

# **DISMANTLING COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY IN CALIFORNIA**



## **THE CSU CRISIS AND CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE**

The Fourth in a Series of Reports  
Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* at UCLA

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June 2011

## **The CSU Crisis and California's Future: A Note on the Series**

This series of reports is designed to analyze the impact of the fiscal cutbacks on opportunity for higher education in the California State University system, the huge network of 23 universities that provide the greatest amount of BA level of education in the state. The CSU has a much larger undergraduate student body than the University of California system and educates a much larger group of Latino and African American students. Many CSU students are first generation college students struggling to get an education in difficult times.

The studies were commissioned under the direction of the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles (CRP) at UCLA. Though the CRP is a research center at UCLA and the UC system has its own severe challenges, we decided to organize and publish a series of studies of the CSU because we have had a long-term focus on access to college for all. This has been one of our central concerns since the CRP was founded 15 years ago at Harvard (it moved to UCLA in 2007); the CRP has produced five books and commissioned many studies on issues of affirmative action and college access. We are convinced that California is in the midst of a full-blown crisis of college access and completion, and that this crisis threatens the future of the state and its communities.

The series was produced for very low budgets and involved considerable contribution of effort by the authors and editors. The basic idea was to produce a series of reports analyzing available data or data that could be collected for a low cost and try to present a number of independent assessments of impacts on various aspects of this large system. We followed our customary procedure of issuing a call for research on a variety of important questions, soliciting proposals from interested scholars, sending the research proposals to outside experts in the field for review, and then commissioning authors to prepare reports. The draft reports were discussed at a roundtable on the UCLA campus, which led to suggestions for editing.

The research costs were shouldered by the CSU Faculty Association, the Ford Foundation, and the Civil Rights Project. Though the Faculty Association has a very strong interest in a number of these issues, the Association had no role in commissioning or evaluating the studies. They respected the traditional scholarly process we require from all funders of Civil Rights Project research. This series is available for reading at [civilrightsproject.ucla.edu](http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu) and we grant all interested instructors or other groups the right to reproduce these reports without any payment of royalties or permissions, so long as authorship is appropriately credited. Authors have final control of their own manuscripts and the opinions expressed in them are the conclusions of those authors.

We understand, of course, that the state of California and many of its institutions are in a full-blown financial crisis and that very difficult and damaging decisions have been made. There are many cuts that threaten the welfare and the future of vulnerable communities in California. Our studies address only one major part of those problems and they arise from a clear awareness that the only secure way into the middle class of California's future is higher education. Our hope is that these hard decisions will consider the depth and danger of the cuts, their long-term impacts, and what may be done to preserve the promise of a vital set of California institutions.

## **PART 4:**

# **DISMANTLING COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY IN CALIFORNIA**

## **Remediation as a Civil Rights Issue in the California State University System**

Kimberly R. King, Suzanne McEvoy, and Steve Teixeira

## **Economic Crisis and the California State Public University: The Institutional, Professional, and Personal Effects on Faculty and Students**

David Boyns, Amy Denissen, Alexandra Gerbasi

## **“You Will Have to Work Ten Times as Hard at the CSU”: Reducing Outreach and Recruitment in Times of Economic Crisis**

Rebecca Joseph with the assistance of Mario Castaneda

## **FOREWORD**

As we face the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, college opportunity has been negatively impacted by drastic cuts and the rising cost of education. In California specifically, higher education opportunity seems to be nearly out of reach for low-income students, academically underprepared students, and students of color. Historically, higher education has been considered a mechanism of upward mobility. Considered part of the "American Dream," parents encourage their children to strive for this goal, even if the parents themselves never attended college.

Academically underprepared students, or those lacking the basic skills of math and/or English to be at college-level, represent over half of entering freshman at the CSU. What these startling numbers really represent is a growing number of underprepared students graduating California high schools, often with excellent grades, yet being denied admission to the state's public institutions. Despite California's commitment to universal access to all who can benefit and tuition-free education, what we are seeing is an inability to uphold this social contract at the cost of students' futures.

The negative impact of budget cuts has been felt beyond the students and their families. Recent pay cuts, furloughs, and other declines in financial support have also impacted faculty and staff at the CSU campuses. Increasingly, faculty and staff have feelings of unfairness, as they struggle to provide services and quality education to students, yet experience enormous cut after cut. Morale continues to plummet as faculty and staff are expected to perform the duties of educating the state's youth, yet the value of education seems practically non-existent within the state's budget priorities.

These studies released today call attention to the fact that the cuts to higher education impact students, their families, CSU faculty, and staff well beyond the classroom. Reductions in access, retention, and increases in cost are disproportionately impacting traditionally underrepresented students, and are being deeply felt within their personal lives. Students are attempting to find additional means of income to cover tuition and fees, as well as contribute to their households. CSU faculty and staff strive to do their jobs with less, while attempting to find employment outside of academia. All the while, students, faculty, and staff feel a lack of knowledge and awareness regarding budget cuts, and report that these cuts indicate changes in society's values of higher education- and most importantly, who should attend. Additionally, students with remedial academic needs feel overwhelmed with an increased time to degree due to courses that often have an attached stigma; yet constrained by policies which appear to support educational outcomes but limit these students' abilities to outside obligations such as family and work.

The barriers to college continue to increase at a time when resources and support for the neediest college students diminish. As a graduate of the CSU, and a student who entered college with remedial math needs, I fully understand that my success today is all an issue of timing. If I was an entering freshman today, the fact is that I may not

be entering a system at all- but rather hopelessly searching for low-paying employment opportunities that are practically non-existent. Closing the doors to college for those who seek it the most is beyond limiting college opportunity-- it is limiting life opportunity.

*Avery Olson*

# **“REMEDICATION” AS A CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUE IN THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

Kimberly R. King, Suzanne McEvoy, and Steve Teixeira

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

For many years, California State University faculty, staff, and administrators have dedicated themselves to helping “remedial” and/or developmental first-year entrants improve their English composition and math skills, so they may develop as students and graduate. Remedial students are defined as students who do not have college-level math and English skills, as determined by scores on the English Placement Test (EPT) and the Entry Level Mathematics exam (ELM; Carter 1989, 1992). They have comprised the majority of CSU’s entering freshmen for many years.

Since 1997, CSU leaders have issued two Executive Orders regarding remediation. E.O. 665 Munitz (1997) mandates that first-year students who do not remediate successfully within their first year at the CSU can be “disenrolled” until they complete remedial work at a community college; E.O. 1048 Reed (2010) will require all remedial students to attend remedial instruction during the summer prior to their first fall enrollment, starting in 2012. Currently, the great majority of “remedial” first-time freshmen (approximately 80%) successfully remediate within their first year at the CSU and continue their academic progress at the university. However, about 3,000 CSU-eligible students who experience problems with remedial courses are forced to leave the University every year (Proficiency Reports of Students Entering the CSU System 2009).

Recently, faculty and staff representatives have publicly expressed concern over the inequitable impact of these policies on low-income and ethnic minority remedial students. In addition, the rate at which under-represented minority students are disenrolled for failing to remediate on time is much higher than the rate for others who do not remediate timely. Such disparities in remediation are also associated with different patterns of selection of CSU campuses by students of various skill levels. Unless these patterns are directly addressed by CSU, a pernicious de facto academic segregation may become intractable.

### **Remedial Students in the California State University System**

California’s Master Plan for Higher Education gave eligibility for the California State University system to California students who graduated from high school with

grades in the top third of their class and had satisfied various subject requirements (California State Department of Education 1960). However, well over 20,000 high school graduates entering the California State University each year—more than half of all first-year entrants—are assessed as requiring academic assistance to achieve university-level proficiency in English, math, or both (CSU Freshman Proficiency and Remediation at Entry and One Year Later 2009).

These academically high-needs students include students of all colors and ethnicities, although they are overrepresented among low-income, first-generation students, and are concentrated among the ranks of students of color from segregated high schools in the poorest communities. In fall 2009, 68% of African American first-time freshmen tested remedial in math, and 71% in English. For Mexican American freshmen, the rate was 52% in math, and 65% in English. Asian American students had slightly higher skills, but 26.1% needed remediation in math and 57% in English. Of whites, 25% were remedial in math and 29% in English (Proficiency Reports of Students Entering the CSU System 2009).

At CSU campuses serving a high proportion of low-income high schools with high minority populations, such as CSU Los Angeles and CSU Dominguez Hills, remediation rates are above 88% of all first-year entrants. However, because white student enrollment in the CSU is so high, the actual number of remedial whites is greater than that of African Americans, and close to that of Mexican Americans.

The average high school GPA for “remedial” students is above a 3.0, and the great majority of remedial first-time freshmen successfully remediate within their first year at the CSU and continue their academic progress at the University. For example, in 2006, 83% of CSU students who entered the CSU needing remediation were proficient at the end of their freshman year (CSU Freshman Proficiency and Remediation at Entry and One Year Later 2007). Of remedial first-year students who entered CSU in 2001 and became proficient, 68% had earned a baccalaureate degree or were still persisting in 2006, virtually the same as the graduation rate of 69% for nonremedial 2001 entrants (English, math proficiency 2007, ¶ 10).

### **CSU Remediation Policies—E.O. 665 and E.O. 1048**

From 1998 to 2010, the California State University system’s basic policy for remedial first-year entrants was Executive Order 665 (E.O. 665; Munitz 1997), which mandated that they complete all math or composition remediation during their first academic year, or risk being “disenrolled” until they completed it at the community college level.

The eruption of the Great Recession in 2008 exacerbated California’s existing budget deficit, and led CSU to announce “a goal to reduce our total enrollment by 40,000 over the next two years” (Zamarripa and Turnage 2009, 1). In addition, Chancellor Charles Reed issued an Executive Order (E.O. 1048; Reed 2010), requiring all remedial entrants to attend a mandatory Early Start Program (ESP) in the summer prior to their fall classes. Students failing to enroll and participate in the program would lose their admission to the University.

Fees for these classes may be higher than fees charged for regular courses. The ESP will begin in some form at all campuses by summer 2012, with full implementation set for summer 2014 (Reed 2010).

The higher fees and loss of employment time associated with mandatory summer ESP threaten to deter a large number of students from entering the University. To allay that fear, Assistant Vice Chancellor Alison Jones assured Trustees that a process will be created by which students who qualify for state financial aid from fall to spring would become eligible for supplementary assistance for the summer ESP. However, he failed to report that this would only apply to federal financial aid, since state Cal Grants cannot be used to pay for Extended Education courses. Currently, to qualify for summer Pell Grants, students must have completed twenty-four credit hours in the previous academic year, which incoming freshmen will not have. In the 2011 federal budget, summer Pell grants may be eliminated. A team of faculty and staff experts warned that such a new, earlier deadline will worsen the problem whereby proportionally more students from low-income and minority communities are already failing to complete all the steps in the existing application process, and cannot be admitted (see Figure 7).

The requirement of summer study will disparately affect low-income students who must rely on summer employment to be able to meet their living costs while in college. The systemwide faculty English Council wrote to the Board of Trustees that instead of merely proposing a summer program which remedial students could choose to utilize, this required program actually undermined California's Master Plan (1960) by imposing financial burdens and "forcing an identified group of students to participate in summer as a pre-condition of enrollment to the university, even though this same population of students is not only fully qualified for admission, but arrives at the CSU having earned high school GPAs of B or better" (CSU English Council 2010, ¶ 2).

Barely two months after ESP was adopted, reports from two campuses seemed to validate suspicions that new remediation practices are as much about lowering enrollment as about enhancing remedial students' skills. On July 1, 2010 an administrator at CSU Dominguez Hills wrote that "as a result of the decreasing state budget necessitating a system-wide decrease in enrollment, the CSUs are experiencing numerous student requests that cannot be accommodated. As you know we at CSUDH exceeded our targets last year and need to manage our new student enrollment very closely." She then reported that 785 students had failed to remediate, facing potential disenrollment by the end of the 2009-2010 academic year, an unprecedented increase compared to the 141 reported for 2007-2008, the last year which CSU made publicly available (K. Bragg, personal communication, July 1, 2010).

Less than three weeks later, The Bakersfield Californian reported that at California State University, Bakersfield "to cut costs, the university had eliminated four of nine math instructors, opting to move the remedial math program to a mostly online format. . . . More than half of the 1,600-plus students who took the new-style courses...



failed the math classes, department figures show. In the year before, about 60 percent of the 1,100 students in an instructor-based, classroom setting passed... The disparity in outcomes of the two instruction models was especially stark when comparing fall of 2008, when about 75 percent of students passed, and fall of 2009, when about 40 percent of students were successful" (Barrientos 2010, ¶ 5).

## **BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW: DOES HIGHER EDUCATION REMEDIATION HELP STUDENTS GRADUATE?**

Eleven years ago, Alexander Astin, founding director of UCLA's prestigious Higher Education Research Institute, gave a prescient warning about the debate over remediation at the California State University. "The remedial issue is particularly interesting because the Cal State people don't seem to understand that that's their most important work. They want to dump it on the secondary schools or the community colleges or whatever. ...For us to stand back and disavow any responsibility for the fact that these people need remediation is not only self-serving but it's just inaccurate...The poor folks in K-12 [kindergarten through high school] are taking the beating for problems that are very often out of their control—either issues of funding or class size or poor neighborhoods (Mills 1999, ¶ 7)...Just kicking these students out of the CSU is crazy. It's shortsighted in terms of the state interest. Why do we want a bunch of people with marginal literacy flooding into cities and towns of our state? We have a self-interest in educating these people well and valuing that part of our work" (Mills 1999, ¶ 8).

By 2004, 76% of all American higher education institutions provided remedial courses (Kreysa 2006) and it is easy to see the civil rights implications of remedial education. Parker and Richardson (2005) and others argue that the endemic and enduring issue of social inequities in the K-16 pipeline suggests a continuing, persistent need for remediation. Bahr (2008) states that "remediation is, by definition, a remedy intended to restore opportunity to those who otherwise may be relegated to meager wages, poor working conditions, and other consequences of socioeconomic marginalization" (422).

Gandara and Contreras (2009) state that "class privilege is tied to social and cultural capital—access to power and authority, to networks of influential and informed friends and colleagues, to the understanding of the workings of 'the system' that allow those with privilege in society to maintain it" (51). These researchers point to the literature that has consistently found social class to be connected to how well students perform in school, with students from higher social class backgrounds typically performing better than their lower class peers. Thus, Knapp and Wollverton argue that "social class is fundamental to understanding the workings and consequences of educational institutions" (2004, 657). Furthermore, social class is a driving force in determining academic preparation and opportunities, as well as success (Balfanz and Legters 2004; Orfield 2004; Gandara and Contreras 2009). The current U.S. K-12 public school system translates social class into structurally unequal access to knowledge

and resources for low-income students and students of color, resulting in unequal and diminished educational opportunities (Kozol 1991; Orfield 1992, 2004; Persell 1993; Sedlacek 1998; Knapp and Woolverton, 2004; Balfanz and Legters, 2004; Darling-Hammond 2004; Garcia 2004; Yun and Moreno, 2006; Gandara and Contreras, 2009). African American and Latino students constitute both a large portion of low-income students, as well as of students of color.

Recently, the Education Commission of the States' 2010 publication, *Getting Past Go: Rebuilding the Remedial Education Bridge to College Success*, cited U.S. Department of Education reports showing that around 34% of all new freshmen needed a minimum of one remedial course (Vandal 2010). However, pressing federal and state financial issues have caused many states to begin to reexamine the issue of higher education remediation.

There are currently no standardized criteria for defining courses or students as "remedial, and/or developmental," causing confusion in effectively identifying and analyzing such programs (Attewell, Lavin, Domina, and Levey 2006). Merisotis and Phipps (2000) argue, "Research about the effectiveness of remedial education programs has typically been sporadic, underfunded, and inconclusive" (75).

Using National Center for Educational Statistics data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of all U.S. students who entered ninth grade in 1988, updated in 2000, Attewell et al. (2006) found remedial students to be more academically diverse than is often believed, with 52% of low-income students represented in remedial classes, along with 24% of students from the highest income quartile. These researchers also found that 10% of high school students who scored in the highest skills test quartile, and 25% of those in the second highest, took courses labeled remedial. Furthermore, 14% of students participating in the most advanced high school curriculum took higher education remedial courses, as did 32% of students coming out of "fairly demanding courses in high school." On the other hand, of those twelfth-grade students who scored in the skills test lowest quartile, 32% did not enroll in any remediation, nor did 42% of those designated from the high schools in the lowest quartile of "curricular intensity" (899).

Overall, 61% of African American students and 35% of whites were in remedial courses. Still, when controlling for SES, high school performance, etc., African American students have a 16% greater probability of participating in remediation. Finally, when these two ethnicities are equally matched in terms of high school preparation, SES, family background, etc., African American students are 11% more likely to have taken remedial courses.

The Attewell et al. study (2006) reported that 52% of remedial students and 78% of nonremedial students earned a bachelor's degree in 8.5 years. In addition, 50% of African American and 34% of Latino remedial students graduated. The graduation rates for students enrolled in three or more remedial courses were found to be 12% to 15% lower than for similarly matched students who took no such courses. However, one

in three of these “multiple-course” remedial students were able to earn a bachelor’s degree in eight years.

The researchers observed pointedly that “if those students were deemed unsuitable for college and denied entry to four-year institutions, a large proportion of the minority graduates in the high school class of 1992 would never have received degrees” (Attewell et al. 2006, 915).

Bahr (2008) concluded that “postsecondary remediation is a hotly contested topic. Yet, remarkably few large-scale, comprehensive, multi-institutional evaluations of remediation have been put forward, leading to an astonishing lack of empirical evidence to inform this debate” (446). However, Bahr also found that students can and do successfully gain college-level skills by taking remedial courses in college, even when they start out with deep and multiple deficits (2010). The CSU statistics on completion are very positive.

## **THE CURRENT STUDY**

The current research examines whether recent policy changes to remedial education at the California State University constitute a civil rights issue, by unfairly reducing educational access and retention for CSU-eligible students from communities of color and low-income communities. We analyzed remediation and disenrollment rates in the CSU, with a focus on the five CSU campuses whose students have the highest need for remediation: Dominguez Hills, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Bakersfield, and East Bay. We also compared these high-remediation campuses with two types of campuses. The first campuses include five of the CSUs with the lowest remedial need: San Luis Obispo, San Diego, Humboldt, Sonoma, and Long Beach. The second campuses are three low-remediation CSUs adjacent to high-remediation campuses and which attract higher-skilled high school graduates from their feeder schools. These three low-remediation adjacent CSU campuses include Long Beach (also one of the lowest remediation), Pomona, and Northridge. For this study, we examined the following ethnic groups: African American, Mexican American, Asian American, and European American (i.e., white). To examine the effects of the recent budget crisis on remedial education and students’ civil rights, we focused on the time period from 2004 to 2009, during which the CSU budget faced deficits each year.

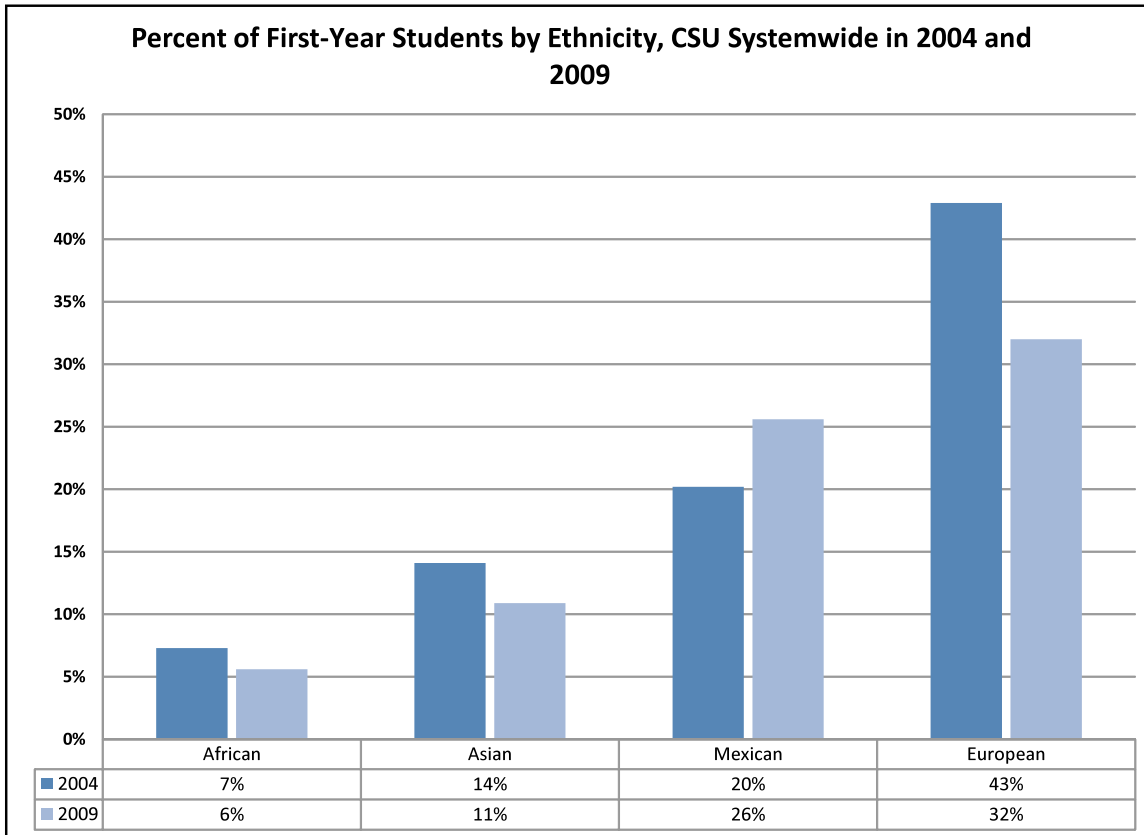
## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **First-Year Student Enrollment**

We examined the number and percent of first-time freshmen attending the CSU system-wide in the fall quarter by ethnicity for the years 2004 to 2009. Figure 1 presents the ethnic diversity of the CSU systemwide in 2004 compared to 2009. The largest ethnic group was whites (the CSU’s term for European Americans), making up almost 37% of the freshman class ( $n = 17,482.8$ ). The next largest group was Mexican

Americans at 21% (n = 9,837.8), followed by Asian Americans at 12% (n = 5,883.2) and African Americans at 7% (n = 3,375.7). Over the years from 2004 to 2009, the percentages of African American, Asian American, and white freshmen decreased significantly. The percentage of Mexican American students increased. The number of African American freshmen went down significantly in fall 2009, the year that serious enrollment control was initiated by the CSU. For the years from 2004 to 2008, the mean percentage of black freshmen was 7% and the mean number was 3,464. However, in 2009, there were only 5.6% black students (n = 2,934).

