

Equity, Interrupted:

How California Is Cheating Its Future

A report from the California Faculty Association on disinvestment and its impact on students in 'The People's University'


California Faculty Association
www.calfac.org

“If the ladder of educational opportunity rises high at the doors of some youth and scarcely rises at the doors of others, while at the same time formal education is made a prerequisite to occupational and social advance, then education may become the means, not of eliminating race and class distinctions, but of deepening and solidifying them.”

—Harry S. Truman: “Statement by the President Making Public a Report of the Commission on Higher Education”
December 15, 1947.¹

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 23-campus California State University system educates a far more diverse student body than it did 30 years ago. But, this report finds that as the number of students of color has increased, public funding for the CSU has decreased.

Or, as one faculty member has put it, “As the student body of the CSU became darker, funding became lighter.”

The change in both the number of students of color and the public funding for these students has been gradual but persistent. It does not arise necessarily from a conscious choice; the decline in funding comes amid a general questioning of funding “public goods” as the demography of the United States has been changing.

But the impact is clear, as this report reveals. California is spending less for each student today, when nearly three out of four are students of color, than it did in 1985 when the majority of CSU students were white.

In too many ways, today’s more diverse students are being cheated out of the education that they deserve and that their predecessors of 30 years ago enjoyed.

We offer today’s students “education on the cheap,” one that may be considered “good enough” for them but that is decidedly less rich than the educational experience the whiter, more privileged CSU students of the past enjoyed.

The facts about key differences for students in 1985 and students in 2015—who they are and what they get—reveal a hidden picture of inequity that must be faced and that should be changed.

About the authors

This paper is a collaborative work by members of the California Faculty Association, all of whom are faculty of the California State University system. © 2017 CFA All Rights Reserved

Equity Interrupted: How California Is Cheating Its Future

The California State University is called the “People’s University” — and for decades, it lived up to that name.

California’s Master Plan for Higher Education emerged from tremendous pressure to find ways to educate unprecedented numbers of students seeking a college education in the 1960s. Its goal was to ensure that there would be broad access for California students to a quality, public, higher education.²

From the beginning, it was clear that the Master Plan’s charge was to do more than permit individual students to succeed. In 1960, the belief was that people would do better and the state of California would excel if people of all backgrounds, including the working class and those with low-income, had the opportunity to get a college degree.

The idea of organizing a system of public higher education that would provide broad access to an affordable, high-quality college education was a new, and even radical, idea among the states. It evolved into a plan that became California’s huge, celebrated public higher education system that has educated millions and made it possible for California to operate on the leading edge of social, cultural and economic advance.

The promise was simple. All qualified Californians would have a place in college; higher education would be accessible to all. The California State University, which is the focus of this paper, offered students in the top one-third of high school graduating classes a place in the public university and provided community college students with a place to transfer after finishing their first two years.³

It was to be tuition-free, with minimal related fees, and at a quality of instruction that would properly prepare students, let them build their skills, broaden their horizons, and generally improve their life chances.

For decades, California delivered on that promise to millions of California’s students. Today, that promise has been broken.

It is not complicated to see. State funding for today’s California State University students is a fraction of what it was for students just 30 years ago in 1985. In real dollars, state spending on a CSU student today—what in budget-speak is called a full-time equivalent student—is 59 cents for every dollar that the state invested per student in 1985.

Another way to say it is that, when adjusted for inflation, California spends 41 percent less on a CSU student today than we did in 1985.

The specific, systemic problem we confront today is the long, gradual abandonment of the state’s commitment to fund the CSU and the other public higher education segments.

The increasingly smaller commitment of state dollars to higher education has triggered a torrent of schemes to make do with less and try to educate our students “on the cheap.” For example, some policymakers have pushed for unrealistic timetables for graduation no matter what life-challenging circumstances today’s students must face.

In 2017, we must finally face up to some fundamental truths about what we have done to our system of public higher education. Demand for public higher education remains as high today as when the system was created; but the tri-partite compact between the state, the universities, and the citizenry has been broken.

As the state invested less and less money into our system, the universities have demanded more and more resources from our students and their families. They have also wasted time and resources massaging requirements, risking quality as they experiment with gimmicks designed to move students out of programs at break-neck speed. Instead of providing a system designed to maximize access and quality for the benefit of the state of California, we are increasing the cost to families, shrinking access because of increased tuition, and failing in our duty to support the new generation of CSU students so that they will help our state prosper in the 21st century.

Why is this generation of CSU students being asked to accept a much more limited educational opportunity? It has not gone unnoticed that at the same time that the real dollars invested in higher education have dropped over the past 30 years, the CSU student body has also gone through an enormous change, becoming far more ethnically and racially diverse.

Today, the majority of the CSU student body are students of color, and a large proportion of these students work long hours to pay their way through school. Moreover, an unprecedented number of students support dependents of their own while they themselves are in school.

When we cut through all the changes in the demography of California, in the state's economy, in the jobs market and so on, we come to the simple fact that is impossible to ignore: as a faculty member testified at a State Assembly hearing in October 2016, "As the student body of the CSU became darker, funding became lighter."⁴

This paper provides a general overview of the story of the CSU since 1985, looking at changes in state and student demographics and circumstances, with a brief overview of the state's disinvestment in public higher education, particularly the California State University, our People's University.

Future papers in this series, "Equity, Interrupted," will delve deeper into the state's disinvestment in the California State University, the spending choices made by executives who manage the CSU, and the impact these decisions have had on our state's prospects.

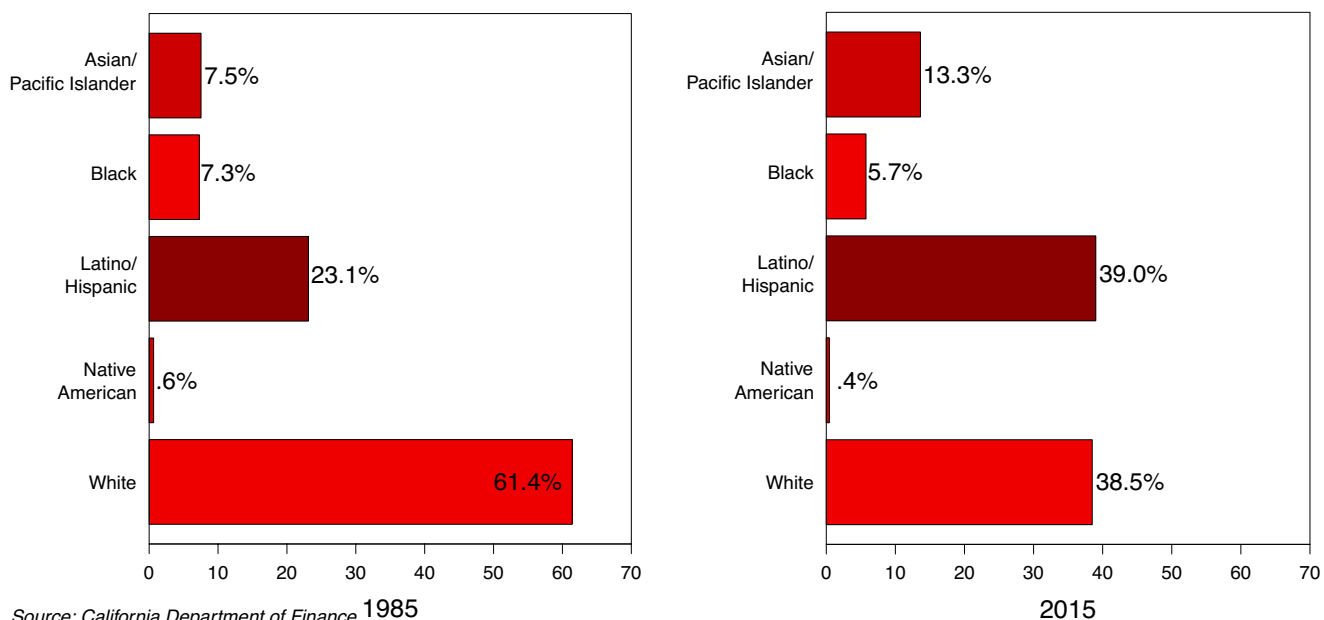
For now, let's look back at what has happened in California and the CSU over the past 30 years.

California Then and Now

The demographic face of California has changed enormously in the 30 years since 1985, making our state today one of the most ethnically diverse in the country.

Even though some population shifts were already underway in 1985, more than 60% of Californians were still white at that time. The next largest ethnic group, Latinos, represented only slightly more than 20% of the population.

