

June 25, 2024

Dear Regents:

I want to bring to your attention an ongoing long-term situation that needs the attention of the Board of Regents, because you determine State tuition and fees and CTState will not resolve the situation.

The laboratory fees collected from our students are not returned to the campus or the department according to our CEO Lisa Dresdner at CTState-Naugatuck Valley. Science students pay \$51 in [lab] materials fees/course. This yields \$1224/lab section of 24 students. We run 140 lab sections per year that yields \$171,360. The campus allocation to the science department for lab supplies is \$62,000 per year at NV. This situation also affects Art studio courses as well as Food Service Management courses. We tell our students that the Materials Fee for their labs, but the money is being held back by CTState. This is not ethical. This policy is not being honest with our students.

Our budget for many years has remained flat or decreased due to CTState mandates to cut the budget. This affects science lab supplies that deal with inflation costs. The Lab Materials Fee is currently deposited in the General Fund for Operation Expenses; whereas, the Student Activity Fee is kept separate and returned to that department.

This has been the policy used by the CT Community College System Office since the Materials Fee was established in 1995. The new era of CTState needs to be honest with the money students pay: The [Lab] Materials Fee needs to be completely and directly allocated to the academic department teaching those lab courses. I am asking the Board of Regents to investigate this situation and change the fiscal policy on this matter to better serve our students.

Respectfully,

Joseph Faryniarz, Ed.D.
Professor of Biological Sciences
CTState-NV

Science Student Cost for 4 credit laboratory course	FY2023	FY2024
Tuition	\$ 696	\$768
Service Fee	\$ 112	\$137
Supplemental Fee (credit hour vs. contact hour)	\$205	\$215
[Lab] Materials Fee	\$51	\$54
Student Activity Fee	\$15	\$20
Total Student Cost for 1 science lab course	\$1079	\$1194
[Lab] Materials Fee generated per course	\$1224	\$1296

[Lab] Materials Fee generated per year (140 sections)	\$171,360	\$181,440
Total Income generated per lab section (24 students)	\$25,896	\$28,656
Total Income generated for 140 science lab sections	\$3,625,440	\$4,011,840

Statement by David Blitz as Public Comment for the BOR meeting of June 27, 2024:

I wish to express my thanks to Joann Ryan for her efforts to deal with many issues and numerous difficulties as Chair of the Board of Regents, despite health problems and her other professional responsibilities. It is always difficult to retire, as some may say it's too early, others, perhaps the opposite. As I have just found out retiring is fraught with danger if those with whom you have previously cooperated turn against you, as did the AAUP leadership and my successor at the FAC as co-chair for the universities. I am sure that will not happen to Joann Ryan, who has earned the long-term respect of those with whom she has worked.

There are two-major issues for the CSUS System, as for any complex organization: regulating finances and exercising power, both of which are conditions for accomplishing its purpose: facilitating the teaching, research and service of the faculty and staff of its member universities and colleges. I see that there is the usual multi-page spread-sheet on finances for today's meeting, but a rather basic principle applies to the component institutions: to balance their books and live within their means. That is a necessary condition permitting each to maintain its autonomy and integrity, and do what its faculty, staff and administrators do best.

A second condition is the judicious use of power at all levels; from the CSUS Chancellor to an instructor in the class room. Plato, if I may cite a philosopher, wrote a major book on the topic, well known to all of us: *The Republic*. His concept of justice, central to the volume, required that each focus on what they do best and avoid interfering with others in the accomplishment of their goals. In order to do so, rulers had to be trained to exercise power judiciously, avoiding extremes and rash judgments, basing their decisions on an understanding of reality and using reason and wisdom in all they do.

Plato lived a long time ago (more than two thousand years); but more recently Bertrand Russell (within the last 100 years) wrote his follow-up, explicitly entitled *Power*, where he traced the use and abuse of power in political, economic, educational and professional institutions and organizations, stressing both the scope and limits of authority. We have seen the abuse of power with a previous System executive in the over-centralized and flawed consolidation of the community colleges, and more recently with the AAUP leadership in their unilateral and biased rejection of the retirement initiative.

Can the CSUS system and its components do better, including the unions as needed maintainers of the collective agreement, which, along with section 185 of state statutes provides the framework within which we operate? We don't have to read volumes of philosophy to apply basic common sense: communicate and consult before decisions are made, and aim for cooperation on that basis and, where possible, coordination; avoiding a command and control approach. Conflicts will no doubt arise, but merely denouncing one's opponent won't resolve them. A strategy involving respect for those with whom we disagree may win them over, or result in a compromise, or at least allow for future improved interactions.

I wish the new Chair of the BOR, Marty Guay well in his efforts, and hope he can develop a strategy to further accomplish the principle we all share: the advancement of public higher education in our state.

David Blitz, until Aug.1, 2024, Professor of Philosophy and Co-Coordinator, Peace Studies Program, CCSU and thereafter "retired".