**Figure 1. Percent of First-Year Students by Ethnicity, CSU Systemwide in 2004 and 2009.**



Source: *First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Campus and Ethnicity, Table 3. (CSU Analytic Studies).*

## Remediation and Under-represented Students

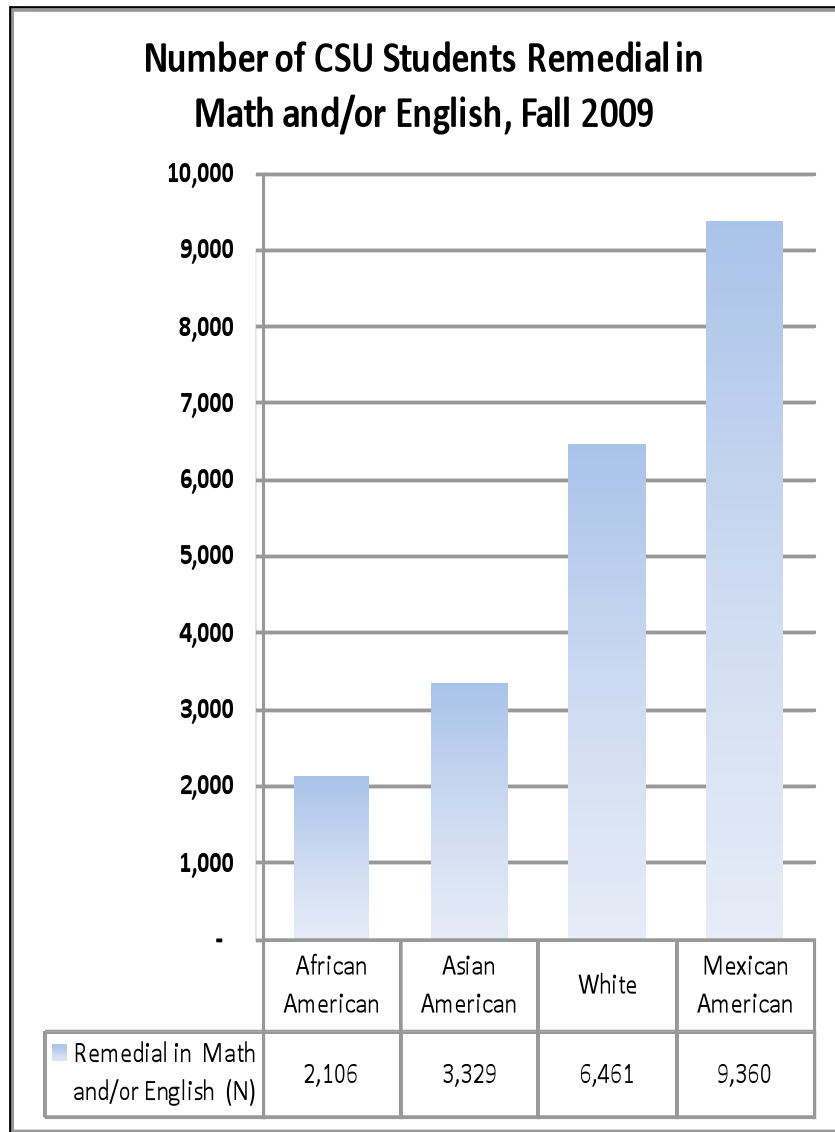
The need for remediation is higher among under-represented low-income and minority groups. For example, in fall 2008, 64.1% of African American first-time freshmen tested remedial in math and 65.9% in English. For Mexican American freshmen, the rate was 51.2% in math, and 63.9% in English. Asian American students had 26.1% needing remediation in math and 54.3% in English, and white students demonstrated the lowest need for remediation, with 25.1% remedial in math and 28.2% in English. Although the percentage of white students who are remedial is the smallest, the number of white students needing remediation is large—second only in size to Mexican American remedial students. (Table A2 in the Appendix presents the need for remediation by ethnicity systemwide and at the twelve target campuses over time in 2009.)

**Table 1.** Remedial Students by Ethnicity, Systemwide Fall 2009 – Regularly Admitted First-Time Freshmen Needing Remediation in math and/or English

	Remedial in math and/or English (N)	%	% Remedial
<b>African American</b>	2,106	83%	7%
<b>Asian American</b>	3,329	60%	11%
<b>White</b>	6,461	39%	22%
<b>Mexican American</b>	9,360	74%	32%
<b>All First-Time Freshman</b>	29,230	58%	100%

Source: Proficiency Reports of Students Entering the CSU 2009 (CSU Analytic Studies).

**Figure 2. Number of First-Year Students Remedial by Ethnicity, CSU Systemwide in Fall 2009.**



Source: Proficiency Reports of Students Entering the CSU System 2009 (CSU Analytic Studies).

We can approximate the percentage of low-income students by examining the percentage of Pell Grant recipients, but this is an underestimate because noncitizens and some others are not eligible or did not apply. The Federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduate students to promote access to postsecondary education. Eligibility is determined by family or personal income and the cost of attending the college. In the 2008-2009 academic year, there were 129,746 Pell Grant recipients at the CSU systemwide (U.S. Department of Education, 2004-08; Headcount Enrollment by Student Level, 2004-08, Table 6), or 34% of all CSU undergraduates. Since the cost of attending the CSU has increased from 2004 to

2008 (the last year for which Pell data is available), we might expect the percentage of Pell Grant recipients to increase at CSU campuses. This was true at Bakersfield and Los Angeles (see Table 2), where the percentages of Pell Grant recipients increased from 52% to 56% and 45% to 51%, respectively. However, at several of the schools we examined—Dominguez Hills, Humboldt, Pomona, San Luis Obispo, and Sonoma—the percentages of these students have decreased over time ( $p = .05$ ), suggesting that a smaller percentage of low-income students have been attending these schools over time. At Dominguez Hills, the percentage decreased from 51% in 2004-2005 to 42% in 2008-2009. The decrease in Pell students over time was smaller at Northridge, and San Diego. Pell student percentages did not change over time at East Bay, Long Beach, or San Bernardino. Looking at the low-remediation schools as a group, the average percent of Pell Grant recipients at these campuses has decreased over time, suggesting that fewer low-income students are attending these CSUs.

**Table 2.** *Pell Grant Recipients, Target Campuses 2004/05-2008/09*  
(Listed from Highest to Lowest Total Remediation)

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
<b>Dominguez Hills</b>	51%	46%	47%	46%	42%
<b>Los Angeles</b>	45	46	46	48	51
<b>San Bernardino</b>	56	49	45	47	48
<b>Bakersfield</b>	52	51	51	55	56
<b>East Bay</b>	32	32	33	31	34
<b>Northridge</b>	55	40	38	36	38
<b>Long Beach</b>	31	30	28	29	31
<b>Pomona</b>	37	33	32	32	32
<b>Sonoma</b>	25	24	23	22	22
<b>Humboldt</b>	48	45	42	42	43
<b>San Diego</b>	28	27	27	27	27
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	19	17	17	15	16

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *Distribution of Federal Pell Grant Program Funds by Institution; Headcount Enrollment by Student Level*, Table 6.

In general, the greater the percentage of students who have Pell Grants at a campus, the higher the remediation rate of the campus ( $r = .75$ ,  $p = .00$ ). For example, at the three highest-remediation campuses in 2008, Dominguez Hills, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino, the average percentage of Pell recipients was 47%. In contrast, at the three lowest-remediation campuses, San Luis Obispo, San Diego, and Humboldt, the average percentage of Pell recipients was 29%. The data show more poverty and a higher percentage of African American and Mexican American students at the CSU campuses with higher remediation. We compared the five CSU campuses with the

highest need for remediation to the CSUs with the lowest remediation need by ethnicity. The highest-remediation schools had significantly higher percentages of low-income students and higher percentages of African American + Mexican American students, African American students, and Mexican American students. The lowest-remediation campuses had significantly higher percentages of white students but there was no significant difference in the percentage of Asian American students.

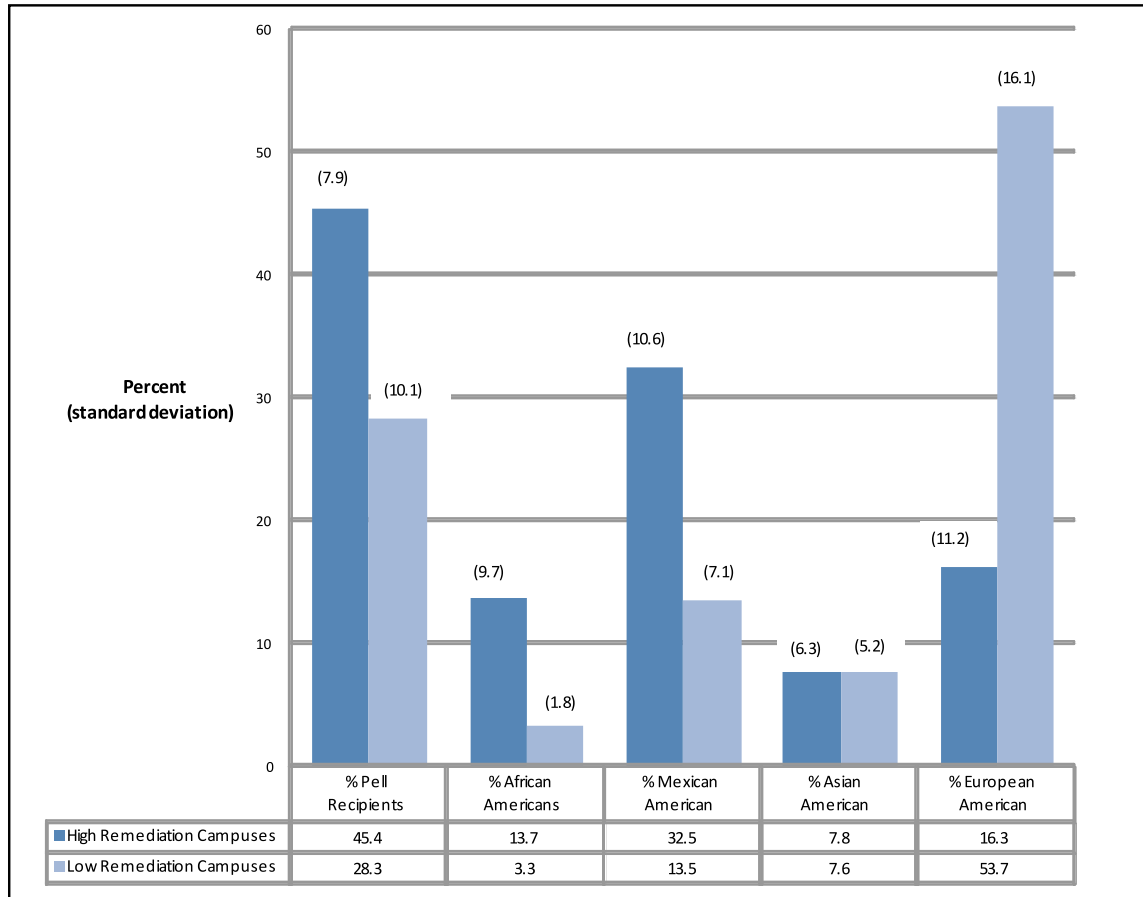
**Table 3.** *CSU Campuses listed by Remediation Need and Pell Grant Recipients*

	<b>Mean Reg. Admit Frosh</b>	<b>Needing Any Remediation Mean Pell Recipients</b>
	<b>Fall 2004-Fall 2009</b>	<b>2004-2008</b>
<b>Dominguez Hills</b>	91%	46%
<b>Los Angeles</b>	87%	47%
<b>San Bernardino</b>	75%	49%
<b>Bakersfield</b>	74%	53%
<b>East Bay</b>	74%	32%
<b>Northridge</b>	73%	41%
<b>Long Beach</b>	55%	30%
<b>Pomona</b>	54%	33%
<b>Sonoma</b>	50%	23%
<b>Humboldt</b>	45%	44%
<b>San Diego</b>	41%	27%
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	13%	17%



**Figure 3. Remediation Need by Pell Status and Ethnicity, 2004-2007**

*Note: Mean percentages of Pell Recipients and ethnic groups at five high- vs. five low-remediation campuses.*



*Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2004/05-2008/09. Distribution of Federal Pell Grant Program Funds by Institution; Headcount Enrollment by Student Level, Table 6.*

As the proportion of white students increases, the poverty rate goes down. The percentage of Asian American students at a campus is not related to the percentage of Pell recipients, suggesting that there is not a connection between poverty and Asian American ethnicity in the CSU.

It is important to note that white students attending high-remediation CSU campuses have remediation rates much higher than other whites at low-remediation CSU campuses—and sometimes even higher remedial rates than those for African Americans or Mexican Americans at low-remediation campuses! For example, 57% of white freshmen at Dominguez Hills and 54% at Los Angeles needed remediation in math in 2009 compared to 15% at Long Beach and 14% at San Diego. Meanwhile, the African American and Mexican American remediation rates at Pomona and San Luis Obispo were lower than the rates for whites at Dominguez Hills and Los Angeles. The campuses with the highest levels of poverty tend to serve disadvantaged students of all ethnicities.

## **Trends in Remediation Rates**

Systemwide, the number of students needing remediation in math and the number needing remediation in English both increased over time, but their percentage among first-year students did not significantly change. The average percentage of students needing remediation from 2004 to 2009 in English was about 47%, and in math was about 37%. Many of these students were remedial in both English and math. On average, 56.5% of freshmen systemwide needed remediation in math, English, or both from 2004 to 2009.

Over the years studied, the number of Mexican American freshmen needing remediation in math and English increased, as did the number of European American students needing English remediation, while the numbers of Asian Americans and African Americans needing remediation did not show a linear change. The percentage of Asian American students in the CSU that needed remediation in math and in English decreased over time. The percentage of regularly admitted African American, Mexican American, or European American freshmen needing remediation did not change at the CSU as a whole during these years.

In addition to systemwide data, we also examined the percentage of students needing remediation at twelve campuses: the five with the highest overall remediation rate (Dominguez Hills [DH], Los Angeles [LA], San Bernardino [SB], East Bay [EB], and Bakersfield [BA]), five campuses with low remediation rates (San Luis Obispo [SLO], San Diego [SD], Humboldt [HU], Sonoma [SON], and Long Beach [LB]) and three “alternate campuses” that attracted large numbers of students from high schools that were geographically closer to high-remediation CSU campuses (one of which, Long Beach, is also one of the low-remediation campuses). The remedial student percentage increased in both math and English at East Bay, increased in English at Sonoma, and increased in math and English at San Diego. The percentage of remedial freshmen decreased at Pomona (POM) in both math and English and at LB in math.

## **Disenrollment of Remedial Students**

CSU's remediation policies have a disparate impact upon campuses based on the makeup of their student body. Taking the average across our target campuses (BA, DH, EB, LA, SB, LB, NO, POM, SD, HU, SLO, SON) from 2004 to 2007 (the most recent years for which disenrollment data is available from the CSU), the higher the percentage of African American freshmen on a campus, the higher the percentage of remedial freshmen who were disenrolled ( $r = .78, p = .00$ ). As the percentage of African Americans on a campus increases, so does the percentage of remedial students disenrolled within their first year of college (see Table 4). In contrast, the larger the percentage of white students on a campus, the lower the disenrollment rate ( $r = -.61, p = .03$ ). For example, the two campuses in the CSU with the highest African American student population, Dominguez Hills and Northridge, also have the highest disenrollment rates.

**Table 4.** CSU Disenrollment of Students by Ethnic Makeup of Campus

Campus	% Disenrolled*	% Af Am	% Mex Am	% Af Am + Mex Am**	% Euro Am**
Dominguez Hills	24.8	30.7	32.4	63.2	5.1
Northridge	18.3	11.6	21.9	33.1	24.5
Los Angeles	15.8	7.6	42.0	47.6	4.7
Cal Poly Pomona	13.5	3.7	24.6	27.5	25.5
Long Beach	12.8	5.8	22.7	27.0	29.6
San Diego	12.5	4.0	19.5	20.8	48.1
San Bernardino	11.3	10.7	37.0	45.1	24.2
Sonoma	11.3	2.1	8.6	10.2	69.8
East Bay	8.3	11.8	14.5	23.9	17.8
Humboldt	6.3	3.5	9.7	12.0	54.8
Bakersfield	4.5	7.7	36.4	44.1	29.6
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo	2.8	1.0	6.8	7.5	66.6
*Average percent of remedial freshman who were disenrolled, 2004-2007					
**Average percent of freshman who were African American, Mexican American, European American 2004-2007					

Source: CSU Freshman Proficiency and Remediation at Entry and One Year Later 2009.

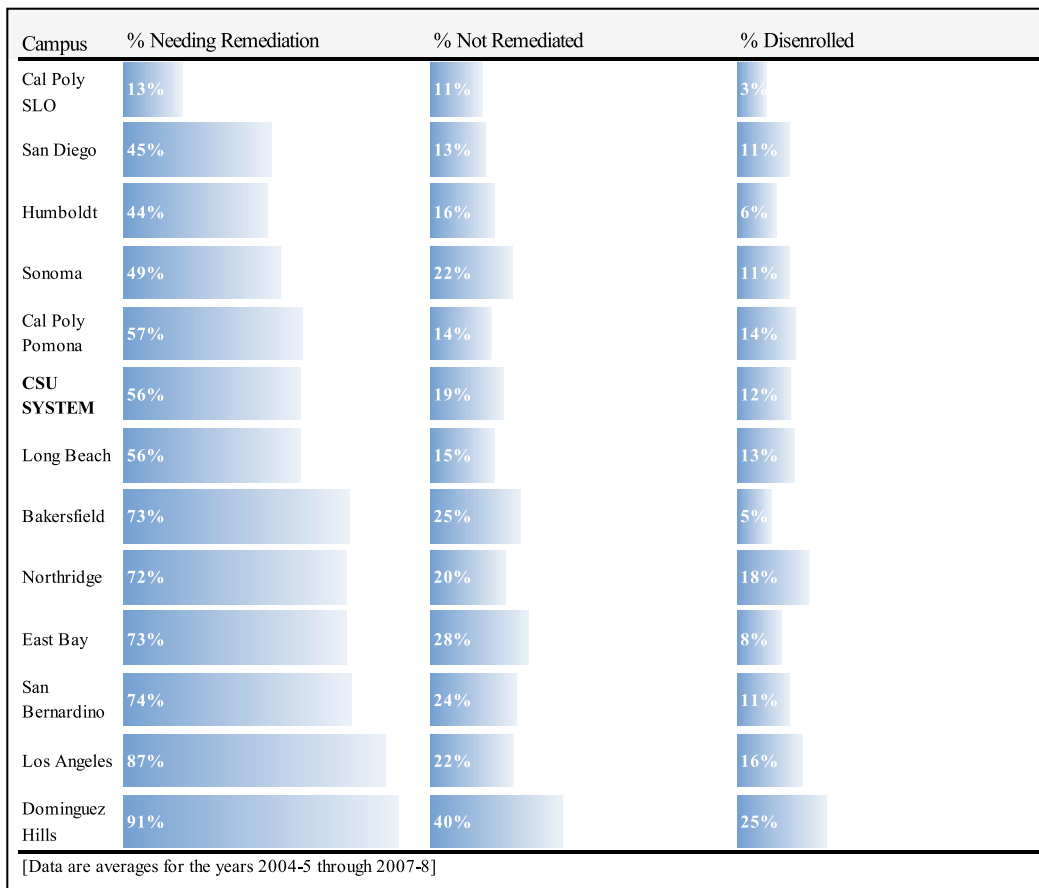
In addition, the higher the remediation rate on a campus, the higher the disenrollment rate. There is a significant correlation between campus remediation rate and disenrollment rate each year from 2004 to 2007, as can be seen in Table A3 in the Appendix. For example, the average percentage of CSU-eligible remedial freshmen not allowed to return to Dominguez Hills between 2004 and 2007 was 25%, while the average rate at San Diego was 3.9%. At the five campuses with the highest remediation need, an average of 13% of remedial freshmen were disenrolled. At the five campuses with the lowest remediation, an average of only 9% remedial freshmen were disenrolled. If we focus only on the top three most remedial campuses, 17% of all remedial freshmen were disenrolled compared to 7% of all remedial freshmen for the three lowest remediation campuses. This, of course, is related to the differing backgrounds of students enrolling.

The rate at which students are being disenrolled is increasing during the current period of CSU budget crisis. At our study's target campuses, the rate of disenrollment of remedial students went up between 2004 and 2007 at San Bernardino and San Luis Obispo. It went down at Humboldt. The percent of all regular-admit freshmen who entered college needing remediation and were disenrolled the next year went up at Bakersfield, Northridge, San Bernardino, and San Diego. As noted above, CSU Dominguez Hills has announced an enormous increase in the number failing to remediate in 2009-10, which should significantly increase disenrollment there.