Figure 1: Race/Ethnicity of Californians in 1985 and 2015



"When we cut through all the changes in the demography of California, in the state's economy, in the jobs market and so on, we come to the simple fact that is impossible to ignore: as a faculty member testified at a State Assembly hearing in October 2016, 'As the student body of the CSU became darker, funding became lighter.'"

A decided shift occurred on July 1, 2014 when Latinos officially became the largest ethnic group in California, outnumbering whites for the first time in recent history.⁵

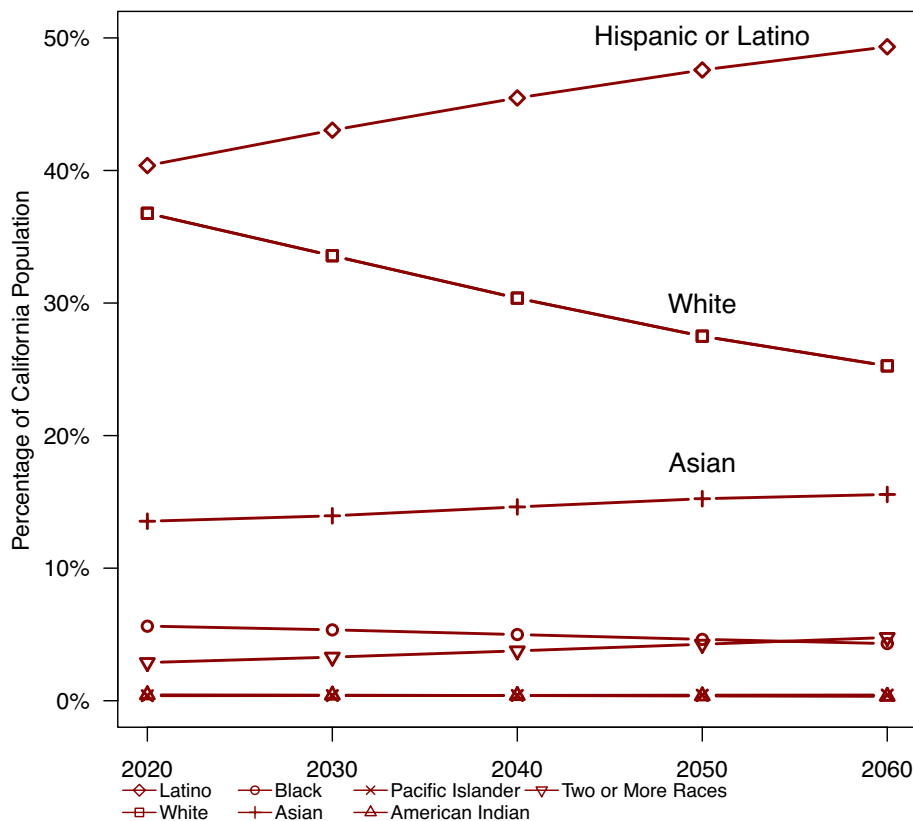
By 2015, 39.0% of Californians were Latino while only 38.5% identified as white (a difference of approximately 200,000 people). As Figure 1 shows, from 1985 to 2015 the number of whites declined as a percentage of the state's population; the number of Latinos and Asian/Pacific Islanders, on the other hand, increased substantially.

As Figure 2 shows, this shift toward even greater diversity is expected to continue—with Latinos and Asians continuing to grow and the numbers of whites residing in California remaining stable or declining.

The biggest shifts in overall numbers are expected for whites and Latinos. Demographers project that by 2060 only one in four Californians will be white; fully half of all Californians will be Latino.

Clearly, the California of 2017 and beyond looks very different from the California of 1985.

Figure 2: Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity Through 2060, State of California



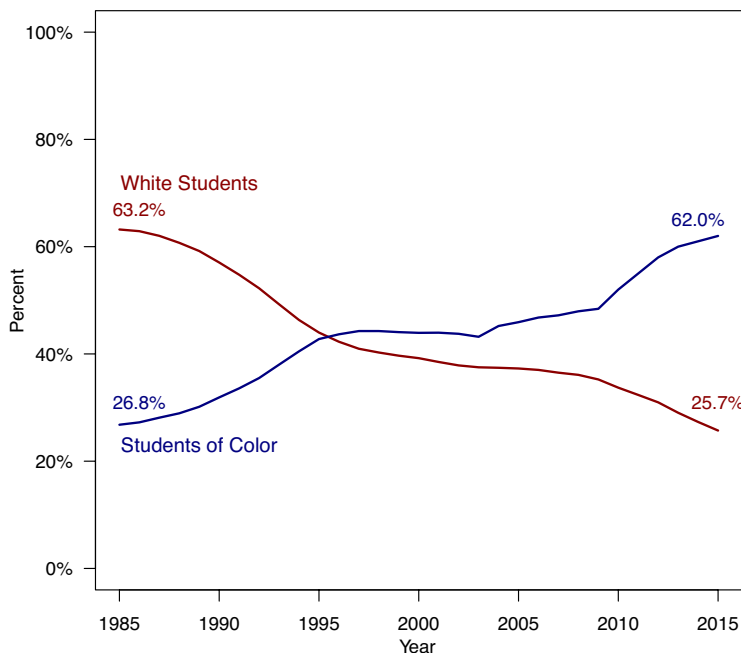
Source: Los Angeles Almanac; California Department of Finance

CSU Students Then and Now

As California has changed over the last 30 years, so too have CSU students.

In 1985, 63% of the CSU student body identified as white, and only 27% identified with another ethnic group. As Figure 3 shows, by 2015, that pattern had essentially reversed, with 26% of students identifying as white and 62% of students identifying themselves as belonging to another ethnic group.⁶

Figure 3: CSU Total Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, 1985 to 2015



Source: CSU Analytic Studies, Statistical Reports

When students who identify with two or more ethnicities are factored in, a total of three out of four students in the CSU today identify with some group other than just whites.⁷

These numbers make the CSU one of the most ethnically heterogeneous state higher education systems in the country and a leader in many national measures of diversity:

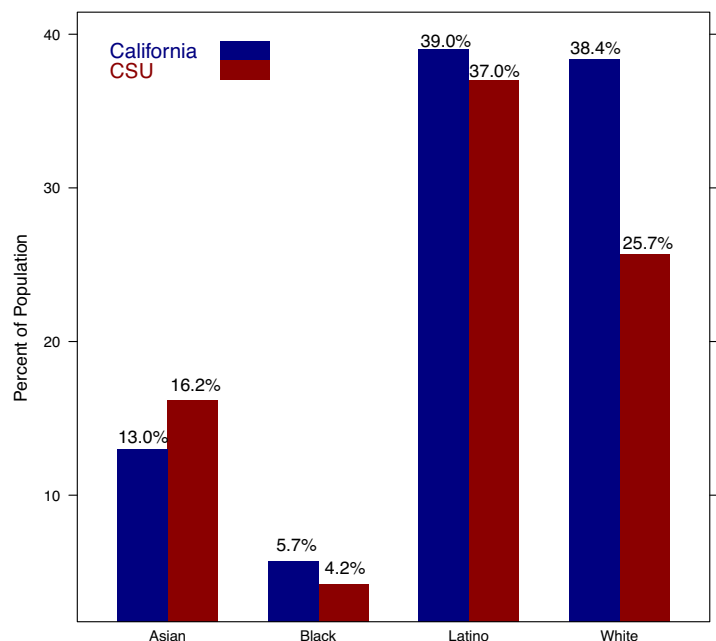
- Of the top 20 most diverse colleges in the western region of the United States, 10 are CSU campuses.⁸
- Eighteen of the 23 CSUs are currently recognized by the Department of Education as Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), colleges and universities with a Latino student enrollment of at least 25 percent.⁹

Given these demographics, one would expect the CSU to play a major role in our state for historically underrepresented groups. And it does. In fact, the CSU provides more than half of all undergraduate degrees granted to California's Latino, African American, and Native American students.¹⁰

This is an important accomplishment; and it contributes to our state's well-being. It has been made possible because, as our state has changed, so has the CSU. In fact, the demographics of California and the CSU have changed in parallel directions as Figure 4 (right) suggests.

