

To: ASI Board of Directors  
From: Armando Perez, CSSA Liaison  
Subject: November 2023 CSSA Plenary

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Fall 2023 Office Hours:

Monday: 1-5pm, Wednesday: 1-5pm, Thursday: 1-5pm/5:45pm, Friday: 1:30-5pm

Winter 2023 Office Hours:

Monday: 9-4pm, Wednesday: 9-4pm

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### **November California State Student Association (CSSA) Plenary**

The November CSSA Plenary Meeting was held at Cal State Maritime Academy from November 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in person. Those in attendance with ASI President Nataly Andrade-Dominguez and I were ASI Executive Vice President Veronica Boulos and ASI Director of Health and Human Services Rosa Colin Vasquez.

For the CHESS Conference, CHESS (California Higher Education Student Summit) is an event hosted in Sacramento as well as the Capitol for two days where students are empowered to become change agents in advocating for an accessible, affordable, and quality system of public higher education in California as stated in CSSA's website. All 23 of the CSU's campuses are invited to bring along some of their guests, including Board Directors and others. This year, *tentatively*, CHESS will not be held on the campus of Sacramento State, it will be held at a convention center. The tentative dates are March 10<sup>th</sup> and March 11<sup>th</sup> which land on a Saturday and Sunday. More information regarding the CHESS Conference will be released in the next in-person plenary meeting which will be hosted by Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in January 2024.

During the CSSA meeting, there was a brief presentation regarding the SIRF, which is short for the Student Involvement & Representation Fee that contains a \$2 fee that is assessed twice a year to all CSU students in order to fund the CSSA. This fee ensures that CSU students have a say on (and not limited to): tuition, financial aid, student services, course availability, academic advising, etc.). However, students can opt out of the fee in their student portal, but whether or not, students will not be affected by opting out as CSSA ensures that students will always be a top priority regardless of the fee if it is paid or not. In regards to the financial part, Sacramento State wasn't listed on the revenue sheet regarding how we are doing with students opting out of it or not but for the system as a *whole*, CSSA is facing a **47% decrease** from the previous year with students opting out more this year. Their expected revenue this year is predicted at \$446,020 while last year's was \$841,206. CSSA also went over enrollment data, however, Sacramento State wasn't listed at the time of the meeting.

In the Legislative Affairs Committee, the ASI President sat in for Sacramento State and we listened together about the topics that were brought up. The federal government were in the talks in regards to reducing financial aid from the government and CSSA sent a letter in expressing concern for this as it would impact the college students. CSSA also expressed interest in learning and having universal associate's degrees for transfer students that decide to go to a CSU/UC to help them transition easier into the 4-year system. After, we were then briefed on the steps that it takes for legislation to start and finish in the State Capitol.

CSSA had previously supported several bills in which all of the bills that either CSSA supported or opposed were *either* supported or opposed by the legislature. Here are the majority of the bills that were talked about in the meeting:

The green was supported & chaptered, the red was opposed and vetoed:

**AB 111** – Personal Income Tax Law

**AB 607** – Public postsecondary education: course materials

**AB 656** – California State University: doctoral programs

**AB 789** – Co-Sponsored! Student Financial Aid: Cal Grants & SAP

**SB 808** – CSU: annual report: sexual harassment reports

**SB 640** – CSU: food service contracts & hotel development projects

**AB 1540** – Postsecondary education: nonresident tuition

Continuing on, the Chancellor will be going over the Financial Aid Plan within the Board of Trustees at the next couple of meetings throughout the year because of their approval of a CSU tuition increase. The plan will go over a progress report and talking about how to maximize financial aid for current and future students of the CSU system. It will also go over the costs of attendance for the CSU's and the definition behind that.

CSSA set time aside for a presentation presented by the Center for Equitable Higher Education. Some of the most important takeaways that was received was 42% of the students in the CSU system have food insecurity along with 11% of the students being homeless. For Sacramento State specifically, North Village which one of the on-campus housing that Sac State offers, students for the 2023-24\* school year, the monthly rate for an 8-month lease (including a required meal plan) is \$1,505 a month. This is the lowest rate possible to receive at North Village for a double occupancy room (2 beds, 1 room). Furthering on the topic of housing, there was input brought to attention by public comments made from the committee members including myself such as how the CSUs are going to become more transparent and accessible for housing and the costs as well. I asked how the CSUs would help students with housing and resources regarding on and off-campus housing after students' first years on their respective campuses to the Center for Equitable Higher Education to have in their minds when they advocate for students.

For Title IX, to give background, Title IX is a federal law that requires educational institutions receiving funds to address discrimination and harassment based on sex. This law factors into Sacramento State's policies on investigating and providing resources for anyone who has experienced sexual exploitation, sexual misconduct (including sexual battery & rape), dating or domestic violence, and stalking. CSSA briefly mentioned Title IX as it is applied to everyone and the CSU system are currently working on bettering the policies to ensure it is at its full effectiveness for students.

The Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025) which was launched in 2015 by the California State University was to create a plan for students to increase their graduation rates, eliminate equity gaps in degree completion, and meet California's workforce needs. For systemwide graduation rates given by the CSU, they are as followed:

4 year first-time student:

2015: 19%

2023: 35%

2025 GOAL: 40%

For more data and information, it can be found on the Graduation Initiative 2025 on Google, clicking the link will redirect you straight to that specific information found on the CSU website.

Some concerns that were brought up into the attention of the Board before concluding the plenary meeting were enrollment rates for specific universities and class instruction mode disadvantages. For enrollment, Sacramento State hasn't released information to the CSU regarding how enrollment rates are for the recent years.

However, CSU Easy Bay had a decline of 16.9% of enrollment which affected the number of classes and programs available to them. For instruction mode in classes, students are sometimes frustrated at the fact that classes can only be offered for specific semesters (Fall, Spring, etc.) and either online only or in-person. CSSA would want better communication from admin to students in regards to any changes with classes.

For information on CIVIC, CIVIC stands for College Involvement and Values Impacting Communities. Essentially, the main point of the CIVIC “challenge” is to encourage and enhance student involvement in the work undertaken by the Legislative & Systemwide Affairs Committee and to amplify student voices. Each campus is assigned a specific teammate and designated legislators. Throughout the year, students & their respective campuses have the opportunity to accumulate and record points for the challenges provided by CIVIC. Sacramento State is partnered up with CSU East Bay. Our representatives are Assemblyman Kevin McCarty and Senator Angelique Ashby. I will be keeping track for points, but for an update, there is not an accurate ranking due to the vacancy of this position. There have been points that have not been submitted just yet so I have been working on getting those points submitted in with the ASI President. We do plan on taking home the trophy and will provide a ranking update once the January plenary meeting has been presented.