Given that the CSU's remedial population contains a higher proportion of low-income, minority, and women students than the systemwide population does, it is reasonable to infer that a more punitive application of remediation policy has resulted in proportionally greater disenrollment of low-income, minority, and female first-year students. We cannot definitively state this because the CSU has refused requests by employees, and journalists, and the Civil Rights Project's freedom of information request to provide disenrollment data for ethnic and gender groups (Silverstein 2003).

Executive Order 665 Munitz (1997) was supposed to establish one statewide policy governing remediation at all twenty-three CSU campuses, and the fact of a persistent ethnic disparity in the rates of disenrollment inherently raises a civil rights issue. Moreover, the announcement of an unprecedented increase in the number of first-year students at CSU Dominguez Hills who failed to remediate and were disenrolled in 2010 raises the question of whether the current budget crisis is unduly influencing the application of remediation policy.

**Figure 4: Percentage of First-Time Freshmen by Campus**



## Special Admit Students

Special admits (also identified by the term “exceptionally admitted”) are students who were initially denied admission by the institution because of one or more of the following: low high school GPA (below 2.0); low SAT or ACT scores; and/or failure to complete the appropriate high school college preparatory course taking pattern (A-G course completion required for CSU eligibility; Yun and Moreno 2006; Haras and McEvoy 2007). However, the University admits a small percentage of such students, deemed to have the potential for success in university studies, as “exception” or “special” admits, a common practice in admissions at many universities because of the limits of tests to fully evaluate students’ potential. From 2004 to 2009, an average of 6% of first-year students were “exceptionally admitted” each year (Exception Admit CSU Systemwide 2004-2009). The percent of African American freshmen who were exceptionally admitted during this time period was higher than other ethnic groups, almost 19% of all first-year African Americans in the CSU. Of Mexican American freshmen from California high schools, 9% were exceptional admits. The proportion of Asian Americans was 5% and of whites almost 3%. As the numbers in Table 5 demonstrate, the percentage of special admits steadily increased from 2004 to 2007, and then dropped significantly in 2008, and again in 2009.

**Table 5.** CSU Special Admit Freshmen from California High Schools,

Systemwide from 2004 to 2009					
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
2,122 (5.3)	2,685 (6.1)	3,757 (7.8)	4,169 (8.1)	3,513 (6.8)	2,070 (4.1)

Source: Exception Admit CSU Systemwide 2004-2009.  
 Note: Number (and percentage) of students exceptionally admitted.

The need for remediation is higher at campuses serving more special admits (see Table 6). Although it is not published on their Analytic Studies website, the CSU reported the remediation need of exceptional admits from fall 2009 to the California Legislature as required under AB 1182. Freshmen who were exceptionally admitted in fall 2009 totaled 2,286, of which 74.6 % were remedial in math and 80% in English (Quillian 2010). This rate is much higher than the rate of 37.6% in math and 49.1% in English reported for regular admit students in fall 2009.

**Table 6.** *Fall 2009 Exceptional Admit Rates at High-Remediation, Low-Remediation, and "Alternate Campuses," Fall 2009*

<b>Study Campuses from High- to Low-Remediation</b>	<b>% of Exceptional Admits from CA High Schools</b>
<b>Domiguez Hills</b>	14.6%
<b>Los Angeles</b>	9.5%
<b>San Bernardino</b>	4.7%
<b>Bakersfield</b>	12.9%
<b>East Bay</b>	28.2%
<b>Northridge</b>	3%
<b>Long Beach</b>	0.4%
<b>Pomona</b>	0.4%
<b>Sonoma</b>	3.2%
<b>Humboldt</b>	6%
<b>San Diego</b>	0.3%
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	0.1%
<b>CSU System Average</b>	4.1%

*Source: Exception Admit CSU Systemwide 2004-2009.*

## **Disparity in High School "Feeders" to CSU Campuses**

Students at high-remediation CSU campuses are likely to have attended "high needs" lower-performing high schools. The top two feeder high schools to the twelve CSUs studied were examined to determine their rankings for academic quality, low-income student population, second language student population, and African American-plus-Latino population. These data provide a rough socioeconomic profile of the students at these schools, for comparison with data the CSU uses to identify low-income students on its campuses (i.e., Pell Grant population, African American plus Mexican American population).

Ironically, a distinction in names accurately symbolizes that the five low-remediation campuses serve a very different student population than do the five high-remediation CSUs. California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; Humboldt State University; Long Beach State University; San Diego State University; and Sonoma State University do not use the more common designation for CSU campuses, in which "CSU" precedes the campus location name (e.g., CSU Los Angeles), a designation used by all five high-remediation campuses. As Table 7 shows, the top two feeder high schools to these five have much higher API scores and much lower rates of poverty, English Learners, and African American + Latino students than do the feeder schools to the five highest-remediation CSU campuses. This reflects a developing de facto academic

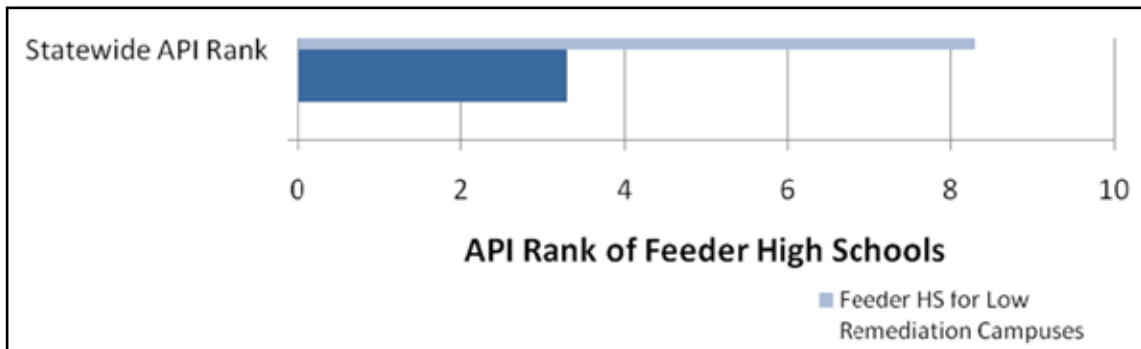
segregation of many low-income and minority students into high-remediation CSU campuses where they have a greater likelihood of disenrollment. See Table A5 in the Appendix for data on the top two feeder high schools for each of the five highest-remediation, the five lowest-remediation, and the two alternate campuses.

First, of the twenty-four feeder high schools to the twelve CSUs which were studied, four of the feeders to the high-remediation campuses were among the five feeder schools with the lowest scores in campus academic quality (i.e., API). Nine of the top ten feeders to the high-remediation CSUs had among the ten lowest API scores for feeders to the any of the twelve CSUs studied. In addition, four of the feeders to the high-remediation CSUs were among the five feeder schools with the highest rates of poverty (i.e., percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals), and eight were among the ten with the highest rates of poverty. Furthermore, four of the ten feeders to the high-remediation CSUs were among the five highest in English learners, and seven were among the ten highest in English learners. Finally, of the top ten feeders to the high-remediation campuses, five were the highest in African American + Latino student population (CPEC n.d.; this data from California Postsecondary Education Commission doesn't show data for "Mexican American" as CSU does, but uses the grouping, "Latino"), and eight were among the top ten in African American + Latino students. Feeder high schools with low API "academic quality" scores were associated with large populations of African Americans + Latinos, higher poverty, more English learners, and with being a top-two feeder to a high-remediation CSU campus.

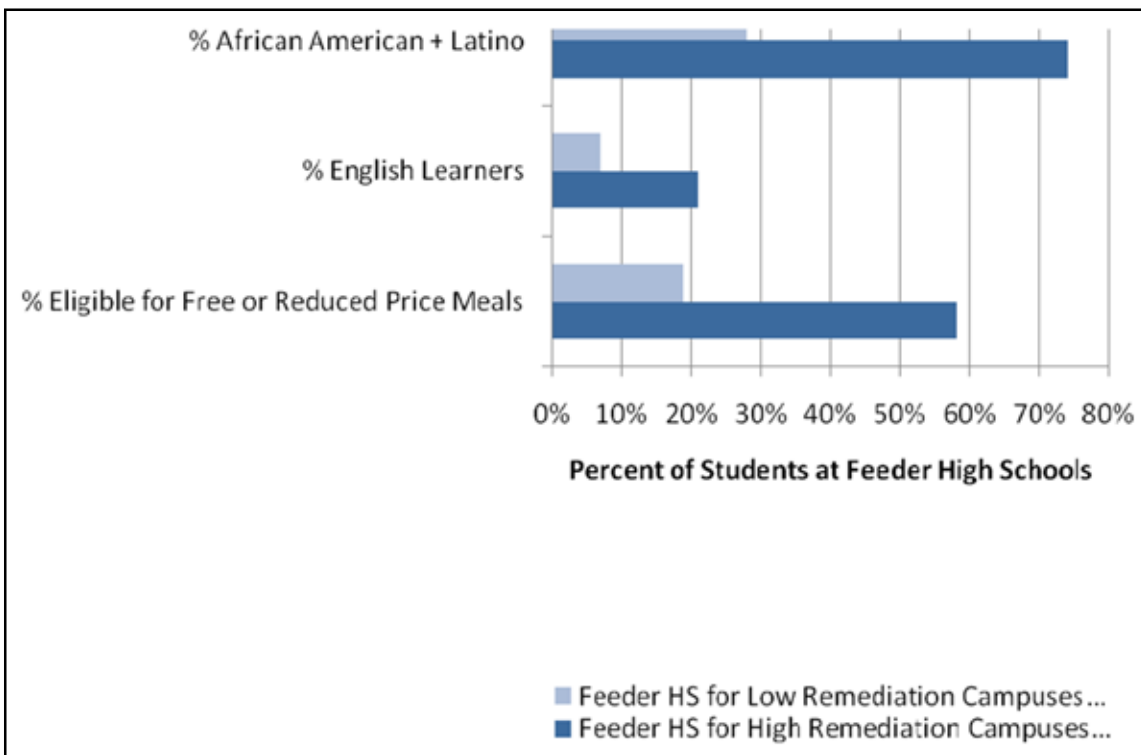
**Table 7: Characteristics of Top Two Feeder High Schools for High- and Low-Remediation Campuses, 2007-2008**

	<b>Feeder HS for High- Remediation Campuses (Average)</b>	<b>Feeder HS for "Alternate Campuses" (Average)</b>	<b>Feeder HS for Low- Remediation Campuses (Average)</b>
<b>Statewide API Rank</b>	3.3	7.3	8.3
<b>% Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals</b>	58%	36%	19%
<b>% English Learners</b>	21%	14%	7%
<b>% African American + Latino</b>	74%	45%	28%

**Figure 5. Academic Performance Index Rank of Feeder High Schools to High- vs. Low-Remediation Campuses**



**Figure 6. Demographic Characteristics of Feeder High Schools to High- v. Low-Remediation Campuses**



There are disturbing indications that graduates from the same high schools, but with differing levels of remedial need, attend different CSU campuses. Though CSU's data does not reveal how many entrants from a particular high school were remedial, data on Special Admits is available by high school; as shown above, a high proportion of Special Admits can be expected to also need remediation. Some top feeder schools to high-remediation CSUs actually sent more of their graduates to "alternate CSUs" than to their closer but high-remediation CSU. For example, Dominguez Hills' top feeder (Gardena High) sent it twenty-four graduates, of whom fourteen (58%) were Specials;



Gardena also sent a total of thirty-nine graduates to Long Beach and Northridge, none of whom were Specials. The second top feeder to Dominguez Hills in 2008 (Fremont) sent twenty-two graduates to Dominguez Hills, of whom twelve (55%) were Specials, and fifty-two to Long Beach and Northridge, of whom only two were Specials (4%).

CSU Los Angeles's top feeder (Roosevelt, 87% math remedial) sent it sixty-eight students, of whom fourteen (21%) were Specials, and also sent a total of thirty-eight to CSLB (none Specials) and CSUN (of whom one, or 4%, was Special). CSU Los Angeles's second top feeder (Wilson, 78% math remedial) sent it fifty-four graduates (28% of whom were Specials) and a total of twenty-four to Long Beach (0 Specials) and Northridge (15% Specials—3 of 20). One final fact hints at the nature of the disparity between CSU campuses, and how it impacts student choices. Two high schools are the namesake of the city in which the high-remediation CSU campuses are located in Southern California: Los Angeles High (ten miles from CSU Los Angeles) and Carson High (four miles from CSU Dominguez Hills, which is in Carson). Yet both sent a far bigger number of students to "alternate" CSUs, which are twice as far away. Significantly, of graduates from these two feeders that did enter CSU Los Angeles and CSU Dominguez Hills, a much greater proportion were Special Admits.

**Table 8.** *Number of Regular and Special Admit Students from High School Feeder Schools*

	Feeder High School	CSUDH	CSULA	CSULB	CSUN
<b>CSU Dominguez Hills Top Two</b>	<b>1.Gardena</b>				
	# Regulars	10	0	23	16
	# Specials	14	0	0	0
	<b>2.Fremont</b>				
	# Regulars	10	22	20	32
	# Specials	14	4	0	2
<b>CSU Los Angeles Top Two</b>	<b>1.Roosevelt</b>				
	# Regulars	0	54	11	26
	# Specials	0	14	0	1
	<b>2.Wilson</b>				
	# Regulars	0	39	4	17
	# Specials	0	15	0	3

**Table 8. Continued**

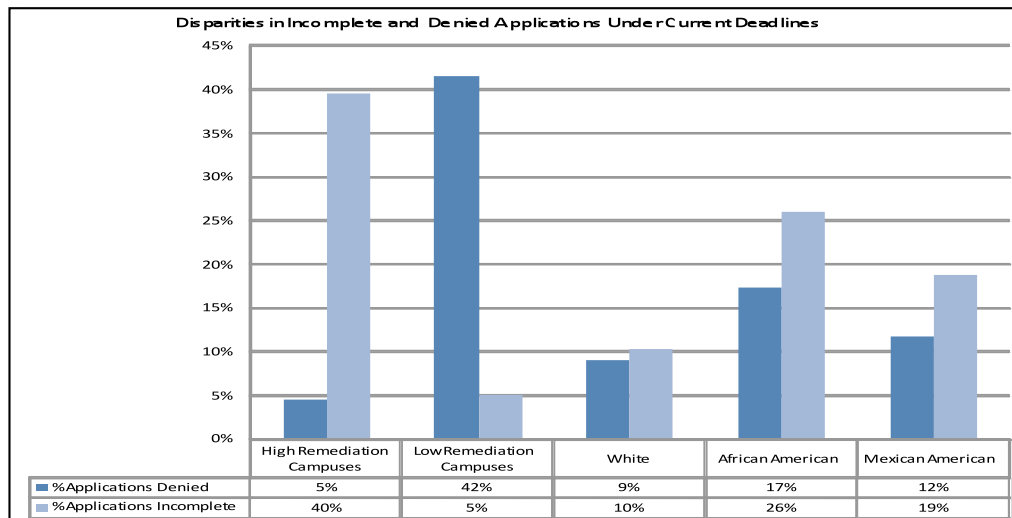
<b>CSU Northridge Top Two</b>	<b>1.Granada</b>				
	# Regulars	0	0	0	115
	# Specials	0	1	0	2
	<b>2.Los Angeles (20 miles to CSU Northridge, 10 to CSULA)</b>				
	# Regulars	0	18	0	90
	# Specials	0	5	0	17
<b>CSU Long Beach Top Two</b>	<b>1.Wilson</b>				
	# Regulars	3	0	121	0
	# Specials	3	0	1	0
	<b>2.Polytechnic</b>				
	# Regulars	3	0	110	0
	# Specials	4	0	0	0

### **Disparity in Incomplete Applications, and Impact of “Early Start” Remediation**

Examination of data documenting the processing of applications to the California State University reveals that while the rate of applications denied is not higher for high-remediation campuses, there was a de facto “denial” in the form of applications that were rejected for being incomplete prior to their acceptance/denial. The number of applications rejected for being incomplete was far higher among the five high-remediation campuses than in the CSU systemwide, and was also higher for applicants of color than for white applicants (CSU New Students [Duplicated] Applications and Admissions By Campus and Student Level 2009).

Under Executive Order 1048 Reed (2010) all remedial students will have to meet new earlier deadlines to apply for summer Early Start remediation or risk losing their admission to CSU. Those needing financial aid will have to meet new, earlier deadlines to qualify for aid in the summer before their first fall classes. This can be expected to worsen the existing disparity in incomplete applications, raising civil rights issues that CSU has failed to note, or to address. The cutback in counseling resources in both high schools and CSUs is likely to make this problem worse.

**Figure 7. Disparity in Incomplete Applications Under Current Deadlines**



Source: CSU New Students (Duplicated) Applications and Admissions by Campus and Student Level 2009.

### Problems With CSU Remediation Data

The university system's data undercounts remediation in two ways. First, it does not include the remediation rate of Special Admit students in the data it reports, though they make up about 8% of the student body. Second, during students' freshman year, CSU only releases data on remediation rates for math or English, by gender and ethnicity, but does not provide the overall remediation rate, which is always higher than either. One year later, CSU does report the overall remediation rate for that year and the number of students disenrolled, but that report excludes any information about ethnicity. No report connects the data for ethnicity to the overall remediation rate, nor to the disenrollment rate.

Faculty and professional staff working for the CSU have repeatedly asked that the administration release crucial information about equal access and retention, such as the rates of disenrollment of unremediated students by ethnicity, gender, income, and special admission status. In 2003, the Los Angeles Times reported that "Cal State officials said they did not yet have a breakdown by ethnic and racial groups for freshmen who were ousted from the system's campuses last year" (Silverstein 2003). Such data never did get published, and seven years later, in April, 2010, the CSU reported that staff layoffs and furloughs implemented in the wake of 2008's fiscal crisis had prevented its timely compliance with remediation reporting responsibilities to the Legislature under AB 1182 (Quillian 2010).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

CSU data show that high-remediation campuses serve proportionally more low-income students and students of color than do the campuses with the lowest remediation rates. It is also clear that these students tend to come from segregated feeder high schools of relatively poor academic performance and high poverty. Students at high-remediation CSU campuses are less likely to complete their remediation courses successfully in their first year and are more frequently disenrolled than those who attend low-remediation campuses serving more affluent and white students. There is a reproduction of economic and racial inequality occurring in the CSU. Low-income CSU-eligible students are being unfairly punished by recent CSU remediation policies for being born into their economic backgrounds and attending schools in their communities. Our results on increased disenrollment of remedial CSU students are particularly perilous for the educational opportunities of African American students, who tend to test highest in remediation and attend high schools and CSU campuses with high poverty rates. The decrease in black enrollment in 2009 is cause for concern. These civil rights implications of the application of remedial policy have hardly ever been publicly examined by the University.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- CSU should convene an academic conference to address the reasons for ethnic and class disparities in remediation, proficiency, and disenrollment rates in the CSU system, and to report the best practices for minimizing punitive impacts on high-remediation campuses serving large ratios of low-income and minority students. This must include analysis of variations in proficiency levels of students from various feeder high schools, and measures to ensure that no CSU campuses become, de facto, the designated campuses for remedial first-year students.
- The CSU system should financially support those remediation costs representing that share of a campus's remediation rate which is greater than the previous year's CSU systemwide average. At the very least, such financial assistance should be provided to campuses whose remediation rate is at or above 66% of all first-year students, campuses which all disproportionately serve low-income and minority students. New changes eliminating summer Pell Grants make this more urgent.
- The new Early Start summer remediation requirement should be amended to allow students to be exempted if their financial circumstances require it. Those students would begin remedial courses in the fall of their first year.
- Online technology should be adopted as a supplement to the necessary amount of service provided by faculty and academic support professionals, rather than merely to provide the cheapest possible means of instruction, which has proven to be far less effective at remediating students successfully.
- Campuses should not impose the penalty of "disenrolling" students unless the quality of remediation courses and services can be guaranteed by the campus faculty and academic support staff experts, and especially not where cost-cutting methodologies have resulted in increased student failure rates.
- CSU must publish data as to the proficiency and remediation rates and disenrollment, as well as the first-year performance, of students by ethnicity, gender, income, and special admission status.
- CSU must determine the source of the disparity in the rate of incomplete applications by ethnicity, and take steps to redress it.
- CSU campuses must not be relieved of their responsibility to provide admission priority to those applicants whose residence is most proximate to each campus.