Today students of color are enrolled in the CSU in roughly the same proportions as their representation in the overall state population. While whites appear to be "under-represented" in the CSU, their level of representation is, in part, due to a trend of white students being more likely than people of color to attend more exclusive and more expensive colleges and universities.¹¹

Figure 4: Race/Ethnicity Comparison Between CSU Student Population and Population of California, 2015

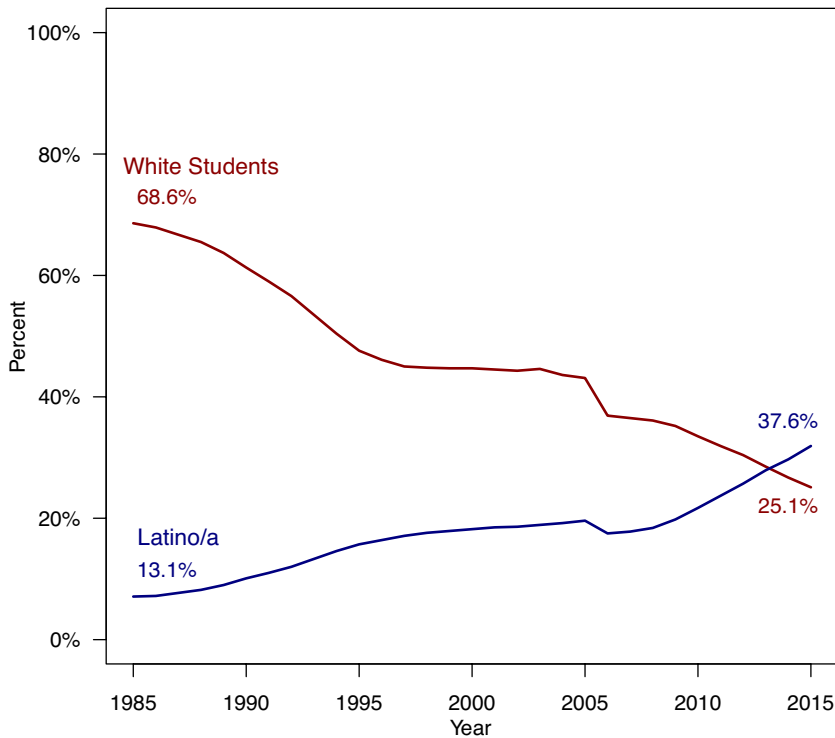


Source: California Department of Finance and CSU Analytics

Population projections for the state discussed above as well as recent demographic shifts in the CSU student body make it very likely that the students of color in the CSU will grow both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the overall student body in future years.

For instance, as Figure 5 shows, the population of Latina/o students in the CSU has grown steadily since 1985.

Figure 5: CSU Enrollment of Latino/a and White Students as a Percent of All Students (Systemwide Undergraduate): 1985 to 2015



Source: CSU Analytic Studies, Statistical Reports
Note: Undergraduates students, residents only

On the other hand, reflecting their decline in the state's overall population, the numbers of white undergraduate resident students have steadily decreased each year in both absolute numbers and as a percentage of the overall student population.

Reflecting the ethnic and racial diversity of a state in its student body is an important measure of educational equity for public state universities; the good news is that the global numbers suggest that the CSU is admitting students in a broadly representative way.¹³

However, reflecting the face of California in our student demographics is only part of the challenge in creating educational equity and promoting social justice in our system and our state.

Challenges for CSU Students Today

As a number of recent studies on California have shown, the harsh fact is that opportunity and well-being are not equally distributed across all ethnic groups in our state. The odds of enjoying economic security, high levels of educational attainment, and other important factors that shape a prosperous and healthy life trajectory are simply greater for whites and some sub-groups of Asian-Americans than they are for other ethnic groups in California.¹⁴

The facts are compelling. For instance, people of color in our state are more likely to struggle with problems associated with unemployment and low incomes than are white people and members of some Asian-American sub-groups. Because people of color (again, with the exception of some Asian-American sub-groups) are less likely to have college degrees, children in these families are less likely to enjoy a wide range of benefits associated with having college-educated parents.

Considering how closely the CSU student body today mirrors the demographics of our state, it is not surprising that the challenges faced by many Californians are also the everyday life circumstances of today's CSU students. These realities create challenges in many areas of life, but they also affect their chances of getting to the CSU and succeeding once there.

Economic Challenges

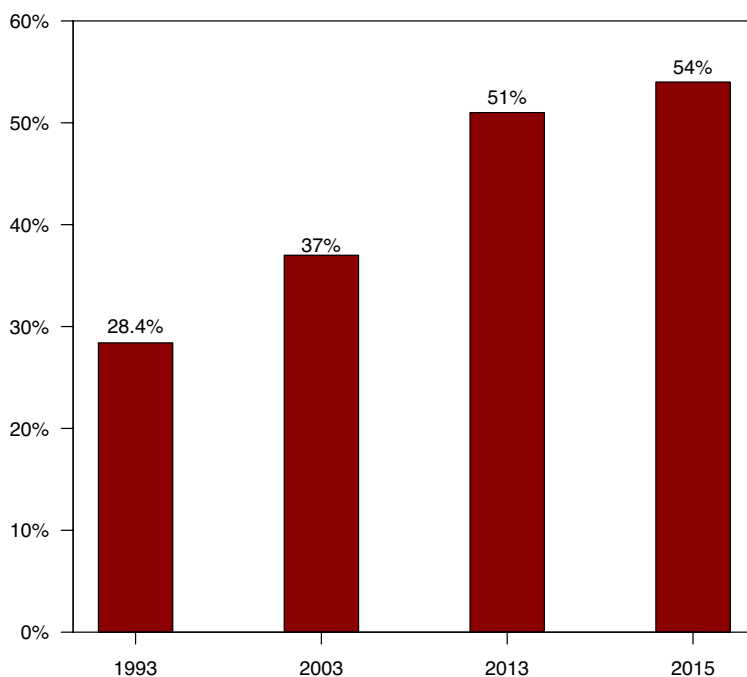
Many CSU students today face daunting economic challenges. Few are well-off financially. As we will see, some are struggling to get or maintain a toe-hold in the middle class. And a shocking number are struggling simply to survive.

The evidence of these enormous economic challenges is undeniable.

One commonly used indicator for the economic status of a student body is how many students rely on receiving Pell Grants, a need-based federal program for low-income undergraduate students. In 2015, more than half of the CSU's nearly 475,000 students (54%, to be exact) got them.¹⁵ The percentage of students from low-income families certainly is higher, however, since this number reflects only those students who actually receive Pell Grants. It does not include students who did not apply for one or who may not meet certain requirements despite being low-income.

While many factors can account for changes in Pell Grant status, including changes in the maximum income allowed and other eligibility criteria, the fact is that the percentage of CSU students receiving them has almost doubled since 1993 (the earliest date for which data are available).

Figure 6: Percentage of CSU Students Receiving Federal Pell Grants



Source: US Department of Education

More surprising—even shocking—is the recent evidence that homelessness and food insecurity are harsh realities for many CSU students today.

In fact, the numbers suggest that tens of thousands of CSU students are struggling for basic survival. A recent study commissioned by the CSU Chancellor's Office found that one in 10 CSU students today is homeless and one in five does not always have enough food.¹⁶ As a result, CSU campuses today are scrambling to provide emergency housing and food banks to help support these students.

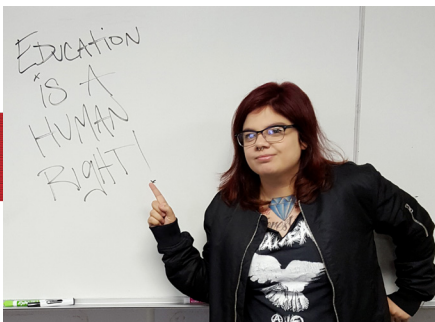
It is difficult to overstate the ways in which a lack of adequate resources affects the lives of today's CSU students and their chances for academic success.

For many prospective students, considering whether to attend college must be examined through the lens of limited resources—can the family even afford to consider it?

Assuming that hurdle is jumped, students must solve the problem of how to pay for tuition (and tuition increases) on an already-stretched budget.

Add the other ever-rising costs of college—books, lab fees, transportation to campus—and pile on top the regular expenses of living, and it is little wonder that lack of resources is such a common reason students give when they drop out of college or do not transfer from community college to a four-year university.¹⁷

Low incomes create more than just economic problems for today's CSU students. Financial struggles also affect a student's ability to do well in college. As one homeless CSU student shared in an interview with the Los Angeles Times, academic work often has to be on the "back burner" when you're struggling to keep a roof over your head and "to make ends meet."¹⁸



Liz Sanchez
Sociology, CSU Fullerton

Liz Sanchez is grateful to work three jobs while going to CSU Fullerton as a first year graduate student. It means Sanchez can rent a room; has a place to study, cook a hot meal, and get a good night's rest.

Until recently, Sanchez was living out of a 2005 Ford Mustang, every belonging shoved into the backseat and occupying every last crevice of the trunk. Bed was the driver's seat. Meals were from the dollar menu at whichever fast food was the cheapest. Sleep was elusive.

"I meditated a lot," Sanchez said. "I was deeply depressed and on medication. I used to pretend I was in a different world to deal with my separation—missing my cats, trying to focus on school and all the while being homeless. The only time I felt sane was when I was active in school, or in my dream world. Leaving campus everyday to go to my car was the most depressing feeling I have ever experienced."

