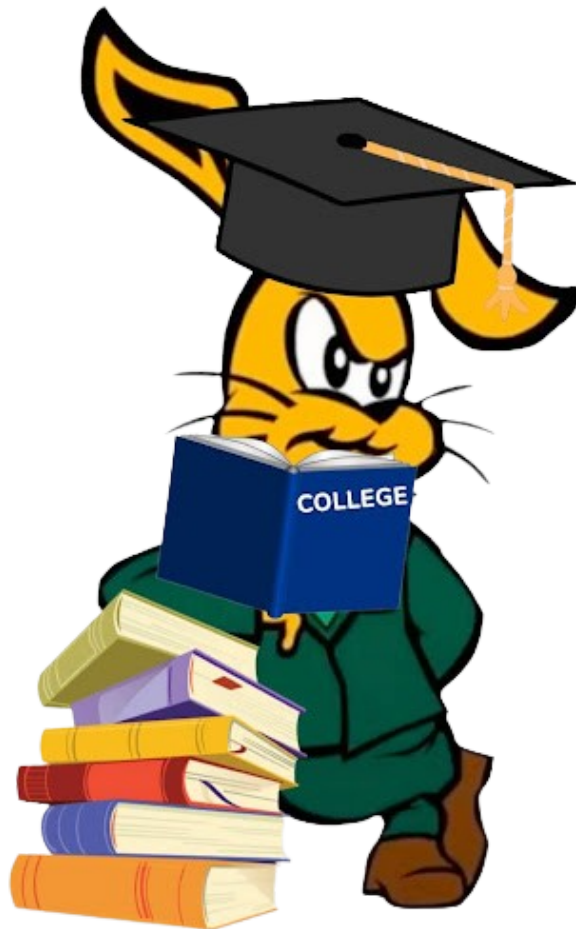


*Background Guide*

**California Community College Board of Governors  
Open Agenda**

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# JACKRABBIT MUN VII

L.B. POLY – MAY 24th, 2025

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# CHAIR LETTER

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Hello Delegates!

My name is Soli Nickerson, and I'll be your head chair for the California Community College Board of Governor's room here at Jackrabbit MUN! I'm a junior here at Polytechnic High School and I've been in MUN since my freshman year. This is my 2nd time chairing for this conference, and this committee is my favorite yet! I motivate all of you to put your best foot forward in committee and in the research before then, as I believe that's how you'll have the most fun. Other than this, I'm a part of the Chamber Choir here and I'm Allana in our upcoming musical Disney's The Little Mermaid. Feel free to reach out to my email if you need any help, and Go Jackrabbits!

Sincerely,

Soli Nickerson

California Community College Board of Governors| Head Chair

[solinickerson@icloud.com](mailto:solinickerson@icloud.com)



# VICE-CHAIR LETTER

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Hello Delegates!

My name is Sylvia Orliczky and I will be your vice-chair for the California Community College Board of Governors committee at Jackrabbit MUN VII. I am a senior here at Long Beach Polytechnic High School and this is my first year in MUN so I am very excited to learn and grow with you. I am looking forward to hearing about your perspective on the CA Community College Board and the solutions you come up with. I hope you all find the research for this committee very interesting and have fun during the conference as well. Aside from MUN, I have been playing soccer for Long Beach Polytechnic for all four years and I am thrilled to further pursue soccer collegiately. You are welcome to reach out with any questions and I am excited to make this conference compelling and enjoyable for you.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Orliczky

California Community College Board of Governors, Vice Chair

[sorliczky@gmail.com](mailto:sorliczky@gmail.com)



# POSITION PAPER GUIDELINES

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- Position Papers are due at 11:59 PM on **Sunday, May 18th**.
- Delegates **must** submit position papers to be eligible for **research AND committee awards**.
- Position Papers will be submitted through a google form:
  - <https://forms.gle/jkenWafGEAL6hJay9>
- At the top of each paper, include your character/country name, first and last name, school name, and appropriate committee.

Love Adu  
First Last  
School Name  
California Community College Board of Governors
- Papers should be submitted as a PDF file
  - Please name the file [Committee\_Country]
    - Ex. CCC\_**Love Adu**
- Papers should be minimum 1-2 pages in length with an additional Works Cited page in MLA format
- Papers should be single-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font and include no pictures or graphics
- Please include the following sections for each committee topic:
  - Background & UN Involvement
  - Position of your Country
  - Possible Solutions
    - Possible solutions can include solutions to multiple problems, since this committee is open agenda
- If you have any questions or concerns, please email one of your chairs.



