



THE FACULTY UNION VISION FOR STUDENT, COMMUNITY COLLEGE, & COMMUNITY SUCCESS

FACULTY INPUT IS CRITICAL TO ACHIEVE
A REALISTIC VISION OF STUDENT SUCCESS



LRCFT AT THE CFT CONVENTION



The Los Rios College Federation of Teachers (LRCFT) would like to present a document that outlines the guiding principles and values for a comprehensive vision of what is truly needed for our students, community

colleges, and the local community to be successful. This vision is intended to be both positive and aspirational. It provides the framework for faculty to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that will guide us in the future.

We believe that the California community college system has been moving in a direction that hurts many of our most vulnerable students. We need a counternarrative that resists this movement, which prioritizes a narrow definition of success, and a business model that puts numbers above learning and the quality of education. We need to move our system onto a more collaborative and positive path that helps all students.

This vision for success is intended to inform faculty, administrators, and elected representatives of our vision for the future of California Community Colleges. Central to this document is the idea that faculty who work with students every day and understand the special and often overwhelming challenges that frequently prevent and often impede them from achieving their academic and human potential. It is faculty who truly understand the barriers students face and what they need to succeed. We want to work with the administration in a participatory governance structure on our vision to find common ground and do what is best for

our students. It seems that our system has lost the motivation and will to work with faculty according to shared governance principles. Somehow this must be repaired.

Unfortunately, the current community college system values certain students above others, such as those who complete a degree or certificate, are full time, will complete their degree within two years, and transfer to a 4-year college or university. But 70% are not part of that evaluation, so we wind up with a myopic rather than inclusive vision as we orient our system to focus on only 30% of our students. We must have a community college system and vision that values all of its students to truly help as many of our students as possible and the colleges themselves to provide maximum benefit to the community.

We hope that our statewide faculty organizations such as FACCC, CFT, Academic Senate, CCC Independents, and CTA will read our vision document and either adopt it or create a similar document so that we have a shared vision of where and how we can provide the best opportunities and experiences for our students. We need to find a way to work together.

For the sake of our students, colleges, and community, THIS IS WHY WE FIGHT!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dean Murakami'.

Dean Murakami

President

Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

Guiding Principle 1: The California Community Colleges serve a diverse population of students that varies significantly across the state.

The California Community Colleges are an open access system, so our students come from highly variable backgrounds and life experiences with different levels of academic, social, and psychological preparation and maturity. Students bring a wealth of life experiences and different levels of academic, social, and psychological preparation and maturity into our classrooms. In addition, community college students come to us with a wide variety of goals, that include earning a degree, professional development, earn a certificate, improving or updating their skills for better job performance, changing careers, pursuing personal growth or interest, engaging in life-long learning, and to simply explore. Some come to us motivated by the desire to improve their and their families' lives but with no clear picture of how being a college student can help them do that. We must assure that we accept every student and must provide the college environment, classes and programs to help each and every student benefit from the opportunity to pursue higher education.



LRCFT was critical in creating the Millionaire's Tax Initiative which became Prop 30. Los Rios receives about \$45 million each year from Prop 30.

Because so many students who enter community colleges do not know what major to choose, their educational goals, or career pathway, we must allow students the opportunity to take a variety of classes to explore multiple paths and discover what most interests them so that they may make the best possible choices as they formulate their academic goals.

We must take all students and provide guidance, opportunity, and mentorship so they can reach their academic and personal potential.

The challenges facing our student communities are diverse and unique. We must provide an infrastructure that meets the needs and challenges of specific student groups such as LGBTQ, Veterans, Foster youth, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, working adults, refugees, and immigrants.

We must address the issue of ethnic and racial diversity in our student body and the persistent equity gap.

"We have to make sure race is at the center of student-success strategies," Jones said. "If states want to see outcomes, they need to rethink their investment strategy ... about how to emphasize and focus on outcomes, incentives and rewards for students of color."

We must advocate for full funding of those programs that help our most vulnerable students define and reach their goals, such as EOPS, DSPS, CalWorks, ESL, MESA, Umoja, RISE, and Puente. These programs have continuously demonstrated that their program and the services they provide help students to achieve success.

Nationally, 30.8 percent of black adults and 22.6 percent of Latino adults have earned an associate degree or more, compared to 47.1 percent of white adults between the ages 25 and 64, according to the reports.



LRCFT is one of the major sponsors of the Cesar Chavez March every year.



Deep discussions with the Governor and CFT

Guiding Principle 2: Participatory governance is critical for the success of the community college system.

Participatory Governance is critical to the success of the California Community Colleges. Our 79 community college districts work best when we have a well-functioning independent and locally elected Board of Trustees and local participatory decision-making. Collegial consultation with all stakeholders allows us to make informed decisions who have different and equally meaningful relationships and interactions with our students. It helps provide nuanced and important information central to student success and equity.

Participatory governance is a collaborative goal-setting and problem-solving process built on trust and communication that involves representatives from appropriate constituent groups who engage in open discussion and timely decision-making.

We strongly advocate for a 75/25 full-time to part-time faculty ratio of classes taught in community colleges. This allows for a proper number of full-time faculty to perform the shared governance duties by the academic senate and union. We also strongly advocate for the 50% law, which requires at least 50% of a district's revenues to be spent in the classroom. This assures that the district is spending its revenues responsibly and insuring that resources are getting directly to students.

Part-time faculty are professionals who are critical for the success of students. Therefore, we advocate equity for part-time faculty in salary, office hours, benefits, and paid opportunities for professional development.

