

The California State University Employee Update

Thursday, July 30, 2009

Two More Unions Agree to Furloughs

The California Faculty Association (CFA), representing approximately 23,000 employees, and the Academic Professionals of California (APC), representing 2,400 student service employees, have ratified agreements to implement a two-day-per-month furlough program.

They join members of the California State University Employees Union (CSUEU), representing 16,000 non-academic employees, and the United Physicians and Dentists (UPD), with 117 members, who will begin furloughs August 1 along with the CSU's executive, management and non-represented personnel. The State Employees' Trades Council-United (SETC), with 1,000 employees, has elected layoffs per their contract as has the International Union of Operating Engineers at the California Maritime Academy with 10 members.

Under the CFA furlough agreement, faculty members will work with individual campus administrators so that class schedules for students are minimally disrupted. For example, if a furlough day is taken on a day of instruction, alternative out-of-classroom assignments could be given to students.

Employee furloughs are one component of a plan the CSU is implementing to manage a \$564 million deficit to its 2009-10 budget. Employee salaries and benefits make up 85 percent of the CSU's operating budget. Furloughs will reduce the CSU's salary expenses by \$275 million and will preserve jobs as well as 22,000 course sections or 15 percent of classes for students for the academic year.

"We appreciate that we were able to come to an agreement with CFA and APC because furloughs will help to save jobs, preserve employee health and retirement benefits, and ultimately allow us to better serve students," said CSU Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Gail Brooks. "Unprecedented reductions in state funding have left the CSU with an enormous budget deficit, and reducing our employee costs is a critical part of the CSU's action plan to address this shortfall."

In addition to furloughs, the CSU is implementing student enrollment reductions and a student fee increase, a salary and hiring freeze, and travel and purchasing restrictions. Campuses will also cut their 2009-10 budgets proportionally \$183 million.

"These are challenging times for everybody, and there are no good options when you are confronting a massive set of budget cuts, said CSU Board Chair Jeffrey Bleich on behalf of the trustees. "But Chancellor Reed has developed a balanced approach that shares this burden equitably among every member of our community. By focusing on our common mission, we can move forward during these difficult times."