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Faculty Trustee's Report

CSU Board of Trustees Meeting – Sept. 14-15, 2021 (virtual)

Hereby I respectfully submit a summary of the Board of Trustees meeting. My report is largely based on the agenda materials provided to the trustees and to the public, on my personal notes, my memory, and a partial review of the archived livestream of the meeting accessible at <https://www.calstate.edu/csuo-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/Pages/september-14-15.aspx>.

I tried my best to accurately reflect the deliberations, and I hope to have quoted correctly and paraphrased in the spirit of the speakers' and presenters' intentions. If you notice any inaccuracy or misrepresentation, please let me know (Romey.Sabalius@sjsu.edu).

The Board of Trustees met **remotely for hopefully the last time**. As in previous virtual Board meetings, the public was invited to comment live at the beginning of the meeting or to submit their comments in writing.

I am elated to report that in August, Governor Newsom re-appointed me to a third term as Faculty Trustee. I am honored to possess the trust of the CSU faculty, our administrators, my fellow Board members, and that of some of our legislators, including the Governor. I look forward to assist in making the CSU more resilient and more effective as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

A sign of this emergence is the gradual re-population of campuses. During this fall semester, the trustees can also visit campuses in person again. Over the past month, I traveled to our campuses at East Bay, Humboldt, Chico, and Sacramento – and several additional visits are scheduled. Finally, in November, the Board is looking forward to meet in person again.

In this report, I presume that the topics of the greatest interest to the faculty would be the crucial Planning for the 2022-2023 Operating Budget (item 8.c), this year's final State Legislative Update (item 9.a), and the always controversial Executive Compensation (item 11.a).

Romey Sabalius

San José, CA – Oct. 19, 2021

Faculty Trustee's Report

CSU Board of Trustees Meeting: September 14-15, 2021 (virtual)

On September 14-15, the CSU Board of Trustees meeting was held virtually via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On September 14, at 8:30 am,

1. The **Board of Trustees** met in **Closed Session** to discuss *Executive Personnel Matters* and to receive a report on *Pending Litigation*.
2. The **Committee on Collective Bargaining** convened in **Closed Session**.
[Note: According to California Education Code § 66602 (c2) the Faculty Trustee “shall not participate on any subcommittee of the board responsible for collective bargaining negotiations.”]

The **Public Meeting** started at approximately 10:10 am.

3. Chancellor Joe Castro delivered his first **State of the California State University Address**.

The Chancellor praised the “ingenuity and adaptability of our faculty and staff,” who enabled the CSU to be “flexible and bold” during the pandemic. “In a span of approximately two weeks, we transitioned 80,000 courses to virtual modalities” and thereby turned the CSU into “the nation’s largest online institution.” A testament to the successful pivot is the fact that approximately 130,000 students graduated during the past academic year, which is an all-time CSU high.

Chancellor Castro wants the CSU “to be even more technology-focused.” Several of our campuses “have been remarkably innovative in this regard,” “some have been national leaders in the use of chat bots [...] to provide unexpected sources of connection and support,” and “virtual advising has been extra-ordinarily successful.”

The Chancellor believes that the challenges “implore us to be an even more compassionate university,” and he cited the CSUCCESS program and the initiative to “prepare faculty across the CSU to be certified mental health first responders” as just some examples of the many new and on-going efforts. He also re-affirmed the CSU’s commitment “to be more inclusive and equitable, two of my highest priorities as your Chancellor.” “We made steady progress in this regard. Today 45% of CSU staff identify as persons-of-color, as compared to roughly 1/3 a decade ago. For instructional faculty the percentage is 35%, and –significantly– nearly half, 47%, of our most recent tenure-track cohort identify as persons-of-color. Of course, we must do more! We must continue to employ creative strategies to insure that our diverse students are reflected by and connected with faculty and staff who authentically understand their lived experiences.”

Lastly, Chancellor Castro re-stated his goal to close equity gaps, which “will require a renewed commitment to transparency and accountability [...] with earnest collaboration and data-sharing between and among campuses so we can all benefit from those who are succeeding.”

4. At 11:00 am, **Public Comment** began. 25 speakers provided their input live via audio, and each had one minute for input. A dozen comments were submitted in writing, some very lengthy and detailed.