The path to homelessness was sudden and jarring for Sanchez, now 32.

Splitting up with a partner of six years left Sanchez without a home or the finances to start again.

"I put all my eggs in her basket, basically," Sanchez said. "I went and stayed with friends; blue collar workers who were struggling to make it. After a while, it got strained. I was in a position of having to quit school and get a full-time job. But I had worked way too hard to give up on school. I was an honor student, and involved on campus. There was no way I was going to give up. So I decided to live in my car and hope for the best."

Fall of 2015 was a long semester for Sanchez. One week, Sanchez tried to get help to use the campus gym to take a shower, but was told there was a fee for a towel. Clothes were washed twice that semester.

"I was very lucky that nothing happened to me, but there were moments that something could have," Sanchez said. "I've had to change clothes in the school parking lot because I woke up late and needed to make it to class on time."

For Sanchez, the tide turned in December 2015, upon receipt of an anonymous donation of \$600 from a dean at Fullerton College, where Sanchez works. That boost was the kick-start Sanchez needed to leave homelessness behind. Sanchez graduated in May 2016.

Three jobs and student loans provide what Sanchez needs to get by although the struggle remains all too real.

"I stretch myself thin in order to follow my passions and pay the bills," Sanchez said. "I do recognize my privilege in comparison to folks who live on the streets and have zero resources. In comparison, my story is only a flicker of tragedy."

Sanchez is vocal about the experience of homelessness because it tells the tale of many students within the CSU system. Though living out of a car is less common, six or seven students sharing a small apartment is not. Also pervasive is student anxiety over financial resources and debt.

About 54% of undergraduates in the CSU are Pell recipients, which provides needs-based grants for low-income students.

Most CSU students are doing everything they can just to survive, Sanchez said.

"We all pay into the system and expect to be taken care of through mind and body because we are the future. Yet, instead of investing in our potential, students are now looked at as financial solutions to resolve the system's greedy failures."

Low incomes almost always mean that CSU students have to work—not for extra “spending money,” but to survive. Many (40%) are not their parents’ dependent and must, therefore, work to support themselves. Moreover, nearly 25% have dependents of their own they must also support financially.

Rising tuition and other costs only increase the amount of time many of today’s students must work. In 1985, CSU students had to work 199 hours at minimum wage to pay tuition and fees for an academic year at the CSU. In 2015, students had to work 682 hours at a minimum wage job to cover those costs.¹⁹ That’s almost 3.5 times the work students in 1985 had to put in just to cover tuition and fees.

Not surprisingly, too many CSU students work more hours than is healthy for their academic success. According to CSU system-wide data, three out of four CSU students today work more than 20 hours per week.²⁰

The hours at work, the hours spent traveling to and from work, the hours spent thinking about work are all hours students do not have for their studies. On top of that, as every faculty member knows well, changes in students’ work schedules frequently interfere with class meeting schedules, paper deadlines, and exams.

When students work as much as CSU students must, the hours often don’t add up. A simple Google search of the question, “How many hours should a college student study for each hour spent in class,” yields a common formula: a full-time student who is in class 15 hours a week should be studying 30–45 hours per week. Not counting travel time to campus or time at the financial aid office, registrar, or book store, that adds up to 45–60 hours a week spent on college work. There is, indeed, a reason 15 units is considered a “full-time” load.

A student working just 20 hours a week—and remember 3 out of 4 CSU students are having to work more than that—would be extremely stretched for time even if she or he had no other family responsibilities and reasonable commute times to school and work.

With just a little thought, it is obvious why graduation rates are lower for students who work as much as CSU students do. What is not so obvious is how they would survive if they worked less.

Challenges Facing First-Generation CSU Students

Given the ethnic make-up of today’s CSU students, it is not surprising that many of them—one third overall, in fact, are the first in their family to attend college.²¹

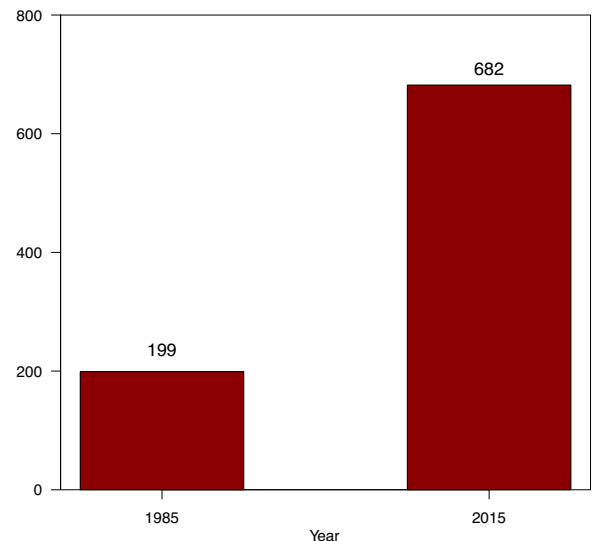
“Creating that kind of institution—a real People’s University for today’s students—is not a simple task; but the work can only be done with adequate resources to provide what students need.”

On many campuses, that percentage is much higher. At CSU East Bay and Humboldt State, for instance, 40 percent of graduates are first-generation students; at CSU Fullerton and CSU San Marcos, it is roughly 50 percent.²²

As considerable research has shown, first-generation students often struggle to understand how universities work and to deal with their intricacies. This affects their chances both of getting into the CSU and of being successful once there. Being the first in a family to attend college creates extra challenges for a college student; that student will have to search harder for advice about everything from how to choose a major to how to deal with problems in a course.

Without those resources at home, many CSU students need more time with their

Figure 7: Number of Working Hours at Minimum Wage to Cover CSU Tuition and Fees



professors and with other supportive university personnel than their more privileged classmates. A big factor in their success is whether that support is available. In the CSU today, as we will discuss in a future paper, it is not.

In short, today's CSU students are not the students of the 80s. Their circumstances and "college experience" are different in countless ways from those of many elected leaders and university administrators who are crafting higher education policy. Serving today's CSU students well—and equitably—must start with recognizing who they are and how to support them.

Thousands of today's students get to the CSU having overcome enormous obstacles just to enroll. When they arrive, those life challenges do not disappear. The CSU needs to be a place that provides them with the support they need to meet those challenges and to fulfill their dreams.

Creating that kind of institution—a real People's University for today's students—is not a simple task; but the work can only be done with adequate resources to provide what students need.



Fatima Rios
Political Science, CSU San Marcos

Fatima Rios took the bus every day to and from her retail job at a cellular store.

She picked up her little sister from school, cooked dinner and made sure the 10-year-old got her homework done.

Rios met with her sister's teacher and the school psychologist, who were helping her sister work through the emotions of having to live apart from their mother and brother, who had been deported in Fall of 2014.

Rios, then 18, paid the rent for the one bedroom they shared in a house full of strangers. She was the primary caregiver and provider for her little sister.

And she did it all while carrying 15 units and working on campus as a freshman at CSU Marcos.

Rios, like 35% of all CSU students, is the first in her family to attend college. She has overcome extreme obstacles in recent years to continue her path of academic success, not letting the hardships sway her from reaching her goal of moving on to graduate school and a career in political campaign management.

"School was an outlet," she said of the difficulties of balancing a 50-hour a week job and a full load of university courses. "I could come to school

and focus on what I had to do and be free for a little."

But that came at a price—tuition. At the time, Rios was paying tuition out of pocket. When she had to step in as head of household, it became evident that she'd have to find help to pay for tuition while she paid household bills.

She discovered the College Assistant Migrant Program (CAMP), which helped her with emergency scholarships and with obtaining federal grants.

Now, her mother is back, and Rios continues to support her family through her on-campus job, which she balances with her classes. She continues to pick up her little sister from school although now Rios is driving.

Thanks to her perseverance and having passed Advanced Placement tests before entering college, Rios is now on track to graduate in May 2017.

The challenges she faced were extreme, but Rios said there are many students like her—students of color, low-income students, and first-generation college students—who need help and support so as not to give up on their dreams.

"It's hard to help students when we don't know who they are," she said. "We need to advertise that help exists, and we need to do better at helping them."

Funding for CSU Students Then and Now

Has the CSU Budget's Growth Kept Pace with that of the Student Body?

The story of state funding for the CSU is usually told in short chapters—a year-to-year story that most often involves small increases in General Fund allocations to the system. When we look at the story of the CSU's budget, over the last 30 years, however, it is a stunning and very different tale.

While the CSU system has grown enormously in numbers of students, the funds to serve those students adequately and equitably simply have not followed.