We support the goal of lab/lecture parity.

The voices of the faculty academic senate and union are critical at the college, district, and State Chancellor's Office via the Consultation Council.

We also advocate a diverse faculty that reflects the community. For example, studies demonstrate that students of color are more successful when they have faculty role models of color. Faculty diversity can only be achieved by examining and assessing current practices for recruitment, retention of faculty, and focusing on improving campus climate.



LRCFT at the State Fair booth

Guiding Principle 3: Faculty believe all students can be successful.



There is no single measure or pathway for student success.

We take pride in our students who graduate and earn certificates, but they make up only 30% of the student population. Many students will fall short of the goal of earning a degree or a certificate. There is nothing wrong with that; they are not failures. Many do not have a degree or certificate as a goal, while some want some training to get better at a job or just develop life skills. Even if students do not attain their goal of a degree, the community college experience improves their lives. Research shows that these students will earn a higher wage, are more likely to vote, less likely to commit a crime, pay more taxes, which translates to a more productive and engaged person in the community. This is also success -- for those students, the college, and the community.

**People with some college experience but not a degree earn \$8,000 more per year (\$100,000 over a lifetime) than people with only a high school diploma.
Hamilton Project 2013**

All students must be treated equitably to maximize their success. This includes providing students with a robust learning environment with access to the resources they need to not only survive but thrive in education.

Although this issue is debatable, there is an overwhelming consensus among public officials, academics, teachers, and parents that postsecondary education is one of the most successful and cost-effective methods of preventing crime. Education and Crime Research Paper 2018

We strongly advocate a comprehensive remediation program so that those students who need it can become successful at transfer-level classes later.



At Sacramento City College promoting Prop 55, the extension of Prop 30

Guiding Principle 4: California community colleges provide more than classes for an education.

Community college students enter with very different levels of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, maturation, social skills, life experiences, and psychological development. The college must provide a safe environment where students can mature, interact with a diverse body of students, develop their social skills, increase their understanding of themselves and others, and refine their goals in life.

The community college experience provides the environment for students to develop soft skills in such areas as critical thinking, communication, accountability, teamwork, time management, cultural awareness, leadership development, and organization. All of these skills will help them be successful throughout their lives.



LRCFT at the Women's March

We believe that the personal growth, maturation, and development of a student can be a more important accomplishment than earning a degree or certificate. Because providing the environment and classes that help students to personally grow and mature is an invaluable community college function, that applies to all of our students.

“A proper college education teaches students how to live an enjoyable life rather than just preparing them to enter the workforce. Charlie Gilkey founder of Productive Flourishing

We want students to mature and develop to the point that they gain control over their lives and goals. Those students are less likely to let life's challenges overtake them so that no matter what career they choose, they have the skills and stamina to be successful.

Earning a community college degree without sufficient exploration, personal growth and maturation will prevent those students from reaching their potential as human beings. This is why classes such as psychology, sociology, history, political science, philosophy, languages, art, music, physical education, and many others are such a critical part of the curriculum.

“While college doesn’t make you successful, it can often give you a wide range of experience that would be difficult to obtain in other ways. The interactions with people from different backgrounds and cultures can be out of reach for many people outside of a college environment.” Joel Falconer editor of sitepoint.com



With the Sacramento Central Labor Council sponsoring a holiday party at Starr King Elementary.

Guiding Principle 5: We must overcome the critical barriers to student success.

While there are many structural college-level barriers to student success such as overly complicated enrollment procedures and pathways to degree attainment, community colleges have been severely deficient in addressing other key barriers.

We celebrate those students that have overcome these challenges.

Unfortunately, many students drop out or fail classes not due to a lack of academic ability or motivation, but because psychological socioeconomic, and cultural issues in their lives prevent them from being successful. For example, many students suffer from severe anxiety and depression, yet the community colleges are woefully inadequate in addressing those students' needs.

Our students face grave challenges: homelessness and joblessness, chronic poverty food insecurity, drug and alcohol abuse, abuse in the home, and violent environments. It doesn't matter how good a program or pathway a college may offer; these social, economic, psychological, and emotional conditions can prevent students from being successful.



LRCFT helped to sponsor the FOOD FOR THOUGHT, Day of Giving at American River College.

A national study of community college students by Sarah Goldrick-Rab (2015) showed that 20% are hungry and 13% are homeless.

Undocumented students and students from mixed status families are part of our student population. We must develop policies, practices, and internal infrastructure necessary to support these students. Many face the critical barriers listed above, but also face legal precarity and a unique set of socio-psychological issues that require culturally responsive and informed resources focused on wellness.

The community colleges must become a full-service institution that provides for the academic, cultural, social, and psychological needs of our students if we want to maximize student success.



LRCFT supports Run to Feed the Hungry each year.

Once Amarillo Community College started connecting students to the services they needed -- childcare, legal services, housing, transportation, emergency aid to pay for utilities – the three-year completion rate at the college has also increased from 26 percent in 2012 to 45 percent in 2017, according to the Hope Lab.

We must advocate for the legislature and Governor to provide funding to meet the psychological and social challenges that prevent too many students from being successful.

RATES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AMONG STUDENTS		
	Average (%)	Range across campuses (%)
UC	19	14–24
CSU	18	12–23
CCC	19	5–27

Providing these services will be beneficial for the students, but also for the community at large.

We support social justice causes and community services because they serve many students who attend community college.



LRCFT at the March for Science



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