Representatives from the *California Faculty Association (CFA)* lamented the lack of progress in the collective bargaining negotiations. They maintain that the offered 2% increase in faculty salaries is too low in light of the solid budget and the extraordinary work of the faculty in converting practically all instructions to an online modality during the COVID pandemic. Other members advocated for more professional training in social justice to combat systemic racism and to increase equity on campuses.

Surprisingly, the leaders of the *CSU Employees Union (CSUEU)* did not provide public comment either live or in writing. This is unusual, since their representatives normally attend in great number and provide intensive feedback.

As usual over the past year, *Students for Quality Education (SQE)* called for the redirection of resources from university police departments to student services, especially to mental health counseling.

Other students and faculty called for the divestment of CSU reserves from fossil fuel assets. [Note: On October 6, Chancellor Castro announced “that the university will not pursue any future investments in fossil fuels in the university’s three investment portfolios”].

Half a dozen speakers urged the CSU to include caste as a category protected from discrimination.

Furthermore, concerns were raised about the safe re-population of campuses.

5. After a lunch break, the **Committee on Audit**
 - a. received as an information item in consent the *Status Report on Audit and Advisory Services Activities*.

“Audit and Advisory Services is wrapping up work on the 2020-2021 audit plan and has commenced work on the 2021-2022 audit plan. Fifty-two audits have been completed as part of the 2020-2021 audit plan and the remaining 2020-2021 audits are progressing through the report writing and campus review process. Twelve audits are currently in process as part of the 2021-2022 audit plan and are being performed remotely. Audit management continues to evaluate when in-person on site fieldwork will resume.”

6. The **Committee on Committees**
 - a. approved as an action item in consent *Amendments to Board of Trustees’ Standing Committee Assignments for 2021-2022*.

Three newly appointed trustees were added to the committee roster: Maria Linares (Student Trustee), Julia Lopez, and Yammilette Rodriguez.

7. The Committee on Educational Policy

- a. approved as an action item in consent the *Academic Master Plan Update: Fast-Track Programs*.

The only new projections were a BS in Data Science and a BS in Marine Biology at Humboldt State.

- b. approved as an action item an *Amendment to Title 5 Regulations: Credit for Prior Learning*.

“This item proposes changes to the name and substance of Title 5 §40408. Currently titled *Credit Based on Examination*, the proposed title, *Credit for Prior Learning*, more accurately describes current practice in higher education as well as proposed revisions to existing policy. In addition to credit by examination, the proposed amendment seeks to expand the types of prior learning assessments from which credit may be earned to include portfolio assessment, interviews or other appropriate demonstrations of learning outcomes. Furthermore, the proposed amendment would allow graduate, as well as undergraduate, students to earn credit for prior learning outside of traditional collegiate coursework. In sum, these amendments would update best practices for evaluating and awarding credit for prior learning and would support revisions to CSU Credit for Prior Learning policy. The Board discussed this as an information item in July 2021.”

Trustees asked questions about the equitable application of the new regulation across all campuses (Adamson) [subsequent campus and system policies are expected to be implemented], whether it applies as well to life and work experience (Rodriguez) [absolutely], who was included in the conversation to develop the new regulation (Linares) [broad feedback gathered], and if the CSU would monitor and collect data on approved credit for prior learning (Lopez) [respective criteria will be established and the CSU will collaborate with the California Community Colleges in data collection and sharing].

- c. received as an information item a presentation on *Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities*.

“Research, scholarship and creative activities are intrinsic to California State University (CSU), providing students with hands-on learning opportunities where they can develop and test hypotheses and push boundaries in pursuit of new knowledge benefitting California, the nation and the world. The CSU is distinctive for making this high-impact practice available to undergraduate students throughout its 23 campuses and 10 multi-campus affinity groups. As a result, CSU graduates are better prepared to meet today’s opportunities and challenges and help transform tomorrow.

Research, scholarship and creative activities also provide an effective strategy for improving student success. Undergraduate research, for example, develops purposefulness, perseverance and collaboration, empowering students and leading to their academic success. Students gain opportunities for deep learning when they work side-by-side with faculty on research, scholarship and creative activities.”

“Total external expenditure –from grant and contract revenue– for CSU research and sponsored programs has increased steadily over the past several years. In 2019-2020, the most recent year for which data are available, the total amount was \$657 million. This represents a growth of \$90 million over a five-year period.”