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APPENDIX

**Table A1. First-Time Freshmen at the CSU by Ethnicity Percentages, Fall 2004-Fall 2009**  
(Systemwide and Target Campuses)

Campus	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Bakersfield</b>						
Af Am	9.7	12.4	10.1	10.2	.5	6.2
Mex Am	37.7	41.5	35.5	40.2	39.8	33.7
Asian Am	4.2	3.0	2.7	2.3	1.9	2.5
Euro Am	37.8	30.7	25.3	24.4	15.7	14.7
<b>Dominguez Hills</b>						
Af Am	37.7	41.7	36.6	37.2	35.3	24.8
Mex Am	34.8	31.1	33.3	31.7	33.3	43.1
Asian Am	3.2	2.4	3.0	2.0	1.9	1.0
Euro Am	6.1	5.3	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.3
<b>East Bay</b>						
Af Am	15.7	18.9	18.0	15.3	18.4	14.5
Mex Am	12.5	14.3	11.3	13.9	12.0	21.7
Asian Am	23.3	20.5	18.9	13.1	17.9	13.5
Euro Am	22.6	22.8	14.5	12.0	14.0	13.1
<b>Los Angeles</b>						
Af Am	10.6	10.2	8.8	9.0	7.4	7.0
Mex Am	41.9	41.3	39.6	40.9	44.5	49.3
Asian Am	17.6	17.8	13.3	13.1	10.7	11.2
Euro Am	6.4	5.2	4.9	3.7	3.7	4.1
<b>San Bernardino</b>						
Af Am	14.7	14.2	14.1	13.6	12.9	9.2
Mex Am	39.6	39.0	31.7	34.7	3.8	48.1
Asian Am	5.0	6.0	4.1	5.1	39.4	3.4
Euro Am	24.8	27.3	22.9	20.0	20.4	15.4
<b>Northridge</b>						
Af Am	13.0	15.5	12.6	15.0	13.5	10.3
Mex Am	24.3	24.4	21.4	20.5	23.9	28.8
Asian Am	11.1	10.4	8.2	7.4	7.7	7.2
Euro Am	28.4	27.7	23.4	23.9	20.8	20.2

Table A1. Continued

<b>Pomona</b>	4.8	4.1	4.2	3.5	3.8	3.2
<i>Af Am</i>	22.3	25.3	23.7	25.4	19.2	29.4
<i>Mex Am</i>	27.1	25.8	22.1	21.5	24.6	16.7
<i>Asian Am</i>	30.7	27.4	24.2	22.1	26.4	25.5
<i>Euro Am</i>						
<b>Long Beach</b>	7.6	7.1	5.7	6.9	5.3	4.4
<i>Af Am</i>	23.2	21.3	39.6	22.1	15.4	28.7
<i>Mex Am</i>	15.7	15.9	15.7	16.5	24.7	15.8
<i>Asian Am</i>	33.5	34.7	29.8	27.3	29.1	22.2
<i>Euro Am</i>						
<b>Sonoma</b>	2.6	3.2	2.9	2.7	2.2	1.6
<i>Af Am</i>	8.3	10.4	10.0	8.0	2.4	11.7
<i>Mex Am</i>	3.3	3.5	4.4	3.2	9.2	2.5
<i>Asian Am</i>	78.1	75.5	65.0	68.8	69.4	62.2
<i>Euro Am</i>						
<b>Humboldt</b>	7.8	7.5	6.9	5.3	4.4	3.4
<i>Af Am</i>	8.5	13.7	8.2	9.1	2.4	16.9
<i>Mex Am</i>	5.6	3.1	2.4	3.0	9.3	2.7
<i>Asian Am</i>	70.4	65.2	50.1	45.5	47.6	55.4
<i>Euro Am</i>						
<b>San Diego</b>	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.7	4.3	4.3
<i>Af Am</i>	16.5	17.5	16.2	18.1	7.5	27.2
<i>Mex Am</i>	8.0	8.0	7.2	7.9	21.8	6.4
<i>Asian Am</i>	56.3	53.2	46.9	45.7	40.6	36.4
<i>Euro Am</i>						
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	1.2	0.9	1.3	1.0	1.2	0.6
<i>Af Am</i>	7.0	6.0	6.4	7.6	8.4	7.9
<i>Mex Am</i>	10.2	9.6	9.1	9.8	7.2	9.4
<i>Asian Am</i>	74.3	75.8	66.0	65.1	67.3	64.1
<i>Euro Am</i>						

Source: CSU Analytic Studies Table 3. First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Campus and Ethnicity.

**Table A2. Percentages of Regularly Admitted First-Time Freshmen Needing Remediation in Mathematics and/or English, 2004-2009 by Ethnicity (Systemwide and Target Campuses)**

	2004/05		2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		
	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	
Students needing any remediation	57%												
	Af Am	64.9	67.4	62.7	64.2	65.3	63.2	63.9	65.4	64.1	65.9	67.9	71.2
	Mex Am	53.2	65.1	52.0	62.3	52.6	62.0	51.8	62.9	51.2	63.9	51.8	64.5
	Asian Am	30.2	61.5	29.6	58.9	29.1	58.2	26.7	56.1	26.1	54.3	26.2	56.9
	Euro Am	25.4	28.0	24.9	26.0	26.0	26.0	25.4	26.7	25.1	28.2	24.6	28.7
All Freshmen	36.8	46.6	36.2	45.2	37.5	45.3	37.2	46.2	37.2	47.0	37.6	49.1	
Students needing any remediation	73%												
	Af Am	74.0	78.0	72.5	70.6	80.4	85.7	67.7	79.0	100.0	100.0	75.9	81.0
	Mex Am	68.1	80.9	52.3	74.4	65.2	70.1	64.0	72.3	56.3	75.9	52.6	72.3
	Asian Am	46.4	67.9	42.9	81.0	43.5	69.6	63.2	78.9	37.5	68.8	50.0	73.1
	Euro Am	39.7	39.7	36.3	37.7	43.1	42.6	42.4	45.5	40.3	41.0	33.8	38.4
All Freshmen	54.6	61.8	47.8	61.2	57.3	62.0	55.7	65.1	52.3	67.0	52.3	66.2	
Students needing any remediation	91%												
	Af Am	81.9	85.2	82.7	83.3	87.7	84.4	80.6	87.8	84.4	77.2	89.1	85.1
	Mex Am	77.5	86.0	74.7	81.5	86.1	86.5	80.5	88.5	81.3	85.4	79.9	89.0
	Asian Am	57.9	84.2	30.0	70.0	45.0	80.0	70.0	80.0	60.0	80.0	60.0	90.0
	Euro Am	40.5	54.1	44.4	29.6	75.0	59.4	55.6	51.9	58.6	44.8	57.1	54.3
All Freshmen	74.6	83.5	74.2	78.8	83.1	84.5	78.3	83.8	80.1	78.8	79.9	86.2	
Students needing any remediation	74%												
	Af Am	76.4	68.5	74.2	63.6	73.7	67.1	72.5	73.9	76.0	76.0	77.4	74.8
	Mex Am	72.6	74.0	54.4	61.8	68.8	54.7	65.3	69.5	63.8	75.8	55.7	76.3
	Asian Am	49.3	75.4	37.8	71.4	40.2	55.4	47.0	72.3	46.6	67.0	45.1	67.6
	Euro Am	30.4	40.5	38.5	32.0	33.0	30.9	39.8	31.3	39.1	34.4	44.1	46.0
All Freshmen	50.8	63.2	49.0	57.3	51.5	59.3	55.4	64.5	53.6	66.4	54.9	69.4	
Students needing any remediation	86%												
	Af Am	78.2	77.3	74.3	70.3	80.2	78.4	84.3	80.9	76.0	73.0	81.8	82.7
	Mex Am	76.9	85.1	73.8	81.3	73.5	78.0	78.9	83.7	78.8	83.4	76.6	82.4
	Asian Am	49.7	78.8	44.7	81.4	38.5	83.3	48.7	80.4	40.8	76.3	32.9	78.3
	Euro Am	41.8	34.3	37.7	29.5	50.0	40.6	35.2	50.0	42.9	46.4	53.6	52.2
All Freshmen	70.1	77.8	64.9	76.4	67.3	75.7	71.6	80.2	71.9	79.2	68.5	80.1	

Table A2. Continued

	74%		73%		75%		75%		77%		76%		
	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	
<b>San Bernardino</b>	Students needing any remediation												
	Af Am	67.5	74.7	72.4	71.0	77.5	69.8	70.8	78.5	75.6	74.4	70.8	70.8
	Mex Am	57.6	74.8	62.3	74.7	62.7	73.1	60.5	74.2	67.1	76.6	57.3	72.2
	Asian Am	58.6	84.5	49.3	70.1	56.1	75.4	50.8	66.7	42.9	63.5	47.0	74.2
	Euro Am	37.8	41.6	41.1	42.7	42.7	41.5	41.9	41.9	44.8	43.1	43.0	49.8
All Freshmen	51.6	64.8	53.0	63.6	57.8	63.4	57.4	67.4	57.7	65.4	53.7	66.7	
<b>Northridge</b>	Students needing any remediation												
	Af Am	73%		71%		72%		73%		75%		74%	
	Mex Am	76.8	73.6	74.1	74.1	78.9	72.4	73.9	69.7	79.9	75.2	73.0	80.2
	Asian Am	66.7	71.2	63.3	69.6	65.7	72.5	64.4	70.1	67.4	72.0	66.6	72.8
	Euro Am	29.9	65.3	32.9	61.3	38.6	63.4	39.5	60.1	34.9	63.1	25.9	58.6
All Freshmen	41.3	41.3	35.1	40.5	37.3	35.2	39.6	37.3	38.7	41.0	39.4	39.9	
<b>Pomona</b>	Students needing any remediation												
	Af Am	56%		56%		58%		56%		49%		47%	
	Mex Am	51.2	60.5	40.7	47.8	45.4	46.9	43.5	58.1	30.9	48.5	36.7	45.6
	Asian Am	46.0	16.8	43.0	62.9	45.1	61.0	40.0	61.3	34.1	54.9	37.1	54.3
	Euro Am	58.3	63.5	18.4	57.5	16.9	57.7	13.0	51.9	14.2	45.0	10.5	44.1
All Freshmen	23.7	31.0	20.0	27.6	22.4	30.7	18.9	28.0	15.5	24.4	11.5	21.8	
<b>Long Beach</b>	Students needing any remediation												
	Af Am	59%		55%		55%		54%		53%		53%	
	Mex Am	29.1	48.5	28.8	49.4	29.9	50.8	27.2	49.5	23.5	42.8	22.8	41.0
	Asian Am	46%		48%		49%		53%		52%		49%	
	Euro Am	38.6	49.7	34.6	43.5	35.1	43.5	33.4	44.5	31.7	42.7	29.0	45.1
<b>Sonoma</b>	Students needing any remediation												
	Af Am	46%		48%		49%		53%		52%		49%	
	Mex Am	30.4	33.3	35.4	31.1	36.7	32.6	38.2	36.4	35.2	38.3	30.1	37.9
	Asian Am	54.5	63.6	40.9	45.5	69.7	54.5	61.8	58.8	62.5	53.1	66.7	66.7
	Euro Am	42.7	54.7	60.2	51.8	53.0	50.7	46.6	53.4	48.9	57.0	43.2	59.3
All Freshmen	21.2	42.4	53.1	59.4	30.2	41.3	35.4	56.3	25.0	55.6	36.4	45.5	
All Freshmen	29.1	29.7	31.4	26.6	32.7	28.3	36.5	33.0	32.3	34.2	27.2	32.2	

Table A2. Continued

	45%		45%		43%		44%		44%		47%		
	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	
<b>Humboldt</b>	Students needing any remediation												
	Af Am	68.0	72.0	46.7	43.3	52.4	66.7	64.0	80.0	66.7	63.6	68.6	60.0
	Mex Am	35.7	40.5	45.0	51.3	45.7	50.0	48.4	58.1	53.1	43.2	56.4	56.4
	Asian Am	34.5	55.2	16.7	27.8	18.8	37.5	5.3	10.5	39.1	30.4	50.0	43.3
	Euro Am	27.1	27.4	31.6	23.5	24.0	20.7	26.4	21.4	29.6	20.4	27.0	20.9
All Freshmen	30.7	30.9	34.7	29.8	27.6	28.6	31.1	30.2	34.6	26.0	35.8	30.5	
<b>San Diego</b>	Students needing any remediation												
		35%		37%		41%		42%		44%		46%	
	Af Am	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English
	Mex Am	31.9	42.7	30.4	45.6	38.5	54.3	41.0	53.9	36.9	57.1	39.6	56.5
	Asian Am	18.9	39.9	17.4	41.8	21.0	39.9	19.4	40.8	24.8	45.4	21.5	53.3
Euro Am	13.7	16.7	14.1	17.1	17.0	17.1	16.2	17.3	14.7	19.9	14.2	19.0	
All Freshmen	19.6	26.5	19.8	28.7	24.8	31.3	25.2	32.3	24.9	36.8	26.4	38.4	
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	Students needing any remediation												
		13%		12%		14%		14%		12%		13%	
	Af Am	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English	Math	English
	Mex Am	21.9	31.3	3.7	14.8	21.3	27.7	20.0	24.7	7.5	30.0	20.8	37.5
	Asian Am	5.9	23.2	11.5	16.9	7.8	23.4	8.2	29.2	8.5	28.2	5.3	19.1
Euro Am	4.1	8.8	4.7	7.1	5.7	7.8	4.4	8.0	3.4	6.6	3.9	8.4	
All Freshmen	4.4	10.8	5.0	9.0	5.7	11.3	4.5	11.9	4.1	10.0	3.8	10.7	

**Table A3. Disenrollment Rate at High-Remediation, Low-Remediation, and 'Alternate Campuses,' 2004-2008**

Campus	Freshman Needing Remediation				Freshman Needing Remediation Who Did Not Remediate in First Year				Freshman
	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	
Cal Poly SLO	13%	12%	14%	14%	0%	3%	5%	3%	0%
San Diego	35%	37%	55%	54%	8%	11%	11%	15%	9%
Humboldt	45%	45%	43%	44%	7%	6%	4%	8%	7%
Sonoma	46%	48%	49%	53%	8%	11%	17%	9%	8%
Cal Poly Pomona	56%	56%	58%	56%	12%	14%	14%	14%	12%
CSU S Y S T E M	57%	55%	56%	56%	10%	11%	13%	13%	10%
Long Beach	59%	55%	55%	54%	15%	12%	12%	12%	15%
Bakersfield	73%	70%	75%	75%	3%	4%	5%	6%	3%
Northridge	73%	71%	72%	73%	14%	19%	19%	21%	14%
East Bay	74%	69%	72%	75%	10%	12%	3%	8%	10%
San Bernardino	74%	73%	75%	75%	10%	10%	12%	13%	10%
Los Angeles	86%	85%	86%	89%	17%	16%	14%	16%	17%
Dominguez Hills	91%	89%	92%	91%	18%	24%	31%	26%	18%

Source: CSU Analytic Studies, CSU Freshman Proficiency and Remediation at Entry and One Year Later, 2009.

**Table A4. Feeder High School Demographics for Top Two Feeder High Schools for High- and Low-Remediation CSUs, and "Alternate Campuses," 2007-08**

Campus & Top Two Feeder High Schools, 2007-2008	Statewide API Rank	% Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals	% English Learners	% African American & Latino
Five High-Remedial Campus Averages	3.3	58%	21%	74%
Arvin (Bakersfield)	2	87%	34%	95%
Ridgeview (Bakersfield)	3	40%	7%	63%
Gardena (Dominguez Hills)	1	65%	17%	92%
Fremont (Dominguez Hills)	1	80%	42%	99%
Logan (East Bay)	7	26%	14%	39%
San Leandro (East Bay)	5	43%	14%	54%
Roosevelt (Los Angeles)	1	84%	40%	99%
Wilson (Los Angeles)	1	80%	28%	94%
Cajon (San Bernardino)	4	49%	9%	65%
Redlands East Valley (San Bernardino)	8	24%	5%	43%
Five Low-Remedial Campus Averages	8.3	19%	7%	28%
San Luis Obispo (San Luis Obispo <sup>1</sup> )	9	18%	5%	18%
Campolindo (San Luis Obispo <sup>2</sup> )	10	0%	1%	2%
College Park (San Luis Obispo )	7	9%	4%	16%
Eureka (Humboldt)	7	44%	8%	12%
Arcata (Humboldt)	9	10%	0%	11%
Wilson LB (Long Beach)	7	46%	11%	52%
Polytechnic (Long Beach)	7	59%	12%	54%
Otay Ranch (San Diego)	7	14%	15%	64%
Eastlake (San Diego)	8	8%	10%	59%

<sup>1</sup> San Luis Obispo had two high schools that tied for 2nd top feeder high school: Campolindo & College Park

<sup>2</sup> San Luis Obispo had two high schools that tied for 2nd top feeder high school: Campolindo & College Park



Table A4. Continued

Amador Valley (Sonoma)	10	3%	3%	3%	10%
California (Sonoma)	10	2%	2%	2%	10%
Two "Alternate Campuses" Averages	7.3	36%	14%	14%	45%
Wilson LB (Long Beach)	7	46%	11%	11%	52%
Polytechnic (Long Beach)	7	59%	12%	12%	54%
Granada (Northridge)	9	30%	7%	7%	33%
Los Angeles (Northridge)	1	68%	44%	44%	87%

**Table A5. Demographic and Academic Performance Profiles of Top Five Feeder High Schools for Five CSUs with Highest Remedial and Five CSUs with Lowest Remedial**

Feeder High School Profiles for Campuses with Highest Remediation Needs (2008)							Feeder High School Profiles for Campuses with Lowest Remediation Needs (2008)						
Campus	Top 5 Feeder High Schools	Statewide API Rank	% Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals	% English Language Learners	% Teachers with Emergency Credentials	Average SAT Total	Campus	Top 5 Feeder High Schools	Statewide API Rank	% Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals	% English Language Learners	% Teachers with Emergency Credentials	Average SAT Total
Bakersfield	Arvin	2	87%	34%	3%	1228	San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo	9	18%	5%	3%	1684
	Ridgeview	3	40%	7%	5%	1344		College Park	7	9%	4%	25%	1626
	Stockdale	8	14%	3%	1%	1601		Los Gatos	10	1%	6%	0%	1766
	Libert	6	10%	1%	1%	1519		Poway	10	9%	4%	2%	1681
Dominguez Hills	Delano	4	77%	41%	1%	1315	San Diego	Paso Robles	7	25%	13%	15%	1534
	Gardena	1	65%	17%	32%	1189		Otay Ranch	7	14%	15%	0%	1442
	Fremont	1	80%	42%	23%	1095		Eastlake	8	8%	10%	0%	1480
	Junipero	1	37%	28%	9%	n/a		Mira Mesa	8	27%	9%	10%	1488
East Bay	Dominguez	1	99%	47%	14%	1153	Humboldt	University City	7	29%	9%	14%	1595
	Inglewood	1	60%	12%	13%	1130		Steele Canyon	7	16%	6%	4%	1524
	Logan	7	26%	14%	13%	1481		Eureka	7	44%	8%	0%	1561
	San Leandro	5	44%	14%	13%	1379		Arcata	9	10%	0%	8%	1593
Los Angeles	Mt. Eden	3	47%	23%	8%	1349	Sonoma	McKinleyville	7	13%	2%	0%	1607
	Arroyo	6	21%	8%	0%	1411		Fortuna Union	3	30%	5%	2%	1467
	Oakland	2	76%	21%	5%	1263		Berkeley	n/a	29%	7%	4%	1621
	Roosevelt	1	84%	40%	19%	1180		Amador Valley	10	3%	3%	1%	1693
San Bernardino	Wilson	1	80%	28%	33%	1225	Long Beach	California	10	2%	2%	3%	1650
	Garfield	1	90%	37%	17%	1218		Roseland Charter	5	50%	50%	5%	1193
	Schurr	5	54%	17%	7%	1421		Castro Valley	9	4%	4%	2%	1580
	Eagle Rock	6	61%	15%	14%	1394		Rancho Cotate	4	12%	12%	1%	1555
Redlands E Valley	Cajon	4	49%	9%	2%	1412	Los Alamitos	Wilson	7	46%	11%	2%	1511
	Valley	8	24%	5%	3%	1519		Polytechnic	7	59%	12%	1%	1514
	Rialto	2	63%	28%	7%	1289		Lakewood	6	44%	6%	0%	1438
	Arroyo Valley	2	84%	39%	5%	1195		Millikan	4	60%	18%	1%	1401
HIGH REMEDIATION CAMPUSES	Fontana AB	3	50%	28%	1%	1360	LOW REMEDIATION CAMPUSES						
	Miller	3	50%	28%	1%	1360							
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>3.36</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>7.4</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>1554</b>

# **ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE CALIFORNIA STATE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY: THE INSTITUTIONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND PERSONAL EFFECTS ON FACULTY AND STUDENTS**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This study focuses upon the ways that faculty and students have been differentially affected by the economic crisis at the CSU, and how the budget cuts have changed the ways that members of the CSU community perceive the California public university and its future. The study examines faculty and student respondents on the campus of California State University, Northridge (CSUN) during the spring 2010 academic semester.

## **Methods**

This investigation documents how CSUN faculty and students have experienced drastic cuts to public higher education in California. Qualitative and quantitative methods are employed. The qualitative component of the study examines focus group data from sixteen CSUN faculty and seventeen students. Quantitative methods utilize online questionnaires of 128 faculty and 1,120 students. Overall, the study explores issues related to the budget cuts including: framing of the crisis; institutional confidence and engagement in the context of the crisis; resistance strategies in response to the crisis; perceived procedural justice in making decisions about the budget cuts, and the professional and personal impact of the budget cuts.

## **Results**

The results show that the budget crisis has had a profound impact on the members of the CSUN community. Data analysis reveals five primary themes that are discussed below.