Consider these facts:

- **The CSU had over 150,000 MORE students (full-time equivalent) in 2015 than it had in 1985 for a student body increase of 64% over those 30 years.**²³
- **But the CSU budget has not grown at the same rate. In fact, the CSU funding from the state actually declined by 2.9% in real dollars over those 30 years.**

Massive tuition increases over the last 30 years have not made up the difference. State funding and tuition increases *combined* have only increased CSU funds by 41.5% in real dollars since 1985, still a considerable lag behind the 64% increase in students.²⁴

In other words, if the CSU today had resources (state funding plus tuition) comparable to 1985, it would have more than \$773 million extra dollars in its operating budget to serve today's students.²⁵

From these facts alone, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that today's more diverse students are being shortchanged.²⁶

Admittedly, these facts jar with most people's assumptions. The CSU and state budget processes encourage a focus on the year-over-year budget cuts and augmentations the system generally receives each year and reinforce the optimistic belief that real resources are increasing. But a step back shows that the effect of modest yearly changes actually evaporates over time.

In fact, the CSU has not even returned to the level of state funding received before the Great Recession, when the CSU's operating budget was cut by a third.

In 2015-16, the CSU was still receiving 17.7% less from the state in real dollars than it received in 2007-08—even though by 2015 there were over 48,000 (13.5%) more students (FTES) in the system to serve than there were in 2007-08.²⁷

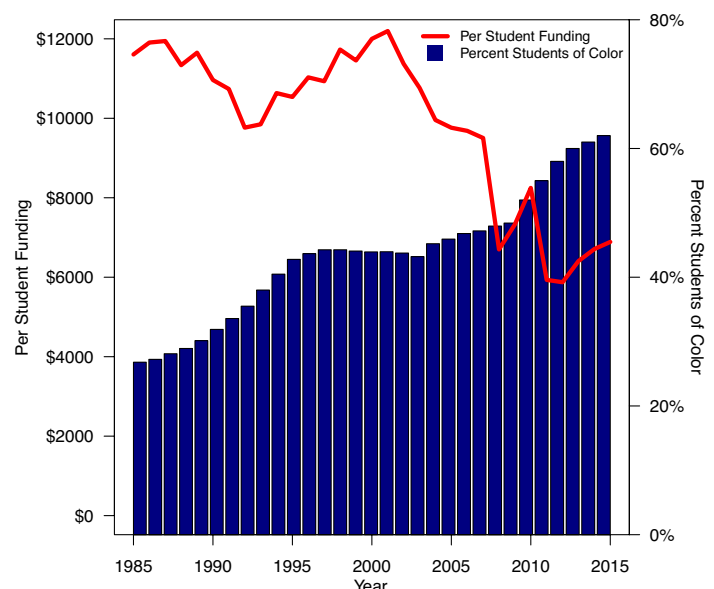
State Support Funding per Student in 1985 and Today

The long-term shortfall in state funding that has accumulated over the last 30 years has enormous effects on every single student today.

A helpful way to understand the impact is to look at state funding per student over the last 30 years.

The shocking fact is that the state of California is spending much less on each CSU student today than it did on each student in 1985. At that time, state funding per student was \$11,607 after adjusting for inflation. Today, as Figure 8 shows, state spending per student is only \$6,888.

Figure 8: General Fund Dollars per CSU Student (real dollars) and the Percentage of Students of Color, by Year



Source: CSU Statistical Reports

In other words, today's CSU students get just 59 cents for every dollar the state invested in CSU students in 1985.

That precipitous drop in state funding since 1985 overlaid onto the changing ethnic make-up over the same period, shown in Figure 8, underscores the harsh trend described by a CSU faculty member and mentioned earlier: as the student body of the CSU has become darker over the last 30 years, the funding has, indeed, become lighter.

Can California Afford To Do Better?

It's commonplace these days to argue that the state can no longer afford to support the CSU at the level we once did in California. But this notion of a "new normal" that is worse than the past is wrong.

The fact is that we live in an extremely wealthy state. In 2014, California's Gross Domestic Product was estimated at \$2.31 TRILLION dollars, a figure that makes it the seventh or eighth largest economy in the world—and moving up.²⁸

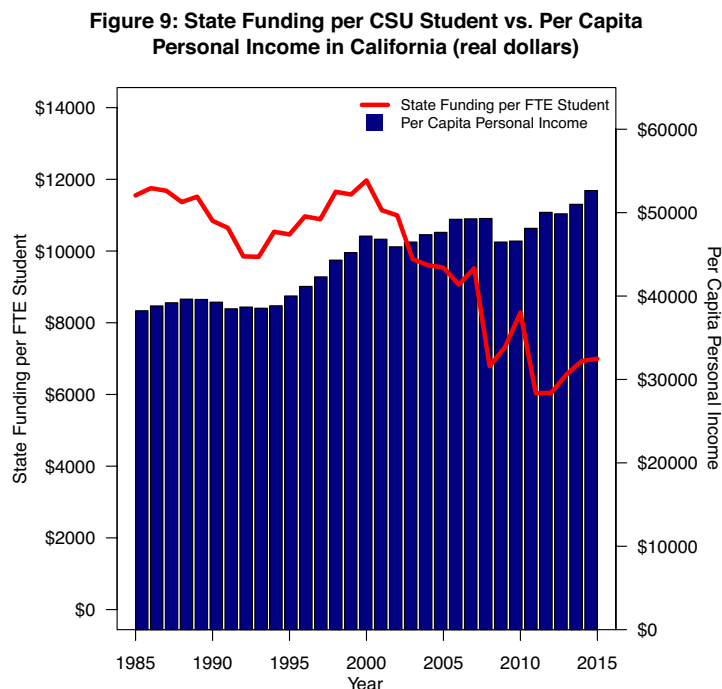
It is a travesty that a so-called "inability to pay" defines higher education policy in a state that has more billionaires than any other state and more than all but two countries of the world.²⁹

Wealth in the state is actually greater now than 30 years ago when the CSU was being funded more adequately. Average per capita personal income, for example, grew substantially in real dollars over the last 30 years—from \$38,241 in 1985 to \$52,651 in 2015. If investments in the CSU had been made in line with that increased income, we should have seen significant increases in state funding for the CSU.

But we didn't.

As Figure 9 shows, state funding per CSU student actually declined as per capita personal income in the state went up.

The reality is simple—not only are we failing to fund the CSU in line with past levels; we are also not funding the CSU in line with California's actual, current wealth.



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and CSU Statistical Reports

“It is a travesty that a so-called ‘inability to pay’ defines higher education policy in a state that has more billionaires than any other state and more than all but two countries of the world.”

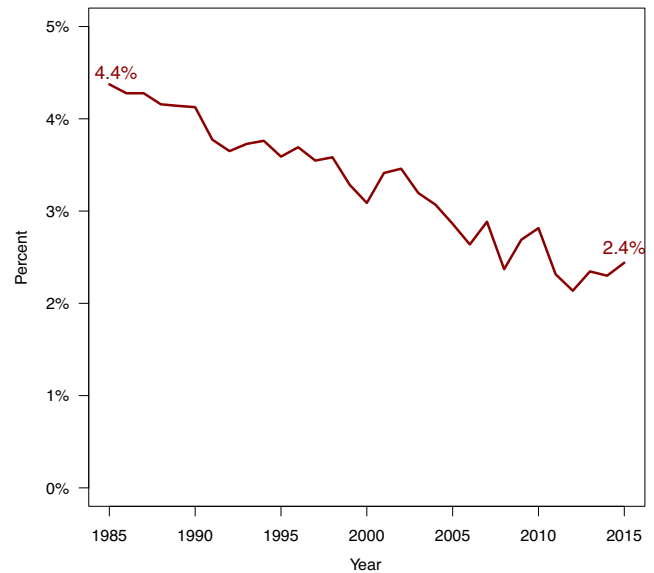
By any measure of state funding, California is failing the CSU. As Figure 10 shows, California spent 4.4% of its overall budget on the CSU in 1985. That number was down to 2.4% in 2015-2016.³⁰

A 2% drop may sound insignificant, but it is huge when translated into dollars for the CSU.

If the state of California were supporting today's students at the level of 1985, state funding for the CSU in 2015 would have been \$1.9 billion more in constant dollars.³¹

With numbers this large, it is absurd to argue that educational quality for today's students is comparable to that their more privileged predecessors enjoyed.

Figure 10: State General Funds for the CSU as a Percent of the Total General Fund



Source: California State University, Legislative Analyst's Office, Department of Finance



Justin Blakely
Africana Studies, CSU Dominguez Hills

Justin Blakely is on target to graduate from CSU Dominguez Hills with a degree in Africana Studies. His goal is to move on to law school and practice civil rights law.