- Trustees asked whether the CSU can expect an increase in research funding from the new federal government (Kimbell) [yes] and whether students were able to continue to conduct research during the pandemic (Carney) [to some degree in a virtual modality].
- d. received as an information item a presentation of the *Graduation Initiative 2025*.

“The CSU launched Graduation Initiative 2025 in 2015 as an ambitious plan to increase graduation rates, eliminate student equity gaps and meet the workforce needs of California. The initiative is centered on six key priorities identified as having significant impact on degree completion and student success. Those priorities are: academic preparation; enrollment management; student engagement and well-being; financial support; data-informed decision making; and removal of administrative barriers.

In spring 2021, CSU Chancellor Joseph Castro convened an Advisory Committee with the charge to ‘... explore bold and creative ways to not only maintain but accelerate our progress toward GI 2025’s goals – with a special focus on eliminating equity gaps.’ The 19-member committee, comprised of CSU trustees, campus presidents, vice presidents for student affairs, provosts, faculty, staff and students, presented a series of recommendations, strategic imperatives and guiding principles for the Chancellor’s review.”

James Minor, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Senior Strategist for Academic Success and Inclusive Excellence, reported that the incoming students this fall will be the 4-year cohort graduating class of 2025, marking the final year of the Graduation Initiative 2025. “They come to us having navigated one of the most challenging times for any high school graduating class.” “Today, we share a framework to translate the recommendations by the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee into tangible actions, [... which] place students and equity at the forefront.”

Jeff Gold, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, outlined the strategies to be applied, including, but not limited to investing in course availability, providing grants for summer and inter-session, and expanding virtual learning. “Ultimately, we hold a collective responsibility to turn obstacles into opportunities for our students.”

“In October, the Chancellor’s Office will host the second virtual Graduation Initiative 2025 Convening: Advancing Equity Together. This online celebration of the CSU’s commitment to student success will review the latest data on graduation rates and equity. It is also an opportunity for faculty and staff to renew a collective commitment to fostering student success across the CSU. Registration for the convening is free and open to the public. The event will be livestreamed on Friday, October 22, 2021 at www.calstate.edu/GradInitiative2025Convening.”

Trustees asked questions about student basic needs –including mental health services– (Raynes) [\$15 million are allocated to support student basic needs and another \$15 million for mental health services, which were distributed to campuses], regarding success in closing the equity gaps (Raynes) [significant progress will be announced and best practices will be shared at the convening], about campus support visits (Linares) [a team of experts from across the system], and a comment about the importance of the Board to stay engaged in the monitoring and implementation of Graduation Initiative 2025 strategies (Arambula).

8. **The Committee on Finance**

- a. received as an information item the California State University Quarterly Investment Report.

**CSU Investments – Balances, Allocations, and Returns
March 31, 2021**

	<u>Balance</u>	<u>% of CSU Investments</u>	<u>Twelve Month Returns</u>
Liquidity Portfolio (SWIFT)	\$3.947 billion	73.24%	1.06%
Total Return Portfolio (TRP)	\$1.289 billion	23.92%	35.50%
Surplus Money Investment Fund (SMIF)	\$152.9 million	2.84%	0.70%
CSU Investments	\$5.39 billion	100%	

Trustee Sabalius removed this item from the consent calendar to compliment the “sensational” return of 35.5% in the TRP. Steve Relyea, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, acknowledged the work of the Investment Advisory Committee, which includes volunteer investment experts from various campus foundations. In light of the public’s call to divest from fossil fuel investments, Trustee Sabalius inquired about the extent of the CSU’s exposure. Trustee McGrory replied that currently around \$250 million are invested in fossil fuel industries.

- b. received as an information item the Annual Systemwide Report on Hate Incidents on Campus.

“During the 2020 calendar year there were no reported hate crimes and there was one reported non-criminal act of hate violence on one campus.” By comparison, in 2019, there were 5 reported hate crimes and 4 reported non-criminal acts of hate violence, and in 2018, the numbers were 10 and 1 respectively. While the 2020 numbers are welcomed news, the low level of incidents is most likely due to the campus closures for most of the year.

- c. received as an information item the Planning for the 2022-2023 Operating Budget.