*The question of procedural justice.*

Many faculty and students felt that the budget cuts made to CSUN were poorly planned with information inadequately disseminated. Many faculty and students arrived on

campus for the fall 2009 semester with little knowledge of the budget cuts and the policies that had been implemented during the summer months (in particular the two “F-words”: student “fee-hikes” and “faculty furloughs”). For many faculty and students, this ambiguity regarding decision-making about the budget cuts raised issues of procedural justice about how the budget cuts were planned and implemented. For example, only 6.3% of faculty and 11.2% of students agreed that the CSU Chancellor’s Office had treated them with respect, and only 17.5% of faculty and 16.3% of students felt these officials had been truthful. The majority of faculty agreed that the CSUN campus administration had treated them respectfully (56.5%), honestly (60.8%), sensibly (55.2%), and with concern for individual rights (62.7%). Students, on the other hand, were less optimistic regarding the CSUN campus administration, with a smaller set of students believing that they had been treated with respect (23.8%), sensitivity (15.7%), honesty (25.8%), sensibility (22.8%), and concern for their individual rights (24.0%). In the interviews, most faculty and students expressed considerable ambiguity regarding knowledge of the specific details of the cuts and how they would be implemented. Like Gregory,<sup>1</sup> a fulltime lecturer, many faculty remembered “*a lot of confusion*” and “*feeling a lot of disappointment.*”

### *The neglect of education.*

Many faculty and students perceived the cuts to be a product of a general disregard for education. In the interviews one tenured faculty member, Karl, expressed his surprise at how neglected education is in the United States and his “*shock ... to see that the state [of California] spends more on prisons than education.*” Seventy-seven percent of both faculty and students reported that the CSUN budget crisis “*deserved more media attention.*” Additionally, 51% of faculty and 58% of students believed that the budget cuts had significantly affected “*CSUN’s reputation,*” and 73% of faculty and 76% of students agreed that it had “*reduced the quality of education at CSUN.*”

The institutional impact—apostrophe’d degrees, settling for Cs. The CSUN budget cuts also had significant professional and personal impacts on faculty and students. Both faculty and students agreed that the cuts had a negative impact on the institution, and on the quality of education it provided. In the questionnaire data, 97% of faculty and 89% of students agreed that the budget cuts had a negative impact on CSUN, and 90% of faculty and 80% of students perceived a decrease in the quality of education at CSUN. In addition, 88% of faculty and 76% of students agreed that they had been personally and adversely affected by the budget cuts. The impact was made directly apparent in the interviews with faculty. Krista, a tenured faculty member, described the budget cuts and how they had resulted in a paradoxical situation where “*we are asked to do and have the same results but with less [money].*” Victoria, a tenured faculty member, was troubled by the fact that she felt she needed to “*put an apostrophe on my students’ diploma ... saying, ‘Oh, sorry, you [only] had 90% of this work.’*” The “apostrophe’d” diploma was not lost on students, like George, a junior in Sociology, who stated that “*you pay more for less.*” Keisha, a CSUN senior, also expressed

1 The names of all participants in this study are replaced with pseudonyms.

the downside of reduced class time matched with the difficulty of getting classes: *"We're fighting like pigs! ... You got a tuition raise and you're fighting like a pig to get into classes!"*

### *The professional and personal impact.*

The cuts affected faculty workload, with 48% reporting they had spent more time than expected engaging in class preparation. Among students, 65% expressed a larger time investment in securing financial aid, and 81% spent more time trying to enroll in classes. Strikingly, 28% of faculty and 37% of students reported that they spent more time pursuing non-academic interests, and almost one-half of faculty and nearly three-fourths of students found themselves searching for additional sources of income. In the interviews, faculty and students described the personal toll that the budget cuts had on their lives. Despite this, faculty members like Denise agreed that *"the biggest tragedy about the furlough [and other education cuts] is cheating the students out of an education, because I know I'm not giving them the same."*

### *Affordability, accessibility, and underrepresented students.*

There was a common perception that traditionally underrepresented students might disproportionately suffer the most negative effects. In the questionnaire data, 41% of faculty and 53% of students "strongly agreed" that the CSU budget cuts had *"caused more students to be excluded from CSUN."* The student data offers a more nuanced perspective and suggests that the disproportionate burden seems to have fallen on the shoulders of students of color and first-generation college students. The qualitative data reflects similar concerns related to underrepresented students. Many students predict that the university will become more privileged, white, and upper or middle class, as a result of increasing educational costs. Faculty members also raised concerns about the student fee increases, criticizing the size of the increase as well as its implementation. Students seemed to be genuinely disheartened and overwhelmed, and felt that the changes brought about by the budget crisis would make the university less accessible and affordable for lower-income students and students of color.

## **Conclusions**

In the context of recent changes, faculty and students perceive a larger institutional shift in the CSU system. Faculty and particularly students feel they have relatively little agency in institutional decision-making and university administration. In addition, they perceive waning public awareness and support of the university that coincides with the decline in financial support. The impact on the quality of education and professional and personal lives of the faculty and students is abundantly clear. Larger class sizes, fewer course offerings, reduced class meetings, fewer faculty, and fewer students make for a somber campus environment. The impact on vulnerable groups, such as first-generation students, lower-income students, and students of color, is expected to be pronounced. In general, students and faculty fear that the public university in California has become less accessible, less affordable, and less public.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the twenty-first-century economic crisis at the California State University (CSU) system, and the specific effect of fee increases, furloughs, and budget reductions on faculty and students. The general approach of this investigation is to examine the budget cuts much in the same way that social scientists study natural disasters—how they disrupt everyday activity; distort and invigorate local communities; create strategies for resistance; destroy infrastructure and superstructure; effect commitment to institutions, identities, and communities; and produce hope and vision for rebuilding and renewal.

The study focuses upon the following research questions: How are discrete stakeholder groups differentially affected by the economic crisis at the CSU? How have the budget cuts changed the ways that members of the CSU community perceive the California public university and its future? Which groups are perceived to be most vulnerable as a result of the economic crisis and why?

This investigation documents how both CSUN faculty and students have interpreted and experienced the budget cuts; how they have perceived fairness and justice in making decisions about the cuts; and how they have been affected by the cuts on institutional, professional, and personal levels. Overall, the results of the investigation suggest that the effects of the budget crisis at CSUN have had a profound impact on the campus community, which has not only been financially affected, but which also has experienced a crisis of confidence in the California public university, which is seen as becoming less accessible, less affordable, and of lower quality.

### **THE RESEARCH SITE: CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE**

The institutional context for this study is the campus of California State University, Northridge (CSUN). Established in 1958, CSUN is the third largest of the CSU campuses, is the fourth-largest university in California, and is located in Southern California in the San Fernando Valley, a large suburban area that is geographically located directly adjacent to but north of the Los Angeles Basin. CSUN employs approximately 1,600 faculty, maintains an enrollment of approximately 36,000 students, and each year awards more California teaching credentials than all of the other CSU campuses combined. CSUN is noted for being second in the United States in awarding bachelor's degrees to Hispanic students, a large and often underrepresented population in the southwestern United States.

California, in an effort to reduce the state deficit, reduced the overall operating budget of the CSU by \$1 billion over the 2008-2010 fiscal years. CSU officials responded by putting the following ameliorative mechanisms in place:

1. Reduced the overall state allocation to the general funds of the CSU campuses

2. Increased student fees (which, for California residents, increased by over 30% during 2008-2010, and by 210% since 2002)
3. Instituted two-day per month, mandatory employee furloughs for campus faculty and staff, the equivalent of a 10% reduction in income
4. Limited CSU enrollment for incoming freshman students, channeling many of them into the California Community College (CCC) general education pipeline
5. Increased the time-to-graduation for students and forcibly graduated long-time "super seniors"
6. Reduced access to financial aid
7. Reduced the number of faculty (mostly part-time lecturers)
8. Increased class sizes and overall faculty-student ratios

At CSUN, the campus budget reduction was equivalent to 24% of the CSUN base operating budget.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

For decades, policymakers and academics have engaged in debates about the declining state of public education in the United States, and what some have perceived as the growing crisis in the American university. Some have contested the growing privatization (Calhoun 2009; Huff 2006; Washburn 2005) of the public university, while others have questioned declining standards (Readings 1996), the attacks on the tenure system (Wood 1998), and the emergence of the "online university" (Farber 1998). At its broadest level, the overall mission of the public university has been questioned, and many have seen the failure to adequately fund public higher education in the United States as an indication that a paradigm shift in American education is underway (Cole 2010; Readings 1996). Some investigations into the political economy of education have argued that a change in financial support for higher education underlies many of these changes (Sommer 1995) and has served to bring this paradigm shift in higher education into a sharper focus, and even to foment a "new normal" for the university (Jones and Wellman 2010). Prior research in the organizational literature has suggested that these kinds of changes can be profound, impacting the degree of an individual's institutional identification (Fuller, et al 2006), satisfaction (van Dick 2007), and commitment (Meyer et al. 1991; Meyer et al. 1993).

Moreover, as the impact of the financial crisis and economic recession on colleges and universities becomes evident, concerns about the specific effect of recent cuts on underrepresented students are emerging. Of particular concern are budget cuts at minority-serving institutions, which have resulted in declining enrollments, faculty layoffs, and program eliminations (Galuszka 2008; Hernandez 2010). Combined with declining access to financial credit and financial aid support as well as fewer jobs to

fill the financial aid gap (Galuszka 2008), minority students are expected to bear a disproportionate share of the pain. Further, new plans for increasing revenue, such as Berkeley's plan to increase the number of out-of-state and international students who pay nonresident tuition, are projected to impact minority and low-income students who tend to be concentrated near the cut-off point for admission (Keller 2009).

There is a long history of studying variation in educational achievement (see Kao and Thompson 2003 for an excellent review), and one of the key areas of concern for social scientists has been the disparity in educational attainment between ethnic groups. Work by Karen (2002) indicates that minorities are more likely to attend two-year colleges than whites. Students who attend community colleges (but do not continue on to a bachelor's degree) tend to have poorer outcomes than students at other post-secondary schools (Brint and Karabel 1989; Dougherty 1994). Minorities are also somewhat more likely to attend school part time (Rumberger 1982), which places further stress on the student and reduces the likelihood of graduation.

Two of the best predictors of educational achievement are parental education and family income (Kao and Thompson 2003). Parental SES helps explain a substantial portion of variation in the educational outcome of youth. High-SES students are more likely to finish high school (Rumberger 1995) and college (Camburn 1990). Those students whose parents had higher educational levels are more likely to attend and graduate from college. This suggests that first-generation college attendees have a more difficult time completing their degree.

The current crisis follows a decades-long increase in educational inequalities. In a review of research on college access and persistence from the 1960s through the 1990s, Baker and Vélez (1996) show how the college participation rate for whites and non-whites briefly narrowed in the 1970s only to return to 1960s-level disparities by the 1980s and 90s. Starting in the 1980s, college access for the non-affluent was increasingly restricted due to a combination of increasing tuition and fees, decreases in needs-based financial aid, and growing inequality in family incomes (Haveman and Smeeding 2006). Hauser (1992) argued that the strongest determinant in the decline in the college entrance of African Americans was a relative decrease in financial aid. Latinos faced similar problems, however; since they were more likely to enroll in two-year colleges, they also confronted difficulties in transferring to four-year colleges (Baker and Vélez 1996). In addition, the passage of Proposition 209 in 1998 and the subsequent elimination of affirmative action in college admissions in California resulted in a 30-50% decline in black and Hispanic students at the elite public universities, although the effects of affirmative action may have been largely confined to the most selective 20% of universities (Card and Krueger 2005; Kane 1998).

In addition to race-ethnicity and SES or income, research has also found that first-generation students are at increased risk of leaving college. Using a national dataset, Lohfink and Paulsen (2005) found first generation students among Hispanics, lower-income students, and women and were less likely to persist than their continuing-



generation student counterparts. Similar to previous research, they also found that higher income and financial aid support, among other factors, were positively correlated with persistence for first-generation students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed in this study to examine the CSUN campus community. All of the data for this study was collected during the spring 2010 academic semester.

### **Qualitative Methods**

The qualitative component of the study sought to inductively explore a series of issues related to the budget cuts including framing and sense-making of the crisis; institutional confidence, commitment, and engagement in the context of the crisis; and coping and resistance strategies in response to the crisis. Focus group interviews were conducted with CSUN faculty and students. The interviews included questions about where participants received information about the budget cuts and what they learned, what they saw as the causes of the budget cuts, how the budget cuts affected their work or studies, how the budget cuts affected the university, what their reactions and responses to the budget cuts were, and what they saw as potential solutions to the budget cuts. Sixteen CSUN faculty members and seventeen CSUN students participated in the focus groups. The students were diverse in terms of gender and race-ethnicity but were skewed toward upper-class standing. Among the students, ten were women, seven were men, seven were black, four were Asian, three were Hispanic, and three were white. Most students were of upper-class standing, and included nine seniors, four juniors, two sophomores, one freshman, and one graduate student. The faculty were diverse in terms of gender and rank but were primarily white, which reflects the composition of the faculty more broadly. Among the faculty, eight were men, eight were women, eleven were white, two were Hispanic, two were black, and one was American Indian. In terms of faculty rank, there are seven full professors, three associate professors, three assistant professors, and three lecturers. The focus group interviews were composed of five to eight respondents, lasted one and one half hours, and were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for common thematic elements.

### **Quantitative Methods**

Quantitative methods utilized online questionnaires of the campus populations and explored the interrelationships of a number of conceptual factors. These factors included perceived institutional support from the university, commitment to the university, identification with the university, perceived procedural justice in making decisions about the budget cuts, the prestige of the university, and satisfaction with the university. In addition, respondents also were asked to describe some of the specific

ways that they were affected by the budget cuts, both professionally and personally. Statistical imputation was used in order to replace missing values for items used to create composite measures.

In total, 128 members of the CSUN faculty and 1,120 CSUN students completed the online questionnaire. The sample includes a broad and generally representative sample of the CSUN community. Because the questionnaire was completed online through the CSUN Office of Institutional Research, it is difficult to get a clear estimation of response rates. Although the response rates received for the administration of the questionnaires are consistent with those typically received by the institution in the administration of online questionnaires, it is likely that some sampling bias exists, particularly that related to the lack of online accessibility of some members of the CSUN community. The overall demographic breakdown of the online questionnaire sample is presented in the Table 1.

**Table 1:** *Demographics of Online Questionnaire Sample*

Study Demographics	Faculty		Student	
	CSUN Data	Study Data	CSUN Data	Study Data
	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2009	Spring 2010
Tenured and Tenure Track	40.7	71.6		
Adjunct Faculty	59.3	28.4		
Freshman			18.3	5.1
Sophomore			9.7	9.7
Junior			25.2	24.6
Senior			29.9	32.8
Graduate			16.8	23.7
All Minorities	24.2	26.1	48.8	56.5
<i>African American</i>	5.6	5.0	7.4	15.6
<i>Asian</i>	8.1	4.0	11.6	11.8
<i>Latino/a</i>	9.9	17.1	29.5	29.1
<i>Native American</i>	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.0
White	73.8	72.3	31.0	36.4
Unknown/Other	1.9	1.6	20.2	7.1
Female	42.7	48.8	57.8	62.0
Male	57.3	51.2	42.2	38.0

The demographics of the study sample differ in several ways from those reported for fall of 2009 by the University's Office of Institutional Research. First, CSUN tenure-track faculty members are comparatively over-sampled. Second, among students, freshman are comparatively undersampled and graduate students oversampled. Finally, among students, African Americans are oversampled, though this is probably explained by the fact that many students identify as "other" (which is a much larger category in the CSUN data) in the more inflexible CSUN demographic system.

## RESULTS

The results from both the qualitative and quantitative data are organized below around five themes that emerged during the data analysis. In the first section, faculty and students describe their experiences with the implementation of the budget cuts and their perceptions of fairness and procedural justice in their execution. The second section examines the growing perception among faculty and students that education is becoming systematically neglected as a central concern in California. The third and fourth sections describe the respective professional and personal impacts of the budget crisis at CSUN on both faculty and students. The final section highlights the effects of the budget cuts on what faculty and students both identify as one of the more vulnerable populations—the traditionally under-represented student. Here we also attempt to provide a broad overview of the study and some of the key findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data.

### The Question of Procedural Justice

Many faculty and students felt that the budget cuts made to CSUN were very poorly planned, with information inadequately disseminated in an untimely fashion. It was not until the summer months just before the start of the academic term that some clarity was brought to the specific cuts to the CSU. Campus administrators, faculty, staff, and students were all left in an institutional limbo as the final statement on the budget cuts could not be delivered until the State of California had ratified a fiscal budget for 2009-2010, and the final ratification of this budget was nine months late. Important decisions were made during these summer months, in the weeks right before the start of the academic year: student fees were increased an additional 10%, and the CSU faculty union held a statewide vote to determine whether or not a 10% faculty furlough would be supported. Students were sent new notices for additional fees to cover the tuition increases, and the CSU faculty agreed by a narrow margin to authorize their faculty union to accept the 10% furlough. Both faculty and students had little time to prepare themselves for the fee increases and the furloughs, and for the financial, organizational, and psychological consequences of the cuts. Almost two-thirds of both faculty (61.1%) and students (63.6%) felt that they were “*just a tiny cog in the machinery of this university.*”

As shown in Table 2, only 6.3% of faculty and 11.2% of students agreed that the CSU Chancellor's Office had “*treated them with kindness and respect,*” and only 17.5% of faculty and 16.3% of students felt these officials had “*dealt with them truthfully.*” Very few faculty (2.9%) and students (5.6%) believed that the CSU Chancellor's Office was “*sensitive to their personal needs,*” and a similarly low number of faculty (4.8%) and students (7.4%) reported that California State University officials allowed them to “*challenge or appeal decisions.*” A parallel disaffection is found in the reports of both faculty and students regarding the degree to which the officials of the CSU Chancellor's Office “*offered explanation that made sense*” (faculty, 14.1%; students, 14.5%),

"clarified decisions" (faculty, 10.5%; students, 11.1%), and "showed concern for individual rights" (faculty, 13.0%; students, 12.8%).

**Table 2: Faculty and Student Perceptions of Procedural Justice**

(Scale: 1 = "Strongly Disagree," 5 = "Strongly Agree")

Procedural Justice	Faculty		Student	
	CSU Chancellor's Office	CSUN Campus Administration	CSU Chancellor's Office	CSUN Campus Administration
When decisions were made about the CSUN budget cuts ...	% Agree	% Agree	% Agree	% Agree
<i>treated me with kindness and respect.</i>	6.3	56.5	11.2	23.8
<i>offered explanations that made sense to me.</i>	14.1	55.2	14.5	22.8
<i>was sensitive to my personal needs.</i>	2.9	37.4	5.6	15.7
<i>dealt with me in a truthful manner.</i>	17.5	60.8	16.3	25.8
<i>clarified decisions and provided additional information when</i>	10.5	61.3	11.1	19.7
<i>showed concern for my rights.</i>	13.0	62.7	12.8	24.0
<i>allowed employees to challenge or appeal decisions.</i>	4.8	41.2	7.4	14.0

More sanguine results can be found in faculty and student reports regarding their perceptions of how the CSUN campus administration dealt with the budget cuts. On most items, the majority of faculty agreed that the CSUN campus administration had treated them respectfully (56.5%), honestly (60.8%), sensibly (55.2%), and with concern for individual rights (62.7%). Students, on the other hand, were much less likely than faculty to report a fair sense of procedural justice regarding the CSUN campus administration. In every category, only one in four students reported that the CSUN officials had exercised adequate procedural justice in managing the budget cuts, with only a relatively small subset of students believing that they had been treated with respect (23.8%), sensitivity (15.7%), honesty (25.8%), sensibility (22.8%), and in a manner that showed concern for their individual rights (24.0%).

Many of the faculty interviewed for this study reported that the prospect that there would be cuts came as no real surprise, as they had followed the budget discussions for months or even years, and were well aware that CSUN was going to take a significant budget reduction beginning fall 2009. Gregory, a fulltime lecturer, summarizes this point of view:

*I remember a lot of confusion, hearing mixed messages either from the union, or from various department faculty members, and I tried to gather as much information as I could, as time allowed. I would go to various meetings... and there was just a lot of confusion and a lot of different points of view. As a new faculty member, it was a little overwhelming ... I'm sure feeling a lot of disappointment, hearing how all these solutions were enacted and how fast they were enacted and how poorly planned they were.*

Some faculty members took this perspective one step further, suggesting that the ambiguity surrounding the cuts, coupled with last-minute policy decisions, may have been intentional. For example, Yesenia, a tenured faculty member, remarked that "it was in the middle of the summer that we got cuts... I feel like it was done on purpose. It was very

*suspicious that we had to decide on this [during the academic recess] while everybody was spread out throughout the world. It was so very hard to get information."*

Most students expressed a different perspective than the faculty on the CSUN budget cuts. Few students had significant knowledge of or involvement in the debates regarding potential student fee increases or in the possibility that university faculty and staff could be on two-day-per-month furloughs, thus reducing their time in class, the quality of their education, and the availability of campus services. This lack of awareness of the budget cuts is not altogether surprising given parallel faculty reports that express a strong sense of confusion and uncertainty regarding CSUN's economic situation. For many CSUN students, their lack of knowledge regarding the budget cuts was revealed to them only when, after they had already paid their fees, they received a notice of an additional tuition increase just before the beginning of the academic semester. Samantha, a sophomore at CSUN, sums up the students' general sense of confusing mystification about the budget cuts, and specifically regarding the fee increase:

*"I didn't know anything about the budget cuts until I paid my tuition. I went and looked at the portal [the CSUN online computer system for student registration] and it said I owe an extra \$300. I paid everything, why would I owe \$300? So I called the school and they said there had been a tuition increase ... It would have been nice to have some warning!"*

Michael, a junior at CSUN, echoes Samantha's sentiments and expresses the financial burden this put on himself and his family:

*I learned about the fee increase the day before the last day when the money was due. I almost didn't have enough money to do it. I mean I barely even have enough money to pay for school ... It made me mad just coming to school and I didn't want to be here. I was ready to quit and not come back. It was difficult for my family especially because they were paying for school ... They didn't send us mail or anything. And then they put a message on [the] portal that they have the right to do this, so "too bad." I even called them that day and they were giving me attitude like, "Oh you should have known," but they sent no mail, no nothing. It was like, "Oh well, too bad, if you want to go to school, you've got to pay". I was like, this is shady!*

Unlike faculty, students seemed more likely to localize their suspicions of the institution at the campus level, attributing their distrust to actions of CSUN officials. For example, Emma discusses the CSUN campus administration:

*I feel like ... they're afraid to talk to us, just to let us know what is going on because that means that we'll expect to actually hear things, and they don't want to tell us things. When I first came here, the communication was fine and I was notified on anything. But now ... they'll rarely send emails notifying us about things going on.*

Students' increased suspicion of the CSUN campus administrators indicates that not only did students, more so than faculty, tend to feel alienated from the decision-making process regarding the budget cuts, but also students were much more likely to localize the problem. Students, when compared to faculty, were much more willing to attribute blame for the budget cuts and their policy implications to local campus officials and to believe the CSUN administration had intentionally deceived them. However, while faculty and students differed in the degree to which they made localized attributions regarding the causes and consequences of budget cuts, they did agree that the budget cuts surely indicated a general decrease in the value of public higher education in the State of California.

