Great Budget for District, Faculty

by Richard Hansen, FA President

The budget agreement reached last week between the governor and legislature varies little from Brown’s May Budget Revision with respect to funding for the California Community Colleges (CCC). It’s a great budget, but an important exception for faculty is a cut of $12.68 million from the $75 million proposed in May for the conversion of part-time faculty workload into full-time faculty positions. While this is an unfortunate result, the budget agreement makes an important improvement in how this funding must be used: it’s the legislature’s intent that any of these funds not used to hire additional full-time faculty should “… enhance student success through the support of part-time and full-time faculty, including, but not limited to, the first part-time faculty of the house.”

It is important to mention, here, the significance of AB 626 in the creation of a new allocation for full-time faculty positions. Sponsored by the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges and authored by Foothill-De Anza’s local Assembly Member, Evan Low, this bill sought to allocate state funds to “… increase the state’s minimum and would have been used for hire additional faculty, so advocates went to work with the district to secure the increase.”

Foothill-De Anza is the only District in the state that does not use a “load factor” to rate faculty performance, and the practice began in 1977. The first load factors were generated from the number of courses a full-time faculty member taught in an entire academic year. For example, in 1977 the history faculty were five lecture hours a week and a full-time faculty member taught nine courses per year. Thus each course was 1/9, or 0.111 load. It appears that when load factors were first introduced, class sizes were controlled by room size, and most classes were five lecture hours per week.

However, over the years, load factors have gotten even more complicated. Today, the teaching load of a full-time faculty member is determined by the number of courses with either three- and/or four-hour lecture hours, with four-hour courses ranging from 25 to 70 students, depending on the course and campus. In addition, in order for a course to be articulated with UC, the Course Outline of Record (COR) must meet specific requirements. Understandably, the UC system writing requirement differs greatly from department to department, so the method used to determine the load factor varies in our various departments.

Under the original Foothill-De Anza load factor system, all instruction was considered to be the same system’s goal of having 75 percent of instruction take place in classes taught by full-time faculty. Districts further distinguish between lecture and non-instructional areas, with good news for part-time faculty with the College Retirement Plan provided by CalPERS. Faculty members should expect the bill from their provider, often Kaiser or Anthem Blue Cross, in the same delayed manner as the direct pay billing process. Currently, Kaiser has a $2.50 fee associated with each COBRA invoice and Anthem Blue Cross currently has no COBRA fee. Other than that, the process is solved issues in the lecture arena to handle with great care.

Is this system in every permutation the best for student success and equity? In some cases, perhaps not, and the members of the load task force are aware that it is important to remember that the load task force was created to make as fair and equitable as possible a review of the load practices we have already have in place. To create a system of assigning hours of instruction and maximum class size, the legislature used narrow the achievement gap is entirely a process of initiating COBRA coverage for a month or two, hiring new employees, or paying for COBRA, the process is somewhat parallel, and COBRA coverage has the advantage of 18 months of eligibility while direct pay is 12 month maximum.

The upcoming July 1, all part-time faculty who do not have a summer assignment will receive a notice that they are eligible for COBRA coverage and will be given the option to maintain coverage over the summer if they so choose. The Board of Trustees Benefits Unit. Faculty members should expect the bill from their provider, often Kaiser or Anthem Blue Cross, in the same delayed manner as the direct pay billing process. Currently, Kaiser has a $2.50 fee associated with each COBRA invoice and Anthem Blue Cross currently has no COBRA fee. Other than that, the process is narrow the achievement gap is entirely a process of initiating COBRA coverage for a month or two, hiring new employees, or paying for COBRA, the process is somewhat parallel, and COBRA coverage has the advantage of 18 months of eligibility while direct pay is 12 month maximum.

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Update on VEBA, JLMBC, Post-97 Trust

by Lisa Markus, FA - Vice President

More progress has been made getting up the Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA) Trust account for Post-97 Trust.

Long-time followers of the FA News will recall that the employees hired prior to July 1, 1997, who meet the criteria as defined in Article 23, receive lifetime health benefits provided as part of their employment. Some of these benefits are presently being sponsored by the District, while for those not yet receiving benefits, an application was due on July 1, 1997, there are no retirement medical benefits sponsored by the District except for those under the Bridge Plan (Article 23.A) which cover until Medicare eligibility (typically age 65).

In response to this glaring disparity, the District and the union agreed to set up a VEBA Trust to provide a small reimbursement to medical expenses for retirees over age 65.

The VEBA Board of Trustees has hired Associated Third Party Administrators (ATPAs) to oversee the day-to-day running of the trust, and assist in the investigation of any necessary clarifications for the consultants for the running of the Trust. Mary Ellen Goodwin is the ATPA, and has been formualting services, which includes validation and required reporting. US Bank will be the custodian bank for the approximately $1.2 million dollars in the fund. The board has hired Stephen Hornstein to get quotes for fiduciary liability insurance and will be overseeing the investments. At the next upcoming board meeting, the VEBA board hopes to hire an accounting firm.

Update on JLMBC

by Robert Stockwell, Nicyen Yu, FA PAC

The FA Political Action Committee (FA PAC) is the political arm of our union. In Fall 2015, we set out to find and defeat candidates who provided funds to Foothill-De Anza students and faculty.

Over the past three years we have recruited, hired, trained and deployed 24 student interns to help support the political advocacy work on behalf of the District and our students and faculty. The 2014-15 student intern included Jennifer Alabye and Evlynn Chun from Foothill, and Arjun Gadkari, Matt Sheehan, Jimmy Johnson, and Constance Cole from De Anza.

Since the program’s inception, FA PAC student intern hires have fought for and helped win passage of Proposition 30 (which brings in $2 billion to the community colleges and legal insurance as part of the annual Open Enrollment for health benefits in September and October 2015.

This year’s program achievements include: creating a full-time staff position, and making sure to cover the cost of full-time faculty positions and the Equity Administrative, and the Proposition 39 support.

Jimmy Johnson indicates that being an FA PAC intern taught him more than he could have imagined. “Now, thanks to the FA PAC, and its members, I have the skills and tools to make active changes for students and faculty.”

Finally, Cynthia Rodriguez says the FA PAC internship enabled her to hone her leadership skills, “FA PAC has helped me to ‘grow as a community leader, student and human being.’”

On behalf of the FA PAC, we want to thank this year’s student interns for their hard work and dedication. And, on behalf of the student inte""