Ryan Storm, Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Budget, provided some background information to frame the proposed CSU budget request. In short, cost and losses due to the COVID pandemic were mostly off-set by three generous federal aid packages totaling \$3.1 billion (of which \$1.3b were student grant aid). While the CSU’s initial expectation was to spend nearly half of its reserves, they have actually grown slightly to \$2 billion, of which \$531 million are for economic uncertainties, in other words: our “rainy day fund.” This is still a low level, since it would only support our system’s operation for approximately 4 weeks, while a minimum of three months is recommended as an appropriate level.

Of the total CSU budget amounting to \$11.8 billion, about 2/3 constitutes the operating fund. The \$7.4 billion in the operating fund come from the state (57%), from student tuition (34%), and from campus-based fees (9%). Not included are philanthropic revenues of approximately \$2.3 billion. From the operating fund, 72% are spent on salaries (47%) and benefits (25%).

Fortunately—and quite surprising given the pandemic conditions—the state’s budget outlook is rather positive in the short and the mid-term, including a massive multi-year budget surplus (\$75 billion). Therefore, both the state as well as the CSU are currently in a good financial shape.

The proposed CSU budget request seeks additions to the recurring state allocation of currently \$4.23 billion for the following line items:

2022-23 Preliminary Plan

<i>Incremental Expenditure Increases</i>	<i>Range (in millions)</i>	
Graduation Initiative 2025	75	75
Student Basic Needs	10	20
Bridging Equity Divide Through Technology	50	100
Employee Salary and Benefit Increases	199	245
Academic Facilities and Infrastructure	50	135
Enrollment Growth (+2.5%)	129	129
Mandatory Costs	50	50
Staff Salary Structure Study Results	TBD	TBD
Total Incremental Budget Request	563	754

In addition, the budget request will include a one-time funding request for Facilities and Infrastructure Needs

	500	1,000
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In regards to facilities and infrastructure, EVC Relyea explained the three-pronged approach that consists of recurring funds of \$50 to \$135 –which could finance bonds in the range from \$750m to \$2b–, one-time funds (\$500 to \$1b), and a voter-approved general obligation bond for \$2 billion. Trustee Sabalius expressed his appreciation for the robust request for funds to address the CSU’s deferred maintenance need, which total approximately \$16.8 billion. However, he would like to see a bigger request for salaries and benefits in light of the additional and substantial pandemic workload [EVC Relyea acknowledged the extra effort of faculty and expressed the desire of the Chancellor’s Office to keep compensation competitive].

Trustee Raynes urged to make our campuses more fire resilient [EVC Relyea replied that this is already a part of the overall facilities plan].

Trustee Steinhauser encouraged increased partnerships with K-12 districts in the attempt to close equity gaps and to leverage the statutory state investment in schools [EVC Relyea supported the idea of cooperation with school districts to prepare students for college].

Trustee Fong underscored the importance of conducting a study on faculty salaries. She also asked how we can increase our reserves, which are currently at an inadequate level [EVC Relyea stated that our reserves were replenished with money from the federal aid packages, and the CSU strives to continue to build them up gradually. He further explained that the reserves are not only a safeguard against economic uncertainties, but also important to retain a good credit rating for the CSU, which reduces the costs for bonds]. Trustee Fong also asked about progress on obtaining a multi-year funding plan [EVC Relyea replied that it

still is a long-term goal and a work in progress. Yet, in the current financial situation the CSU has “to weigh predictability versus the opportunity to secure a solid allocation”].

Trustee Faigin expressed concern about committing to a large amount of debt when leveraging recurring funds to generate a significant sum of bond dollars for facilities and infrastructure. [EVC Relyea opined that the CSU’s debt ratio is at a good level to assure favorable credit ratings. The CSU is currently able to get capital at a rather low cost due to low interest rates. Furthermore, construction costs are likely to experience large price hikes in the near future. Therefore, it is an advantageous moment to lock in the current rates for capital projects. Additionally, renewing our aging buildings and facilities also would generate savings in maintenance and repairs].

Trustee Lopez is worried about the CSU’s long-term financial sustainability. For the next year, the Board will be asking the legislators for an increase of about 10%. It is obvious that the state’s general fund cannot continue to grow at that rate. There are “serious fights” for state money “even in good times.” “Increases of 10% or more are not sustainable in the state of California.” An increase in tuition is our only other major funding possibility, but that would run contrary to the desire to keep the CSU affordable. Trustee McGrory agreed that the CSU has to reduce its reliance on the state, and we will have to explore additional funding streams, such as entrepreneurial opportunities, corporate partnerships, and various sponsorships.