### The Neglect of Education

Karl, a tenure-track faculty member, offered what seemed to be a widely shared perspective on the CSUN budget crisis. For him, the uncertainty surrounding the decision-making process was not simply a function of an intentional ambiguity of CSU administrators. Instead, the cuts were more centrally a product of a general disregard for education within the broader context of the United States. Karl expressed his surprise at how neglected education is in the United States and, as he put it, his "*shock ... to see that the state [of California] spends more on prisons than education,*" and the implications that this has had for CSUN. He describes his viewpoint in this way:

*I followed the California budget discussion ... [I] didn't anticipate such an amount of negligence on the issue of education in America. I just did not imagine the depth to which the public would go along with cuts and would basically say they don't really care for education, despite it being, in my opinion, being one of the most discussed subjects in American society. But I did not expect that the ordinary folks would not really care. That was disconcerting to me because I strongly believe in public education and I see CSUN as a very good example of how to blend the kind of private/public educational system... I was very surprised that the union, or the faculty in general, would not be able to count on the support of the general population.*

Karl's surprise at the neglect of education in the United States, as exemplified by the budget crisis in public education within California and at CSUN specifically, also resonated with many students. For example, Wilson, a student in the teaching credential program, described how myopic the budget cuts were and what they revealed about the declining value of education in the United States:

*When I heard about [the budget cuts] I just thought about how short-sighted it was for the people in power, whoever they are, to cut from education ... I recognize the importance of education and having an educated work force. If Americans are going to have any kind of future, they need to have an educated population in order to compete in the global economy ... It's really sad.*

These attitudes about the neglect of education also reverberated within the questionnaire data. For example, 77% of both the faculty and students responding to the questionnaire reported that the CSUN budget crisis *“deserved more media attention,”* and 57% of faculty and 78% of students indicated that they thought it *“deserved more attention on campus.”* Among these same respondents, 51% of faculty and 58% of students believed that the budget cuts had significantly affected *“CSUN’s reputation,”* and 73% of faculty and 76% of students agreed that it had *“reduced the quality of education at CSUN.”*

Many faculty revealed that the lack of attention given to the significant budget reductions at CSUN were an indication not only of a neglect of education, but also of a *“change in the way that our society thinks about education”* (Katie) and a redefinition of *“who should have access to education”* (Yesenia). In addition, many of these CSUN faculty members believed that the budget cuts to the CSU system compromised teaching and learning environments. The effects of these changes had an important institutional impact on the pedagogic practice of faculty, as well as the confidence of both faculty and students in the educational process at the CSU.

### **The Institutional Impact – Apostrophe’d Degrees, Settling for Cs**

The combined influence of the uncertainty regarding the CSU budget cuts and the perceived overall neglect of education in California were not without significant professional and personal impacts on CSUN faculty and students. Specifically, these impacts reflected two general categories of experience: the first, outlining the ways in which the budget crisis had affected participation in the professional and institutional culture of the university; the second, describing the more personal impact of these changes.

In describing the CSUN budget cuts, both faculty and students resoundingly agreed that the cuts had a negative impact on CSUN as an institution; on the quality of education it provided; and on the students, faculty, and administrators on the campus. In responding to the questionnaire items that asked about the perception of the budget situation at CSUN (see Table 3), 97% of faculty and 89% of students agreed that the budget cuts had a negative impact on CSUN overall, and 90% of faculty and 80 % of students perceived a decrease in the quality of education at CSUN. In reflecting upon the specific impact of the budget cuts on faculty and students, 98% of faculty contended that students had been adversely affected; likewise, 89% of students saw their fellow students as unfavorably impacted. Similarly, 97% of faculty and 89% of students agreed that faculty had been negatively affected by the budget cuts. Finally, both faculty (63%) and students (80%) also saw CSUN campus administrators as hurt by the budget cuts. Overall, and with only one exception (i.e. the faculty perception of the campus administration), over three-fourths of both faculty and students agreed that the cuts had a broad and comprehensive negative effect on CSUN on each of the questionnaire items listed in Table 3.

**Table 3: Faculty and Student Perceptions of Budget Cut Impact\***

(Scale: 1 = "Very Negative," 5 = "Very Positive")

Budget Cut Impact	Faculty	Student
How would you characterize the effects of the budget situation on ...	% Negative	% Negative
<i>CSUN itself</i>	96.8 (47.9)	89.3 (49.9)
<i>you personally</i>	88.0 (41.3)	75.5 (35.2)
<i>students</i>	97.9 (61.7)	88.9 (46.5)
<i>campus administration</i>	63.3 (18.9)	79.3 (40.7)
<i>campus faculty</i>	96.7 (42.4)	88.9 (54.0)
<i>the quality of education at CSUN</i>	89.1 (37.0)	79.0 (40.1)

\*Numbers in "( )" indicate the percentage response of "Very Negative."

The impact of the budget cuts on the institutional and professional culture of the institution was more directly apparent in the interviews with faculty and students. For example, Krista, a tenured faculty member, described the budget cuts and how they had affected the faculty and students in her department:

*In my college we had to cut a number of our classes in order to meet enrollment reductions in order to pay for everything ... I did watch a number of colleagues all of sudden get their summer classes cut and other sections did get cut. It was difficult for me because I taught five days a week, and these furloughs all of a sudden, I had no choice but to cancel classes. So on top of less money, and on top of student classes being cut, on top of student fees being raised, now I'm being asked to do the same thing with less time and less resources. And it was very frustrating. You know, from an educational standpoint, in order to pull all that together, to cover sort of the same material, advice I got from other colleagues was just, "Don't cover that material or just give more tests or more assignments"—it's not really a great answer. It's just not! ... I had a lot of anger over how it was all administered and how we were being asked to do and have the same results but with less. And what would that say to future legislature and future administration, that we can still do this with less money? [If that is the case] why give them more resources?*

Krista's comments highlight an important concern that was echoed by many faculty members— "we are asked to do and have the same results but with less [money]"; they worried about what kind of message their ability to manage successfully with fewer resources would send to legislators and administrators about the amount of funding the university needs to effectively operate.

Many of the faculty interviewed for this study believed that the economic crisis at the CSU, though not sustainable, would become a new "standard" for the public university in California. Both administrators and faculty would be asked to provide the same services and the same quality of education, but with fewer resources. Inevitably, however, faculty perceived that the quality of education would suffer as each round of cuts further reduced resources and reshaped the learning environment for students and faculty.



Other faculty members argued that the 10% workload reduction due to the faculty and staff furloughs would have additional consequences.

*[The furloughs came and] people stopped working ... If you asked them to do anything that had been their regular job, staff and faculty, the response was, "Oh, I'm having a furlough" ... That seemed to be the response to anything. Anybody that didn't want to do anything, it appeared, would use that as their rationale.*

Luke, a tenured faculty member, more dramatically echoed this same sentiment:

*If you look at the workload ... there was no cut-back in workload! Even though there was a 10% work reduction, which is what a furlough is, there is no reduction of work! The theory was we'll take it out of preparation, take it out of research, take it out of these other things. Then I think the morale issue was tremendous. It was just demoralizing ... everything you heard from everybody was "blah blah blah furlough!" It became the universal reason. Like traffic on the freeway. "I couldn't get here because there is traffic on the freeway." "Well, I couldn't get it done because there was furlough." When you look at it, the fact is that it's not just your time being cut back. This is a social institution and people need to work with other people. So if you start looking at they're not here Thursday and they're not here Wednesday, and whatever, it's a square function and maybe even more than that. So the impact is way more than just 10%. I would estimate the amount of effective work that got done, other than teaching, probably was reduced by like a third, maybe even more.*

In addition to discussions about "doing the same for less," both faculty and students collectively agreed that the 10% furloughs had had a significant impact on students and had compromised the quality of education they received. As Victoria, a tenured faculty member, described it,

*I'm troubled by the fact that I feel like I need to put an apostrophe on my student's diploma ... saying, "Oh, sorry, you had 90% of this work." What chapter in physics do you leave out for the next semester? So I'm troubled by that emotionally, that and other people just say, "Oh well, we have to do it so I'll just cut something."*

The existence of this "apostrophe'd" diploma was not lost on students. George, a junior in Sociology, bemoaned this situation, stating that *"the amount of furloughs they take is ridiculous ... So if you finally do get into the classes, then the class is empty. You miss out on most of the material. You get hit from both ends ... You pay more for less. And it's hard to get into that less, you know."*

The difficulty of getting classes, of getting "into that less" was one of the biggest complaints of the students interviewed for this study. Anna, a senior in History, expresses this dilemma of "paying more for less" in some detail:

*It's just not about getting classes. It's that they're not offering classes, you know. A year ago I had four classes left to take and I would graduate in the fall. Well, they went from offering a larger number of anywhere from up to seven or nine of these classes a semester ... to two to three classes. You have a lot of graduating seniors in the history department ... like "Hello!?" And when I went in to find out [about registration] ... before registration opened for the next semester, it was already full. The waiting list was full; it was closed. They weren't even taking anyone from the waiting list from fall and this was in spring. So summer was full; fall was full; so what was I going to do? Because you're not going to pay for one class! With furloughing the teachers, with laying some of the teachers off rotations, and cutting down the classes, and on top of that making the remainder so crowded that you can't get them, I mean it's a wonder that there are students that are still here.*

The faculty interviews confirmed the dire institutional situation described by many students. As Monique, a tenure-track faculty member, explained:

*As a result, fewer classes, and fewer classes in terms of the sections that I teach. For instance, I had the challenge of where I couldn't add any students above the required enrollment. I had students standing at my door crying, completely distraught. It's a GE [General Education] class, and they need the class to graduate. They need the class to move forward. They could have been a senior. It really pulled at my heart strings, because they really literally begged. They begged at the door to let them in. And if I did that, then I would have been penalized ... I was conflicted because I thought about my students and I kept struggling with how I am going to disseminate the knowledge I want within that period of time. It was a real challenge to adjust the classes so the students felt that they were getting what they should as a result of having spent sixteen weeks with me.*

Keisha, a CSUN senior, also very poignantly summarized her similar experience:

*I'm trying to get into a class that I need for my graduation and... there is only one class, one time, one day. One class for over 80 students! And we're fighting like pigs! It's like, "I'll pay you for your spot, for real!" I have to pay for my spot now? That's ridiculous! That's what pisses me off, not having to pay extra money. Cause I feel like a lot of students will feel okay if they just [even though their] tuition was raised .... can get into classes. You got a tuition raise and you're fighting like a pig to get into classes! That probably affects a lot of people!*

Keisha's account expresses the struggles that many students encountered as a result of the budget cuts at CSUN – increased tuition, awkward class schedules, “fighting like a pig to get into classes,” and even being desperate enough to pay another student for a spot in the class.

## The Professional and Personal Impact

While the perception of the decline in effective and engaging institutional participation was a dominant theme among both faculty and students, they also reported an impact on their professional and personal lives. In looking at the responses of faculty regarding how they used their time differently during the year of the budget cuts (Table 4), some important patterns emerged.

**Table 4:** Faculty and Student Perceptions of Professional and Personal Impact

(Scale: 1 = "Strongly Disagree," 5 = "Strongly Agree")

Professional and Personal Impact	Faculty	Student
During the past academic year, I have spent more time than expected ...	% Agree	% Agree
<i>following campus politics.</i>	48.4	46.1
<i>following news about the US economy.</i>	62.0	76.0
<i>pursuing non-academic interests.</i>	28.1	37.4
<i>finding additional sources of income.</i>	48.4	71.9
<i>doing class preparation.</i>	47.6	
<i>working from home.</i>	52.8	
<i>trying to secure financial aid.</i>		64.5
<i>trying to enroll in my classes.</i>		81.2

Both faculty and students reported that during the academic year they spent more time than usual following campus politics (faculty, 48.4%; students, 46.1%). In addition, 48% of faculty reported that they had spent more time than expected engaging in class preparation and 53% worked from home more frequently than they anticipated. Among students, 65% expressed a larger time investment in securing financial aid, and 81% spent more time than expected trying to enroll in classes.

It is striking that 28% of faculty and 37% of students reported that they spent more time than expected pursuing non-academic interests, and that almost one-half of faculty and nearly three-fourths of students found themselves searching for alternative sources of income. The budget cuts appear to have drawn faculty and students toward pursuits outside of the academy, mostly for economic reasons.

In the interviews, faculty reported distress in various aspects of their everyday lives, including not having enough time for family and friends, fears of not being able to make payments for homes and cars, fears of losing retirement investments, and feeling detached from loved ones, many of whom were also feeling the pinch of the economic recession. Yesenia described the personal toll that this had taken on her family:

I have also been financially deeply affected and I think it's different for everybody depending on what kind of situation they're in, double-income household or not. Whether or not you have children. We have a daughter who is 23, who lost her employment too so everything is on me, so, and with our salaries it's been tough.

Denise echoed the difficulties of family separation, describing the emotional consequences of the budget cuts on her personal life:

*Sometimes I feel downright resentful. I haven't seen much of my husband, because he is trying to make up for my lack of paycheck. If they do a furlough another year, the piece of land that we were going to retire on, we may end up losing it ... And I'm not seeing my husband now and it's putting strain on our relationship. He's really cranky, and I would imagine that he'd say that I'm cranky as well.*

Despite maligning their own situation, faculty seemed to be in general agreement that the most significant impact of the budget cuts was on the CSUN students. Monique sensed that the budget cuts were having a disorienting effect on many students. As she described it,

*The students are feeling discombobulated with having the days off. I wondered if some students rather enjoy having those furlough days so that they can sleep in, and maybe do some fun stuff. I asked two of my classes the other day, "You guys enjoy your day off?" And they said, "You know, not really. We actually like coming to class. I was off for your class, but I still had to go to my other classes. Then another day I go to your class and one of my other classes are cancelled." One of the students said that she had so much time in between [classes] that she'll go home, and then she'll get tired and she won't come back for the next class. So you know, it is having a spiraling effect, from one class to the next, with the students trying to juggle and what-have-you.*

Denise summed up this sentiment, saying that, "*the biggest tragedy about the furlough [and other higher education budget cuts] is cheating the students out of an education, because I know I'm not giving them the same.*"

### **Affordability, Accessibility, and Underrepresented Students**

There was a common perception that some students had been, or would be, hurt more than others by the budget cuts. In particular, traditionally underrepresented students—low-income students, first-generation students, and students of color—were identified as those who might disproportionately suffer the most significantly negative effects. Ironically, it is through including and serving those same student populations that the CSU system has long celebrated its ability to provide a quality, affordable, and accessible education to all of the residents of California.

Both faculty and students agreed that the budget cuts had caused more students to be excluded from the CSU system. Among the faculty respondents, 41% of faculty and 53% of students "strongly agreed" that the CSU budget cuts had "*caused more students to be excluded from CSUN.*" Students of color—and in particular Latino (54.8%) and African American (56.5%) students—were more likely than their white (48.2%) and Asian American (48.8%) counterparts to "strongly agree" that the exclusion of students had increased. In addition, first-generation college students (57.1%) were more likely than their continuing-generation complements (47.6%) to perceive a very salient increase in student exclusion.

Table 5 helps to provide an understanding of the unique experiences of traditionally underrepresented students in negotiating the budget cuts. In examining this questionnaire data, it is clear that with respect to ethnicity or generational status, all racial, ethnic, and generational groups reported a marked increase in their search for funding and classes, but the disproportionate burden seems to have fallen on the shoulders of students of color and first-generation college students. For example, about one-third of white students indicated that they “strongly agree” that they found themselves searching for additional sources of income (32%) and for financial aid (33%), and just over one-half (54.8%) described a significantly increased effort involved in enrolling in their classes. By comparison, students of color reported a much more difficult time securing funding with over one-half of both Latinos (52.8%) and African Americans (52.5%) describing significant efforts securing additional income, and almost two-thirds of Latinos (62.8%) and one-half of African Americans (54.5%) stretching to secure financial aid. While for many students of color the struggle to find classes was roughly equivalent to that of their white counterparts, the difficulties for Latinos was much more pronounced, with 70% of Latinos indicating significant problems in their course enrollments.

**Table 5: Student Perceptions of Personal Impact by Ethnicity and Generation Status**

(Scale: 1 = “Strongly Disagree,” 5 = “Strongly Agree”)

Personal Impact by Ethnicity and Generation Status	White	Latino	African-American	Asian-American	Non-First-Generation	First-Generation
During the past academic year, I have spent more time than expected ...	% Strongly Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Strongly Agree
following campus politics.	10.2	14.5	13.0	14.0	12.2	13.6
following news about the US economy.	23.6	32.5	30.4	30.2	26.6	29.9
finding additional sources of income.	32.0	52.8	52.5	42.9	36.1	45.0
trying to secure financial aid.	33.0	62.8	54.5	46.3	33.4	50.4
trying to enroll in my classes.	54.8	69.8	52.5	59.5	55.9	64.6
studying.	12.8	20.6	30.4	20.9	13.6	17.9

Student reports of generational status parallel that of racial and ethnic difference. Like many students of color, first-generation students reveal a greater degree of dissonance as a consequence of the CSU budget cuts when compared to continuing-generation students. For example, 45% of first-generation students, compared to 36% of continuing-generation students, reported that they “strongly agreed” that the budget cuts led to an unexpected search for additional sources of income. Similarly, about one-half of first-generation students (50.4 %) also described more effort in securing financial aid, compared with one-third (33.4%) of continuing-generation students. While all students indicated a high degree of difficulty enrolling in their courses, nearly two-thirds of first-generation students (64.6%) reported such difficulties compared with 56% of the continuing-generation students. Interestingly, despite their reports of increased and unexpected difficulty in the face of the CSU budget cuts, underrepresented students—including both first-generation students and students of color—reported a greater and unanticipated degree of time spent studying during the academic year, when compared with their white and continuing-generation complements.<sup>2</sup>

2 It is important to note that when it comes to funding and course enrollment, as discussed in the sections above, all students indicated that they felt the negative effects of the budget cuts; however, students of color and first-generation students reported a disproportionately greater impact of the CSU budget woes.

In their focus group discussions, many faculty and students commended the CSU system for its history of increasing access to students traditionally excluded from higher education. For example, in the student focus group interviews, the point was clearly made that students of color notice and feel more comfortable within a diverse learning environment like that represented by the CSU system. They see diversity as a strength of the Northridge campus, yet they also believe that the budget cuts will have a negative impact on campus diversity. Students predict that the university will become more privileged, white, and upper or middle class, as a result of increasing educational costs that make it harder for students from underrepresented communities to attend college. The following excerpt is a conversation during the focus groups that exemplifies student opinions about campus diversity.

**Interviewer:** *What [do you think] about serving a diverse population?*

**Daniel (black):** *Just having different races on campus?*

**Sara (Asian):** *I think that's one of CSUN's strongest things.*

**Daniel (black):** *It's the first time I've been at a school that wasn't all white.*

**[group laughter]**

**Sara (Asian):** *Yeah, me too.*

**Daniel (black):** *I'm still...seeing the same faces for 12 years. Oh, you look like me! That's weird.*

**Mike (black):** *CSUN's got that but they're about to lose that, too. We're still cutting all these freshmen out of here. I mean, especially with groups who can't afford. Like my cousin, he can't afford school so he has to go to community college. It might be in 20 years... it's like a bunch of white kids in here because that's all that can afford.*

**Juan (Hispanic, first-generation):** *I think it's going to be harder for minority students to get in here. We have a history of low-income people. I guess with the budget cuts it's going to get more expensive for them and it's going to cut down the diversity on the campus.*

These students draw a stark contrast between the university they entered, which was affordable and diverse (“low-income people” and people that “look like me”), and the direction they see the university headed (unaffordable and privileged). For them, the causes of declining diversity are firmly situated at the intersection of race-ethnicity and social class. As the cost of attending CSUN goes up, low-income people can no longer afford it, and the number of minority students will decline.

The relationship between social class and educational affordability was a topic of conversation among students across the focus groups. In the following statements, Henry describes a growing class divide while Daniel bemoans the failure of the CSU system to provide a “haven” for lower-income students:

**Henry (white):** *I think what's frustrating for a lot of people from lower income is that if kids have money where they don't have to worry about work,*

*or their parents pay, then they can just focus on their studies. Even if they have to take classes at odd hours it doesn't matter because they could just focus on going to school and not have to worry about making money for rent or will I have to get another job because the fees are going up. The divide is getting bigger between people in the private schools or the UC schools ... and for the people that go to Cal State schools ... Now it's less affordable.*

The faculty also noted the confluence of social class and race-ethnicity in discussing the effects of the budget cuts on the student body. Javier, a tenure-track faculty member, described his experiences with students who are traditionally under-represented:

*I asked this student, "What's your biggest concern?" She's at a community college and she said, "I'm not sure I can afford to continue my education." These students are on the margin economically [and] I'm beginning to think that race and class are convoluted. It's very complex. I don't think it's one or the other, there's an intersection between these two. We have to come back to the class-racial dynamic that's taking place in this society and I think it's tied to the economic situation. You're dealing with a form of capitalism that if unabated becomes brutal.*

Many of the students and faculty at CSUN were keenly aware of the disproportionate impact of rising costs on underrepresented and underserved students.