"That history, the historical perspective of what happens to African American communities, will give me a better perspective of how to represent marginalized communities," he said.

Yet his time within Ethnic Studies also has afforded Blakely an additional perspective—a firsthand view of problems that seem to plague the department and that have a tangible impact on its students.

While there is a list of courses offered, there aren't enough full-time tenure-track professors to fill them, resulting in some courses being offered only in spring or only in fall.

"I know students who have had to delay their graduation by a year because the courses aren't being taught," Blakely said.

Although student interest in ethnic studies has grown, resources have decreased, according to key findings from a survey conducted by the CSU's Task Force on the Advancement of Ethnic Studies and included in its July 2016 report.

Ethnic Studies, and its students, appear to be an afterthought in the CSU, Blakely said.

Blakely, the son of a Dominguez Hills graduate, is a board member for the California State Student Association (CSSA). In recent months, he's been advocating for improvements within Ethnic Studies, including hiring more faculty, improving access to advising, and increasing funding for programs.

"Ethnic Studies started in the Cal State system at San Francisco State—it should be one of the top priorities in the CSU system. It doesn't make sense that it isn't being sustained, especially in the time and place we are now as a country."

What State Disinvestment in the CSU Means for Today's Students

Like an ebbing tsunami, this massive disinvestment in the CSU has washed away what was once broad access, real affordability, and robust quality in the CSU. What stands today is only a shell of that historic commitment.

Today's students feel the effects of this devastation in countless ways.

Eligible Students Can't Get In

The odds that qualified students will be able to get into the CSU in the first place are much worse now than 30 years ago. In the 2013-14 academic year alone, the CSU turned away more than 14,000 first-year applicants who were fully qualified for admission.³²

This is a direct failure of the CSU and the state of California to honor the promise made and kept to previous generations. For decades students who worked hard in high school and met the requirements for CSU admission were guaranteed a place in the CSU. That changed in 2008 when the CSU began to turn away qualified students, a practice that continues today.³³

Today, more students than ever have taken the courses required for CSU admission—with Latinos showing particularly strong gains over the last decade—but, there is no place for large numbers of them in the CSU.

Tuition has Skyrocketed

Another direct result of drastically reduced state support is the astronomically high tuition that today's students face compared to their predecessors. In 1985, tuition and fees for CSU students were only \$666 per year.³⁴

Since that time those costs have grown 923%, an enormous increase that has very real consequences for today's students. If tuition had simply kept pace with inflation over the last 30 years, students would be paying \$1,519 in tuition and fees. Instead, they are paying 4.5 times that amount.

As we will discuss in another paper on the changing definition of "affordability" in the CSU, the assumption that financial aid takes the sting out of the much higher tuition and fees for today's students is simply a cruel myth.

The unfortunate reality is clear: today's more diverse students are, on many levels, paying more than their less diverse predecessors did 30 years ago.

Fewer Faculty Available for Students Who Do Get In

Today's CSU students are also getting less. For instance, although 50 years of research demonstrates that interaction with faculty improves student success for all students, especially for first-generation college students and students of color, the fact is that today's students have less chance for that interaction than did their peers 30 years ago.³⁵

Consider this single fact: system-wide, there are 157,448 more students in the CSU today than there were in 1985. However, there are 276 fewer full-time-equivalent permanent instructional faculty today to mentor them, to teach their classes, to supervise their projects, and to develop their programs than there were in 1985.

These are only some of the data points and details that describe the large story about disinvestment in the California State University.

They all add up to this harsh truth: today's more diverse students are being cheated out of the education that they deserve and that their predecessors of 30 years ago received.

In too many ways, California is offering them "education on the cheap," one that may be considered "good enough" for them but that is decidedly

less rich than the educational experience the whiter, more privileged CSU students of the past enjoyed.

We recognize that this assessment jars with what many believe to be the case, with claims made in public, and with many specific positive developments within the CSU system over the last 30 years.

But the key differences in how we educate students in 1985 and students in 2015 reveal a picture of inequity that must be faced and that needs to be changed.

It is time to get real about student success in the CSU. It is about money, the lack of it, and how it is spent.

Lack of Funding Drives Bad Policy

One simple fact is obvious if rarely acknowledged: effective educational policy is often impossible when resources are inadequate.

For example, the current CSU administration's push for students to graduate within four to six years is too often leading to policies fraught with complications and negative—if unintended—consequences for students like those who attend the CSU. While helping today's CSU students graduate is a laudable goal—even an obligation—of the government and the university, the reasons CSU students struggle with this artificial standard of success should, by now, be obvious.

Clearly, family and personal income makes a huge difference in the chances of a student graduating in four to six years. As a national study has shown, 97% of students from families in the top quartile income group who enter college graduate by the age of 24 compared to only 23% of those from the bottom quartile.³⁶



Madelyn Wright
Political Science, Sonoma State University

Like nearly half of California's college students, Madelyn Wright took out student loans her freshman year.

In mapping out a financial plan for college, her parents told her she needed to take loans to cover tuition, and they would help the first two years with living expenses.

Now a junior at Sonoma State, Wright is financially flying solo. She works on campus and has a job as a student activist to help her meet her bills, while also balancing 14 units a semester.

The debt facing her upon graduation is daunting. Despite tuition freezes the past few years, fees continue to increase. The debt load she'll face as a college graduate will hover around \$20,000.

"When I was in high school, it was just the norm to take out loans for tuition. Everybody does it," she said. "Before you get to college, you don't think about the tuition and fees rising every year."

About 19% of CSU undergraduates assume loans as freshmen. The average amount of debt upon graduation from the CSU is about \$15,898, according to the CSU Chancellor's Office and National Center for Education Statistics.

Wright has gotten clever with sourcing textbooks and budgets meticulously so as to avoid the need to take loans to cover living expenses.

When Wright started at Sonoma State, tuition for the 2014/15 academic year was \$7,276. For the 2016/17 academic year, that amount rose to \$7,388. Campus-based fees account for the increase, according to information from the CSU Budget Office.

The looming threat of tuition increases is yet more disheartening.

"The worst feeling is seeing the money for tuition and fees go up, and seeing the amount of classes we have to choose from decreasing and the amount of students in each class increasing," she said. "If tuition and fees are going up, I should be getting better services, not worse."

The funding level at the college or university a student attends also affects their graduation rates. As Robert Shireman, former Deputy Undersecretary of Education, has pointed out, funding per student is one of the strongest predictors of college graduation, a fact that helps explain why well-funded universities have extremely high graduation rates and more accessible public institutions have much lower rates.³⁷

As with so many issues in higher education, money is a key element in improving graduation rates and closing the achievement gaps that exist for some ethnic groups. But better funding for universities or more financial support for students is rarely proposed.

Offered instead are educational policy suggestions that either tinker around the edges (better tracking and “early-alert” systems) or that are actually harmful to today’s students.

For instance, a common policy recommendation has been to structure fee schedules to “incentivize” full-time enrollment by making the cost per unit higher for students who are not taking a full-load. While such an action might demonstrate that “something” is being done to improve graduation rates, it would actually harm students who simply don’t have days long enough or the resources needed to go to school “full-time.” Making them pay (from already strained resources) for the fact that their lives can’t accommodate full-time enrollment is anything but helpful.

As this example shows, even well-intended policies developed to paper over inadequate funding can punish the majority of our students for the realities of their lives. Instead of defining “timely graduation” in a way that makes today’s students feel like laggards or failures, we should be lauding them for the extraordinary effort and persistence it takes for them to graduate at all and working on real policy and fiscal solutions that would make it easier for them to do so.

To state the obvious, CSU students can’t wave a magic wand and change the realities of their lives; but state and system-wide leaders can provide funding and craft educational policy that is more in line with the needs of the people they are supposed to be serving.

The Moment is Now

Everything about the demographic projections of the CSU student body and the future face of the state as whole suggest that the CSU will be one of *the* most important pathways for greater prosperity and human development for California in the coming decades. And it must be; for if people who come from backgrounds like those of CSU students do not do well in the future, it is hard to imagine how the state can.

We, thus, stand at a pivotal moment in deciding our future. We can ignore the facts showing that educational equity is declining and disparities by race and income widening, but the price of that denial is high. As Robert Shireman has put it, “This blemish—more like a blight, really—threatens not only America’s self-image as the land of opportunity, but undermines our nation’s civic health. A country in which the wealthy and powerful pass their privilege down to their offspring, leaving everyone else behind, is an aristocracy, not a democracy.”³⁸

We can head further down this path, or we can do as California has done in the past: rather than follow the rest of the country, we can—once again—take in the lead in higher education and make the commitment to a CSU that is an exemplary “People’s University.”

We hope this paper and ones to follow will help further a conversation about realizing that vision.