Evelyn Nazario, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, provided a brief overview of the study of staff salaries. The Chancellor’s Office (CO) agreed with the Employees Union (CSUEU) that there are issues with salary compression and inversion. When the opportunity arose to get funding for a comprehensive study from the legislators, the CO and the CSUEU worked collaboratively to launch it. That said, the likely findings of inequities cannot be addressed with our current budget, and the CSU will have to advocate as a united front for additional funds from the legislators. VC Nazario noted that the faculty is not being overlooked, and that there is acknowledgement of an existing salary lack.

Chancellor Castro closed the discussion by stating his commitment to increase employee salaries. He quoted Senate Pro-Temp Atkins, who said that “when the CSU family unifies around our request we are almost unstoppable.” The Chancellor further reported that the Governor would not like to see tuition increases to keep the CSU affordable, and Castro assured him that an increase is not a priority for the CSU. He also quoted the Governor as saying to “please tell me exactly what you need.” [This is a comment that Newsom already made several years ago when he attended Board meetings in his role as Lieutenant Governor – and Trustee Sabalius has reminded the Board repeatedly over the past years about the Governor’s request for a sincere, and not a strategic assessment of our funding needs].

9. The Committee on Governmental Relations

- a. received as an information item the *State Legislative Update*.

Larry Salinas, Vice Chancellor for University Relations and Advancement, reported that the legislator concluded its legislative session on Sept. 10 and is now adjourned until January 3.

Nichole Muñoz-Murillo, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Advocacy and State Relations, highlighted bills of great importance to the CSU:

- AB 361 (Rivas, R.) – *Open Meetings: State and Local Agencies: Teleconferences*. “This bill allows state entities that are required to follow Bagley-Keene or Gloria Romero Open Meetings Acts, including the CSU Board of Trustees and CSU student legislative bodies, to conduct public meetings through teleconferencing technology until January 31, 2022.” The CSU supported this bill [signed].
- AB 815 (Rivas, L.) – *School Nurses: Credentialing*. “This bill authorizes the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to approve local education agencies (K-12), with an enrollment exceeding 40,000 students, to offer school nurse credentialing programs.” The CSU opposed this bill, but was pleased that the Senate’s Appropriations Committee limited its scope [signed].
- AB 1456 (Medina) – *Student Financial Aid: Cal Grant Reform Act*. “This bill would have enacted the Cal Grant Reform Act, which would have revised the current structure and eligibility requirements of the state financial aid program.” The CSU supported the bill if amended; however, it was voted by the Governor.
- AB 928 (Berman) – *Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act of 2021: Associate Degree for Transfer Intersegmental Implementation Committee*. “This bill creates an intersegmental committee on the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), consolidates the CSU and UC transfer admission general education pathways into one pathway within the number of units currently in the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, and requires that CCC students automatically enroll in an ADT pathway if they express a goal to transfer.” The CSU supported the bill after amendments were made [signed].

AVC Muñoz-Murillo commented further on AB 928: “We worked closely with the author and sponsors of the bill as we sought significant amendments [...] to strengthen the role of faculty and streamline General Education requirements. These amendments ensured that CSU faculty will have a role and voice in determining the consolidated GE pathway.” “We were pleased that we were able to move to a support position on this bill, which is the most consequential transfer bill since the passage of SB1440 ten years ago, which established the Associate Degree for Transfer pathway between the California Community Colleges and the CSU.”

Trustee Sabalius expressed his sympathy for the desire to facilitate student transfers between our systems of higher education. He reiterated, however, the strong objections of the faculty against this legislative intrusion into the curriculum, because the passage of this bill would mandate drastic changes to the General Education curricula on all CSU campuses.

- AB 927 (Medina) – *Community Colleges: Statewide Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program*. “This bill removes the sunset date on the statewide CCC baccalaureate degree pilot program and allows up to 30 programs to be approved each year. It maintains the

current prohibition on CCC baccalaureate degrees that duplicate CSU and UC programs, and provides a structured consultation process on new programs between the CSU, the UC, the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, and the CCC Chancellor's Office." The CSU's position was neutral [signed].