According to the focus group participants, it isn't simply the fee increases that are changing the demographics of the student body. Students also feel that the university's priorities and commitments have changed. The new policies that have emerged after the budget crisis are perceived by focus group participants as designed to make students leave school, particularly those students who are defined as costly or undesirable by the university. Many students commented specially on this topic:

**Daniel (black):** *It's almost like they're trying to get us to leave. During the summer I was reading the updates on the CSUN website on the budget crisis. One of their goals was to cut the student population in half by this year. So you're openly telling us that you want half of us to leave, you know. They're just trying to make life terrible for us right now.*

**Sara (Asian):** *Yeah, it makes more sense for CSUN to want students that can pay than to have students that take money...like financial aid and stuff. They'd rather have people that can actually pay for it.*

**Mike (black):** *Now they're not letting people with academic delinquency, like if you get subpar grades below 2.0 and you don't pay your money on time, stuff like that.*

After the budget cuts, the CSU system and the CSUN campus instituted a wide range of new policies. Some of these included cutting enrollment by 10,000 students system-wide while increasing the admissions of out-of-state students, who pay higher non-resident tuition. The university further restricted enrollment policies and academic

disqualifications for students with failing grades or low GPAs. Students seem to interpret these policies as sending messages about who the university sees as a desirable student (those with money and good grades) and who is not a sought-after student (those who cannot pay for their education on their own and who struggle academically). Thus, according to the focus group participants, these policies send a discouraging message to low-income students, including students of color, that they are no longer desirable students within the CSU system.

In order to pay for fee increases, students sought outside employment, and some who already worked increased their hours or took on additional jobs. Henry describes the impact of taking a second job:

**Henry (white):** *One of the reasons why I would choose this school is because it was affordable when I started here and now it's less affordable. I had to increase my work hours. I work one job and I do tutoring on the side. [I] started that [tutoring] this year because I didn't have enough money. That takes time away from my studies, which hurts my grades. Those thirty hours a week working, if I could spend fifteen of those hours studying I would be doing a lot better. I also get a scholarship, which is a godsend, otherwise I would be working more.*

From the start, Henry's college experience was influenced by social class. Both the university he can afford to attend and the hours he can dedicate to studying are limited by financial obligations. Henry worries that the time he spends at work detracts from the quality of his education and his ability to earn good grades. As the costs of education increase, lower- and moderate-income students like Henry must dedicate more of their time and energy to paying for school. This limits their ability to learn, earn good grades, graduate on time, and make the most of their college experience.

In addition to fee increases, the university simultaneously decreased course offerings as a cost-saving measure. These changes compound work-education conflicts for students; at the same time that students need to increase their work hours, they face an inflexible class schedule that offers fewer sections of each class. In the following, students discuss the problems they encounter:

**Keisha (black, first-generation):** *If you have a six- or a four-hour class in the middle of Wednesday from 1:00 to 5:30, how are you going to tell your employer, "Well, I gotta bounce every Wednesday and Thursday and I gotta commute two hours to get here"?*

**Susan (white):** *That's exactly what I'm saying, you either work or go to school. It's one or the other.*

**Mayra (Hispanic):** *No, we do all three [including internship].*

**Susan (white):** *But you can't hold a job and tell them you gotta be out every Wednesday afternoon and Friday morning; they're not going to employ you. So that's what I mean by not being able to go to school and hold a job.*



**Keisha (black, first-generation):** *Or you're taking jobs at...waitressing.*

**Mayra (Hispanic):** *Exactly.*

**Susan (white):** *And you're not making enough money on that.*

The effects of the economic recession on families outside the university further compound the effects of the budget cuts within; students are confronted with increasing education costs at the same time that many families are under financial duress. In the following account, Simon, a faculty member, describes the "heartbreaking" situation of these students.

*Some of the interactions I've had with students are heartbreaking. A couple days ago a student came to my office...and she'd been absent a few times and wasn't doing very well in the course. She explained that her father lost his job and she had to take three jobs at the same time as going to school. She never worked before and didn't know what to do so she asked if she could have an incomplete. She was failing the course so I wasn't allowed to give her an incomplete under those circumstances but I suggested [she] declare a hardship and withdraw in that way. I get a lot of students in approximately that same situation.*

In this excerpt, the job loss and potential downward mobility of a parent has tremendous implications for the social mobility of the children. Students like the ones Simon describes are doubly penalized by increasing education costs and declining family incomes. Withdrawing or dropping out of college to secure employment may be important for family survival, but it also potentially limits the family's long-term prospects and the next generation's social mobility.

In addition to fears about the effects of the declining economy, faculty members also raised concerns about the student fee increases, criticizing the size of the increase as well as their implementation. For example, Benjamin, a faculty member who has been a part of the CSUN community for over fifty years, describes how he believes the fee increases will affect the CSU students:

*This population tends to be people who have the least capability of paying for their tuition. So as the tuition goes up, and it goes up precipitously [at] an incredibly skyrocketing rate, the students have less and less opportunities to come here.... This institution is very rapidly moving towards those who could afford to go to this university.*

Here, Benjamin describes fee increases as a threat to accessibility and the retention of lower-income students. Similar to some of the students' comments, the university is increasingly seen as a public institution that no longer serves diverse communities, but rather, becomes accessible only to the financially privileged. As Carla, a tenured faculty member, states:

*I think that very little has changed except that we are short-changing our students even more ... I'm here because I believe that by educating people*

*we can subvert the class system and we can help students really achieve something. I'm totally committed to that. I think that these budget cuts and the consequent actions make it much harder for students to succeed ... If class sizes are getting bigger and it's getting harder for students to actually come to class because they have to take on two and three jobs just to help their families make ends meet and we can't bend the rules to let them pass a class because that's not right either, that means that they're not learning. We can't work with them one-to-one anymore ... so we're now herding them into giant classes ... Hello? You know this is really impacting on the quality of education and it's going to make it even harder for these young people to succeed. It's disgusting.*

In sum, students appreciate and benefit from a diverse student body that is accessible to lower-income students and racial-ethnic minorities. However, both students and faculty agree that recent fee increases threaten the diversity of the campus. Further, the fee increases and related policy changes are seen as reflecting broader changes to the university's priorities and commitments. These changes are interpreted as reflecting a growing interest in serving financially privileged students who can afford to pay for their education on their own. In contrast, lower-income students who require financial aid or academic help are perceived to be the target of the university's enrollment cuts. These new policies, as well as the difficulty of paying for school while managing work and class schedules, have impacted student engagement and motivation. Students seem to be genuinely disheartened and overwhelmed by the new campus climate in which they find themselves. Not surprisingly, they feel that the changes brought about by the budget crisis, if preserved for the long term, will make the university less accessible and affordable for lower-income students and students of color.

## CONCLUSION

As the 2011-2012 academic year approaches, the administrators, faculty, and students of CSU Northridge, and throughout the entire state of California, are facing yet another round of drastic budget cuts. The state has approved \$500 million in new cuts to the CSU system. If Governor Brown's proposed tax extension is not approved, an additional \$500 million in cuts (\$1 billion in total) is anticipated. Student fees are set to increase another 10% in the fall, but this could more than triple to 32%, causing the cost of a CSU education to double (from \$4,880 to \$7,400) in just three years (Asimov 2011). CSU Chancellor Charles Reed has warned of "extreme choices," including closing enrollment for spring and turning away 20,000 transfer students (San Francisco Chronicle, May 11, 2011). At CSUN, departments have again reduced their course offerings and have doubled the sizes of many of their classes. Almost all of the part-time lecturers are gone. While another round of significant budget cuts is assured for the 2011-2012 academic year, no one knows with certainty what the cuts will look like, and what their consequences will be for California's public universities in the twenty-first century. What is certain, however, is that the members of the CSUN community will assuredly quake as these shockwaves once again resonate through the campus.

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# **“YOU WILL HAVE TO WORK TEN TIMES AS HARD AT CSU”: REDUCING OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT IN TIMES OF ECONOMIC CRISIS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

California's economic problems have had a major impact on the state's public high school and university students, especially those choosing to apply to and matriculate in the California State University (CSU) system. Using mixed methods including interviews of program leaders, recruiters, and student workers, this study investigates the effects of the budget cuts on the ability of five CSU campuses to provide outreach and recruitment to low-income high school and transfer students. The findings show that cuts to these programs are not proportionate, because these students are most likely to be “left in the dark” with limited access to college readiness services. This paper highlights the ways in which the CSU campuses are trying to continue their work using creative, collaborative, and resilient methods with declining resources.

## **INTRODUCTION<sup>3</sup>**

*“Triumph...is my message. Will it be easy? No! I remind them that you may have nights you don't sleep, but you have to get it done. You have to work three times as hard with little parental support. Now with the budget situation, you will have to work ten times as hard. But you can and will triumph.”*

Every time the young man<sup>4</sup> quoted above visits his low-income neighborhood, he sees the differences between himself—a college senior and the first in his family to go to college—and the peers he left behind living in poverty and despair. “I do whatever I can to try to motivate other students to find their way to college where they can enhance themselves through education, power, and possibility,” he said. “But it is harder and harder to do.” A student ambassador who has worked for his student outreach office for three years, he visits high schools to help students through the college readiness and application process. “I come from a lower SES (socioeconomic status) background,” he says, “I can tell them that despite the obstacles, if I can do it, you can do it. If it's money, you can do it. You don't have to sell drugs or strip. You can apply to FAFSA

3 This paper was sponsored by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA. We would like to thank Guadalupe Anaya, Daniel Crook, Laura Gutierrez, and Lauren Holguin for their assistance.

4 To protect the anonymity of everyone we interviewed for this paper, we refer to students who work in the outreach and recruitment offices as student ambassadors or student workers. We refer to directors, assistant directors, and recruiters as specialists, recruiters, or professionals.

(Free Application for Federal Financial Aid). They get it. The way I approach them, I share the details. I don't scare."

During the past year, he has watched dramatic changes occur in the world of college recruitment and outreach. Colleges have new deadlines and reduced enrollments, high schools have cut back on counseling, and outreach offices have cut back on programming, which may include downsizing the number of student ambassadors who share their powerful stories with other young people.

Research shows that outreach and college readiness programs are vital for attracting Latino and other under-represented students to four-year colleges. First-generation and other historically under-represented students lag behind their higher-income peers academically and attend college at significantly lower rates (Ikenberry and Hartle 1998; Miller 1997). About 33 percent of whites in their twenties hold college degrees, compared to 18 percent of blacks and 10 percent of Latinos (Gándara and Contreras 2009). These students face some of the most difficult challenges in education: they are more likely to attend ill-equipped schools (Kozol 1991; Oakes et al. 2006); to receive limited access to rigorous college preparatory courses, especially in math and language (Perna and Swail 2002; Tierney and Hagedorn 2002); to receive poor college counseling (McDonough 2005); and to have less prepared and less qualified teachers than their privileged counterparts (Darling-Hammond, Berry, Haselkorn, and Fideler 1999). Moreover, they are less likely to live in a home with college-educated parents, a relationship that directly correlates to college matriculation (Perez and McDonough 2008).

Once admitted, these students are much less likely to matriculate and/or persist through college because they are less likely to accept loans, more likely to require remediation, and more likely to struggle academically, socially, and financially (Hafner, Joseph, and McCormick 2010; U.S. Department of Education 2009; Perez and McDonough 2008).

In Los Angeles County, the lack of college attendance is acute. More than half of all students in the Los Angeles Unified School District, but only 24 percent of low-income students, graduate from high school having completed the courses required for entry into California's public university system. More than 70 percent of low-income students require remediation upon matriculation at those campuses serving the most at-risk students (Silver, Saunders, and Zarate 2008). The lack of college education leads to higher costs for our society, including loss of revenue because of a lack of a highly educated workforce; higher crime rates; higher rates of no life, health, and automobile insurance; and continued lack of economic advancement (Center for Labor Market Studies 2009).

## **THE PROBLEM**

The young ambassador described earlier is one of hundreds of students and staff members who are devoted to motivating, recruiting, and assisting low-income, first-

generation, and under-represented students in the California State University (CSU) system. The largest public four-year-college system in the country, the CSU has twenty-three campuses, which serve more than 450,000 students and employ more than 48,000 faculty and staff members. Despite major tuition and fee increases, the CSU system was the second most affordable system in the country and continued to serve the most diverse student population in the country in 2010 (ICF 2010). Moreover, in the 2009 and 2010 academic years, the CSU system's campuses have received the highest number of applications in its history, 609,000 and 611,000, respectively. The CSUs play a central and crucial role in contributing to the diversity of the nation's college graduates and strengthening the state's economy (ICF 2010).

This CSU role in California's economy is stronger than ever, as recent economic reports show that those most hurt in this economic downturn are minorities and the non-college educated. While the overall U.S. unemployment rate hovered at 10 percent in 2010, the unemployment rate for the college educated is 4.5 percent (Lumina Foundation 2010). By providing "an affordable, accessible education to hundreds of thousands of Californians who would not otherwise attend a university," the CSU system is the greatest mechanism for economic and social mobility within the state of California (ICF 2010, 10). Conferring nearly half of all undergraduate and one-third of all master's degrees in the state, the CSU system educates the largest number of low-income minority students in the country. This education leads to higher incomes for its graduates and has a tremendous impact on the economy through the infusion of highly trained workers to California social services and industries, including hospitality, criminal justice, education, and business.

The CSU has a long-standing commitment to educating first-generation, low-income Latino and African American students, and has one of the most substantial outreach budgets in the country. Committed to helping students succeed and persist to a degree once they reach the university, the CSU recently initiated a Graduation Initiative aimed at increasing the graduation rate and reducing the achievement gap of under-represented students. As of 2006-2007, the CSU awarded 56 percent of all California bachelor's degrees granted to Latinos (ICF 2010).

Unfortunately, as the economy has soured in the country and particularly in the state of California, the CSU system has taken three successive annual cuts, totaling more than \$546 million from 2006 to 2010. The largest in the system's history, these cuts represent more than 20 percent of its operating budget. For the 2011-2012 school year, the CSU will face a budget cut of at least \$500 million (18 percent), and in a worst-case scenario, \$1 billion (36 percent). At the same time, more students than ever are attending four-year colleges as first-time freshmen or transfer students, and the system's major recruitment and outreach have brought in the largest number of first-generation, low-income students in its history.

Table 1 shows CSU system-wide outreach budgets broken down by major funding sources for academic years 2005-2006 through 2009-2010 (California State University

2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009, 2010). During this period, the system's outreach budget suffered a 50.1 percent cut in state general funds, with a 20.7 percent overall drop in funds. Federal and state lottery funds have helped make up some of the loss in state general funds. However, two of the campuses we studied have lost access to their lottery money for outreach as campus leaders determine usage of the money, making their budget cuts deeper than those in other parts of their campuses.

**Table 1:** CSU Systemwide Outreach Budgets

Type of Funds	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
State General funds	\$32,682,000	\$22,538,368	\$18,691,022	\$17,759,164	\$16,307,197
Lottery funds	\$ 1,671,000	\$ 1,315,953	\$ 1,540,702	\$ 2,996,164	\$1,613,775
Federal funds	\$36,168,000	\$29,050,871	\$24,092,038	\$27,407,094	\$26,788,418
Other <sup>18</sup>	Not available	\$11,729,176	\$10,423,810	\$10,926,854	\$11,292,876
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70,621,000</b>	<b>\$64,634,368</b>	<b>\$54,747,572</b>	<b>\$59,089,276</b>	<b>\$56,002,266</b>

**Table 2:** Percentage Three-Year and One-year CSU Systemwide Outreach Budget Changes

Change 2005-2006 to 2009-2010	
State General funds	-50.1%
Lottery funds	-3.4%
Federal funds	-25.8%
Other*	Not available
<b>Total</b>	<b>-16.3%</b>

The CSU has long had a major commitment to outreach and diversity. Yet this series of severe budget cuts has led the CSU's Chancellor to cut the operating budgets of outreach and recruitment offices. In this paper, we discuss the specific impact of these budget cuts (prior to the massive 2011 cuts) on the outreach and support programs provided by the five CSU campuses serving Los Angeles County, the area of the state that serves the largest Latino, first-generation, and low-income population of college students. We seek to answer the following research questions:

1. How have the recent budget cuts impacted CSU outreach and recruitment offices?
2. How are the five CSU campuses in this study changing practices as a result of the cuts?

5 Funds received from private corporations, non-profits, and community-based organizations.



3. How do CSU campus outreach and recruitment professionals and students respond to budget shifts?

### STUDY DESIGN

In this study, we focused on five diverse CSU campuses in Southern California. Campus 1 is located in a low-income area and serves large numbers of first-generation students. Campus 2 is a magnet campus that draws from the entire state yet also has a local service area. Campus 3 is located in a more affluent area of the region yet also serves many low-income areas. Campus 4 is the largest of the five campuses and received the most applications of all CSU campuses in the past year, while Campus 5 is the smallest and is the only non-impacted campus of the five in this study (impacted campuses are at capacity and cannot admit all qualified students). All five offices receive state lottery monies in addition to state general fund, federal, and grant monies, and all five run campus tours.

**Table 3: 2009 Campus Application and Acceptance Information**

	Campus 1	Campus 2	Campus 3	Campus 4	Campus 5
Freshmen applied	21,394	20,759	23,298	45,771	9,729
Freshmen admitted	14,382	12,731	17,411	14,543	5,737
% Freshmen accepted	67.2%	61.3%	74.7%	31.8%	59%
Freshmen enrolled	2,019	2,913	4,625	3,551	1,135
% Freshmen matriculated	14.0%	22.9%	26.6%	24.4%	19.9%
Transfers applied	9,728	5,289	10,831	14,691	6,578
Transfers admitted	7,357	3,832	6,353	3,651	5,055
% Transfers accepted	75.6%	72.5%	58.7%	24.8%	76.8%
Transfer enrolled	1,826	1,567	3,652	2,077	2,494
% Transfers matriculated	24.8%	40.9%	57.5%	56.9%	49.3%

**Table 4: 2010 Campus Application and Acceptance Information**

	<b>Campus 1</b>	<b>Campus 2</b>	<b>Campus 3</b>	<b>Campus 4</b>	<b>Campus 5</b>
Freshmen applied	22,731	23,395	23,024	47,709	12, 083
Freshmen admitted	12,996	10,447	16,926	16,428	6,999
% Freshmen accepted	57.2%	44.7%	73.5%	34.3%	58.0%
Freshmen enrolled	2,061	2,019	5,195	3,988	1,037
% Freshmen matriculated	15.6%	19.3%	30.7%	24.3%	14.9%
Transfers applied	13,000	10,469	14,569	21,737	8,157
Transfers admitted	9,506	3,478	7,546	4,204	5,194
% Transfers accepted	73.1%	33.2%	51.8%	19.3%	63.7%
Transfer enrolled	2,561	1,506	4,472	2,275	2,141
% Transfers matriculated	26.9%	43.0%	59.3%	54.1%	41.2%

**Table 5: 2010 Ethnic Diversity of Freshmen Enrollment**

	<b>Campus 1</b>	<b>Campus 2</b>	<b>Campus 3</b>	<b>Campus 4</b>	<b>Campus 5</b>
Asian Pacific Islander	12.9%	20.29%	8.5%	17.7%	6.4%
Black	5.3%	2.80%	10.8%	4.9%	18.1%
Filipino	2.14%	2.94%	2.54%	5.1%	1.1%
Latino	66.74%	38.5%	45.4%	38.9%	54.4%
Native American	.1%	.1%	.2%	.4%	.4%
White	3.64%	22.4%	19.3%	19.4%	6.5%

## EFFECTS AT FIVE CAMPUSES

To learn about the effects of budget cuts on outreach and recruitment, we visited the campuses. Each campus organizes its outreach and recruitment differently.

Campus 1 has an outreach and recruitment office that also leads student orientation. It employs nine full-time recruiters who serve 104 high schools and eighteen community colleges. Twenty-three paid student ambassadors serve sixty high schools and two community colleges. It also has several full-time staff members who run its self-supported orientation, and four student workers who serve as campus tour guides. Campus 1 has several grants that fund specialized college readiness programs. The

outreach and recruitment office director was recently named Director of Admissions and will continue to run both offices.

Campus 2 has a combined outreach and admissions office. Its six recruiters also serve as admission officers. With its current focus on statewide admissions, Campus 2 reaches 200 high schools and twenty community colleges. Four recruiters work with fifty schools and four to five community colleges. One of these four is funded by a grant to focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) recruitment and admissions along with outreach to high schools and community colleges. Another recruiter works with community and religious organizations, twenty-eight schools, and two community colleges; and two others work with teacher education and veteran recruitment and admissions. The office also runs campus tours, with two directors and twenty-five student workers. Campus 2 has only a few student ambassadors and primarily relies on student organizations to send members to events with recruiters. The program runs a couple of other smaller recruitment and outreach programs.

Campus 3 has a large outreach and recruitment office that is separate from the Admissions Office. The office incorporates recruitment, marketing and communications, partnerships, guest relations, campus tours, and all campus-wide testing including placement tests. It also oversees programs such as three federal college access programs: Gear Up Grants, Education Talent Search, and Upward Bound.<sup>6</sup> Campus 3 has six full-time recruiters, one of whom focuses on international recruitment, which has doubled to 5.5 percent of overall admissions in the past year as international students pay more than out-of-state fees. It also has ten paid student workers and seventy volunteer student workers. It receives more than \$1 million in federal and state grant funding each year.

Campus 4 has a separate recruitment office that sends four recruiters out to its service areas, down from seven the previous year. It uses volunteers as tour guides and has student ambassadors work in its office. The campus works with several grants and has unique admissions compact with its local high school and community college districts that guarantees admissions to students in local area schools who meet some key criteria.

The smallest campus, Campus 5 runs a small outreach office. It recently announced a new in-house Transfer Center.

Our research methods included accessing state data sources to analyze demographic, application, and enrollment data, and conducting multi-day site visits to the five campuses to conduct interviews. Overall, we spoke with five program directors, three assistant directors, twenty-three recruiters/outreach and admissions specialists, three student ambassadors, two campus tour directors, and three high school teachers active in college access. We used semi-structured interview protocols, and we followed up with phone calls and emails for additional information.