“...CSU students can’t wave a magic wand and change the realities of their lives; but state and system-wide leaders can provide funding and craft educational policy that is more in line with the needs of the people they are supposed to be serving.”

ENDNOTES

¹ Quoted in *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: 45-Year Trend Report*, revised 2015. Pell Institute for the Study of Equity in Higher Education. Viewed at http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/publications-Indicators_of_Higher_Education_Equity_in_the_US_45_Year_Trend_Report.pdf.

² For the text of “A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975,” see <http://www.ucop.edu/acadinit/mastplan/MasterPlan1960.pdf>.

³ See “A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975” at <http://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/july02/302attach1.pdf>.

⁴ Professor Cecil Canton at a California Assembly Higher Education Committee hearing in San Jose on October 6, 2016. See a report of that hearing at <http://www.calfac.org/headline/cfa-leader-assembly-higher-ed-committee-racism-implicit-bias-wreaking-havoc-csu>.

⁵ Javier Panzar, “It’s Official: Latinos Now Outnumber Whites in California,” Los Angeles Times, July 8, 2015. Viewed at <http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-census-latinos-20150708-story.html>.

⁶ CSU Analytic Studies Division, Enrollment by Ethnic Group, <http://www.calstate.edu/AS/>.

⁷ CSU Enrollment by Ethnic Group, Fall 2015 Profile http://www.calstate.edu/as/stat_reports/2015-2016/feth02.htm.

⁸ “Campus Ethnic Diversity: Regional Universities (West),” U.S. News and World Report. Viewed at <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/rankings/regional-universities-west/campus-ethnic-diversity>.

⁹ “The California State University Fact Book, 2016. Viewed at <http://www.calstate.edu/csufacts/2016Facts/documents/facts2016.pdf>.

¹⁰ The California State University Fact Book 2015. Viewed at <https://www.calstate.edu/csufacts/2015Facts/documents/facts2015.pdf>.

¹¹ For example, many of the most exclusive and more expensive colleges and universities have much higher percentages of white students than the CSU does.

White Students as a Percent of Student Body and Elite, Private Universities in California

	% White	Source
University of Southern California	40%	https://about.usc.edu/facts-and-figures/ethnicity/
Pomona College	47%	http://www.collegedata.com/cs/data/college/college_pg01_tmpl.jhtml?schoolId=1677
Stanford University	42%	http://facts.stanford.edu/academics/undergraduate-profile
Santa Clara University	52%	https://www.scu.edu/admission/undergraduate/choosing-scu/class-profile/
Pepperdine University	49%	http://www.collegedata.com/cs/data/college/college_pg01_tmpl.jhtml?schoolId=1121
University of San Diego	52%	https://www.sandiego.edu/facts/quick/current/ethnicity.php
Chapman University	63%	http://www.collegedata.com/cs/data/college/college_pg01_tmpl.jhtml?schoolId=661
Harvey Mudd College	58%	https://www.hmc.edu/institutional-research/institutional-statistics/institutional-statistics-students/student-enrollment-raceethnicity/

¹² http://www.calstate.edu/as/stat_reports/2015-2016/rfeth01.htm.

¹³ One disturbing trend over the last decade is a steady decline in the numbers of African-American and Native American students in the CSU. While some of this decline may be attributable to the inclusion of a new category, “Two or more races,” in 2010, more investigation of these trends is needed.

¹⁴ Kristen Lewis and Sarah Burd-Sharps, *A Portrait of California, 2014-2015* published as part of the Measure of America series at the Social Science Research Council, p. 116-117. Viewed at http://ssrc-static.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/A-Portrait-of-California_vF.pdf. According to the data in this report, Whites earn, on average, twice as much as Latinos in California. This study also demonstrates the vast differences in income across different Asian subgroups in the state.

Earnings among Asian Subgroups	
	Median Income
Asian Indian	\$58,071
Japanese	\$50,225
Chinese (except Taiwanese)	\$43,042
Filipino	\$38,784
Korean	\$38,592
Vietnamese	\$32,802
Cambodian	\$24,061
Hmong	\$19,448

¹⁵ "Facts about the CSU 2015." Viewed at <http://www.calstate.edu/csufacts/2016Facts/students.shtml>.

¹⁶ "Serving Displaced and Food Insecure Students in the CSU," The CSU Chancellor's Office, January 2016. Viewed at <https://presspage-production-content.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/1487/cohomelessstudy.pdf?10000>.

For news reports see Rosanna Xia, "1 in 10 Cal State Students Is Homeless, Study Finds," *Los Angeles Times*, June 20, 2016 (viewed at <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-cal-state-homelessness-20160620-snap-story.html>) and "Thousands of California College Students Homeless and Go Hungry," *The Economic Times*, June 22, 2016 (viewed at <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/thousands-of-california-college-students-homeless-and-go-hungry/articleshow/52866783.cms>.)

¹⁷ As a study discussed in *Inside Higher Education* found, 72 per cent of those graduating from community college have considered going on for a 4-year degree, but 64% did not because of the cost and/or their family and work obligations. "Survey: Many 2-Year Grads Want to Get Bachelor's Degrees But Don't," *Inside Higher Education*, April 12, 2016. Viewed at <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2016/04/12/survey-many-2-year-grads-want-get-bachelors-degrees-dont>.

¹⁸ Rosanna Xia, "1 in 10 Cal State Students Is Homeless, Study Finds," *Los Angeles Times*, June 20, 2016. Viewed at <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-cal-state-homelessness-20160620-snap-story.html>.

¹⁹ The minimum wage in California increased during the 2015-16 academic year. Prior to January 1, 2016, the minimum wage was \$9/hour. On January 1, 2016, the minimum wage increased to \$10/hour. The 682-hour figure is based on the \$10/hour minimum. See Department of Industrial Relations, "History of California Minimum Wage." Available at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/iwc/minimumwagehistory.htm>.

²⁰ "Facts about the CSU." Viewed at <http://www.calstate.edu/csufacts/2016Facts/students.shtml>.

²¹ "2010-2011 Student Academic Outreach Program's Annual Report," California State University, p. 1. Viewed at http://www.calstate.edu/SAS/documents/2010-11_OutreachReport.pdf.

²² Elizabeth Chapin, "First Generation Grads Pave the Way," June 5, 2012, California State University Public Affairs. Viewed at <http://www.calstate.edu/pa/News/2012/Story/firstgen.shtml>.

As this article points out, first-generation students face a number of challenges: "The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study reports that 89%

of low-income first-generation students leave college within six years without a degree—four times the dropout rate of higher-income second-generation students. These students are more likely to work while in school, have more financial obligations, and are less likely to be academically prepared for college.”

²³ CSU Analytic Studies, Fall Term Enrollment Summary. Enrollment includes undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and graduate students on all CSU campuses. Enrollment excludes students in international programs and CalStateTEACH. For 2015, see http://www.calstate.edu/as/stat_reports/2015-2016/f15_02.htm. For 1985, see http://www.calstate.edu/AS/stat_abstract/stat0910/pdf/z1a10.pdf, Table 2, p. 4.

Four new campuses were also added to the system between 1985 and 2015. See CSU History at <http://www.calstate.edu/explore/history.shtml>.

²⁴ This increase refers to change in state general funds plus net tuition, after financial aid funds are accounted for. See table in Footnote 25.

²⁵ **Percentage Change in Funding for the CSU in Real Dollars (by Source) Compared to FTE Students between 1985 and 2015**

	1985	2015	Change
FTE Students	247,298	404,746	157,448
General Funds	\$2,870,314,504	\$2,787,938,000	(\$82,376,504)
Operating Budget	\$3,487,114,683	\$4,933,750,000	\$1,446,635,317
Operating Budget per FTE Student	\$14,101	\$12,190	(\$1,911)
Shortfall in Operating Budget	n/a	(\$773,519,840)	

Source: California State University, Department of Finance, Legislative Analyst's Office

Note: Operating budget for the CSU is general funds plus net tuition & other fee revenue, the operating budget is an estimate based on change in operating budget per FTE student

²⁶ General Fund appropriations for 1985-86 to 2007-08 are from CSU Analytic Studies, Statistical Abstract to July 2010, Table 188, p. 339. Available at http://www.calstate.edu/as/stat_abstract/stat0910/. General Fund appropriations for 2008-09 to 2015-16 are from the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), State of California Expenditures, 1984-85 to 2015-16, August 2015. Available at <http://www.lao.ca.gov/PolicyAreas/state-budget/historical-data>. Note that General Fund appropriations for 2014-15 and 2015-16 exclude funds for General Obligation (GO) bond debt service (\$188.5 million in 2014-15 and \$201.1 million in 2015-16, per the LAO). Net tuition and other fee revenue for 1985-86 are from the Department of Finance (DOF) budget galley (received via email on June 30, 2016). Net tuition and other fee revenue for 2015-16 are from the 2016-17 CSU Support Budget, and are based on the 2015-16 Final Budget. See p. 6 of <http://www.calstate.edu/budget/fybudget/2016-2017/executive-summary/documents/2016-17-support-budget.pdf>. Inflation-adjustments reflect the change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in California between Fiscal Year (FY) 1985-86 and FY 2015-16. Indices are available from the DOF at http://www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/FS_DATA/LatestEconData/FS_Price.htm.