# TOPIC SYNOPSIS

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2.1 million students are enrolled in the largest higher education system in the nation: the California Community College (CCC) System.

Thus, it is essential these schools are run effectively and prepare these students to enter further education or the workforce. Many students hail from economically underprivileged backgrounds, are part of minority groups, are English Language Learners (ELLs) or have previously struggled in educational spaces, so it is essential that we provide robust support networks to ensure that all have the opportunity to succeed. However, the educational budget is always notoriously tight. As a member of the California Community College Board of Governors, it will be your job to work to improve the educational outcomes, reputation and financial solvency of both individual colleges and the system as a whole.

California makes robust promises in regards to community college accessibility for state citizens, and policies such as the California Promise waive many fees a student would otherwise be forced to pay. Debates over budgeting for extracurricular activities, such as sports teams— both varsity and intramural—other activities such as choirs, debate clubs, and Model United Nations, and academic and cultural resource centers are often contentious, and you must make the decisions on where the money goes.



Sourcing funding for these institutions remains vital, especially considering the constant threat of state grants being discontinued. Additionally, you must address changing student needs and technological advancement. What role does AI play in higher education? Should we continue offering high-school level math courses or reduce math requirements and throw everyone else into calculus? What majors should be added, and which should be cut? How will you change community college campuses, and how will you ensure a better future for all students?



# COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

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This iteration of the California Community College Board of Governors is a special task force brought together by Governor Gavin Newsom composed of the usual 18 members, along with several relevant stakeholders. You will either be representing a prominent stakeholder or a member of the board itself. This specialized committee will be very similar to a General Assembly besides the setting and the characters, including opening speeches with a few major changes.

Due to this committee being **open agenda**, there is no set topic, and the topic may change as committee progresses, and for each topic Suggested Policies will be passed throughout the course of committee, formatted as shorter resolution papers pertaining towards a specific topic being discussed.





# BACKGROUND

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## HISTORY OF THE BOARD

The first community college in California, Fresno City College, was created in 1910, as a part of an initiative called “The Upward Expansion Act.” Earlier four year institutions established in California such as the University of Southern California and the University of California: Berkeley were few and far between regionally, and a desire came to allow students to take post-graduate classes closer to home. This initiative, simply starting as independent highschools promoting college level classes, eventually expanded to over 40 of these “junior colleges”—as they were called at the time— across the California area



in the next two decades. Community Colleges grew more and more popular as a practical option outside of the traditional four year schools over the years, especially after the NJCAA (National Junior College Athletic Association) was created, incorporating competitive athletics into the equation (of which, many of

the California community college schools are 1st or 2nd division.) Eventually, it was evident that these schools required some sense of uniformity in their structure and

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curriculum beyond their shared names. In 1967, the Community College Board of Governors was formed, established to reform the institutions under a unified system, without any discrepancies between schools across the state.

The board has 18 members who work to advise the Chancellor, currently Sonya Christian. The first in command is the lieutenant governor, currently Eleni Kounalakis, who is appointed as an outside position, elected by the citizens of California to serve a maximum of two four-year terms. She serves in many other roles in higher education including as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of California and the Board of Trustees of California State University. The twelve members of the board are appointed by the governor, but approved by the senate. Their terms last six years. Two of these members must have previously served on a board of trustees for another school district. There is also a two year position that five specifically delegated members hold—two to faculty, two to students, and one classified employee. Despite hailing from all different areas of California, their job as a collective is to delegate funding to all different sectors of the community college program.

## **FUNDING AND OTHER ROLES**

Community College's funding comes from a multitude of sources. Being one of the largest higher education networks in the world, California's government contributed 20 billion dollars into the system between 2018–2019. This is ultimately for a profit however as the system will eventually generate 250 billion dollars for the California economy through the work many of these graduates will do for the state. All of this is a great demonstration of the power these community colleges have to change



lives and contribute to the greater state economy. However, this isn't the only funding source, and with taxpayer dollars and tuition, another 12 billion is added. This is then split up among a number of different endeavors, most notably around 400 million per year has been allocated to construction and significant amounts of money are spent on faculty salaries and medical care. Unfortunately, funding has significantly decreased over the past several years. As enrollment has dropped, college funding as a state priority has slowed. This affects the UCs and CSUs as well, which are planned to receive budget cuts as part of a new government plan. This plan by Governor Newsom also puts CCC in line to receive \$100 million in one time aid.

