communications for clarity and timeliness
- Expanding mentorship and career engagement through alumni networks
- Increasing access to paid internships for hands-on professional experience
- Streamlining administrative policies and practices to remove institutional barriers

Next Steps and Faculty Involvement

Feedback collection and faculty consultation will continue through the spring. Faculty leaders underscored the importance of aligning implementation with academic values and priorities. There is optimism that this revised phase of the Graduation Initiative more effectively centers the CSU's educational mission and provides greater opportunities for campus-level input and innovation.

5. CSSA Liaison Report

Tara Al-Rehani, CSSA Vice President of Systemwide Affairs, provided updates from the California State Student Association (CSSA), highlighting key student-led initiatives and advocacy efforts across the CSU system. One ongoing area of focus is college affordability, particularly related to textbooks and course materials. In support of this effort, CSSA Vice President of Finance Kawari delivered a presentation at the Affordable Learning Solutions Convening on February 21, addressing the importance of expanding access to affordable learning resources for students across the 23 campuses.

Housing affordability remains another major priority for CSSA. The board has officially approved guidance for the development of an Affordable Housing White Paper. With this foundational step completed, work is now underway to begin drafting the white paper, which will outline student-centered solutions and recommendations for improving access to affordable housing throughout the CSU system.

Al-Rehani also shared updates on recent and upcoming resolutions. CSSA recently introduced and successfully passed a resolution to establish a systemwide CSU Undocumented Student Advisory Council. This council will serve as a structural framework to ensure comprehensive and sustained support for undocumented students across the system. Additionally, a resolution affirming support for the rights of transgender students has been introduced. This resolution will be discussed in April and is expected to move forward as an action item in May.

Student leadership development and legislative advocacy were also spotlighted through CSSA's recent hosting of CHESS, the California Higher Education Student Summit, which brought together nearly 200 student leaders representing all 23 CSU campuses. The summit featured discussions on strengthening student advocacy both within campus communities and at the state level. A central component of CHESS was its Advocacy Day, during which student delegates met directly with legislators to share regional perspectives and promote policy priorities that reflect the needs and experiences of CSU students.

6. Resolutions

Action Items:

[AS-3728-25/APEP/FGA](#)

Resolution Approved

Resource Needs to Effectively Support the Articulation System Stimulating Inter-institutional Student Transfer (ASSIST) in Supporting Student Success

[AS-3720-24/APEP](#)

Resolution Approved

Endorsing the CSU Math Council Resolution Regarding the Implementation of Assembly Bill 1705 as it Pertains to STEM Major Academic Preparation

[AS-3726-25/Exec](#)

Resolution Approved

Apportionment of Academic Senate CSU Seats

[AS-3727-25/Exec](#)

Resolution Approved

Academic Senate of the CSU 2025-2026 Meetings

[AS-3733-25/FGA](#)

Resolution Approved

Federal Advocacy Priorities for the Academic Senate of the California State University

[AS-3736-25/AA](#)

Resolution Approved

Proposed Changes to Cal-GETC Standards

[AS-3746-25/FA](#)

Resolution Approved

Call for a Systemwide Response to the CSU Fiscal and Budget Crisis

[AS-3747-25/FGA](#)

Resolution Approved

2025 State Legislative Advocacy Positions of the Academic Senate of the California State University

[AS-3740-25/JEDI](#)

Resolution Approved

Commitment to a CSU Culture of Dignity, Belonging, and Safety

First Reading Items

These items will be on the senate floor in May. Please review the resolutions and provide any feedback to your state senators.

[AS-3732-25/Exec](#)

This resolution adopts an official ASCSU Media Policy that outlines guidelines for how Senate members interact with the media, ensuring that public statements reflect the Senate's official positions. It designates the ASCSU Chair or their designee as the sole spokesperson, distinguishes personal opinions from official statements, and provides protocols for crisis communication, social media use, and periodic policy review.

[AS-3734-25/AA](#)

This resolution affirms the importance of faculty-led decision-making in the use of generative AI (GenAI) in the classroom, emphasizing that its use should enhance, not hinder, teaching and learning. It appreciates the CSU's leadership in AI innovation and calls for practical guidance and ethical considerations to be prominently shared with faculty through the CSU AI Commons.

[AS-3735-25/AA](#)

This resolution calls for the creation of a joint task force to develop guidelines for evaluating and approving requests to award CSU General Education credit for coursework and examinations offered by external organizations. The goal is to ensure systemwide consistency, maintain academic standards, and involve disciplinary faculty experts in the review process.

[AS-3737-25/APEP](#)

This resolution affirms a set of recommendations from the Chancellor's General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) to standardize and clarify lower-division GE requirements across the CSU system. It supports eliminating broad GE exemptions and waivers while allowing for limited course substitutions, with the goal of ensuring that all students complete the full range of GE learning outcomes regardless of major or transfer pathway.

[AS-3738-25/APEP](#)

This resolution urges the California Department of Education and Commission on Teacher Credentialing to conduct a statewide analysis of teacher retention and turnover in PK-12 public schools. The goal is to provide data that will inform CSU teacher preparation programs and support efforts to recruit, prepare, and retain a diverse and effective educator workforce.

[AS-3739-25/APEP](#)

This resolution supports continued efforts to diversify and expand access to teacher credential programs while recognizing the rigor of completing a Subject Matter Waiver (SMW) program. It calls on CSU credential programs to give greater admissions weight to students who have completed an SMW, particularly in impacted programs, as this pathway is considered the highest standard of subject matter competency by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

[AS-3741-25/APEP](#)

This resolution calls for the creation of a task force to establish standards and processes for evaluating new credit-by-examination opportunities for CSU General Education credit. It aims to address the lack of existing procedures for reviewing credit requests from emerging assessment agencies beyond established exams like AP, IB, or CLEP.

[AS-3742-25/APEP](#)

This resolution supports allowing community college STEM students the option to enroll in preparatory math courses, such as precalculus, even if they have previously completed similar high school coursework. It pushes back against interpretations of AB 1705 that restrict student choice and may hinder success in STEM pathways by requiring immediate enrollment in calculus.

[AS-3743-25/APEP/FGA](#)

This resolution urges the CSU and California State Legislature to preserve and expand state funding for teacher credential students impacted by recent federal cuts to DEI and education-related grants. It emphasizes the need to sustain access to credential programs in order to address teacher shortages and uphold the state's commitment to preparing a diverse and equitable educator workforce.

[AS 3744-25/JEDI](#)

This resolution adopts a five-year Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion (EDJI) Strategic Action Plan to guide the culture, leadership, and policy work of the Academic Senate of the CSU. It outlines goals to diversify Senate leadership, integrate JEDI principles into policymaking, foster inclusive governance, and assess progress through internal evaluation and training.

[AS-3745-25/JEDI/FA](#)

This resolution reaffirms faculty authority over academic programming and opposes the elimination of liberal arts and marginalized studies programs, such as Women and Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies, due to budget cuts. It calls on CSU leadership to uphold shared governance and protect the inclusion of diverse disciplines essential to student success, equity, and the CSU's educational mission.

[AS-3748-25/Floor](#)

This resolution urges the California Legislature to reject AB-1462 and any similar proposals that would allow community colleges to offer four-year degrees beyond current agreements, arguing that such legislation undermines the California Master Plan for Higher Education and threatens the role and sustainability of the CSU. It reinforces the importance of collaboration and existing dual-admission pathways between the CSU and community colleges.