

WHAT THE GOVERNOR GIVETH, HE MORE THAN TAKETH



The Governor released his proposed budget on January 11th. Months will pass before all is settled. I advise that we all invest in Southwest Airlines and other air carriers to Sacramento. Lobbyists will jam the A, B, and C lines from now until September. Advocates for the uninsured, K12, no tax increases, and other righteous causes will elbow, scratch, and maul to get face time with legislators and staffers. Prison guards (an inmate in every cot) and social workers (a chicken in every pot) will compete for resources. Like relentless centipedes, each group will glide on hundreds of feet toward the capitol dome.

CSU will be “doin’ the centipede,” too. Spared so far the pain of a mid-year cut, we are not so lucky in the Governor’s proposal for ’08-09. CSU’s budget request included money for the faculty contract and the provisions that it triggered in other agreements. The Governor’s budget, following the lead of the Legislative Analyst, refers to the compact but not the latest faculty contract. The contract requires more funding. However, the first part of his budget more or less matches categories and total amount--@350M--with the CSU’s reckoning. So, while his office hesitates to besmirch the page with “contract,” his staff conjures the right money amount. In sum, his proposed “workload budget sets up a minimally adequately base. But, the second part of the projection seizes 312M from CSU for next year. In other words, changes to the base budget occur on paper, awaiting a better day.

IN MILLION	GOVERNOR		CSU		NOTES
	STATE	STUS	STATE	STUS	
COMPACT	116		116		BASE COMMITMENT
AC TRANSF	30		30		FOR EFFICIENCY
8500 FTE	70	34	70	34	STATE AND FEE
10% FEE INC		112			ON BASE AND 8500
NO FEE INC			72		NO SUG SET ASIDE
SUB	216	146	288	34	
CUT	312	35			MINUS CUT, MINUS SUG, TO EQUALIZE WITH CSU APPRCH
TTL	15			322	

Left, is an attempt to chart all this. The Governor’s budget paper-funds the compact. It paper-funds academic technology. It paper-funds 8, 500 FTE. It does increase students’ fees by 10%. No paper only there!

CSU’s own proposed budget has not changed since last year. It asks for the money to buy down a 10% fee increase for students, 72M. Note that

the actual increase under the Governor’s budget, 112M, is much higher; it includes the addition for state university grants to students to offset part of the fee increase. The CSU plan funds not only the compact but the contract and effects that ripple outward from there. And it funds academic transformation.

CSU says that it need about a 6% increase, The Governor tags us with over a 6% decrease. Also, although the Governor projects that CSU should grow 8,500 FTE, he does not record any new positions. That implies that he expects us to redirect growth money away from new faculty and use it to support those

on board. It could be that CSU is expected to grow but use the growth money for . . . the contract? The figures are not detailed enough to tell.

CSU has announced that it will fight for a better budget—one that buys out fee increases, rejects growth that is not fully funded, and lives up to the contract. So, in a difficult budget year, we are demanding three things that we rarely get in a good year: a fee buy-down, an adequate boost in pay, and full support for growth. Who are our allies? The legislators and state officials who urged agreement on the contract settlement but knew full well they could not afford it? CFA, CSU, and the students have to link arms to have any chance.



It is as if CSU is riding a unicycle on a cable across Niagara Falls. It cradles a long pole for balance. No-fee students hang from one end and no-contract-reopener faculty hang from the other. Will we work together, or will we fall into the froth? And we have raised the stakes.

Forgoing growth because the Governor expects us to redirect the money, we give up an added \$80,000,000, increasing the cut to nearly 400 million. What happens if, by miracle, we get the fee buy-out but no help toward the contract? Or imagine a salary increase with a fee increase? That will test allies, it surely will.

Meanwhile, we go on. Our reduction could be at least \$21,000,000 (our share of 312 million), or it could be “as low as” 7-9 million (our share of 50 million plus the contract costs). We cannot wait until the legislature and governor resolve conflicting interests, because we must decide about hiring, assigned time, etc. So, our need to act is pressing. Others will be angry because they believe that only with time can we change the minds of policymakers. (Uh . . . no comment.)

As you know, we have been here before, many times. I would like to tell you that, even if fees are rolled back and the contract funded, we would not have to increase class sizes and/or severely curtail services and purchases. But then I would be lying; and my nose is long enough! As I wrote in my previous comments on this budget, we also must look ahead. We must invest, in the midst of cuts, in a few good bets that to increase revenues, decrease some costs for students, and supplement the income of faculty and staff. While this crisis, too, shall pass, another California calamity will queue up. Technology bubble, housing bubble . . . if you squint with me and peer into the future, you can make out Fate, recumbent in the bath, teasing the next bubble out of the suds on her (or his!) hands.