The board however has other goals and tasks, which often require direct input from the stakeholders involved. To handle this, the board has a meeting every other month in order to discuss these concerns with the public. These include accessibility issues, majors that are wanted, fee waivers or how to deal with a growingly diverse population. Then, the board concludes by voting on the issue or advising the Chancellor depending on whether the initiative requires a direct legal change.

## **LEGAL PRECEDENT AND CONTROVERSY**

Beginning in May of 2022, the California Community College Board approved mandatory DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) regulations, creating controversy among some. On August 17, 2022, six professors worked to file a lawsuit against the California Community College state officials, and district officials in the State Center Community College District, claiming a violation against freedom of speech. The board's official position on DEIA in the classroom states that all professors must acknowledge institutional racism and advocate for anti-racism in the classroom,



participate in seminars or community groups that support marginalized communities, while requiring districts to evaluate faculty with these aspects in mind. Opposition to DEIA argues that the standards for what must be taught are too vague. For example, Plaintiff Loren Palsgaard stated that he no longer assigned students to read Martin Luther King Jr. 's *Letter From Birmingham Jail* or watch recorded debates over the death penalty because he now feared presenting a viewpoint of the opposition that did not promote a sufficiently anti-racist lens, and thus risk discipline over failure to promote anti-racist. Furthermore, Plaintiffs Bill Blanken and Linda de Morales argued that educators teaching subjects such as chemistry, DEIA principles did not have a place in the curriculum and took up time that otherwise could be spent on coursework. These professors also claimed that the state encroached on their own personal freedom to treat everyone by race-blindness, and claimed fear of being reprimanded for not abiding by state law to promote anti-racism through race-consciousness. Defendants asked to dismiss this case due to lack of standing from the plaintiffs, none of whom had actually been persecuted as a result of DEIA enforcement, and stated that none of the defendants would have actually been at risk of persecution. Other similar cases have come up, especially over conservative professors feeling that their rights to freedom of speech are being encroached on by DEIA. However, there remains to be little evidence of punishment for discompliance actually being enforced. Additionally, under the First Amendment the government has made it illegal for colleges to impose political ideology or litmus tests in any regards to faculty employment.



## PREVIOUS BOARD INVOLVEMENT

For many students, attending community college gives them a second chance in education by supplying an affordable and accessible pathway to enhance their learning. However, this would not be attainable without contribution from the California Community College Board. All 18 board members attempt to improve California community colleges through making resources more accessible and applicable to students of all incomes. For instance, the board developed regulations which required each district to form policies for community college students to receive free instructional resources including textbooks. This adaptation made community college more affordable overall for students of all incomes by sparing them hundreds of dollars spent strictly on textbooks. Likewise, the Board also designed an action plan called Vision 2030 which improves the financial and educational opportunities across all 116 CA community colleges. This plan aims to increase the number of students who receive a baccalaureate degree as well as who attain a living wage. To ensure this, Vision 2030 provides resources such as tutoring services and financial aid to pursue a higher education. Within Vision 2030, the digital center for innovation works to enhance opportunities by utilizing technology for the enrichment of student's success in education. This can include creating partnerships with state agencies to promote accessibility to technology and develop AI tools that contribute to student's success without overriding their potential.



# MAJOR ISSUES TO CONSIDER

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## AI USAGE

AI, or Artificial Intelligence, is on the rise as a new form of cheating for college students. It has the ability to create an assignment like an essay in mere minutes, and to customize its response to avoid AI detectors. Although plagiarism has always been punished by colleges, even resulting in expulsion in some cases, AI does not have an original owner it's stealing from, so detection and therefore punishment can often be much more ambiguous. However, it can also be used as a tool for growth and learning, so understanding its limits as a tool will be something that needs to be decided.

## ACCELERATION

As college acceptances become more and more competitive, many students are taking dual enrollment courses or accelerating their classes. This has unfortunately created a problem for community colleges as the level students will be starting out college with is very vast, with some students having completed up to calculus their senior year, while others only completing up to geometry. Some colleges have solved this by removing some lower math classes not taken as much anymore. However, this creates an issue within itself, as many students from underserved communities do not have the time and resources to take accelerated classes in high school, and college would no longer be accessible for them.



## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Environmental change has become a pressing issue globally, in regards to SDG 13, and the California Community Colleges have committed to climate action. Specifically, the current plan outlines five-year incremental goals: a 2025 benchmark, to build and institutionalize by 2030, and improve and reassess in 2035. The goals outlined tackle issues such as waste management, food systems, and greenhouse gases that may be difficult and costly to achieve. Consider how much you are willing to commit to the sustainability goals, and what must be done in order to achieve them.

## **INCLUSION**

Students come from all different backgrounds, places, and incomes, and it is the Board's goal to make them all feel included. The Board has tried to reduce bias, racism and increase accessibility and inclusion throughout the years. These changes have often faced resistance, and it is imperative to find a balance as you push for change in the system. Many of the current initiatives tackle racism, but issues regarding ableism, homophobia, sexism and other prevalent topics are also established on the docket of things to address.

## **ENROLLMENT & RETENTION**

The pandemic was disastrous for educational institutions across the country, and the California Community Colleges are no exception, being hit even harder than four year colleges. From the 2019-2020 academic year to the 2020-2021 academic year, the number of students declined by 14.8%. This is one of the major reasons that colleges in California shifted away from enrollment as the sole determinant for funding. However,



enrollment still contributes significantly to funding, and significant budget cuts to faculty, programs, and resources have had to be made, while courses have been reworked in order to accommodate a switch to online learning. Although the enrollment rates have been increasing slowly, the issue is still pertinent and has prompted significant change. Consider the factors that have led to the post-COVID decline, especially enrollment and retention from minority groups and underserved communities, and changes within the system that will incite new students to go to college, and reach out to those who have dropped out.

### **AFFORDABILITY & FINANCIAL AID**

Although two-thirds of California Community College students are from low income households (less than \$30,000 annually), and 54% of them did not receive any financial assistance. By contrast, 75% of these students at four year universities benefit in some way from financial aid. Many people who apply for college struggle to access FAFSA or CADAA and are unable to fill it out in time. Unfortunately even with financial aid, the cost of college includes tuition, food, housing, books, materials, and transportation, and this proves to be still too expensive for many students to afford. Consequently, many students end up taking out loans. These disparities are often along racial lines, for instance, Black students alarmingly make up 20% of borrowers, even though they only represent 5% of the total student enrollment. Students work long hours to pay off their college debt, with over three-quarters of enrolled CCC students reporting that they work over 21 hours a week, and almost half working over 36 hours a week. It is imperative that ways to make financial aid more accessible are discussed, as this issue greatly affects academic success, enrollment, and graduation rate.





## **FRAUD**

September of 2021 was the first time that colleges began reporting a significant amount of fraudulent applications, and the data has only increased from there. In 2022, almost 200 thousand suspected cases of suspected fraudulent applicants (excluding those who were caught) were reported by the colleges in the CCC, and this number skyrocketed to almost one million in 2024. It was suspected that this accounted for 20% of college applicants in that year. The COVID pandemic is to blame for this influx, and its impacts have been undeniable. Fraud within applications can be as simple as a student overstating on their FAFSA application how many people live in their household, or understating how much their assets are worth. However the most prominent example cost-wise is done by people who enroll with the no intention of actually attending the college. Then, money is gained through financial aid fraud, or through student discounts (e.g. having a “.edu” email). The state has allocated \$125 million for cybersecurity, fraud detection, and implemented changes in the application portal, but the issue prevails, remaining extremely detrimental to the financial stability of the CCC. This issue is convoluted, with some cases of spotty data. Some colleges under report suspected enrollment fraud in order to boost their numbers, while others who clamp down too hard on fraud put their legitimate recipients of financial aid at risk of not having access.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Within school campuses themselves, the maintenance and building of facilities is essential to student learning. The California Community Colleges commit a portion of



their funding of capital outlay in order to acquire, maintain, repair, and upgrade infrastructure at each school. It is important to consider plans for future infrastructure and how to ensure that students throughout the state have equitable access to adequate facilities. Additionally, the pressing of sustainability benchmarks makes innovation especially pertinent, and many existing facilities will have to be reassessed in order to meet these goals.



# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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1. What are the most significant challenges currently facing the California Community College system?
2. What initiatives are in place to improve graduation and transfer rates to four-year institutions?
3. What are the California Community College board's current top priorities? Do you think these should remain the same?
4. How can we both prioritize students getting the financial aid they need and the Community College system retaining financial solvency?
5. How should we address the myriad issues that face the board at this time?
6. How can emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence be used to enhance students' learning experience?
7. How can the Community College system improve its financial situation?



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