In light of the passage of AB 927, Trustee Carney urged the Chancellor's Office to intensify efforts to pave the legislative path to offer independent doctoral programs in the CSU, "particularly in areas in which there is a shortage of people educated with those degrees in the state of California."

Lastly, the Chancellor's Office will continue to work with legislators and key stakeholders to launch a voter referendum on a general obligation bond for facilities.

10. The **Committee on Institutional Advancement**

- a. approved as an action item the *Naming of Martin V. Smith Hall at CSU Channel Island*.

"The Martin V. and Martha K. Smith Foundation has generously agreed to a \$3.532 million gift to support construction costs associated with a third phase of renovation for Manzanita Hall as well as the restoration of the courtyard adjacent to the building."

- b. presented the *2021-2022 CSU Trustees' Awards for Outstanding Achievement*.

"Since its inception, over 400 students have received the CSU Trustees' Awards for Outstanding Achievement. Thanks to donor generosity, 23 students will receive an award this year. The most outstanding recipient is designated the Trustee Emeritus Ali C. Razi Scholar.

These distinguished awards are funded by contributions from the CSU trustees, employees and friends of the university. In 2020, the CSU Foundation board of governors endowed a scholarship in recognition of the outstanding leadership of Chancellor Emeritus Timothy P. White. They also funded a 2021 named scholarship honoring Garrett P. Ashley's service as foundation president.

Scholarships range from \$6,000 to \$15,000. Sixteen runners-up received scholarships of \$3,000."

The Board adjourned at 17:00 pm to attend a virtual reception for the CSU Trustees' Award recipients.

On Sept. 15, at 8:30 am, the Board reconvened.

11. The **Committee on University and Faculty Personnel**

- a. approved as an action item the *Implementation Process for Executive Compensation: Presidential Triennial Performance Review Salary Assessment*.

On behalf of the Chancellor's Task Force to develop the implementation process for presidential compensation, Trustee Fong delivered a summary of the evolution of the Board's executive compensation policy. In July 2018, the Board receive the results of an independent study, which showed that the salaries and benefits of all CSU presidents are 5%

to 35% below the market median compensation for a comparator group. In November 2019, the Board decided to augment the presidents' salaries upon completion of their triennial review. Yet, it never acted on it because of the financial uncertainties due to the COVID-19 pandemic since the beginning of 2020. By now, 10 presidents are due for salary assessments and there will be 13 by the end of this year. "To continue to retain high-performing educational leaders from the broadest set of diverse backgrounds that match the unique requirements of our campus communities, we need to align our guiding principles to compensate all CSU employees in a manner that is fair, reasonable, and competitive with similar institutions."

VC Nazario explained the gradual, case-by-case approach of the implementation plan.

- Concurrent with triennial review cycle
- Annual adjustments over three years
- Target salary is the peer group median
- First year adjustment not to exceed 10 percent
- Second and third years, equity adjustment from 0 to 10 percent if applicable
- Re-assess market data periodically

Trustee Firstenberg, Day, Steinhauser, McGrory, Faigin, and Clarke strongly supported the proposed implementation formula, and they also expressed their commitment to support a fair compensation for all CSU employee groups. Trustee Sabalius appreciates that "this matrix will provide a very systematic, a very predictable, and a much less arbitrary system to raise presidential salaries. [...] This is a very transparent and systematic pattern that is open to the public, open to criticism or approval. [...] The CSU budget currently is solid, and we should compensate our campus leaders fairly. However, I plead with all of you to please let the tide lift all the boats, and please also advocate for the increase of the salaries of faculty and staff." Chair Kimbell reiterated "that we are committed as a Board to ensuring that they [faculty and staff] are also receiving salaries that are in parity with other universities."

At 9:10 am, Chair Kimbell called the full **Board of Trustees Meeting** to order.

12. The **Board of Trustees**

a. received the following *Reports*:

Lillian Kimbell, *Chair of the Board of Trustees*, re-affirmed the CSU's continued commitment to affordability. "In fact, 84% of all CSU students received some form of financial aid in 2019 and 2020, and approximately 60% of undergraduate students have their tuition fully covered by grants or waivers. Impressively, 54% of CSU graduates will collect their diplomas with zero educational loan debt." "But today, Pell grants cover only 28% of the average cost to attend a public four-year college or university, which is down from roughly 77% in 1979. Doubling the maximum Pell grant and extending this aid to a broader population including Dreamers is a key step towards ensuring that a post-secondary education remains within reach of all students, and it remains the CSU's top federal

priority.” “Our campuses proudly and consistently earn top rankings for value, social mobility, and return on investment.”