²⁷ **Percentage Change in Funding for the CSU (by Source) Compared to FTE Students between 2007 (pre-recession) and 2015**

	2007	2015	Change	Percentage Change
FTE Students	356,592	404,746	48,154	13.5%
General Funds	\$3,388,986,373	\$2,787,938,000	(\$601,048,373)	-17.7%
Net Tuition & Other Fee Revenue	\$1,663,638,123	\$2,145,812,000	\$482,173,877	29.0%
Operating Budget	\$5,052,624,496	\$4,933,750,000	(\$118,874,496)	-2.4%

Source: California State University, Legislative Analyst's Office

Note: Operating budget for the CSU is general funds plus net tuition & other fee revenue

Even in 2016-17 state appropriations to the CSU, when controlled for inflation, were still nearly \$500 million less than in 2007-08 (page 20, CSU Support Budget 2017-18).

²⁸ Jason Sisney & Justin Garosi, "2014 GDP: California Ranks 7th or 8th in the World," Legislative Analyst's Office, July 1, 2015. Available at <http://www.lao.ca.gov/LAOEconTax/Article/Detail/90>. <http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-sac-essential-politics-california-s-economy-maybe-moves-to-1465940673-htmllstory.html>

²⁹ Dan Alexander, "California Leads All States (and All but 2 Countries) with 111 Billionaires," *Forbes*, March 7, 2014. Available at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/danalexander/2014/03/07/california-leads-all-states-and-all-but-2-countries-with-111-billionaires/#4d46f57e3bf6>.

³⁰ Total General Fund Budget Expenditures are from the Department of Finance (DOF), Historical Budget Expenditures, January 2016. Available at http://www.dof.ca.gov/budgeting/budget_faqs/documents/CHART-B.pdf.

³¹ The \$1.9 billion figure is calculated by adjusting per student spending in 2015-16 to the 1985-86 real dollar level of per student spending, and then adjusting for the additional number of FTE students. The \$1.9 billion estimate would increase per student spending to 1985-86 levels only for existing students. The dollar amount to increase per student spending to 1985-86 real dollar levels for existing students and to enroll qualified students who are denied admission (30,665 in fall 2014, per the CSU 2016-17 Support Budget), at the same level of funding, is \$2.3 billion.

See chart below:

State Funding Per Student, 1985-16 and 2015-16

	FTE Students	State General Funds	Per Student
1985-86 -- Actual	247,298	\$1,258,498,523	\$5,089
2015-16 -- Actual	404,746	\$2,787,938,000	\$6,888
2015-16 -- Theoretical (at 1985 level of state support for existing students)	404,746	\$4,697,769,042	\$11,607
Shortfall		\$1,909,831,042	

³² Hans Johnson, "Defunding Higher Education What Are the Effects on College Enrollment?" Public Policy Institute. Viewed at http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/rb/RB_512HJRB.pdf.

³³ Jim Doyle, "CSU to impose enrollment caps in budget crisis," *SF Gate*. November 20, 2008. View at: <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/CSU-to-impose-enrollment-caps-in-budget-crisis-3261161.php>

"Chancellor Timothy White Talks CSU and His Mantra: 'More Students to Degrees Sooner'" *KQED Radio*. October 25, 2016. View at: <https://www.kqed.org/forum/2016/10/24/chancellor-timothy-white-talks-csu-and-his-mantra-more-students-to-degrees-sooner/>

³⁴ The basic tuition fee covers an academic year for resident undergraduate students enrolling in more than 6 units per term. Campus-based fees vary by campus; fees shown are systemwide averages. Fees for 2005-06 and earlier years are from the California Postsecondary Education Commission. See <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/FiscalData/FeesGraph.ASP?System=CSUTot&Dollars=Actual>. Fees for 2006-07 and later years are from the California State University Budget Office. See <http://www.calstate.edu/budget/student-fees/fee-rates/systemwide-history.pdf>.

³⁵ One of the best overviews of this research is an article by Adrianna Kezar and Dan Maxey, "Faculty Matter: So Why Doesn't Everyone Think So?" *Thought and Action*, Fall 2014, p. 30. Viewed at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/e-Kezar.pdf>.

For a sampling of the many other articles about the key role played by faculty, see Ullah, Hafeez and Wilson, Mardell A. "Students' Academic Success and Its Association to Student Involvement with Learning and Relationships with Faculty and Peers," *College Student Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 4, December 2007; Komaraju, Meera, Musulkin, Sergey, and Bhattacharya, Gargi, "Role of Student-Faculty Interactions in Developing College

Students' Academic Self-Concept, Motivation, and Achievement," *Journal of College Student Development*, Volume 51, Number 3, May/June 2010, 332-342; and Stevenson, Joseph M., Buchanan, Debra A., and Sharpe, Abby, "Commentary: The Pivotal Role of the Faculty in Propelling Student Persistence and Progress toward Degree Completion," *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice*, Volume 8, Number 2, 2006-2007, 141-148.

A recent study commissioned by the Gates Foundation, titled "U.S. Postsecondary Faculty in 2015 Diversity In People, Goals And Methods, But Focused On Students," reviews the literature on the role of faculty and confirms the consistent and long-standing general finding that "faculty-student interaction drives outcomes" (p. 12). In addition to interactions between faculty and students inside the classroom, those interactions beyond instruction "anchor students to the school and motivate them to succeed" (p. 12).

The full report is available on the Gates Foundation website at <http://postsecondary.gatesfoundation.org/2015/02/10/u-s-postsecondary-faculty-2015/>.

³⁶ Suzanne Metter, *Degrees of Inequality: How the Politics of Higher Education Sabotaged the American Dream*, p. 25. See also the discussion in *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: 45 Year Trend Report*, 2015 Revised Edition, published by the Pell Institute for the Study of Higher Education. Viewed at http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/publications-Indicators_of_Higher_Education_Equity_in_the_US_45_Year_Trend_Report.pdf. Their research shows that the gap between graduation by 24 rates for low-income students and high-income students has actually widened since 1970.

³⁷ Robert Shireman, "The Real Value of What Students Do in College," The Century Foundation, February 25, 2016, p. 11. Viewed at <https://tcf.org/content/report/the-real-value-of-what-students-do-in-college/>.

³⁸ Robert Shireman, "The Real Value of What Students Do in College," The Century Foundation, February 25, 2016, p. 1. Viewed at <https://tcf.org/content/report/the-real-value-of-what-students-do-in-college/>.

Many researchers have emphasized the same point.

For instance, Suzanne Metzler, has argued that by many measures higher education in the United States is becoming "a caste system." (p. 190).

Tom Mortenson, a senior scholar at the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education who has been involved in this research for decades, has emphasized that equity in higher education "is really crucial to what America is, was, and at least used to stand for." However, today, he concludes, "It clearly doesn't stand for that any more. The data show, in every way you look at it, that we're on the wrong path." Quoted in Jon Marcus and Holly K. Hacker, "The Rich-Poor Divide on American's College Campuses is Getting Wider, Fast," *The Hechinger Report*, December 17, 2015. Viewed at <http://hechingerreport.org/the-socioeconomic-divide-on-americas-college-campuses-is-getting-wider-fast/>.

And finally, looking specifically at California, Lande Ajose, Director of California Competes, has concluded that "California is in trouble. . . When the master plan was enacted, the state made a promise to 'guarantee educational access for all.' While students may have access, that access is not translating into equitable outcomes. That has implications not only for the state's long term economic prospects but also for creating a coherent social fabric. You can't have strong and vibrant democracy when you have disparate higher education outcomes whose results reinforce broader social inequalities." Quoted in "Mind the Gap: Delivering on California's Promise for Higher Education," published by California Competes. Viewed at <http://californiacompetes.org/home/new-report-finds-degree-gap-in-california-has-grown-to-2-4-million-by-2025/>.

For a detailed and data-rich study of equity in higher education, see "Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the US: 2016 Historical Trend Report," a study issued by the Pell Institute for the Study of Equity in Higher Education. Viewed at http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/publications-Indicators_of_Higher_Education_Equity_in_the_US_2016_Historical_Trend_Report.pdf.