<sup>6</sup> These three federally funded programs provide money for colleges and community organizations to partner with local school districts to provide significant college access and readiness programs.

## FINDINGS

### **Systemwide Cuts Affect Outreach, Recruitment, and Admissions**

The CSUs have long recognized the need to provide a wide variety of outreach and pre-college support programs to reach those students who need the most ongoing support preparing for, applying to, and transitioning to college (Oliva 2008). The system dedicated funds to provide a wide variety of outreach services, yet for two years in a row, the state dramatically cut the CSU budget. For the 2011-2012 school year, the state has already announced a \$500 million cut, which may become as high as \$1 billion should expiring taxes not be renewed. Last year, the CSU closed winter and spring admissions at campuses, did not allow campuses to accept late applications, and pushed out students who did not meet remediation requirements after their first year, or who took more than six years to graduate. In response to the already announced \$500 million cut, the CSU will enroll 10,000 fewer students, raise tuition for the third year in a row, reduce the number of class sections, increase class sizes, and cut all program budgets. Should the additional \$500 million budget cut go into effect, the CSU will institute wait-lists, raise tuition by up to another 32 percent, and continue not admitting any winter or spring applicants, potentially cutting another 20,000 students

This is occurring at the same time that the system received record freshmen and transfer applications, K-16 schools experienced unprecedented budget cuts, and budget cuts are affecting all layers of the CSU system. The rationalization for scaling back in these programs is the assumption that given the 10 percent reduction in admissions, there will be less need for services such as early outreach, recruitment, Summer Bridge, and orientation programs.<sup>7</sup>

#### *Inability to Serve the Same Number of Students*

To limit student enrollment at a time of increased applications, the Chancellor instituted the following four mandates during the 2009-2010 school year:

1. Declaring campus impaction
2. Admitting only fully eligible students
3. Adhering to deadlines
4. Not allowing super seniors (seniors who already qualify to graduate) in college to continue taking classes

The first three mandates affected the front end of the admissions process and the efforts of outreach and recruitment offices.

<sup>7</sup> Critical to remember is that the 10 percent reduction cuts Full Time Equivalent Student (FTES), not bodies. Full Time Equivalents are course units. At a school like Campus 1 where students take only about two-thirds of a load (three Campus 1 students = two FTES), a 10 percent cut affects far more students than it does at an affluent school where students carry a full load. So campuses that serve more low-income students, like one campus in our study, will incur deeper cuts affecting those students who need the services and programs the most.

In addition to keeping the 2009-2010 cuts in place, the following additional limits will go into effect for the 2011-2012 school year:

1. Waitlists
2. Limited or eliminated winter and spring admissions
3. 10,000 to 20,000 fewer students

## **Declaring Campus and Program Impaction**

Until recently, the majority of CSU campuses and programs were open. Open, non-impacted campuses must admit all students who meet basic eligibility requirements<sup>8</sup> and can use special admits to admit students who don't meet these criteria.

Impaction at either the major or campus level changes that open dynamic. In the past year, all but three out of the twenty-three CSU campuses have impacted their entire campuses and/or very popular majors—up from ten campuses a year earlier (California State University, 2008a; California State University, 2011). An impacted campus must prioritize enrollment to students in its service area and then, if room is available, open to other students from across the state. Impacted majors can require students to have higher eligibility indexes and/or to submit supplementary materials.

In metropolitan Los Angeles, four of the five campuses are now impacted for freshmen, while three are impacted for transfers. For the past two years, each campus has had a significant increase in the number of applications at both the freshmen and transfer levels. There has been at least a 12 percent increase in freshmen applications and a much more significant increase in transfer applications.

## **Admitting Only Fully Eligible Students**

Before this year, most CSU campuses could admit students provisionally, and they allowed first-time freshmen and transfers to make up one or two missing required high school or community college classes during the summer before matriculation. They also allowed community college students to enter with one or two missing classes, especially one of the Golden Four transfer courses—College English, Critical Thinking, College Math, and Speech. Now for the first time, all high school and transfer students must meet eligibility requirements by the end of their traditional academic year spring semester or quarter. Fulfillment of eligibility requirements is more challenging than ever for first-generation community college students, who often wait until the end of their final year to take the final core classes. “Now we meet with students who worry they will have to wait an additional year because they can't get access to classes

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<sup>8</sup> The CSUs use an eligibility index to admit students. For freshmen, an eligibility score multiplies by 800 a student's GPA in specific college readiness (A-G) classes in tenth and eleventh grade along with the number of AP or honors classes taken and then adds in the student's Critical Reading and Math SAT scores. For transfers, the index uses GPA in GE and major courses, the minimal completion of sixty units with grades of C or higher, and the completion of the four required classes.

they need,” said one official. Community colleges have also been hit by budget cuts and are offering fewer classes even as their enrollment is skyrocketing. High school students often lose eligibility because they have to take summer classes, which the CSUs no longer allow. “They shouldn’t have waited, but they do, and now most districts have either cancelled or severely limited summer school for students to clear deficiencies the summer before they apply,” said another official.

### *Adhering to Deadlines*

Until last year, transfer students could apply for fall and spring at semester-system schools and for fall, winter, spring, and summer at quarter-system schools. Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, all campuses could accept only fall applications. That continued this year with some late summer provisional abilities to accept transfer students in some programs for spring. So the 2010-2011 school year had three groups of transfer students applying: spring 2009, fall 2010, and spring 2010. In addition, many campuses used to allow freshmen to apply beyond the November 30 final application date on CSU Mentor, the online application system. Starting this past November, all but one campus was forced to use November 30 as the final date and to hold students to other deadlines for placement tests, intent to register, and final transcript submission. Several campuses also implemented registration deposits last or this year. Recruiters said they heard that several teachers paid these student deposits. We spoke to one teacher who said, “I paid deposits for three students,” adding, “Students did not have the cash, their families do not work, and I knew they are good kids and really deserved to go to college.” All of these deadlines have dramatically changed the climate for campuses like CSU Los Angeles, which used to allow students to apply as late as June and submit all final paperwork late into the summer.

### *“Worst I’ve Seen in Twenty Years”*

All of the changes described above had a dramatic impact on the ability of many students who traditionally would have matriculated to a CSU to do so. As one official said, “This is the worst I have seen in twenty years. We have never been impacted in twenty years. We have never not admitted students each term. We have never required a \$100 registration deposit. We have never closed admissions.” All officials said they recognized the necessity of reducing admissions, but each and every one to whom we spoke worried that mandated changes would affect the most fragile students, especially those with little guidance from their families and schools. “These students tend to be our first-generation students attending schools which often do not mandate A-G classes for all students, place students in lower-track classes, and offer limited college counseling,” said one professional. “Students and schools always thought we would always be there,” commented one official, adding, “We have no more last-minute accepts.” “We cannot make exceptions for incomplete transcripts or late intents to register,” said another specialist. At least one official from each college said he or she relied on late admits or exceptions in his or her own admissions process. “I don’t know if I would have attended a CSU if what is happening now had been going on,” said one specialist. “It’s a huge culture shock, a paradigm shift.”

### *Getting the Word Out*

The officials have been getting the word out about the shifts. The websites for each campus mention the effects of the budget cuts on services and programs, and list new mandates and requirements. "We are working to change the messages students and families receive," said a specialist. The professionals worry, however, that the new reality has led to "a culture of fear and worry among students." "If they don't know the system or know someone who knows it, they will get lost," explained one specialist.

## **EFFECTS OF BUDGET CUTS AT THE CAMPUS LEVEL**

Budget cuts at the university level have impacted each office's ability to do outreach and recruitment. "We have had to look at our core goals, our significantly reduced budgets, and make difficult decisions," said one leader. "We can't visit as often as we once did," said another. Because of budget cuts, each campus has been unable to replace all outreach and admissions professionals who leave, increasing the case load of those remaining. One campus is down three recruiters, while two others are down four. "They don't realize we're building bridges. Every staff person lost contacts with hundreds and hundreds of students and families," said one director.

### **Reduced Travel Budgets and Travel Schedules**

Budget cuts have reduced travel budgets. One campus used to have four state cars; now it has only one. One campus used to send recruiters to schools three to four times a year, at critical junctures, to provide guidance to students. Last year, it stopped allowing recruiters to go to schools after December, except for college fairs. The three other campuses reduced outreach visits to high schools to once a month, down from once a week or twice a month. All campuses reduced the majority of their community college outreach from once or twice a week to once or at most twice a month. Three of the CSUs mandated that recruiters service only schools in its Tier 1 (local) service area. One campus shifted its recruiters away from middle schools to high schools only.

Personal contact is very important in informing students and keeping them on track. The reduced visit schedules worry everyone we interviewed. "These students and schools rely on us," said one official. Another said, "They need us because we look like them, and we share stories of how we made it and show them how they can, too." Another added, "The students need personal relationships. Students, primarily Hispanic students, who are seventeen years old are afraid to call. They blend in and hear things but don't call us. We say just call or email us. But they don't call. They don't email. They don't take advantage. And if they continue this, they will lose out in these competitive times."

### **Shifts to Group Presentations and College Fairs**

Because of the reduced number of campus visits, all campuses asked recruiters to shift their focus to more classroom, schoolwide, and college fair presentations. One campus requires recruiters to visit a classroom during each visit. "These larger group

visits are very effective, because we reach so many more students, and the teachers and counselors take what we provide and share it with other groups.”

Others require two to three school visits per day. “I schedule several school sites per day, and it’s ideal to conduct presentations in big groups, but sometimes because of the size of the group, I lose out on the middle kid, the borderline kids who are not sure of their plans, and who need one-on-one guidance,” one specialist said. “I’m making presentations this summer because I know how important it is to get to students and establish a personal connection. I stay afterwards, on my own time, and speak with students. They are the ones who follow through with me,” said another.

## **Fewer Campus Tours**

Campus tours make a huge difference in students’ and families’ interest in colleges (Nora 2004). Campus tours impact a student’s choice of college. By physically engaging in the school’s environment, students form psychological and social reactions that help them decide which college to attend. Factors such as friendliness, enthusiasm, and personal attention from admissions officers play a huge role in the college decision-making process (Nora 2004, 2). Year-end surveys of counselors at the CSU campuses indicate that a campus tour is “extremely positive” and influences a student’s decision to matriculate. Because of budget cuts, three campuses reduced the number of campus tours during the school year and cancelled summer tours. One campus may not offer any tours next year, while three will have to cut back their tours significantly. Typically, campus guides are current students; three campuses use student workers to give tours, while two others use volunteer tour guides. “Campus tours make campuses friendly or unfriendly; we become the campus to them.” said one director. Because of cuts in student workers at one campus, it cancelled summer tours and may not run any tours next year.

In addition, all of the campuses used to offer bus transportation to schools in their service area for group tours. “We used to use fourteen busses,” said one professional at a school that now uses only one or two for special programs. Campus officials said they no longer have sufficient funds to resume providing non-grant-funded busses. A student ambassador said, “I used to get a bus tour for each school I visited. This is awesome, because during our school visits we paint a picture of college, and then, when they would follow up with a tour, they would see how they belong here.” The ambassador worried about students’ ability to see college as a reality, because the campus tours were often their first visit to a college.

Rather than serving 300 school requests, one campus can now provide tours to only ninety schools. One specialist worries that “the parents of under-represented students do not have the option to take time off, as generally they participate in the Saturday tours, which have been reduced to one per month during the academic year and none during the summer. We used to provide tours every Saturday.” One recruiter watched a group from a school community five minutes away come for a visit. “When they left, they were glowing and taking pictures. Parents were ‘wow.’ None of them knew about



the campus, and they live in the same area," said this recruiter, adding, "What will happen if they can't come to campus?"

### **Reduced Access to Handouts**

In addition, each of the five campuses had to reduce the production quality and number of handouts it produces. Two campuses now produce only one handout. One directs students to its website.

### **Use of Student Workers and Ambassadors**

All of the campuses rely on student workers for much of their outreach. These students are highly effective because "they went to the same schools our students attend and are great role models," said one director. "They bring life and light to our work," said one specialist. Four of the campuses use work-study to fund some student workers, but next year they may only be able to hire work-study students (as federal work-study pays half of student's wages), or cut the number of student workers. One campus may not have any funds to hire student workers. Another is cutting its student staff in half. Fortunately, three campuses have found other ways to integrate students into their offices, using volunteer campus tour providers, and inviting student organizations to send members to events in return for small payments to their organizations' coffers.

## **CUTS AT K-12 SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Each and every cut affects the scope of firsthand school outreach. Often each campus is the only CSU campus present to provide college outreach services to schools in its service area, whereas in the past years "we would have three to four schools per site." In addition, cuts at the K-12 and community college levels are leading to unprecedented numbers of K-12 school site counselors being laid off or reassigned. "There are fewer counselors, and the counselors who are still there are wearing multiple hats, rather than one or two hats. They are already spread too thin. We are setting them up to fail. How can they do all of it?" said one official. All of the officials said they rely on school counselors for appointments, collaboration, and access to students.

Community colleges are cutting classes and services just as their enrollment is skyrocketing. "Community college students seek me out as they know I am a source. The counselors sometimes tell them different things. They are falling in between the cracks, now that I'm not there as much," said one worried specialist. "We are entering schools where we have to start from scratch as our counselor contacts are no longer there, and often those who are have dramatically increased work responsibilities," said one official. "Counselors would call us and advocate for students. Now who will?" wondered one officer.

## **MULTIPLE RESPONSES TO THE CUTS**

“My workload has increased; along with everyone else I suffered a pay cut from the furloughs, the schools I service are impacted, and yet my will to work is stronger than ever. The students need us more than ever, and that alone keeps me focused and committed to our work,” said one professional. Throughout our visits, we learned of the multiple approaches outreach workers are finding to continue their critically important work using resilience, creativity, and new partnerships. “Students will call me day after day, and I take each and every call. They can never ask a question that is too simple or silly. They just don’t know,” offered another. “We are partnering with other groups and organizations and finding ways to reach those who most need us,” said another.

### **To Whom Can Students Turn?**

“In our communities, in our cities, and in our streets, we are critical components of equity. It is a huge detriment to society when we will find that we have left these people behind.”

Admissions officers, like the one quoted above, worried about the short- and long-term consequences of the cuts. “Just when schools need us the most, we have less to offer them,” said one specialist, adding, “The students need us more than ever, just when they are being left most alone.” Another notes, “There is so much uncertainty in community colleges and K-12 career centers that they need us to see more students.” One student ambassador worried that “students will have no one to turn to next year.”

### **Need for Individual Guidance**

Student workers emphasized the need for individual guidance: “If it wasn’t for the Cal State recruiter, Karen, who came to us and provided flyers, I would have gone to a community college. I saw her twice a week after that. That’s how I got to apply,” explained one student, adding, “I go to schools to make sure other kids get the help I received from a recruiter.” A specialist said, “If we tell them how much they should go to college, and then during senior year, close doors and do not disseminate info that is so helpful, the pipeline of future lawyers, teachers, nurses, engineers will close for those most at-risk, yet talented, students.”

### **Resilience, Persistence, and Optimism**

Even though the effects of this confluence of cuts at the CSU, community college, and K-12 school levels are affecting students’ ability to apply, accept, and matriculate, the five campuses we visited are still places of hope and potential. The situation is requiring students to become more resilient, persistent, and responsible, said all the officials. One added, “We are having to do the same and retain our optimism, which is

challenging and necessary to do our work." That is clearly evident from the way each office is approaching this crisis.

### **Integration of Technology**

Each campus is relying more on technology. Three are offering virtual campus tours, several offer self-guided tours, and one purchased new computers and cameras to enable professionals to use Skype to communicate with students farther away in its service area. All are putting core recruitment documents online. All are looking at social networking and other ways to reach students, including flash emails and virtual college fairs. The CSU Mentor site offers an educational planner into which students can enter their grades and classes, which are then exported into the application whenever students are ready to complete their application. Many students, however, do not have access to a networked computer.

### **Increased In-House Availability**

Because of the reduction in site visits, each recruiter is spending more time in the office answering phones, sending out mass emails, running counselor training sessions, and scheduling classroom, college fair, and on-campus sessions with groups of counselors. "When a student and family come in, they actually get to meet with us," said a specialist. Another commented, "I help reduce their fears and show them step by step what they need to do. Once I talk to someone, he will keep in touch." One campus just created a transfer center to offer services directly to transfer students on its own campus.

### **New View of Partnerships**

All of the campuses have other sources of funds, from federal to state to private grants. "We rely on those grants to pick up the slack from where we're leaving off, and they're helping us," said one official. Three of the campuses fund some of their recruiters through grants. All fund student workers through lottery money, which for two campuses has been drastically cut at the campus level. "I see the need for us to apply for much more federal and private monies," said one official. "Gear Up and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) can pay for busses. They can provide for additional counselors. They do the work we used to and need to still do." One specialist just trained several Gear Up staff to give campus tours to groups from the schools it services. "Giving a tour requires real training, so I'm glad they asked us to train their students. They need to not only learn about our campus but also how to send positive messages about attending college to parents, teachers, and students."

Other campuses are developing partnerships with local community colleges and high schools. One campus, for example, announced a partnership to provide local community college students with access to campus resources. Another has a compact with a local, diverse high school district and local community colleges to guarantee admissions to students meeting core criteria.

## **Increased Collaboration with Counselors**

Each campus is increasing its on-campus outreach to counselors and school site leaders. One campus brought in more than 100 counselors for a counselor update conference, a 20.2 percent increase from the previous year; and drew more than 150 counselors to an appreciation lunch, up 16 percent from the previous year. Two campuses are working with church and other non-profit groups. "These groups are embedded in the neighborhoods and can do so much to help promote college," said one specialist. "Now it's time to develop partnerships with them."

## **Increased On-Campus Resources**

With the reduced travel time, outreach specialists are on their campuses more and available to meet with more students and families who visit campus. One campus announced a new transfer center to provide transfer students with on-campus admissions counseling all year round. "If we can't go to them, we certainly can maximize our assistance to them when they come to our campuses," said one specialist.

## **DISCUSSION**

At a time when CSU campuses have more applicants and students than they can handle, one director said, "People may wonder why we need recruitment and outreach." If they understand the CSU's goal to offer high-quality education to all students, "then they would not question our existence but insist on giving us more." "Lots of students who would have been perfectly eligible 1.5 years ago are not eligible," explained one specialist. "We went from 2.5-3.0 GPA for transfer students to higher than a 3.0. We are leaving many students out in the cold." Currently, enrollment numbers are up and the system has more students than available spaces, so the effects of reduced recruitment efforts and more stringent eligibility standards may not be observable immediately.

The campuses know they will continue to get the top-ranking, most motivated students. Yet diversity comes from the middle students, those students whose families and schools do not push them toward four-year universities. "If we don't get to them, we lose them. We play a really crucial role. We don't want to leave them in the dark," said a recruiter. Two recruiters talked about how they had to use their own cultural capital to help their relatives with college access. "They need our personal stories, our passion, our connections," said one specialist, adding, "I'm a first-generation graduate; my parents didn't go to school. I had to find resources on my own. I share my story, and I see the lights go on in their eyes."

If students do not get the information they need, then how will they pursue their education at a CSU when the slots can be filled with those from more affluent and better supported communities? "CSU is about building relationships. If we cut off outreach and recruitment, you cut off the public investment in our future," said one professional. Another added, "It depends on your vision of higher education. If you be-

lieve higher education is there to serve the future, we can't afford to leave those most vulnerable students behind."

The budget cuts affecting campus outreach programs are much more profound than simple dollar cuts, because every service affects low-income Latino and African American students disproportionately; they are more likely to attend schools where counselors have been eliminated or reassigned, less likely to have parents who attended college, and more likely to need personal attention. All of the programs provide significant outreach to high schools and community colleges through recruiter and student presentations, as well as meetings with individual students and families, campus tours, training counselors, and running a myriad of college readiness programs. These services are paramount for under-represented students. Recruiters, most all of whom are first-generation college students or graduates, help provide a more informal means of receiving information about higher education. Speaking with a younger, culturally familiar representative of the university can be more personal and more engaging than a visit to a high school counselor or a call to an admissions officer. Multiple visits to a school can make the college application process go from a possibility to a reality. Paid busses and tours are critical ways to expose students to campus life and to help Latino students, especially, about the advantages of four-year colleges and campus life. Campus tours help students and their families see college attendance as a real possibility, especially for those families in which no one has attended college.

Recruiters and student workers are facing the obstacles presented by funding cuts. They are volunteering their time to continue visiting schools, and using all means possible to stay connected with students. During these difficult times, those who seek to help students apply, accept, matriculate, and thrive must also help themselves. "It is unsettling. We often wonder, 'what is the need for my job when you cut recruitment?'" said one professional, adding, "Yet our university holds true to our goals for outreach and diversity. We are just having to do our work with less." Another said, "My morale is low, but I am very fond of these students, and that keeps me going because I see lack of access as leading to increased crime and fewer options for students."

"We all cry the same voice," concludes one specialist. "My greatest worry is access," shared another specialist, "There are so many first-generation, low-income, historically under-represented families for whom education is a way up and out. Those who are in the know will be able to navigate more and more efficiently and those who don't will be left out. It is an issue of civil rights."

## **SCHOLARLY SIGNIFICANCE**

Campus leaders worry that cutting programs could result in a gradual reconfiguration of the state's social hierarchy, disenfranchising segments of California's population that consist largely of ethnic minority groups. The reduction of early outreach services will be felt most acutely by the state's Latino and African American communities—communities that have struggled with challenges and failures at all levels of the

educational system. Because these students' social networks lack mentors and close associates who encourage students to raise their socioeconomic standing through socially appropriate means, Latinos and other marginalized populations often do not respond to traditional institutional admission and enrollment services. The cutbacks will drastically impede their educational progress.

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# The Civil Rights Project



*Proyecto Derechos Civiles*

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