Chair Kimbell cited the grant-funded ALS initiative (Affordable Learning Solutions) as an example of how the CSU tries to generate savings for students to keep their cost of attendance low. She praised the efforts of faculty to develop curricula that incorporate free or affordable course materials, which have saved students millions of dollars.

In closing, she acknowledged Hispanic Heritage Month, and she noted that “Latinx students comprise almost half of the CSU student body.”

Robert Collins, *Chair of the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU)*, noted that the 2021-22 Academic Senate is “the most diverse Academic Senate since our founding in 1963.”

Unlike the Chancellor’s Office, the Academic Senates of all three systems of higher education (CCC, CSU, UC) opposed the transfer bill AB 928. Faculty consider this proposal as “legislative intrusion.” It is creating “redundancies in curricular discussions,” since appropriate oversight and policy recommending committees already exist. It is the consensus of the faculty in all three systems that “transfer is not broken, but it is underfunded, particularly in the area of advising.”

Chair Collins further reported on the Leadership Retreat in August. Representatives from the Board of Trustees (Kimbell, Sabalius), the ASCSU Extended Executive Committee, the Chancellor’s Office (EVC Alva, AVC Storm), CFA (President Toombs), CSUEU, and CSSA discussed strategies to enable a sense of belonging, to reduce barriers to student engagement and success, and to further student and employee wellness during the COVID pandemic.

Lastly, Chair Collins summarized the resolutions that the ASCSU passed during its plenary in September. In closing, he assured that “the ASCSU will continue to monitor the implementation” of the new Ethnic Studies requirement and “to continue effective communication on campus concerns that arise during implementation and course approval processes.”

Trustee Sabalius claimed the floor to create a constructive pause. He feels that “we move from report to report so quickly that there is hardly time to process the large amount of valuable information that these reports contain.” He suggested a re-arrangement of the Board’s agenda to place these important constituents’ reports at the beginning of our meetings so that they can clarify and inform the discussions and decisions of the various committees of the Board.

Isaac Alferos, *President of the California State Student Association (CSSA)*, expressed the students’ appreciation for the CSUCCESS Program, which provides learning technology for CSU students while they are enrolled. He is encouraged to see that students take a proactive role in the re-population of campuses. “Students are a vital partner in creating a healthy and safe learning environment.” He relayed the students strategic position to “tackle the growing social inequities in our system: food, housing, mental health, campus safety, and digital equity.”

Jeremy Addis-Mills, *President of the Alumni Council*, reported that during their virtual meeting last week, the Alumni Council discussed “best alumni engagement practices learned

during the pandemic. [...] They have found really innovative ways to engage with our 4 million CSU alumni over the course of the last year.” The Council wants to continue to focus on “partnering with the university on their advocacy efforts” and “working with the Academic Senate on ways that the alumni can bring value to the classroom and provide mentorship to students.”

- b. Chair Kimbell gave the newly appointed trustees Linares, Lopez, and Rodriguez the opportunity to make introductory remarks.
- c. approved as an action item in consent the previously passed *Committee Resolutions*.

Trustee Raynes removed the resolution on *Executive Compensation* from the consent calendar for comment. She underscored the tremendous impact the presidents have on the campus environment, in consulting with students, and by serving as role models and sometimes even personally mentoring students. Both Student Trustees Raynes and Linares voted for the increase of presidential salaries, but they underscored Trustee Sabalius’ plea to “lift the entire CSU.” Chancellor Castro also declared, “I support completely the efforts that we are undertaking to address inequities in other areas, whether it is with respect to our staff or faculty or with regard to basic needs and ensuring the success of all of our almost 500,000 students.” The resolution passed without dissent, but with abstentions from Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis and Trustee Rodriguez.

All other resolutions on the consent calendar passed unanimously.

13. The **Board of Trustees** met in **Closed Session** to discuss *Executive Personnel Matters*.

The Board of Trustees meeting was officially adjourned on Wednesday, Sept. 15, at 1:30 pm.